

Tiger! Tiger!

By Alfred Bester

"Dearly beloved we are gathered here today as mark of respect at the time of the passing on of our dear friend. This was a paperback book which came into being over 20 years ago, full of hope and promise. Now that life has ended. Advancing years combined with a certain stiffness of the spine (old glue!) and a tendency to curl at the edges, mean that all that remains after the rigours of its final scanning is a tattered pile which we will now commit respectfully to the bin (I also loathed the cover!). Ashes to Ashes, dust to dust. In sure and certain knowledge of the resurrection to eternal life....as an e-book. You could say that this book died for your sins, so that you may have the pleasure of its presence on your hard drive forever more. Here Endeth the lesson. ....Amen. "

So William Gibson invented Cyberpunk? Maybe it was Bruce Bethke? Read this, published in the early 1950's, and then think back. You can see Bester's influence on a whole range of writers since then, from Heinlein to most of the 'New Wave' and their ilk.

Unfortunately as a writer Bester's range was a little limited, and he tended to revisit the same material again and again. The similarities between this and his other great book 'The Demolished Man' are such that after I haven't read them for a while they seem to merge into one. Demolished is in many ways more ambitious, but this is my favourite because of Gully. He's a great character. On the other hand 50 years later, I don't think either writers or readers would let him get away with what he does to Robin Wednesbury! ...Enjoy...AFB

P.S. See notes at end re new posting strategy

'This was a golden age, a tune of high adventure, rich living and hard dying. . but nobody thought so. This was a future of fortune and theft, pillage and rapine, culture and vice . . . but nobody admitted it. This was an age of extremes; a fascinating century of freaks . . . but nobody loved it'.

'It is against the seething background of the twenty-fourth century that the vengeful history of Gulliver Foyle begins.'

Gully Foyle - liar, lecher, ghoul, walking cancer. Obsessed by vengeance, he's also the twenty-fourth century's most valuable commodity - but he doesn't know it.

His story is one of the great classics of science fiction.

'A definitive statement in Wide Screen Baroque, a kind of free-wheeling interplanetary adventure, full of brilliant scenery, dramatic sciences, and a joyous 1 taking for granted of the unlikely' Brian Aldiss in Billion Year Spree Penguin Science Fiction

Tiger! Tiger!

Alfred Bester was born in 1913 and was educated at Pennsylvania University, where he studied science and the fine arts. He became a professional author after winning a writing competition in 1939. His novel The Demolished Man was voted the outstanding book of the year by the eleventh World Science Fiction Congress, and is also published in Penguins. His most recent books are Extro (1975) and The Light Fantastic (1971: a collection of short stories).

Penguin Books Ltd, Harmondsworth. Middlesex, England Penguin Books, 625 Madison Avenue, New York, New York 10022, U.S.A. Penguin Books Australia Ltd, Ringwood, Victoria, Australia Penguin Books Canada Ltd, 2801 John Street, Markham, Ontario, Canada L3R IB4 Penguin Books (N.Z.) Ltd, x82-x90 Wairau Road, Auckland 10, New Zealand First published is the U.S.A. 1955 Published in Great Britain by Sidgwick & Jackson 1956 Published in Penguin Books x967 Reprinted 1974, 1979 Copyright p Alfred Best-, 1955 AD rights reserved Made and printed in Great Britain by Cox & Wyman Ltd, London, Reading and Fakenham Set in Monotype Plantin Except in the United States of America, this book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, resold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form of binding or cover other than that is which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser

## Prologue

This was a golden age, a time of high adventure, rich living and hard dying . . . but nobody thought so. This was a future of fortune and theft, pillage and rapine, culture and vice. . , but nobody admitted it. This was an age of extremes, a fascinating century of freaks . . . but nobody loved it.

All the habitable worlds of the solar system were occupied. Three planets and eight satellites and eleven million millions of people swarmed in one of the most exciting ages ever known, yet minds still yearned for other times, as always, as ever. The solar system seethed with activity . . . fighting, feeding, and breeding, learning the new technologies that spewed forth almost before the old had been mastered, girding itself for the first exploration of the stars in deep space; but 'Where are the new frontiers?' the Romantics cried while the frontier of the mind opened in a dramatic incident that took place in a laboratory on Callisto at the turn of the twenty-fourth century.

A researcher named Jaunte set fire to his bench and himself (accidentally) and let out a yell for help with particular reference to a fire extinguisher. Who so surprised as Jaunte and his colleagues when he found himself standing alongside said extinguisher which was seventy feet removed from his lab bench.

They put Jaunte out and went into the whys and wherefores of his seventy-foot journey. Teleportation . . . the transportation of oneself through space by an effort of the mind alone . . . had long been a theoretic concept, and there were a few hundred badly documented proofs that it had happened is the past. This was the first time that it had ever taken place before professional observers.

They investigated the Jaunte Effect savagely. This was something too earth-shaking to handle with kid gloves, and anyway Jaunte was anxious to make his name immortal. He made his will and said farewell to his friends. Jaunte knew he was going to die because his fellow researchers were determined to kill him. There was no doubt about that.

Twelve psychologists, Para-psychologists and neurometrists of varying specialization were carried in as observers. The experimenters sealed Jaunte into an unbreakable crystal tank. They opened a water valve, feeding water into the tank, and let Jaunte watch them smash the valve handle. It was impossible to open the tank; it was impossible to stop the flow of water.

The theory was that if it had required the threat of death to goad Jaunte into teleporting himself in the first place, they'd damned well threaten him with death again. The tank filled quickly. The observers collected

data with the tense precision of an eclipse camera crew. Jaunte began to drown. Then he was outside the tank, dripping and coughing explosively. He'd teleported again.

The experts examined and questioned him. They studied graphs and X-rays, neural patterns and body chemistry. They began to get an inkling of how Jaunte had teleported. On the technical grapevine (this had to be kept secret) they sent out a call for suicide volunteers. They were still in the primitive stage of teleportation; death was the only spur they knew.

They briefed the volunteers thoroughly. Jaunte lectured on what he had done and how he thought he had done it. Then they proceeded to murder the volunteers. They drowned them, hung them, burned them; they invented new forms of slow and controlled death. There was never any doubt in any of the subjects that death was the object.

Eighty per cent of the volunteers died, and the agonies and remorse of their murderers would make a fascinating and horrible study, but that has no place in this history except in highlight the monstrosity of the times. Eighty per cent of the volunteers died, but twenty per cent jaunted. (The name became a word almost immediately.) 'Bring back the romantic age,' the Romantics pleaded, 'when men can risk their lives in high adventure.' The body of knowledge grew rapidly. By the first decade of the twenty-fourth century the principles of jaunting were established and the first school was opened by Charles Fort Jaunte himself, then fifty-seven, immortalized, and ashamed to admit that he had never dared jaunte again. But the primitive days were past; it was no longer necessary to threaten a man with death to make him teleport. They had learned how to teach man to recognize, discipline and exploit yet another resource of his limitless mind.

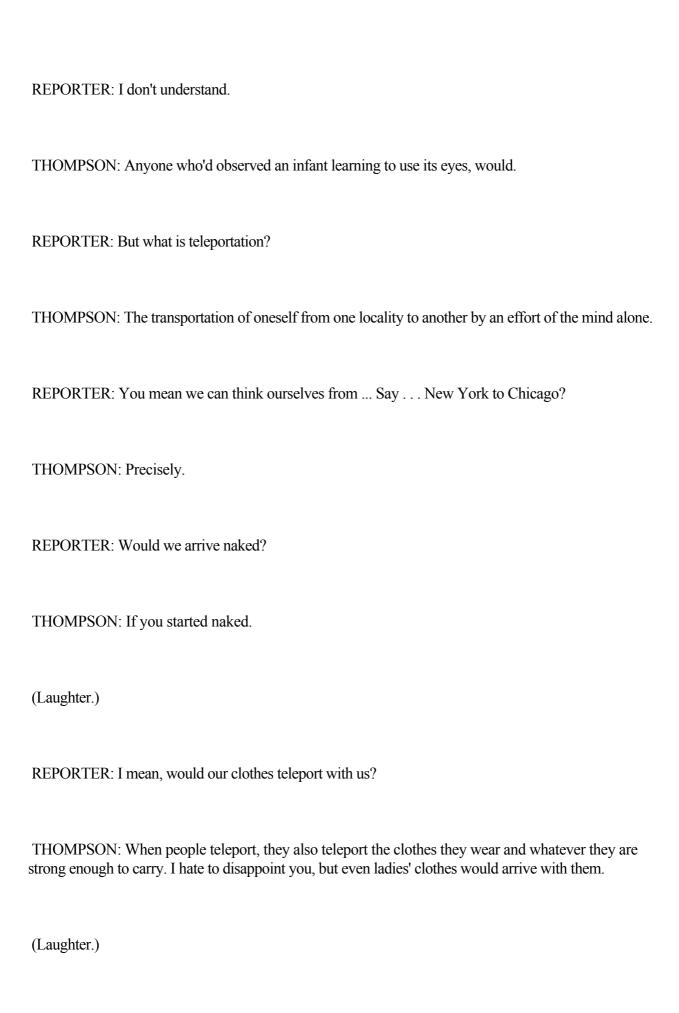
How, exactly, did man teleport? One of the most unsatisfactory explanations was provided by Spencer Thompson, publicity representative of the Jaunte Schools, in a press interview.

THOMPSON: Jaunting is like seeing; it is a natural aptitude of almost every human organism, but it can only be developed by training and experience.

REPORTER: You mean we couldn't see without practice?

THOMPSON: Obviously you're either unmarried or have no children . . . preferably both.

(Laughter.)



REPORTER: But how do we do it? THOMPSON: How do we think? REPORTER: With our minds. THOMPSON: And how does the mind think? What is the thinking process? Exactly how do we remember, imagine, deduce, create? Exactly how do the brain cells operate? REPORTER: I don't know. Nobody knows. THOMPSON: And nobody knows exactly how we teleport either, but we know we can do it - just as we know that we can think. Have you ever heard of Descartes? He said: Cogito ergo sum. I think, therefore I am. We say: Cogito ergo jaunte. I think, therefore I jaunte. If it is thought that Thompson's explanation is exasperating, inspect this report of Sir John Kelvin to the Royal Society on the mechanism of jaunting: 'We have established that the teleportative ability is associated with the Nissl bodies, or Tigroid Substance in nerve cells. The Tigroid Substance is easiest demonstrated by Nissls' method using 3.75 g. of methylene blue and 1.75 g. of Venetian soap dissolved in 1,000 cc. of water. 'Where the Tigroid Substance does not appear, jaunting is impossible. Teleportation is a Tigroid Function.' (Applause).

Any man was capable of jaunting provided he developed two faculties, visualization and concentration. He had to visualize, completely and precisely, the spot to which he desired to teleport himself; and he had to concentrate the latent energy of his mind into a single thrust to get him there. Above all, he had to have faith . . . the faith that Charles Fort Jaunte never recovered. He had to believe he would jaunte. The slightest doubt would block the mind-thrust necessary for teleportation.

The limitations with which every man is born necessarily limited the ability to jaunte. Some could visualize magnificently and set the co-ordinates of their destination with precision, but lacked the power to get

there. Others had the power but could not, so to speak, see where they were jaunting. And space set a final limitation, for no man had ever jaunted farther than a thousand miles. He could work his way in jaunting jumps over land and water from Nome to Mexico, but no jump could exceed a thousand miles.

By the 2420's this form of employment application blank had become a commonplace:
This space reserved for retina pattern identification
NAME (Capital Letters):(Last Middle First)
RESIDENCE (Legal):(Continent Country Country)
JAUNTE CLASS (Official Rating: Check One Only):
M (1000) miles:
L (50 miles):
D (500 miles):
C (100 miles):
X (10 miles):
V (5 miles):
The old Bureaux of Motor Vehicles took over the new job and regularly tested and classed jaunte applicants, and the old American Automobile Association changed its initials to A.J.A.

Despite all efforts, no man had ever jaunted across the voids of space although many experts and fools had tried. Helmut Grant, for one, who spent a month memorizing the co-ordinates of a jaunte stage on the moon and visualized every mile of the two hundred-and-forty-thousand-mile trajectory from Times Square to Kepler City. Grant jaunted and disappeared. They never found him. They never found Enzio Dandridge, a Los Angeles revivalist looking for Heaven; Jacob Maria Freundlich, a paraphysicist who should have known better than to jaunte into a deep space searching for meta-dimensions; Shipwreck

Cogan, a professional seeker after notoriety; and hundreds of others, lunatic fringers, neurotics, escapists and suicides. Space was closed to teleportation. Jaunting was restricted to the planets of the solar system.

But within three generations the entire solar system was on the jaunte. The transition was more spectacular than the change-over from horse and buggy to gasoline age four centuries before. On three planets and eight satellites, social, legal and economic structures crashed while the new customs and laws demanded by universal jaunting mushroomed in their place.

There were land riots as the jaunting poor deserted slums to squat in plains and forests, raiding the livestock and wildlife. There was a revolution in home and office building, labyrinths and masking devices had to be introduced to prevent unlawful entry by jaunting. There were crashes and panics and strikes and famines as pre-jaunte industries failed.

Plagues and pandemics raged as jaunting vagrants carried disease and vermin into defenseless countries. Malaria, elephantiasis and the break-bone fever came north to Greenland; rabies returned to England after an absence of three hundred years. The Japanese beetle, the citrons scale, the chestnut blight and the elm borer spread to every corner in the world, and from one forgotten pest-hole in Borneo, leprosy, long imagined extinct, reappeared.

Crime waves swept the planets and satellites as the underworlds took to jaunting with the night around the clock, and there were brutalities as the police fought them without quarter. There came a hideous return to the worst prudery of Victorianism as society fought the sexual and moral dangers of jaunting with protocol and taboo. A cruel and vicious war broke out between the Inner Planets, Venus, Terra and Mars, and the Outer Satellites . . . a war brought on by the economic and political pressures of teleportation.

Until the Jaunte Age dawned, the three inner planets (and the Moon) had lived in delicate economic balance with the seven inhabited outer satellites; Io, Europa, Ganymede and Callisto of Jupiter; Rhea and Titan of Saturn; and Lassell of Neptune. The United Outer Satellites supplied raw materials for the Inner Planets manufactories, and a market for their finished goods. Within a decade this balance was destroyed by jaunting.

The Outer Satellites, raw young worlds in the making, had bought seventy per cent of the L.P. transportation production. Jaunting ended that. They had bought ninety per cent of the LP. communications production. Jaunting ended that too. In consequence L.P. purchase of O.S. raw materials fell off. With trade exchange destroyed it was inevitable that the economic war would degenerate into a shooting war. Inner Planets cartels refused to ship manufacturing equipment to the Outer Satellites, attempting to protect themselves against competition. The O.S. confiscated the planets

already in operation on their worlds, broke patent agreements, ignored royalty obligations . . . and the war was on.

It was an age of freaks, monsters and grotesques. All the world was misshapen in marvelous and malevolent ways. The Classicists and Romantics who hated it were unaware of the potential greatness of the twenty-fourth century. They were blind to a cold fact of evolution . . . that progress stems from clashing merger of antagonistic extremes, out of the marriage of pinnacle freaks. Classicists and Romantics alike were unaware that the solar system was trembling on the verge of a human explosion that would transform man and make him the master of the universe.

It is against this seething background of the twenty-fourth century that the vengeful history of Gully Foyle begins.

Part One

I

He was one hundred and seventy days dying and not yet dead. He fought for survival with the passion of a beast in a trap. He was delirious and rotting, but occasionally his primitive mind emerged from the burning nightmare of survival into something resembling sanity. Then he lifted his mute face to Eternity and muttered: `What's a matter, me? Help, you Heels. Help, is all.'

Blasphemy came easily to him; it was half his speech, all his life. He had been raised in the gutter school of the twenty-fourth century and spoke nothing but the gutter tongue. Of all brutes in the world he was least valuable alive and most likely to live. So he struggled to survive and prayed in blasphemy; but occasionally his raveling mind leaped backward thirty years to his childhood and remembered a nursery jingle:

Gully Foyle is my name

And Terra is my nation.

Deep space is my dwelling place

And death's my destination.

He was Gulliver Foyle, Mechanic's Mate 3rd Class, thirty years old, big boned and rough... and one hundred and seventy days adrift in space. He was Gully Foyle, the oiler, wiper, bunkerman; too easy for trouble, too slow for fun, too empty for friendship, too lazy for love. The lethargic outlines of his character even showed in the official Merchant Marine records

FOYLE, GULLIVER -AS-128/127:OO6

**EDUCATION: NONE** 

SKILLS: NONE

**MERITS: NONE** 

RECOMMENDATIONS: NONE

(PERSONNEL COMMENTS)

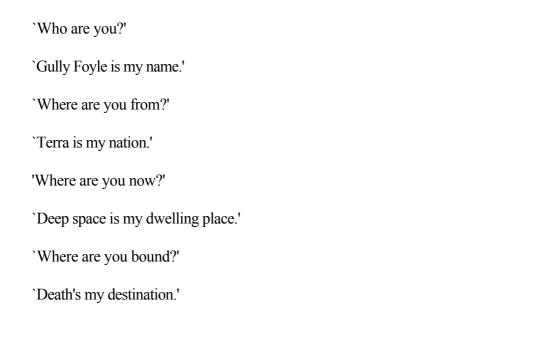
A man of physical strength and intellectual potential stunted by lack of ambition. Energizes at minimum. The stereotype Common Man. Some unexpected shock might possibly awaken him, but Psych cannot find the key. Do not recommend for further promotion. Foyle has reached a dead end.

He had reached a dead end. He had been content to drift from moment to moment of existence for thirty years like some heavily armored creature, sluggish, and indifferent . . . Gully Foyle, the stereotype Common Man; but now he was adrift in space for one hundred and seventy days, and the key to his awakening was in the lock. Presently it would turn and open the door to holocaust.

The spaceship Nomad drifted half-way between Mars and Jupiter. Whatever war catastrophe had wrecked it had taken a sleek steel rocket, one hundred yards long and one hundred feet broad, and mangled it into a skeleton on which was mounted the remains of cabins, holds, decks and bulkheads. Great rents in the hull were blazes of light on the sunside and frosty blotches of stars on the darkside. The S.S. Nomad was a weightless emptiness of blinding sun and jet shadow, frozen and silent.

The wreck was filled with a floating conglomerate of frozen debris that hung within the destroyed vessel like an instantaneous photograph of an explosion. The minute gravitational attraction of the bits of rubble for each other was slowly drawing them into clusters which were periodically torn apart by the passage through them of the one survivor still alive on the wreck, Gulliver Foyle, AS-128/I27:006.

He lived in the only air-tight room left intact in the wreck, a tool locker of the main-deck corridor. The locker was four feet wide, four feet deep and nine feet high. It was the size of a giant's coffin. Six hundred years before, it had been judged the most exquisite Oriental torture to imprison a man in a cage that size for a few weeks. Yet Foyle had existed in that lightless cage for five months, twenty days and four hours.



On the one hundred and seventy-first day of his fight for survival, Foyle answered these questions and awoke. His heart hammered and his throat burned. He groped in the dark for the air tank, which shared his coffin with him and checked it. The tank was empty. Another would have to be moved in at once. So this day would commence with an extra skirmish with death which Foyle accepted with mute endurance.

He felt through the locker shelves and located a torn spacesuit. It was the only one aboard Nomad and Foyle no longer remembered where or how he had found it. He had sealed the tear with emergency spray, but had no way of refilling or replacing the empty oxygen cartridges on the back. Foyle got into the suit. It would hold enough air from the locker to allow him five minutes in vacuum . . . no more.

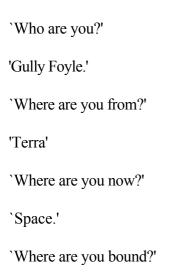
Foyle opened the locker door and plunged out into the black frost of space. The air in the locker puffed out with him and its moisture congealed into a tiny snow cloud that drifted down the torn main-deck corridor. Foyle heaved at the exhausted air tank, floated it out of the locker and abandoned it. One minute was gone.

He turned and propelled himself through the floating debris towards the hatch to the ballast hold. He did not run; his gait was the unique locomotion of free-fall and weightlessness . . . thrusts with foot, elbow and hand against deck, wall and corner, a slow-motion darting through space like a bat flying under water. Foyle shot through the hatch into the darkside ballast hold. Two minutes were gone.

Like all spaceships, Nomad was ballasted and stiffened with the mass of her gas tanks laid down the length of her keel like a long lumber raft tapped at the sides by a labyrinth of pipe fittings. Foyle took a minute disconnecting an air tank. He had no way of knowing whether it was full or already exhausted; whether he would fight it back to his locker only to discover that it was empty and his life was ended. Once a week he endured this game of space-poker.

There was a roaring in his ears; the air in his spacesuit was rapidly going foul. He yanked the massy cylinder towards the ballast hatch, ducked to let it sail over his head, then thrust himself after it. He swung the tank through the hatch. Four minutes had elapsed and he was shaking and blacking out. He guided the tank down the main-deck corridor and bulled it into the tool locker.

He slammed the locked door, dogged it, found a hammer on a shelf and swung it thrice against the frozen tank to loosen the valve. Foyle twisted the handle grimly. With the last of his strength he unsealed the helmet of his spacesuit, lest he suffocate within the suit while the locker filled with air . . . if this tank contained air. He fainted, as he had fainted so often before, never knowing whether this was death.



He awoke. He was alive. He wasted no time on prayer or thanks but continued the business of survival. In the darkness he explored the locker shelves where he kept his rations. There were only a few packets left. Since he was already wearing the patched spacesuit he might just as well run the gauntlet of vacuum again and replenish his supplies.

He flooded his spacesuit with sir from the tank, resealed his helmet and sailed out into the frost and light again. He squirmed down the main-deck corridor and ascended the remains of a stairway to control-deck, which was no more than a roofed corridor in space, most of the walls were destroyed.

With the sun on his right and the stars on his left, Foyle shot aft towards the galley storeroom. Halfway down the corridor he passed a door-frame still standing foursquare between deck and roof. The leaf still hung on its hinges, half open, a door to nowhere. Behind it was all space and the steady stars.

As Foyle passed the door he had a quick view of himself reflected in the polished chrome of the leaf . . . Gully Foyle, a giant black creature, bearded, crusted with dried blood and filth, emaciated, with sick, patient eyes . . . and followed always by a stream of floating debris, the raffle disturbed by his motion and following him through space like the tail of a festering comet.

Foyle turned into the galley storeroom and began looting with the methodical speed of five months' habit. Most of the bottled goods were frozen solid and exploded. Many of the canned goods had lost their containers, for tin crumbles to dust in the absolute zero of space. Foyle gathered up ration; packets, concentrates and a chunk of ice from the burst water tank. He threw everything into a large copper cauldron and then turned and darted out of the storeroom, carrying the cauldron.

At the door to nowhere Foyle glanced at himself again, reflected in the chrome leaf framed in the stars. Then he stopped his motion in bewilderment. He stared at the stars behind the door, which had become familiar friends after five months. There was an intruder among them; a comet, it seemed, with an invisible head and a short, spurting tail. Then Foyle realized he was staring at a spaceship, stern rockets flaring as it accelerated on a sunward course that must pass him.

'No,' he muttered. 'No, man. No.' He was continually suffering firm hallucinations. He turned to resume the journey back to his coffin. Then he looked again. It was still a spaceship, stern rockets flaring as it accelerated on a sunward course which must pass him. He discussed the illusion with Eternity.

'Six months already,' he said in his gutter tongue. 'Is it now? You listen a me, Heels. I talkin' a deal, is all. I look again, sweet Heels. If it's a ship, I'm yours. You own me. But if it's a gaff, man . . . if it's no ship . . . I unseal right now and blow my guts. We both play square, us. Now reach me the sign, yes or no, is all.'

He looked for a third time. For the third time he saw a spaceship, stern rockets flaring as it accelerated on a sunward course which must pass him.

It was the sign. He believed. He was saved.

Foyle shoved off and went hurtling down control-deck corridor towards the bridge. But at the companionway stairs he restrained himself. He could not remain conscious for more than a few moments without refilling his spacesuit. He gave the approaching spaceship one pleading look, then shot down to the tool locker and pumped his suit full.

He mounted to the control bridge. Through the starboard observation port he saw the spaceship, stern rockets still flaring, evidently making a major alteration in course, for it was bearing down on him very slowly.

On the panel marked FLARES, Foyle pressed the DISTRESS button. There was a three-second pause during which he suffered. Then white radiance blinded him as the distress signal went off in three triple bursts, nine prayers for help. Foyle pressed the button twice again, and twice more the flares flashed in space while the radioactives incorporated in their combustion set up a static howl that must register on any waveband of any receiver.

The stranger's jets cut off. He had been seen. He would be saved. He was reborn. He exulted.

Foyle darted back to his locker and replenished his spacesuit again. He began to weep. He started to gather his possessions . . . a faceless clock which he kept wound just to listen to the ticking, a lug wrench with a hand-shaped handle which he would hold in lonely moments, an egg-sliver upon whose wires he would pluck primitive tunes . . . He dropped them in his excitement, hunted for them in the dark, then began to laugh at himself.

He filled his spacesuit with air once more and capered back to the bridge. He punched a flare button labeled: RESCUE. From the hull of the Nomad shot a sunlet that burst and hung, flooding miles of space with a harsh white light.

'Come on, baby you,' Foyle crooned. 'Hurry up, man. Come on, baby, baby you.' Like a ghost torpedo, the stranger slid into the outermost rim of light, approaching slowly, looking him over. For a moment Foyle's heart constricted; the ship was behaving so cautiously that he feared she was an enemy vessel from the Outer Satellites. Then he saw the famous red and blue emblem on her side, the trademark of the mighty industrial clan of Presteign; Presteign of Terra, powerful, munificent, beneficent And he knew this was a sister ship, for the Nomad was also Presteign owned. He knew this was an angel from space hovering over him.

'Sweet, sister,' Foyle crooned. 'Baby angel, fly away home with me.' The ship came abreast of Foyle, illuminated ports along its side glowing with friendly light, its name and registry number clearly visible in illuminated figures on the hull: Vorga-T: 1339. The ship was alongside him in a moment, passing him in a second, disappearing in a third.
The sister had spurned him; the angel had abandoned him.
Foyle stopped dancing and crooning. He stared in dismay. He leaped to the flare panel and slapped buttons. Distress signals, landing, takeoff and quarantine flares burst from the hull of the Nomad in a madness of white, red and green light, pulsing, pleading and Vorga-T: 1339 passed silently and implacably, stern jets flaring again as it accelerated on a sunward course.

So, in five seconds, he was born, he lived and he died. After thirty years of existence and six months of torture, Gully Foyle, the stereotype Common Man was no more. The key turned in the lock of his soul and the door was opened. What emerged expunged the Common Man for ever.

'You pass me by,' he said with slow mounting fury. 'You leave me rot like a dog. You leave me die, Vorga . . . Vorga-T: 1339, No. I get out of here, me. I follow you, Vorga. I find you, Yorga. I pay you back, me. I rot you. I kill you, Yorga. I kill you deadly.'

The acid of fury ran through him, eating away the brute patience and sluggishness that had made a cipher of Gully Foyle, precipitating a chain of reactions that would make an infernal machine of Gully Foyle. He was dedicated.

'Vorga, I kill you deadly.' He did what the cipher could not do; he rescued himself.

For two days he combed the wreckage in five-minute forays, and devised a harness for his shoulders. He attached an air tank to the harness and connected the tank to his spacesuit helmet with an improvised hose. He wriggled through space like an ant dragging a log, but he had the freedom of the Nomad for all time.

He thought.

In the control bridge he taught himself to use the few navigation instruments that were still unbroken, studying the standard manuals that littered the wrecked navigation room. In the ten years of his service in space he had never dreamed of attempting such a thing, despite the rewards of promotion and pay; but now he had Vorga-T: 1339 to reward him.

He took sights. The Nomad was drifting in space on the ecliptic, three hundred million miles from the sun. Before him were spread the constellations Perseus, Andromeda and Pisces. Hanging almost in the foreground was a dusty orange spot that was Jupiter, distinctly a planetary disc to the naked eye. With any luck he could make a course for Jupiter and rescue.

Jupiter was not, could never be habitable. Like all the outer planets beyond the asteroid orbits, it was a frozen mass of methane and ammonia; but its four largest satellites swarmed with cities and populations now at war with the Inner Planets. He would be a war prisoner, but he had to stay alive to settle accounts with Vorga-T: 1339. Foyle inspected the engine-room of the Nomad. There was Hi-Thrust fuel remaining in the tanks and one of the four tail jets was still in operative condition. Foyle found the engine-room manuals and studied them. He repaired the connection between fuel tanks and the one jet chamber. The tanks were on the sunside of the wreck and warmed above freezing point. The Hi-Thrust was still liquid, but it would not flow. In freefall there was no gravity to draw the fuel down the pipes.

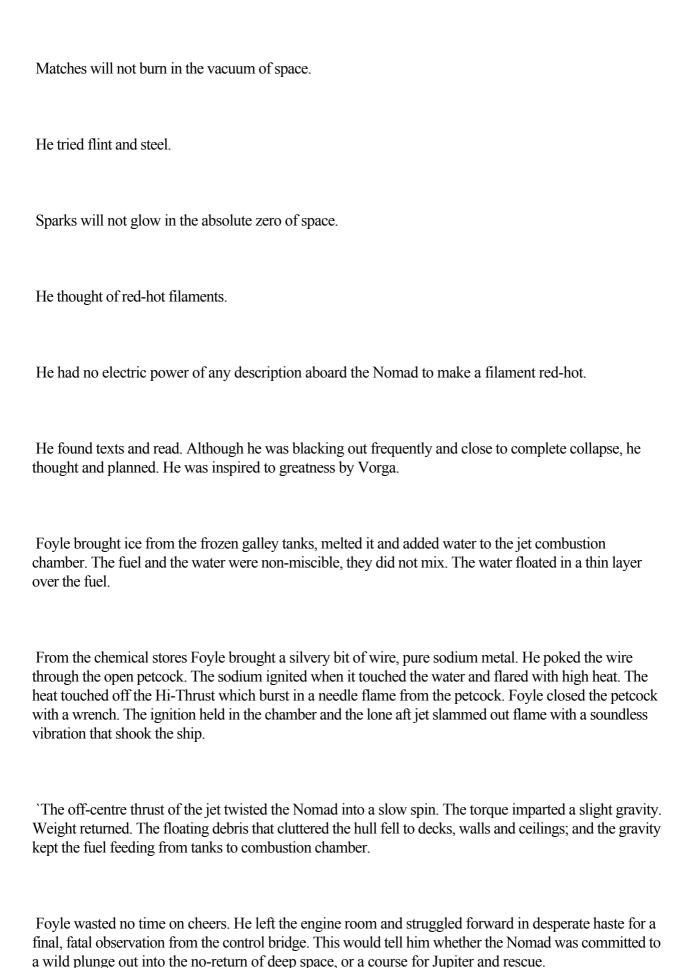
Foyle studied a space manual and learned something about theoretical gravity. If he could put the Nomad into a spin, centrifugal force would impart enough navigation to the ship to draw fuel down into the combustion chamber of the jet. If he could fire the combustion chamber, the unequal thrust of the one jet would impart a spin to the Nomad.

But he couldn't fire the jet without first having the spin; and he couldn't get the spin without first firing the jet.

He thought his way out of the deadlock; he was inspired by Vorga.

Foyle opened the drainage petcock in the combustion chamber of the jet and tortuously filled the chamber with fuel by hand. He had primed the pump. Now, if he ignited the fuel, it would fire long enough to impart the spin and start gravity. Then the flow from the tanks would commence and the rocketing would continue.

He tried matches.



The slight gravity made his air tank almost impossible to drag. The sudden forward surge of acceleration shook loose masses of debris which flew backward through the Nomad. As Foyle struggled up the companionway stairs to control-deck, the rubble from the bridge came hurtling back down the corridor and smashed into him. He was caught up in this tumbleweed in space, rolled back the length of the empty corridor and brought up against the galley bulkhead with an impact that shattered his last hold on consciousness. He lay pinned in the centre of half a ton of wreckage, helpless, barely alive, but still raging for vengeance.

`Who are you?'
'Where are you from?'
'Where are you now?'
'Where are you bound?'
Between Mars and Jupiter is spread the broad belt of the asteroids. Of the thousands, known and unknown, most unique to the Freak Century was the Sargasso Asteroid, a tiny planet manufactured of natural rock and wreckage, salvaged by its inhabitants in the course of two hundred years.
They were savages, the only savages of the twenty-fourth century; descendants of a research team of scientists that had been lost and marooned in the asteroid belt two centuries before when their ship had failed. By the time their descendants were rediscovered they had built up a world and a culture of their own, and preferred to remain in space, salvaging and spoiling, and practicing a barbaric travesty of the scientific method they remembered from their forebears. They called themselves The Scientific People. The world promptly forgot them.

He awoke once while he was being carried in triumph on a litter through the natural and artificial passages within the asteroid. They were constructed of meteor metal, stone and hull plates. Some of the plates still bore names long forgotten to the history of space travel: INDUS QUEEN, TERRA; SYRTUS GAMBLER, MARS; THREE-RING CIRCUS, SATURN. The passages led to great halls, storerooms,

S.S. Nomad looped through space, neither on a course for Jupiter nor the far stars, but drifting across the asteroid belt in, the slow spiral of a dying animalcule. It passed within a mile of the Sargasso Asteroid,

and it was immediately captured by The Scientific People to be incorporated into their little planet.

They found Foyle.

apartments, and homes, all built of salvaged ships cemented into the asteroid. In rapid succession Foyle was borne through an ancient Ganymede scow, a Lassel ice-borer, a captain's barge, a Callisto heavy cruiser, a twenty-second-century fuel transport with glass tanks still filled with smoke rocket fuel. Two centuries of salvage were gathered in this hive: armories of weapons, libraries of books, museums of costume, warehouses of tools, rations, drink, chemicals, synthetics, and 'surrogates. A crowd around the litter was howling triumphantly. 'Quant Suff!' they shouted. A woman's chorus began an elated bleating: ` `Ammonium bromide gr. y Potassium bromide gr. 3 Sodium bromide gr. 2 Citric acid Quant. Suff.' 'Quant Suff!' The Scientific People roared. 'Quant Suff!' Foyle fainted. He awoke again. He had been taken out of his spacesuit. He was in the greenhouse of the asteroid, where plants were grown for fresh oxygen. The hundred-yard hull of an old ore carrier formed the room, and one wall had been entirely fitted with salvaged windows. . . round ports, square ports, diamond, hexagonal . . . every shape and age of port had been introduced until the vast wall was a crazy quilt of glass and light. The distant sun blazed through; the air was hot and moist. Foyle gazed around dimly. A devil face peered at him. Cheeks, chin, nose and eyelids were hideously tattooed like an ancient Maori mask. Across the brow was tattooed JOSEPH. The '0' 1n JOSEPH had a tiny arrow thrust up from the right shoulder, turning it into the symbol of Mars, used by scientists to designate male sex. 'We are The Scientific People,' Joseph said. 'I am Joseph; these are my brethren.' He gestured. Foyle gazed at the grinning crowd surrounding his litter. All faces were tattooed into devil masks; all brows had

names blazoned across them.

'Vorga,' Foyle mumbled.

'How long did you drift?' Joseph asked.



They strapped Foyle down on the operating-table while he raved and rambled. They fed him. They shaved and bathed him. Two men began turning the ancient centrifuge by hand. It emitted a rhythmic clanking like the pounding of a war drum. The assembled began tramping and chanting.

They turned on the ancient autoclave. It boiled and geysered filling the hall with howling steam. They turned on the old fluoroscope. It was short-circuited and spat sizzling bolts of lightning across the steaming hall.

A ten-foot figure loomed up to the table. It was Joseph on stilts. He wore a surgical cap, a surgical mask, and a surgeon's gown that hung from his shoulders to the floor. The gown was heavily embroidered with red and black thread illustrating anatomical sections of the body. Joseph was a lurid tapestry out of a surgical text.

'I pronounce you Nomad!' Joseph intoned.

The uproar became deafening. Joseph tilted a rusty can over Foyle's body. There was the reek of ether. Foyle lost his tatters of consciousness and darkness enveloped him. Out of the darkness Vorga-T: 1339 surged again and again, accelerating on a sunward course that burst through Foyle's blood and brains until he could not stop screaming silently for vengeance.

He was dimly aware of washings and feedings and trampings and chantings. At last he awoke to a lucid interval. There was silence. He was in bed. The girl, Moira, was in bed with him.

'Who you?' Foyle croaked.

'Your wife, Nomad.'

`What?'

'Your wife. You chose me, Nomad. We are gametes.'

'What?'	
her arm. It was	mated,' Moira said proudly. She pulled up the sleeve of her nightgown and showed him disfigured by four, ugly slashes. 'I have been inoculated with something old, something by borrowed and something blue.' Foyle struggled out of bed.
`Where we no	ow?'
`In our home.	
`What home?	
scientific. But	re one of us, Nomad. You must marry every month and beget many children. That will be I am the first.' Foyle ignored her and explored. He was in the main cabin of a small rocket early 2300s once a private yacht. The main cabin had been converted into a bedroom.
by passages m oxygen. The ended the burners	the ports and looked out. The launch was sealed into the mass of the asteroid, connected the main body. He went aft. Two smaller cabins were filled with growing plants for ngine-room had been inverted into a kitchen. There was Hi-Thrust in the fuel tanks, but it is of a small stove atop the rocket chambers. Foyle went forward. The control cabin was but the controls were still operative.
He thought.	
	the kitchen and dismantled the stove. He reconnected the fuel tanks to the original jet ambers. Moira followed him curiously.
combustion ch	<u> </u>

Going to ram out in this boat, is all.' Moira backed away in alarm. Foyle saw the look in her eyes and leaped for her. He was so crippled that she avoided him easily. She opened her mouth and let out a piercing scream. At that moment a mighty clangor filled the launch; it was Joseph and his devil-faced brethren outside, banging on the metal hull, going through the ritual of a scientific charivari for the newlyweds.

Moira screamed and dodged while Foyle pursued her patiently. He trapped her in a corner, ripped her nightgown off and bound and gagged her with it. Moira made enough noise to split the asteroid open, but the scientific charivari was louder.

Foyle finished his rough patching of the engine-room; he was almost an expert by now. He picked up the writhing girl and took her to the main hatch.

`Leaving,' he shouted in Moira's ear. `Take-off. Blast right out of asteroid. Hell of a smash, girl. Maybe all die, you.

Everything busted wide open. Guesses for grabs what happens. No more air. No more asteroid. Go tell'm. Warn'm. Go girl' He opened the hatch, shoved Moira out, slammed the hatch and dogged it. The charivari stopped abruptly.

At the controls Foyle pressed ignition. The automatic takeoff siren began a howl that had not sounded in decades. The jet chambers ignited with dull concussions. Foyle waited for the temperature to reach firing heat. While he waited he suffered. The launch was cemented into the asteroid. It was surrounded by stone and iron. Its rear jets were flush on the hull of another ship packed into the mass. He didn't know what would happen when his jets began their thrust, but he was driven to gamble by Vorga.

He fired the jets. There was a hollow explosion as Hi-Thrust flamed out of the stern of the ship. The launch shuddered, yawned, heated. A squeal of metal began. Then the launch grated forward. Metal, stone and glass split asunder and the ship burst out of the asteroid into space.

The L.P. navy picked him up ninety thousand miles outside Mars's orbit. After seven months of shooting war, the patrols were alert but reckless. When the launch failed to answer and give recognition countersigns, it should have been shattered with a blast and questions could have been asked of the wreckage later. But the launch was small and the cruiser crew was hot for prize money. They closed and grappled.

They found Foyle inside, crawling like a headless worm through a junk-heap of spaceship and home furnishings. He was bleeding again, ripe with stinking gangrene, and one side of his head was pulpy. They brought him into the sick-bay aboard the cruiser and carefully curtained his tank. Foyle was no sight even for the tough stomachs of lower deck navy men.

They patched his carcass in the amniotic tank while they completed their tour of duty. On the jet back to Terra, Foyle recovered consciousness and bubbled words beginning with V. He knew he was saved. He knew that only time stood between him and vengeance. The sick-bay orderly heard him exulting in his tank and parted the curtains. Foyle's filmed eyes looked up. The orderly could not restrain his curiosity.

'You hear me, man?' he whispered.
Foyle grunted. The orderly bent lower.
`What happened? Who in hell done that to you?'
`What?' Foyle croaked.
`Don't you know?'
`What? What's a matter, you?'
'Wait a minute, is all.' The orderly disappeared as he jaunted to a supply cabin, and reappeared alongside the tank five seconds later. Foyle struggled up out of the fluid. His eyes glazed.
`It's coming back, man. Some of it. Jaunte, I couldn't jaunte on the Nomad, me.'
`What?'



simultaneous arrival. That's less than your chance of being killed in a motor accident! The bandaged C.P.O. nodded dubiously and stepped up on the raised stage. It was of white concrete, round, and decorated on its face with vivid black and white patterns as an aid to memory. In the centre was an illuminated plaque which gave its name and jaunte coordinates of latitude, longitude and elevation.

At the moment when the bandaged man was gathering courage for his primer jaunte, the stage began to flicker with a sudden flurry of arrivals and departures. Figures appeared momentarily as they jaunted in, hesitated while they checked their surroundings and set new co-ordinates, and then disappeared as they jaunted off. At each disappearance there was a faint 'Pop' as displaced sir rushed into the space formerly occupied by a body.

'Wait, class,' Robin called. 'There's a rush on. Everybody off the stage, please.' Laborers in heavy work clothes, still spattered with snow, were on their way south to their homes after a shift in the north woods. Fifty white-clad dairy clerks were headed west towards St Louis. They followed the morning from the Eastern Time Zone to the Pacific Zone. And from eastern Greenland where it was already noon, a horde of white-collar office workers was pouring into New York for their lunch hour.

The rush was over in a few moments. 'All right, class,' Robin called. 'We'll continue. Oh dear, where is Mr. Foyle? He always seems to be missing.'

'With a face like he's got, him, you can't blame him for hiding it, ma'am. Up in the cerebral ward we call him Boogey.'

'He does look dreadful, doesn't he, Sgt. Logan? Can't they get those marks off?'

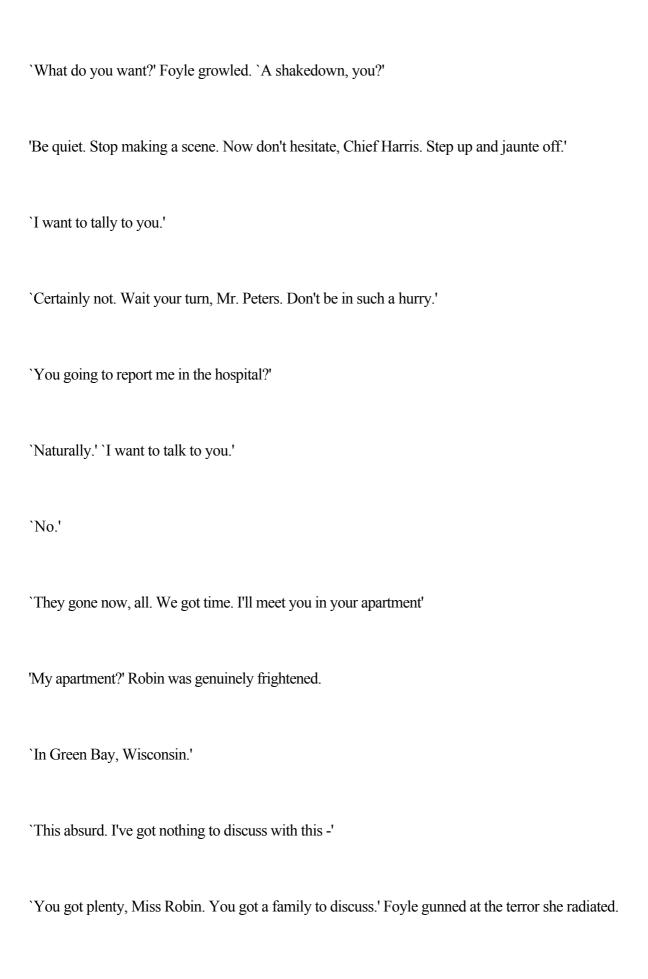
'They're trying, Miss Robin, but they don't know how yet. It's called "tattooing" and it's sort of forgotten, is all.'

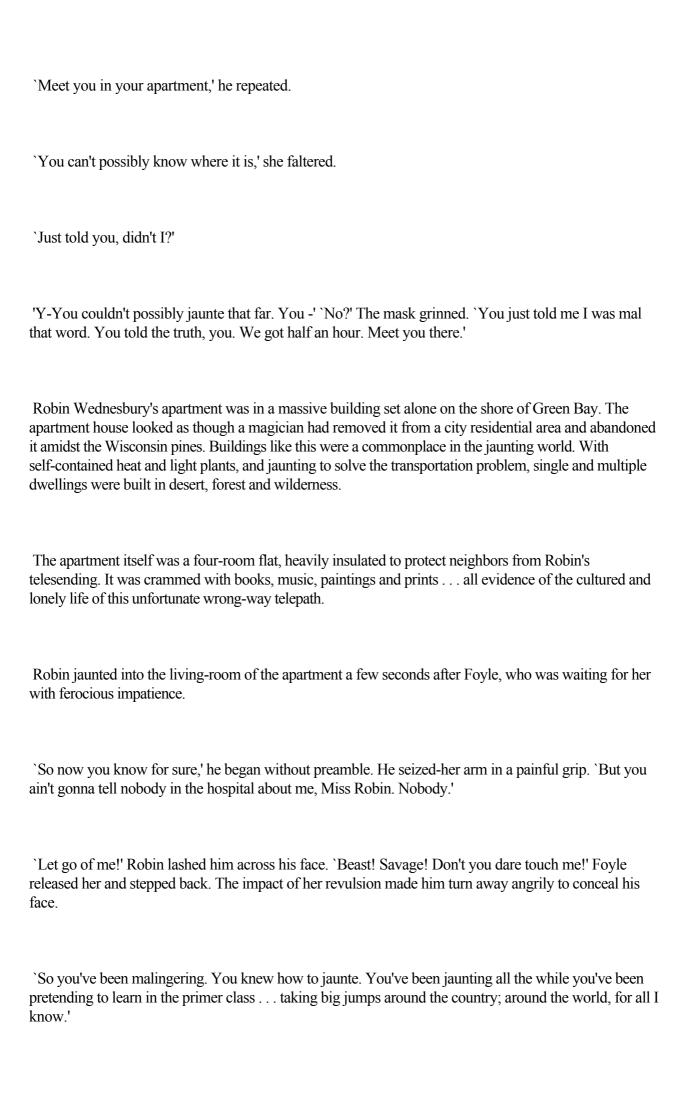
'Then how did Mr. Foyle acquire his face?' 'Nobody knows, Miss Robin. He's up in cerebral because he's lost his mind, him. Can't remember nothing. Me personal, if I had a face like that I wouldn't want to remember nothing too.'

'It's a pity. He looks frightful. Sgt. Logan, d'you suppose I've let a thought about Mr. Foyle slip and hurt his feelings?' The little man with the platinum skull considered. 'No, ma'am. You wouldn't hurt nobody's feelings, you. And Foyle ain't got none to hurt, him. He's just a big, dumb ox, is all."

'I have to be so careful, Sgt. Logan. You see, no one likes to know what another person really thinks about him. We imagine that we do, but we don't. This telesending of mine makes me loathed. And lonesome. Please don't listen to me. I'm having trouble controlling my thinking. Ah! There you are Mr. Foyle. Where in the world have you been wandering?'
Foyle had jaunted in on the stage and stepped off quietly, his hideous face averted. 'Been practicing, me,' he mumbled.
Robin repressed the shudder of revulsion in her and went to him sympathetically. She took his arm. 'You really should be with us more. We're all friends and having a lovely time. Join in.' Foyle refused to meet her glance. As he pulled his arm away from her sullenly, Robin suddenly realized that his sleeve was soaking wet. His entire hospital uniform was drenched.
'Wet? He's been in the rain somewhere. But I've seen the morning weather reports. No rain east of St Louis. Then he must have jaunted farther than that. But he's not supposed to be able. He's supposed to have lost all memory and ability to jaunte. He's malingering.'
Foyle leapt at her. `Shut up, you!' The savagery of his face was terrifying.
`Then you are malingering.'
'How much do you know?'
`That you're a fool. Stop making a scene.'
`Did they hear you?'
`I don't know. Let go of me.' Robin turned away from Foyle. `All right, class. We're finished for the day. All back to school for the hospital bus. You jaunte first, Sgt. Logan. Remember: L-E-S. Location.

Elevation. Situation. . .





'Yeah. I go from Times Square to Columbus Circle by way of... most anywhere, Miss Robin.' And that's why you're always missing. But why? Why? What are you up to?' An expression of possessed cunning appeared on the hideous face. 'I'm holed up in General Hospital, me. It's my base of operations, see? I'm settling something, Miss Robin. I got a debt to pay off, me. I had to find out where a certain ship is. Now I got to pay her back. Not I rot you. Vorga. I kill you, Vorga. I kill you deadly!' He stopped shouting and glared at her in wild triumph. Robin backed away in alarm. `For God's sake, what are you talking about?' 'Vorga. Vorga-T: 1339. Ever hear of her, Miss Robin? I found out where she is from Bo'ness and Uig's ship registry. Bo'ness and Uig are out in SanFran. I went there, me, the time when you was learning us the cross-town jaunte stages. Went out to SanFran, me. Found Vorga, me. She's in the Vancouver shipyards. She's owned by Presteign of Presteign. Heard of him, Miss Robin? Presteign's biggest man on Terra, is all. But he won't stop me. I'll kill Vorga deadly. And you won't stop me neither, Miss Robin.' Foyle thrust his face close to hers. 'Because I cover myself, Miss Robin. I cover every weak spot down the line. I got something on everybody who could stop me before I kill Vorga . . . including you, Miss Robin.' 'No.' 'Yeah. I found out where you live. They know up at the hospital. I come here and looked around. I read your diary, Miss Robin. You got a family on Callisto, mother and two sisters.' 'For God's sake!'

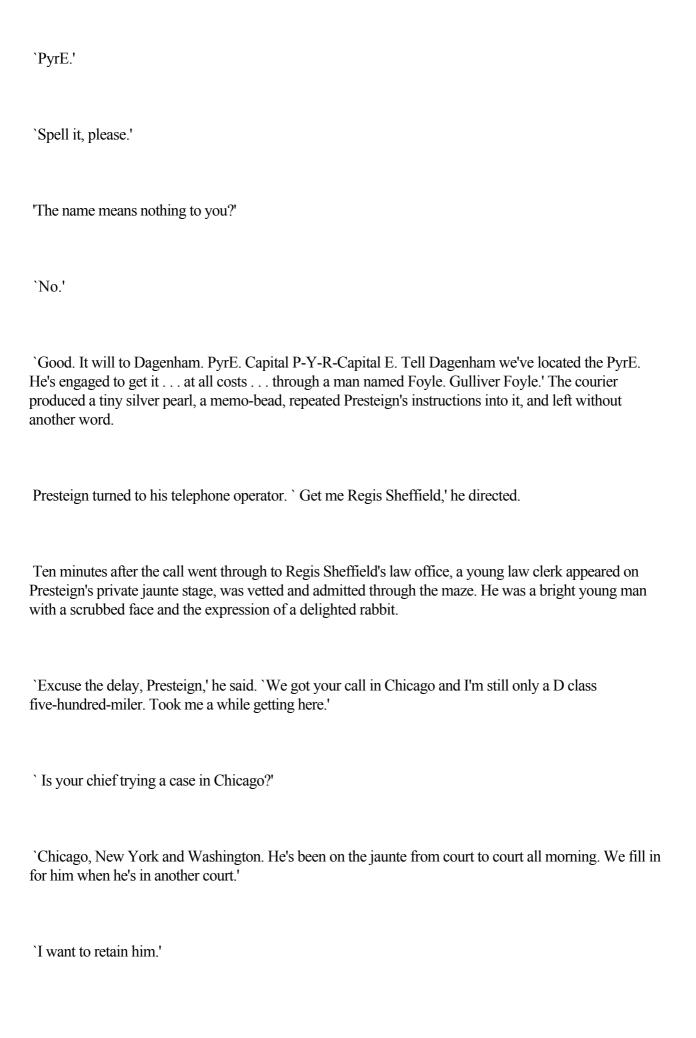
'So that makes you an alien-belligerent. When the war started you and all the rest was given one month to get out of the Inner Planets and go home. Any which didn't became spies by law. You're on the hook, girl.' Foyle opened his hand. `I got you right here, girl.' He clenched his hand.

'My mother and sisters have been trying to leave Callisto for a year and a half: We belong here. We -'
`Got you right here,' Foyle repeated. `You know what they do to spies? They cut information out of them. They cut you apart, Miss Robin. They take you apart, piece by piece -'
Robin screamed. Foyle nodded happily and took her shaking shoulders in his hands. `I got you, is all, girl. You can't even run from me because all I got to do is tip Intelligence and where are you? There ain't nothing nobody can do to stop me; not the hospital or even Mr. Holy Mighty Presteign of Presteign.'
`Get out, you filthy, hideous thing. Get out!'
'You don't like my face, Miss Robin? There ain't nothing you can do about that either.' Suddenly he picked her up and carried her to a deep couch. He threw her down on the couch.
'Nothing,' he repeated.
Devoted to the principle of conspicuous waste, on which all society is based, Presteign of Presteign had fitted his Victorian mansion in Central Park with elevators, housephones, dumbwaiters and all the other labor-saving devices which jaunting had made obsolete. The servants in that giant gingerbread castle walked dutifully from room to room, opening and closing doors, and climbing stairs.
Presteign of Presteign arose, dressed with the aid of his valet and barber, descended to the morning-room with the aid of an elevator and breakfasted, assisted by a butler, footman and waitresses. He left the morning-room and entered his study. In an age when communication systems were virtually extinct; when it was far easier to jaunte directly to a man's office for a discussion than to telephone or telegraph; Presteign still maintained an antique telephone switchboard with operator in his study.
`Get me Dagenham,' he said.

any principal. The fee was Cr 1 per mile. Dagenham guaranteed to get a courier around the world in eighty minutes.

Eighty seconds after Presteign's call was put through, a Dagenham courier appeared on the private jaunte stage outside Presteign's home, was identified and admitted through the jaunte-proof labyrinth behind the entrance. Like every member of the Dagenham staff, he was an M class Jaunter, capable of teleporting a thousand miles a jump indefinitely, and familiar with thousands of jaunte coordinates. He was a senior specialist in chicanery and cajolery, trained to the incisive efficiency and boldness that characterized Dagenham Couriers and reflected the ruthlessness of its founder.

`Presteign?' he said, wasting no time on protocol.
`I want to hire Dagenham'.
`Ready, Presteign.'
'Not you. I want Saul Dagenham himself.'
'Mr. Dagenham no longer gives personal service for less than Cr 100,000.'
`The amount will be five times that.'
`Fee or percentage.'
`Both. Quarter of a million fee, and a quarter of a million guaranteed against ten per cent of the total amount at risk.'
`Agreed. The matter?'





Olivia Presteign was a glorious albino. Her hair was white silk, her skin was white satin, her nails, her lips and her eyes were coral. She was beautiful and blind in a wonderful way, for she could see in the infra red only, from Moo Angstroms to one millimeter wavelengths. She saw heat waves, magnetic fields, radio valves, radar, sonar and electro-magnetic fields.

She was holding her Grand Levee in the drawing-room of the suite. She sat in a brocaded wing chair, sipping tea guarded by her duenna, holding court, chatting with a dozen men and women standing about the room. She looked like an exquisite statue of marble and coral, her blind eyes flashing as she saw and yet did not see.

She saw the drawing-room as a pulsating flow of heat emanations ranging from hot highlights to cool shadows. She saw the dazzling magnetic patterns of clocks, phones, lights and locks. She saw and recognized people by the characteristic heat patterns radiated by their faces and bodies. She saw, around each head, an aura of the faint electro-magnetic brain pattern, and sparkling through the heat radiation of each body, the ever-changing tone of muscle and nerve.

Presteign did not care for the artists, musicians and fops Olivia kept about her, but he was pleased to see a scattering of society notables this morning. There was a Sears-Robuck, a Gillet, young Sidney Kodak who would one day be Kodak of Kodak, a Houbigant, Buick of Buick, and R. H. Macy XVI, head of the powerful Saks-Gimbel clan.

Presteign paid his respects to his daughter and left the house. He set off for his clan headquarters at 99 Wall Street, in a coach and four driven by a coachman assisted by a groom, both wearing the Presteign trademark of red, black and blue. That black `P' on a field of scarlet and cobalt was one of the most ancient and distinguished trademarks in the social register, rivaling the `57' of the Heinz clan and the `RR' of the Rolls-Royce dynasty in antiquity.

The head of the Presteign clan was a familiar sight to New York Jaunters. Iron grey, handsome, powerful, impeccably dressed and mannered in the old-fashioned style, Presteign of Presteign was the epitome of the socially elect, for he was so exalted in station that he employed coachmen, grooms, hostlers, stableboys and horses to perform a function for him which ordinary mortals performed by jaunting.

As men climbed the social ladder these days, they displayed their position by their refusal to jaunte. The newly adopted into a great commercial clan rode an expensive bicycle. A rising clansman drove a small sports car. The captain of a sept was transported in a chauffeur-driven antique from the old days, a vintage Bentley or Cadillac or a towering Lagonda. An heir-presumptive in direct line of succession to the clan chieftainship staffed a yacht or a plane. Presteign of Presteign, head of the clan of Presteign, owned carriages, cars, yachts, planes and trains. His position in society was so lofty that he had not jaunted in forty years. He scorned the bustling new-rich like the Dagenhams and Sheffields who still jaunted and were unashamed.

Presteign entered the crenellated keep at, 99 Wall Street, that was Castle Presteign. It was staffed and guarded by his famous Jaunte-Watch, all in clan livery. Presteign walked with the stately gait of a chieftain as they piped him into his office. Indeed, he was grander than a chieftain as an importunate government official awaiting audience discovered to his dismay. The unfortunate man leaped forward from the waiting crowd of petitioners as Presteign passed.

'Mr. Presteign,' he began. 'I'm from the Internal Revenue Department, I must see you this morn-' Presteign cut him short with an icy stare.

'There are thousands of Presteigns,' he pronounced. 'All are addressed as Mister. But I am Presteign of Presteign, head of house and sept, first of the family, chieftain of the clan. I am addressed as Presteign' Not "Mister" Presteign. Presteign.'

He turned and entered his office where his staff greeted him with a muted chorus: `Good morning, Presteign.' Presteign nodded, smiled his basilisk smile and seated himself behind the enthroned desk while the Jaunte-Watch skirled their pipes and ruffled their drums. Presteign signaled for the audience to begin. Presteign disdained memo-beads and all mechanical business devices.

'Report on Clan Presteign enterprises,' the Equerry began. 'Common Stick: High-201 1/2, Low-201 1/4. Average quotations New York, Paris, Ceylon, Tokyo -'

Presteign waved his hand irritably. The Equerry retired to be replaced by Black Rod.

`Another Mr. Presto to be invested, Presteign.' Presteign restrained his impatience and went through the tedious ceremony of swearing in the 497th Mr. Presto in the hierarchy of Presteign Prestos who managed the shops in the Presteign retail division. Until recently the man had had a face and body of his own. Now, after ten years of cautious testing and careful introductions, he had elected to join the Prestos.

After six months of surgery and psycho-conditioning, he was identical to the other Mr. Prestos and to the idealized portrait of Mr. Presto which hung behind Presteign's dais . . . a kindly, honest man resembling Abraham Lincoln, a man you must love and trust. No matter where you bought around the world, you entered the identical Presteign store and were fathered by the identical manager, Mr. Presto. He was rivaled, but not surpassed, by the Kodak clan's Mr. Kwik and Montgomery Ward's Uncle Monty.

when the ceremony was completed, Presteign arose abruptly to indicate that the public audience was ended. The office was cleared of all but the high officials. Presteign paced, obviously repressing his seething impatience. He never swore, but his restraint was more terrifying than profanity.
`Foyle,' he said in a suffocated voice. `A common sailor. Dirt. Dregs. Gutter scum. And I am Presteign of Presteign. But that man stands between me and -'
`If you please, Presteign,' Black Rod interrupted timidly. `It's eleven o'clock Eastern time; eight o'clock Pacific time.'
`What?
`If you please, Presteign, I remind you that there is a launching ceremony at nine, Pacific time. You are to preside at the Vancouver shipyards.'
`Launching? `Our new freighter, the Presteign Princess. It will take some time to establish three-dimensional broadcast contact with the shipyard so we had better -'
`I will attend in person.'
`In person!' Black Rod faltered.
`But we cannot possibly fly to Vancouver in an hour, Presteign. We -'
'I will jaunte,' Presteign of Presteign snapped. Such was his agitation.
His appalled staff made hasty preparations. Messengers jaunted ahead to warn the Presteign offices

across the country, and the private jaunte stages were cleared. Presteign was ushered to the stage within his New York office. It was a circular platform in a black-hung room without windows. This masking and

concealment was necessary to prevent unauthorized persons from discovering and memorizing its

co-ordinates. For the same reason, all homes and offices had one-way windows and confusion labyrinths behind their doors.

To jaunte it was necessary (among other things) to know exactly where you were, and where you were going, or you had no hope of arriving alive anywhere. It was as impossible to jaunte from an undetermined starting point as it was to arrive at an unknown destination. Like shooting a pistol, you had to know where to aim and which end of the gun to hold. But a glance through a window or door might be enough to enable a man to memorize the L-E-S co-ordinates of a place.

Presteign stepped on the stage, visualized the co-ordinates of his destination in the Philadelphia office, seeing the picture clearly and the position accurately. He relaxed and energized one concentrated thrust of will and belief towards the target. He jaunted. There was a dizzy moment in which his eyes blurred. The New York stage faded out of focus; the Philadelphia stage blurred into focus. There was a sensation of falling down, and then up. He arrived. Black Rod and other of his staff arrived a respectful moment later.

So, in jauntes of one and two hundred miles each, Presteign crossed the continent, and arrived outside the Vancouver shipping yards at exactly nine o'clock in the morning, Pacific time. He had left New York at eleven a.m. He had gained two hours of daylight. This, too, was a commonplace in a jaunting world.

The square mile of unfenced concrete (what fence could bar a Jaunter) looked like a white table covered with black pennies neatly arranged in concentric circles. But on closer approach, the pennies enlarged into the hundred-foot mouths of black pits dug deep into the bowels of the earth. Each circular mouth was rimmed with concrete buildings, offices, check-rooms, canteens, changing-rooms.

These were the take-off and landing pits, the dry dock and construction pits of the shipyards. Spaceships, like sailing vessels, were never designed to support their own weight unaided against the drag of gravity. Normal terran gravity would crack the spine of a spaceship like an eggshell. The ships were built in deep pits, standing vertically in a network of catwalks and construction grids, braced and supported by anti-gravity screens. They took off from similar pits, riding the anti-grav beams upward like motes mounting the vertical shaft of a searchlight until at last they reached the Riche Limit and could thrust with their own jets. Landing spacecraft cut drive jets and rode the same beams downwards into the pits.

As the Presteign entourage entered the Vancouver yards they could see which of the pits were in use. From some the noses and hulls of spaceships extruded, raised a quarter-way or half-way above ground by the anti-grav screens as workmen in the pits below brought their aft sections to particular operational levels. Three Presteign V-class transports, Vega, Vestal and Vorga stood partially raised near the centre of the yards, undergoing flaking and replating, as the heat-lighting flicker of torches around Vorga indicated.

At the concrete building marked: ENTRY, the Presteign entourage stopped before a sign that read: YOU ARE ENDANGERING YOUR LIFE IF YOU ENTER THESE PREMISES UNLAWFULLY. YOU HAVE BEEN WARNED! Visitor badges were distributed to the party, and even Presteign of Presteign received a badge. He dutifully pinned it on for he well knew what the result of entry without such a protective badge would be. The entourage continued, winding its way through pits until it arrived at O-3 where the pit-mouth was decorated with bunting in the Presteign colors, and a small grandstand had been erected.

Presteign was welcomed and, in turn, greeted his various officials. The Presteign band struck up tie clan song, bright and brassy, but one of the instruments appeared to have gone insane. It struck a brazen note that blared louder and louder until it engulfed the entire band and the surprised exclamations. Only then did Presteign realize that it was not an instrument sounding, but the shipyard alarm.

An intruder was in the yard, someone not wearing an identification or visitor's badge. The radar field of the protection system was tripped and the alarm sounded. Through the raucous bellow of the alarm, Presteign could hear a multitude of `Pops' as the yard guards jaunted from the grandstand and took positions around the square mile of concrete field. His own Jaunte-Watch closed in around him, looking wary and alert.

A voice began blaring on the P.A., co-ordinating defense.

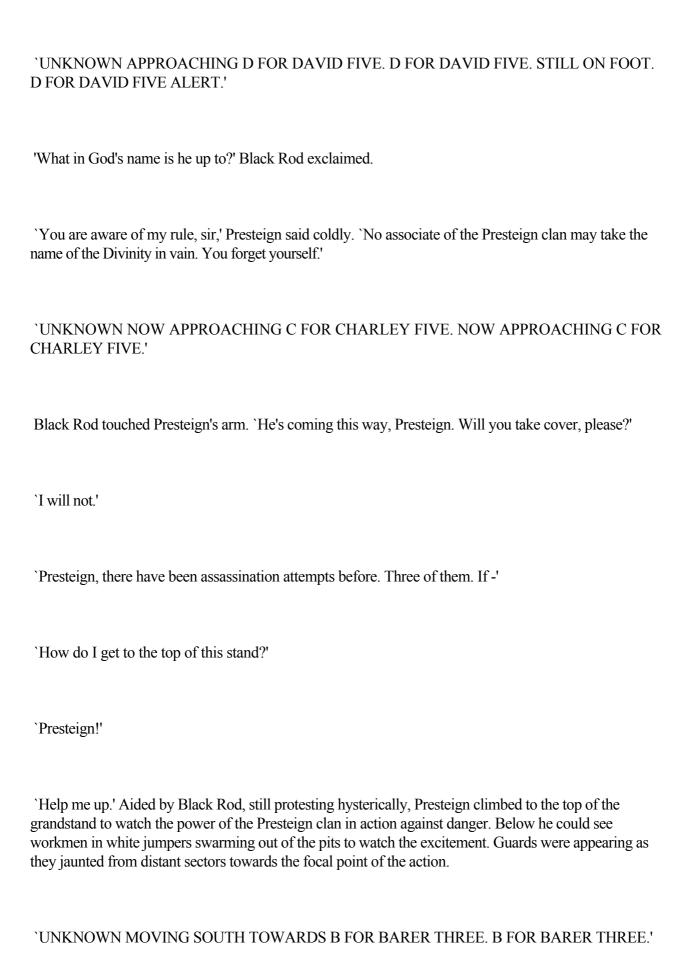
'UNKNOWN IN YARD. UNKNOWN IN YARD AT E FOR EDWARD NINE. B FOR EDWARD NINE MOVING WEST ON FOOT.'

`Someone must have broken in,' Black Rod shouted.

'I'm aware of that,' Presteign answered calmly.

'He must be a stranger if he's not jaunting in here.'

'I am aware of that also.'



Presteign watched the B-3 pit. A figure appeared, dashing swiftly towards the pit, veering, dodging, bulling forward. It was a giant man in hospital blues with a wild thatch of black hair and a distorted face that appeared, in the distance, to be painted in livid colors. His clothes were streaming smoke as the protective induction field of the defense system heated him to burning, and the bright glimmer of flames appeared at his neck, elbows and knees.

'B FOR BARER THREE ALERT. B FOB BARER THREE CLOSE IN.' There were shouts and a distant rattle of shots; the pneumatic whine of scope guns. Half a dozen workmen in white leaped for the intruder. He scattered them like nine-pins and drove on and on towards B-3 where the nose of Vorga showed. His clothes burst into flame and he was a firebrand driving through workmen and guards, pivoting, bludgeoning, boring forward implacably.

Suddenly he stopped, reached inside his flaming jacket and withdrew a black canister. With the convulsive gesture of an animal writhing in death-throes, he bit the end of the canister and hurled it, straight and true on a high arc towards Vorga. The next instant he was struck down.

`EXPLOSIVE. TARE COVER. EXPLOSIVE. TARE COVER. COVER.'

'Presteign!' Black Rod squawked.

Presteign shook him off and watched the canister curve up and then down towards the nose of Vorga, spinning and glinting in the cold sunlight. At the edge of the pit it was caught by the anti-grav beam and flicked upwards as by a giant invisible thumbnail. Up and up it whirled, fifty, seventy, a hundred feet. Then there was a blinding flash, and an instant later a titanic clap of thunder that smote ears and jarred teeth and bone.

Presteign picked himself up and descended the grandstand to the launching podium. He placed his finger on the launching button of the Presteign Princess.

`Bring me that man, if he's still alive,' he said to Black Rod. He pressed the button. `I christen thee . . . the Presteign Power,' he called in triumph.

The star chamber in Castle Presteign was an oval room with ivory panels picked out with gold, high mirrors and stained glass windows. It contained a gold organ and robot organist by Tiffany, a gold-tooled library with android librarian on library ladder, a Louis Quinze desk with android secretary before a manual memo-bead recorder, an American bar with robot bartender. Presteign would have preferred human servants, but androids and robots kept secrets.

`Be seated, Captain Yeovil,' he said courteously. `This is Mr. Regis Sheffield, representing me in this matter. That young man is Mr. Sheffield's assistant!

'Bunny's my portable law library,' Sheffield grunted.

Presteign touched a control. The still-life in the star chamber came alive. The organist played, the librarian sorted books, the secretary typed, the bartender shook drinks. It was spectacular; and the impact, carefully calculated by industrial psychometrists, established control for Presteign and put visitors at a disadvantage.

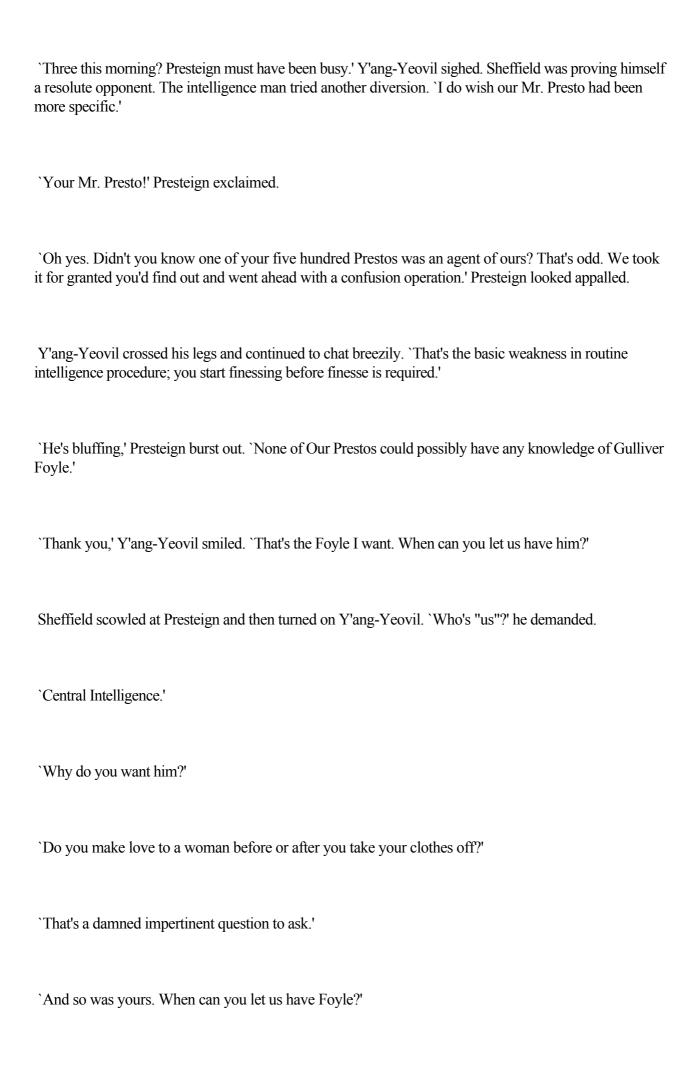
'You spoke of a man named Foyle, Captain Yeovil?' Presteign prompted.

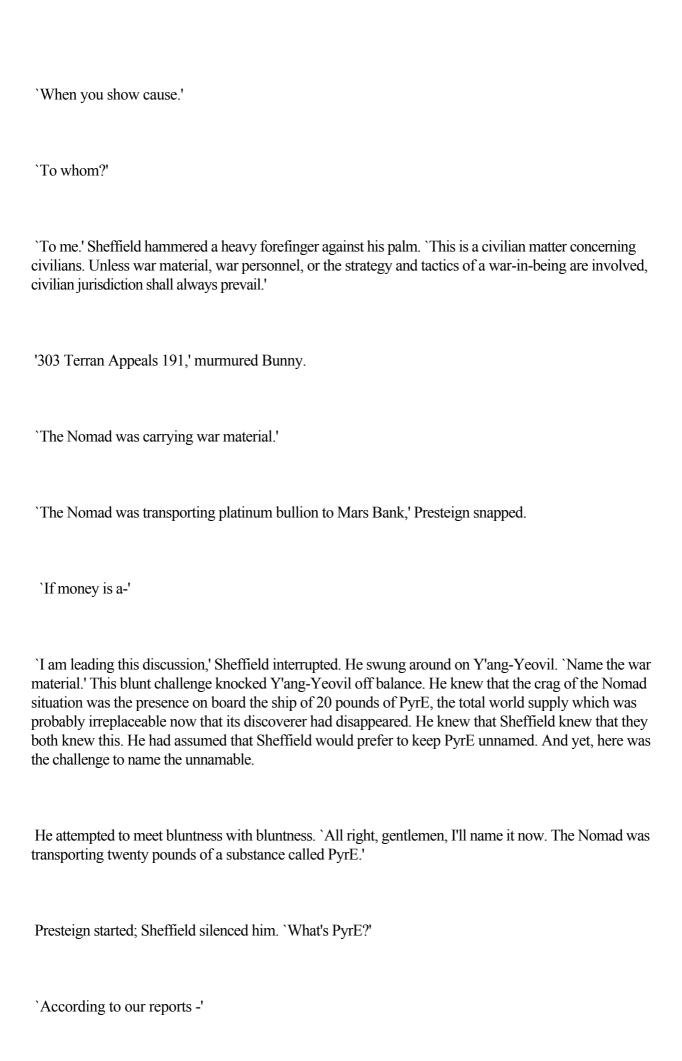
Captain Peter Y'ang-Yeovil of Central Intelligence was a lineal descendant of the learned Mencius and belonged to the Intelligence Tong of the Inner Planets Armed Forces. For two hundred years the I.P.A.F. had entrusted its intelligence work to the Chinese who, with a five thousand-year history of cultivated subtlety behind them, had achieved wonders. Captain Y'ang-Yeovil was a member of the dreaded Society of Paper Men, an adept of the Tientsin Image Makers, A Master of Superstition, and fluent in Secret Speech. He did not look Chinese.

Y'ang-Yeovil hesitated, fully aware of the psychological pressures operating against him. He examined Presteign's ascetic, basilisk face; Sheffield's blunt, aggressive expression; and the eager young man named Bunny whose rabbit features had an unmistakable Oriental cast. It was necessary for Yeovil to re-establish control or effect a compromise.

He opened with a flanking movement. `Are we related anywhere within fifteen degrees of consanguinity?' he asked Bunny in the Mandarin dialect. `I am of the house of the learned Meng-Tse whom the barbarians call Mencius!

'Then we are hereditary enemies,' Bunny answered in faltering Mandarin. `For the formidable ancestor of my line was deposed as governor of Shan-tong in 342 B.C. by the earth-pig Meng-Tse.'
'With all courtesy I shave your ill-formed eyebrows,' Y'ang-Yeovil said.
'Most respectfully I singe your snaggle teeth,' Bunny laughed.
`Come, sirs,' Presteign protested.
`We are reaffirming a three-thousand-year blood feud,' Y'ang-Yeovil explained to Presteign who looked sufficiently unsettled by the conversation and the laughter which he did not understand. He tried a direct thrust. `When will you be finished with Foyle?' he asked.
`What Foyle?' Sheffield cut in.
'What Foyle have you got?'
'There are thirteen of that name associated with the clan Presteign.'
`An interesting number. Did you know I was a Master of Superstition? Some day I must show you the Mirror-And Listen Mystery. I refer to the Foyle involved in a reported attempt on Mr. Presteign's life this morning.'
`Presteign,' Presteign corrected.`
I am not "Mister". I am Presteign of Presteign.' `Three attempts have been made on Presteign's life,' Sheffield said. `You'll have to be more specific.'







seventy-nine per cent casualties. We rescued a corpse. We still don't know if the O.S. was having a cynical laugh at our expense letting us recapture a body. We still don't know how much they ripped out of him.' Presteign sat bolt upright at this. His merciless fingers tapped slowly and sharply.

`Damn it,' Y'ang-Yeovil stormed. `Can't you recognize a crisis, Sheffield? We're on a tightrope. What the devil are you doing backing Presteign in this shabby deal? You're the leader of the Liberal party . . . Terra's arch-patriot. You're Presteign's political arch-enemy. Sell him out, you fool, before he sells us all out.'

'Captain Yeovil,' Presteign broke in with icy venom. 'These expressions cannot be countenanced.'

'We want and need PyrE,' Y'ang-Yeovil continued. 'We'll have to investigate that twenty pounds of PyrE, rediscover the synthesis, learn to apply it to the war effort . . . and all this before the O.S. beats us to the punch, if they haven't already. But Presteign refuses to cooperate. Why? Because he's opposed to the party in power. He wants no military victories for the Liberals. He'd rather we lost the war for the sake of politics because rich men like Presteign never lose. Come to your senses, Sheffield. You've been retained by a traitor. What in God's name are you trying to do?' Before Sheffield could waver in his strange alliance with Presteign, there was a discreet tap on the door of the Star Chamber and Saul Dagenham was ushered in. Time was when Dagenham was one of the Inner Planets' research wizards, a physicist with inspired intuition, total recall, and a sixth-order computer for a brain. But there was an accident at Tycho Sands, and the fission blast that should have killed him did not. Instead it turned him dangerously radioactive; it turned him 'hot'; it transformed him into a twenty-fourth-century 'Typhoid Mary'.

He was paid Cr 25,000 a year by the Inner Planets' government to take precautions which they trusted him to carry out. He avoided physical contact with any person for more than five minutes per day. He could not occupy any room, not his own, for more than thirty minutes a day. Commanded and paid by the L.P. to isolate himself from life and love, Dagenham had abandoned research and built the colossus of Dagenham Couriers, Inc.

When Y'ang-Yeovil saw the short blond cadaver with leaden skin and death's-head smile enter the Star Chamber, he knew he was assured of defeat in this encounter. He was no match for the three men together. He arose at once.

'I'm getting an Admiralty order for Foyle,' he said. 'As far as Intelligence is concerned, all negotiations are ended. From now on it's a shooting war.'

'Captain Yeovil is leaving,' Presteign called to the Jaunte-Watch officer who had guided Dagenham in. 'Please see him out through the maze.' Y'ang-Yeovil waited until the officers stepped alongside him and bowed. Then, as the man courteously motioned to the door, Y'ang-Yeovil looked directly at Presteign, smiled ironically and disappeared with a faint Pop! 'Presteign!' Bunny exclaimed. 'He jaunted. This room isn't blind to him. He -' 'Evidently,' Presteign said icily. 'Inform the Master of the Household,' he instructed the amazed Watch officer. 'The coordinates of the Star Chamber are no longer secret. They must be changed within twenty-four hours. And now, Mr. Dagenham. 'One minute,' Dagenham said. 'There's that Admiralty order.' Without apology or explanation he disappeared too. Presteign raised his eyebrows. 'Another party to the Star Chamber secret,' he murmured. 'But at least he had the tact to conceal his knowledge until the secret was out' Dagenham reappeared. 'No point in wasting time going through the motions of the maze,' he said. 'I've given orders in Washington. They'll hold Yeovil up; two hours guaranteed, three hours probably, four hours possible.' 'How will they hold him up?' Bunny asked. Dagenham gave him his deadly smile. 'Standard F.F.C.C. Operation of Dagenham Couriers. Fun, fantasy, confusion, catastrophe . . . We'll need all four hours. Damn! I've disrupted your dolls, Presteign.' The robots were suddenly capering in lunatic fashion as Dagenham's hard radiation penetrated their electronic systems. 'No matter, I'll be on my way.' `Foyle?' Presteign asked. 'Nothing yet.' Dagenham grinned his death's-head smile.

'He's really unique. I've tried all the standard drugs and routines on him . . . Nothing. Outside, he's just

an ordinary spaceman . . . if you forget the tattoo on his face . . . but inside he's got steel guts.

Something's got hold of him and he won't give.'





which they were withdrawing uninhabitable. But the shattering and laceration of patients' emotions had proved to be too cruel and dubious a treatment.

For Dagenham's sake, the head of Psychiatry had dusted off the 3D visual projectors and reconnected all sensory projectors. They decanted Foyle from his tank, gave him a reviving shot and left him in the middle of the floor. They removed the tank, turned off the lights and entered the concealed control booth. There, they turned on the projectors.

Every child in the world imagines that its phantasy world is unique to itself. Psychiatry knows that the joys and terrors of private phantasies are a common heritage shared by all mankind. Our fears, guilts, terrors and shames could be interchanged, from one man to the next, and none would notice the difference. The therapy department at Combined Hospital had recorded thousands of emotional tapes and boiled them down to one all-inclusive all-terrifying performance in Nightmare Theatre.

Foyle awoke, panting and sweating, and never knew that he had awakened. He was in the clutch of the serpent-haired, bloody-eyed Eumenides. He was pursued, entrapped, precipitated from heights, burned, flayed, bow-stringed, vermin-covered, devoured. He screamed. He ran. The radar Hobble-Field in the Theatre clogged his steps and turned them into the ghastly slow-motion of dream running. And through the cacophony of grinding, shrieking, moaning, pursuing that assailed his ears, muttered the thread of a persistent voice.

'Where is Nomad where is Nomad where is Nomad where is Nomad?'

`Vorga,' Foyle croaked. `Vorga.' He had been inoculated by his own fixation. His own nightmare had rendered him immune.

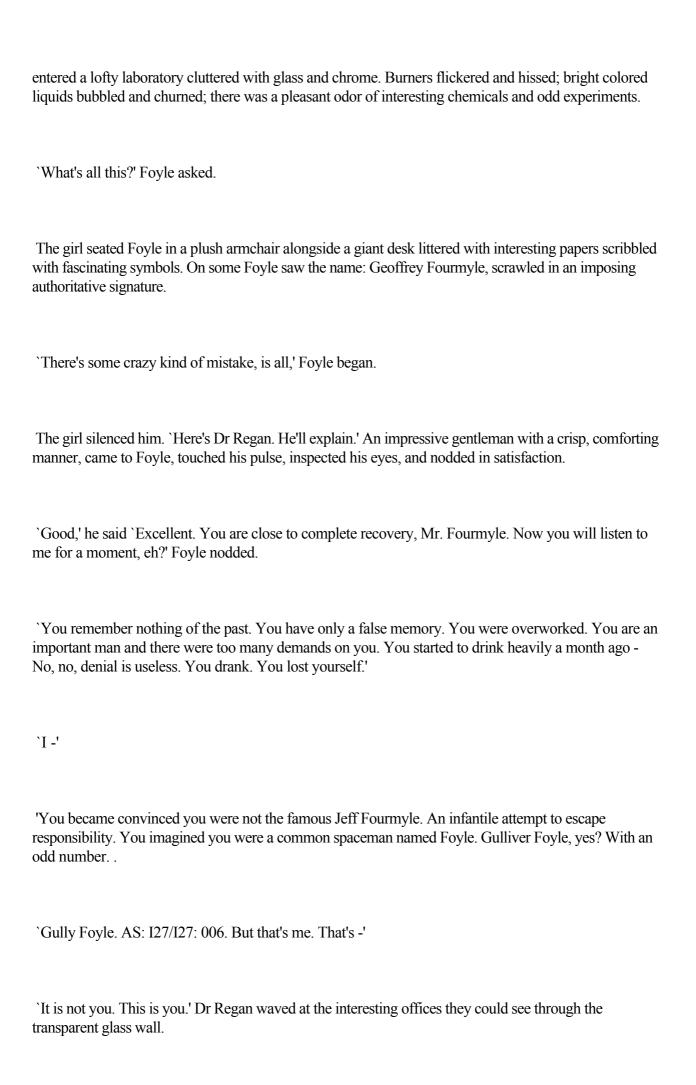
'Where is Nomad? Where have you left Nomad? What happened to Nomad? Where is Nomad?'

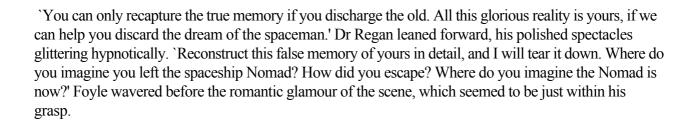
`Vorga,' Foyle shouted. `Yorga. Vorga.' In the control-booth, Dagenham swore. The head of psychiatry, monitoring the projectors, glanced at the clock.

'One minute and forty-five seconds, Saul. He can't stand much more.' 'He's got to break. Give him the final effect.' They buried Foyle alive, slowly, inexorably, hideously. He was carried down into black depths and enclosed in stinking slime that cut off light and air. He slowly suffocated while a distant voice boomed: 'WHERE IS NOMAD? WHERE HAVE YOU LEFT NOMAD? YOU CAN ESCAPE IF









`It seems to me I left Nomad out in -' He stopped short.

A devil-face peered at him from the highlights reflected in Dr Regan's spectacles . . . a hideous tiger mask with Nomad blazoned across the distorted brow. Foyle stood up.

'Liars!' he growled. 'It's real, me. This here is phony. What happened to me is real. I'm real, me.'

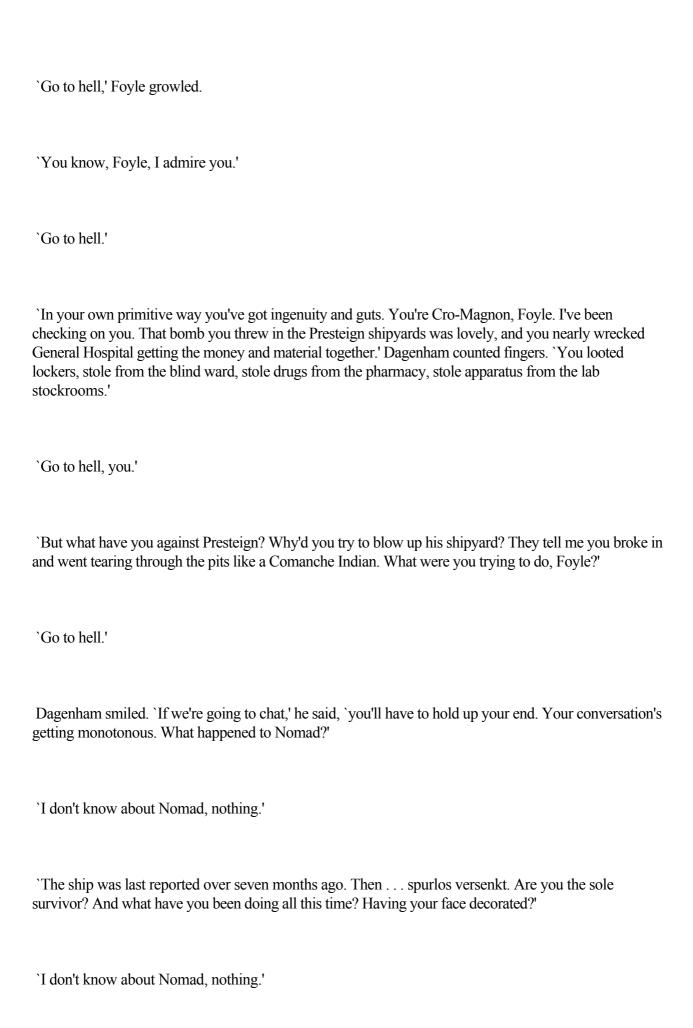
Saul Dagenham walked into the laboratory. `All right,' he called. `Strike. It's a wash-out.' The bustling scene in laboratory, office and studio ended. The actors quietly disappeared without another glance at Foyle.

Dagenham gave Foyle his deadly smile. `Tough, aren't you? You're really unique. My name is Saul Dagenham. We've got five minutes for a talk. Come into the garden.' The Sedative Garden atop the Therapy Building was a triumph of therapeutic planning. Every perspective, every color, every contour had been designed to placate hostility, soothe resistance, melt anger, evaporate hysteria, shore up melancholia and depression.

'Sit down,' Dagenham said, pointing to a bench alongside a pool in which crystal water tinkled. 'I'll have to walk around a bit. Can't come too close to you. I'm "hot". D'you know what that means?'

Foyle shook his head sullenly.

Dagenham cupped both hands around the flaming blossom of an orchid and held them there for a moment. 'Watch that flower,' he said. 'You'll see.' He paced up a path and turned suddenly. 'You're right, of course. Everything that happened to you is real . . . Only what did happen?'

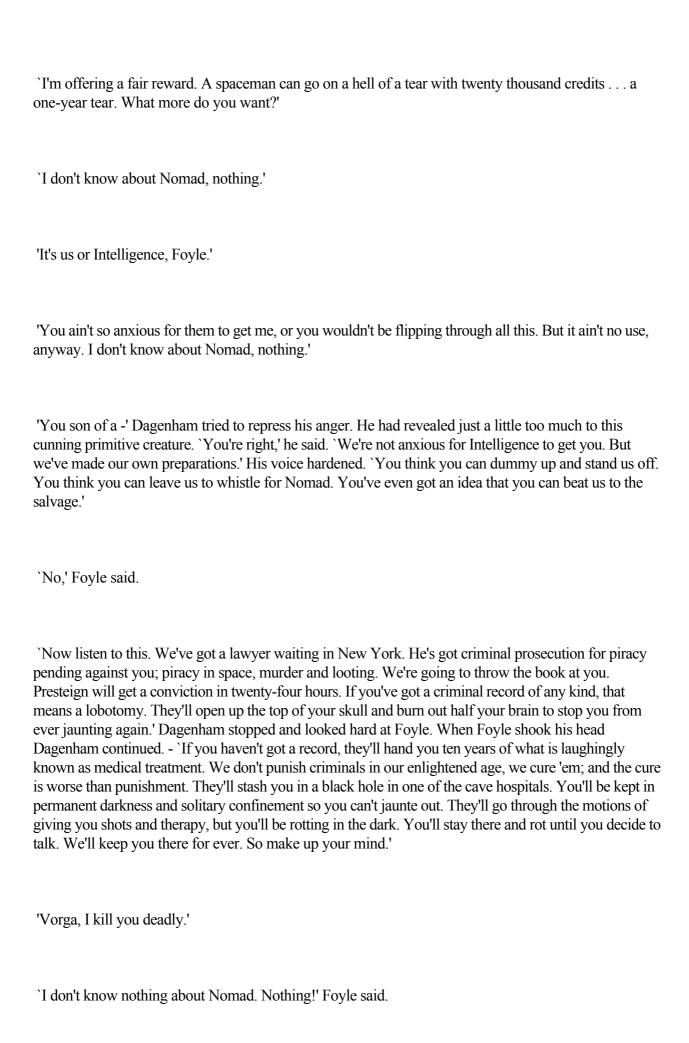


'No, no, Foyle, that won't do. You show up with Nomad tattooed across your face. Fresh tattooed. Intelligence checks and finds you were aboard Nomad when she sailed. Foyle, Gulliver: AS: 128/127:006, Mechanic's Mate, 3rd Class. As if all this isn't enough to throw intelligence into a tizzy, you come back in a private launch that's been missing fifty years. Man, you're cooking in the reactor. Intelligence wants the answer to all these questions. And you ought to know how Central Intelligence butchers its answers out of people.'

Foyle started. Dagenham nodded as he saw his point sink home. 'Which is why I think you'll listen to reason. We want information, Foyle. I tried to trick it out of you; admitted. I failed because you're too tough; admitted. Now I'm offering an honest deal. We'll protect you if you'll co-operate. If you don't, you'll spend five years in an Intelligence lab having information chopped out of you.' It was not the prospect of the butchery that frightened Foyle, but the thought of the loss of freedom. A man had to be free to raise money and find Vorga again; to rip and tear and gut Vorga.







`All right,' Dagenham spat. Suddenly he pointed to the orchid blossom he had enclosed with his hands. It was blighted and rotting. `That's what's going to happen to you.'

5

South of Saint-Girons near the Spanish-French border is the deepest abyss in France, the Gouffre Martel. Its caverns twist for miles under the Pyrenees. It is the most formidable cavern hospital on Terra. No patient has ever jaunted out of its pitch darkness. No patient has ever succeeded in getting his bearings and learning the jaunte co-ordinates of the black hospital depths.

Short of prefrontal lobotomy, there are only three ways to stop a man from jaunting: a blow on the head producing concussion, sedation which prevents concentration, and concealment of jaunte co-ordinates. Of the three, the jaunting age considered concealment the most practical.

The cells that line the winding passages of Gouffre Martel are cut out of living rock. They are never illuminated. The passages are never illuminated. Infra red lamps flood the darkness. It is black light visible only to guards and attendants wearing snooper goggles with specially treated lenses. For the patients there is only the black silence of Gouffre Martel broken by the distant rush of underground waters.

For Foyle there was only the silence, the rushing and the hospital routine. At eight o'clock (or it may have been any hour in this timeless abyss) he was awakened by a bell. He arose and received his morning meal, slotted into the cell by pneumatic tube. It had to be eaten at once, for the china surrogate of cups and plates was timed to dissolve in fifteen minutes. At eight-thirty the cell door opened and Foyle and hundreds of others shuffled blindly through the twisting corridors to Sanitation.

Here, still in darkness, they were processed like beef in a slaughter house; cleansed, shaved, irradiated, disinfected, dosed and inoculated. Their paper uniforms were removed and burned. New uniforms were issued. Then they shuffled back to their cells which had been automatically scrubbed out while they were in sanitation. In his cell, Foyle listened to interminable therapeutic talks, lectures, moral and ethical guidance for the rest of the morning. Then there was silence again, and I nothing but the rush of distant water and the quiet steps of goggled guards in the corridors.

In the afternoon came occupational therapy. The T.V. screen in each cell illuminated and the patient thrust his hands into the shadow frame of the screen. He saw three-dimensionally and he felt broadcast

objects and tools. He cut hospital uniforms, sewed them, manufactured kitchen utensils and prepared
foods. Although actually he touched nothing, his motions were transmitted to the shops where the work
was accomplished by remote control. After one short hour of this relief came the darkness and silence
again.

But every so often . . . once or twice a week (or perhaps once or twice a year) come the muffed thud of a distant explosion. The concussions were startling enough to distract Foyle from the furnace of vengeance that he stoked all through the silences. He whispered questions to the invisible figures around him in Sanitation.

`What's them explosions?'
`Explosions?'
`Blow-ups. Hear 'em a long way off, me.'
`Them's Blue Jauntes.'
`What?'
`Blue Jauntes. Every sometime a guy gets fed up with Jeffrey. Can't take it no more, him. Jauntes into the wild blue yonder.'
'Jesus.`

'Yep. Don't know where they are, them. Don't know where they're going. Blue Jaunte into the dark . . . and we'll hear 'em in the mountains. Boum! Blue Jaunte.' He was appalled, but he could understand. The darkness, the silence, the monotony destroyed sense and brought on desperation. The loneliness was intolerable. The patients buried in Gouffre Martel prison hospital looked forward eagerly to the morning Sanitation period for a chance to whisper a word and hear a word. But these fragments were not enough and desperation came. Then there would be another distant explosion.

Sometimes the suffering men would turn on each other and then a savage fight would break out in Sanitation. These were instantly broken up by the goggled guards, and the morning lecture would switch on the Moral Fiber record preaching the Virtue of Patience.

Foyle learned the records by heart; every word, every click and crack in the tapes. He learned to loathe the voices of the lecturers; the Understanding Baritone, the Cheerful Tenor, the Man-to-Man Bass. He learned to deafen himself to the therapeutic monotony, and perform his occupational therapy mechanically, but he was without resources to withstand the endless solitary hours. Fury was not enough.

He lost count of the days, of meals, of sermons. He no longer whispered in Sanitation. His mind came adrift and he began to wander. He imagined he was back aboard Nomad, reliving his fight for survival. Then he lost even this feeble grasp on illusion and began to sink deeper and deeper into the pit of catatonia; of womb silence, womb darkness and womb sleep.

There were fleeting dreams. An angel hummed to him once. Another time she sang quietly. Thrice he heard her speak; 'Oh God. ..' and 'God damn!' and 'Oh ... in a heart-rending descending note.

He sank into his abyss, listening to her.

'There is a way out,' his angel murmured in his ear, sweetly, comforting. Her voice was soft and warm, yet it burned with anger. It was the voice of a furious angel.

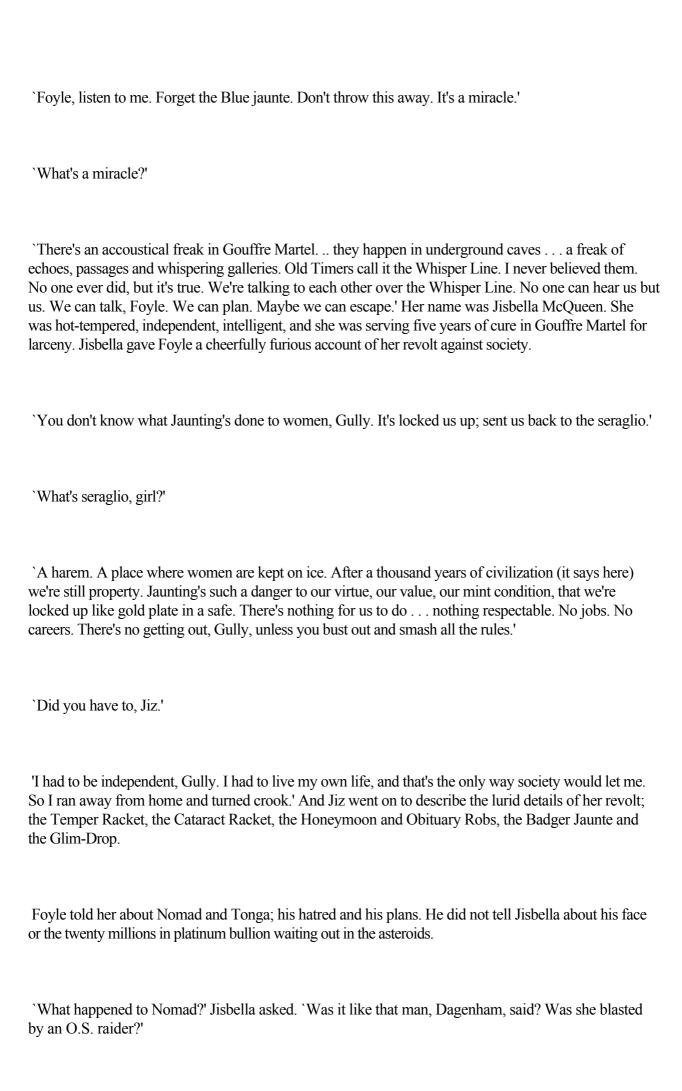
`There is a way out.' It whispered in his ear from nowhere, and suddenly, with the logic of desperation, it came to him that there was a way out of Gouffre Martel. He had been a fool not to see it before.

'Yes,' he croaked. 'There's a way out.'

There was a soft gasp, then a soft question: `Who's there?'

'Me, is all,' Foyle said. 'You know me.'







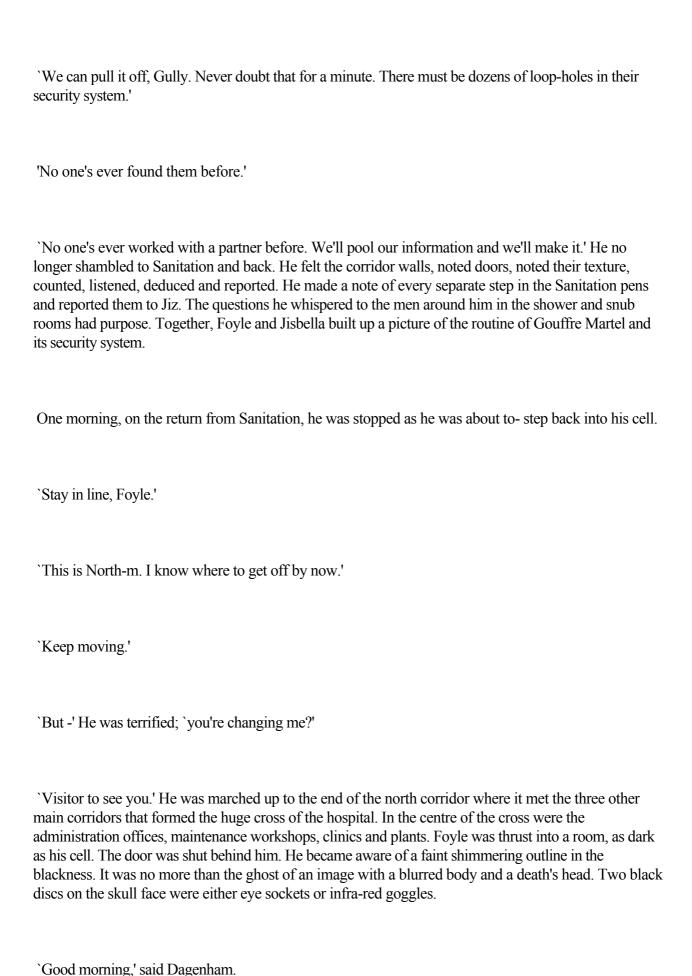
Learn to think, Gully. The head that could figure out how to get Nomad under way and how to put a bomb together ought to be able to figure that out. But no more bombs; brains instead. Locate a member of Vorga's crew. He'll tell you who was aboard Track them down. Find out who gave the order. Then punish him. But it'll take time, Gully . . . time and money; more than you've got.' 'I got a whole life, me.' They murmured for hours across the Whisper Line, their voices sounding small yet close to the ear. There was only one particular spot in each cell where the other could be heard, which was why so much time passed before they discovered the miracle. But now they made up for lost time. And Jisbella educated Foyle. 'If we ever break out of Gouffre Martel, Gully, it'll have to be together, and I'm not trusting myself to an illiterate partner.' 'Who's illiterate?' 'You are,' Jisbella answered firmly. 'I have to talk gutter at you half the time, me.' 'I can read and write.' `And that's about all . . . which means that outside of brute strength you'll be useless.' 'Talk sense, you,' he said angrily. 'I am talking sense, me. What's the use of the strongest chisel in the world if it doesn't have an edge?

He submitted. He realized she was right. He would need training not only for the bust-out but for the search for Vorga as well. Jisbella was the daughter of an architect and had received a first-rate education. This she drilled into Foyle, leavened with the cynical experience of five years in the underworld. Occasionally he rebelled against the hard work, and then there would be whispered quarrels, but in the end he would apologize and submit again. And sometimes Jisbella would tire of teaching, and then they would ramble on, sharing dreams in the dark.

We've got to sharpen your wits, Gully. Got to educate you, man, is all.'



From the underworld, Jisbella had inherited a mass of information about Gouffre Martel. No one had ever jaunted out of the cavern hospitals but for decades the underworld had been collecting and collating information about them. It was from this data that Jisbella had formed her quick recognition of the Whisper Line that joined them. It was on the basis of this information that she began to discuss escape.





'Oh, I'm broke, all right.'
'You ought to be whining. I was right. You're unusual. At this rate it's going to take too long. We can't wait. I'd like to make a new offer.'
'Ten per cent of Nomad's bullion. Two million.'
`Two million!' Foyle exclaimed. `Why didn't you offer that in the first place?' `Because I didn't know your caliber. Is it a deal?'
`Almost. Not yet.'
`What else?' `I get out of Gouffre Martel.'
`Naturally.'
'And someone else, too.'
`It can be arranged.' Dagenham's voice sharpened.
`Anything else?'
`I get access to Presteign's files.'
'Out of the question. Are you insane? Be reasonable.'





closed it, leaped across the room, and tried the other. It opened on to a jaunte-proof maze. Foyle slipped through the door and entered the maze. Without a guide to lead him through the labyrinth, he was immediately lost. He began to run around the twists and turns and found himself back at the reception-room. Dagenham was struggling to his knees.

Foyle turned back into the maze again. He ran. He came to a closed door and thrust it open. It revealed a large workshop illuminated by normal light. Two technicians working at a machine bench looked up in surprise.

Foyle snatched up a sledge-hammer, leaped on them like a caveman and felled them. Behind him he heard Dagenham shouting in the distance. He looked around wildly, dreading the discovery that he was trapped in a cul-de-sac. The workshop was L-shaped. Foyle tore around the corner, burst through the entrance of another jaunte-proof maze and was lost again. The Gouffre Martel alarm began clattering. Foyle battered at the walls of the labyrinth with the sledge, shattered the thin plastic masking, and found himself in the infra-red lit south corridor of the women's quadrant.

Two women guards came up the corridor, running hard. Foyle swung the sledge and dropped them. He was near the head of the corridor. Before him stretched a long perspective of cell doors, each bearing a glowing red number. Overhead the corridor was lit by glowing red globes. Foyle stood on tiptoe and clubbed the globe above him. He hammered through the socket and smashed the current cable. The entire corridor went dark . . . even to goggles.

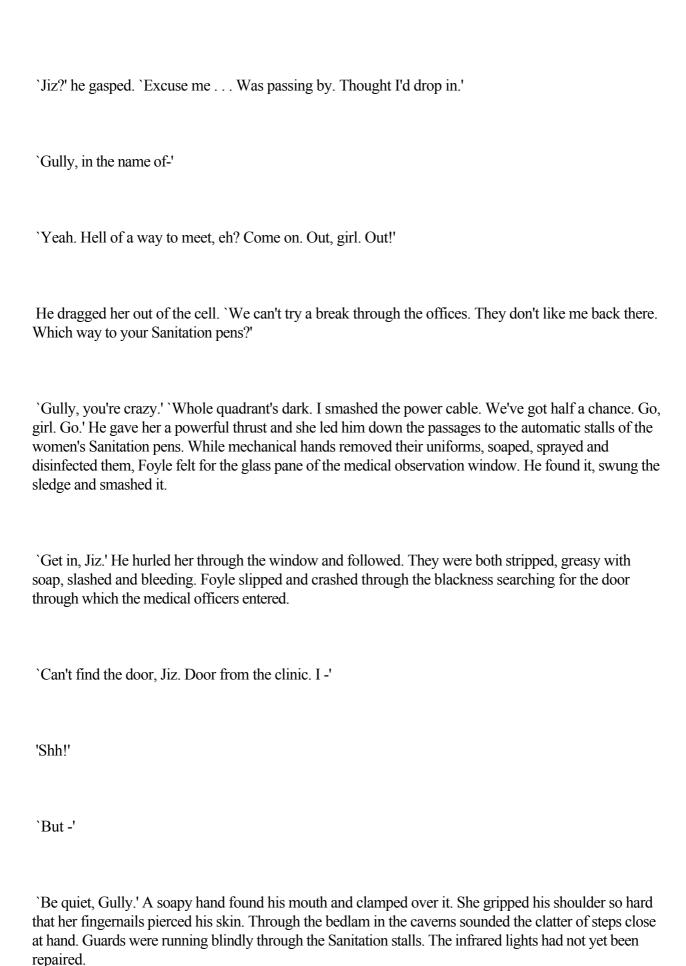
`Evens us up; all in the dark now,' Foyle gasped and tore down the corridor feeling the wall as he ran and counting cell doors. Jisbella had given him an accurate word picture of the South Quadrant. He was counting his way towards South 900. He blundered into a figure, another guard. Foyle hacked at her once with his sledge. Foyle lost count, ran on, stopped.

'Jiz!' he bellowed.

He heard her voice. He encountered another guard, disposed of her, ran, located Jisbella's cell.

'Gully, for God's sake...' Her voice was muffled.

'Get back, girl. Back.' He hammered thrice against the door with his sledge and it burst inward. He staggered in and fell against a figure.



'They may not notice the windows,' Jisbella hissed. 'Be quiet.' They crouched on the floor. Steps trampled through the pens in bewildering succession. Then they were gone.
'All clear now,' Jisbella whispered. 'But they'll have searchlights any minute. Come on, Gully. Out.'
`But the door to the clinic, Jiz. I thought -'
`There is no door. They use spiral stairs and they pull them up. They've thought of this escape too. We'll have to try the laundry lift. God knows what good it'll do us. Oh Gully, you fool! You utter fool!' They climbed through the observation window back into the pens. They searched through the darkness for the lifts by which soiled uniforms were removed and fresh uniforms issued. And in the darkness the automatic hands again soaped, sprayed and disinfected them. They could find nothing.
The caterwauling of a siren suddenly echoed through the caverns, silencing all other sound. There came a hush as suffocating as the darkness.
`They're using the G-phone to track us, Gully.'
`The what?' `Geophone. It can trace a whisper through half a mile of solid rock. That's why they've sirened for silence.'
`The laundry lift?'
`Can't find it.'
'Then come on.'
`Where?'





'Ice,' he muttered. 'Good sign. We're in an ice cavern, Jiz. Underground glacier.'

They arose shakily, straddling their legs and worked their way across the ice that had been forming in the Gouffre Martel abyss for millennia. They climbed into a forest of stone saplings that were stalagmites and stalactites thrusting up, from the jagged floor and down from the ceilings. The vibrations of every step loosened the huge stalactites, and every moment a ponderous needle-sharp stone spear thundered down from overhead. At the edge of the forest, Foyle stopped, reached out and tugged. There was a clear metallic ring. He took Jisbella's hand and placed the long tapering cone of a stalagmite in it.

`Cane,' he grunted. `Use it like a blind man.' He broke off another and they went tapping, feeling, stumbling through the darkness. There was no sound but the gallop of panic . . . their gasping breath and racing hearts, the taps of their stone canes, the multitudinous drip of water, the distant rushing of the underground river beneath Gouffre Martel.

'Not that way, girl,' Foyle nudged her shoulder. 'More to the left.' 'Have you the faintest notion where we're headed, Gully?'

'Down, Jiz. Follow any slope that leads down.'

'You've got an idea?'

'Yeah. Surprise, surprise! Brains instead of bombs.'

`Brains instead of -' Jisbella shrieked with hysterical laughter. `You exploded into South Quadrant w-with a sledgehammer and th-that's your idea of b-brains instead of b-b-b -' She brayed and hooted beyond all control until Foyle grasped her and shook her.

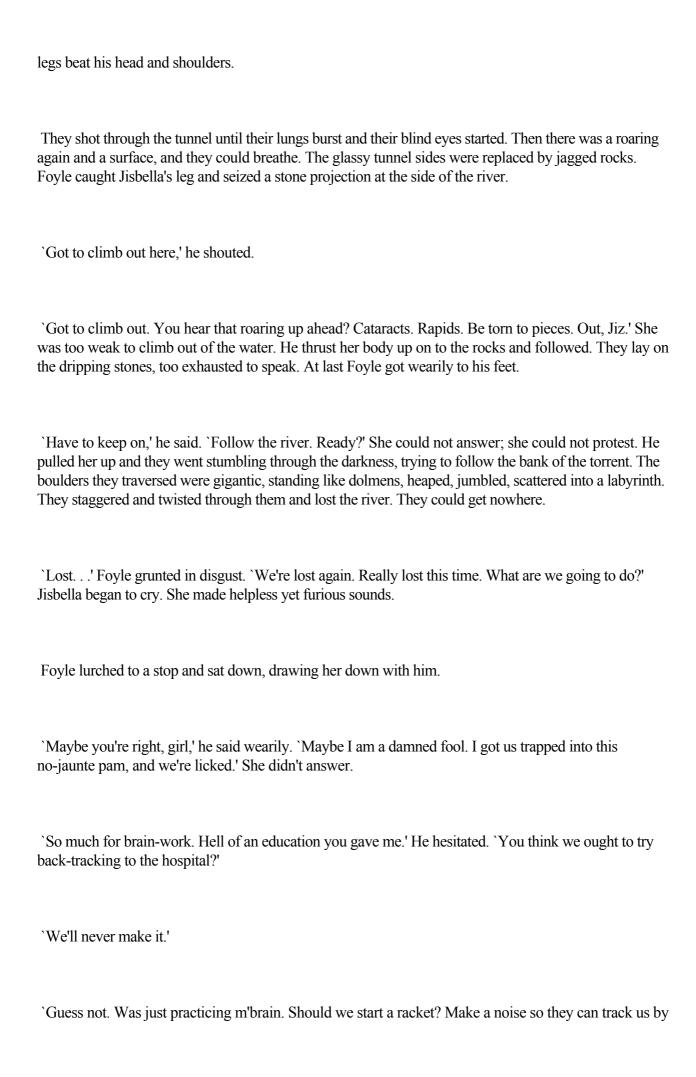
'Shut up, Jiz. If they're tracking us by G-phone they could hear you from Mars.'

'S-sorry, Gully. Sorry. . .' She took a breath. 'Why down?'

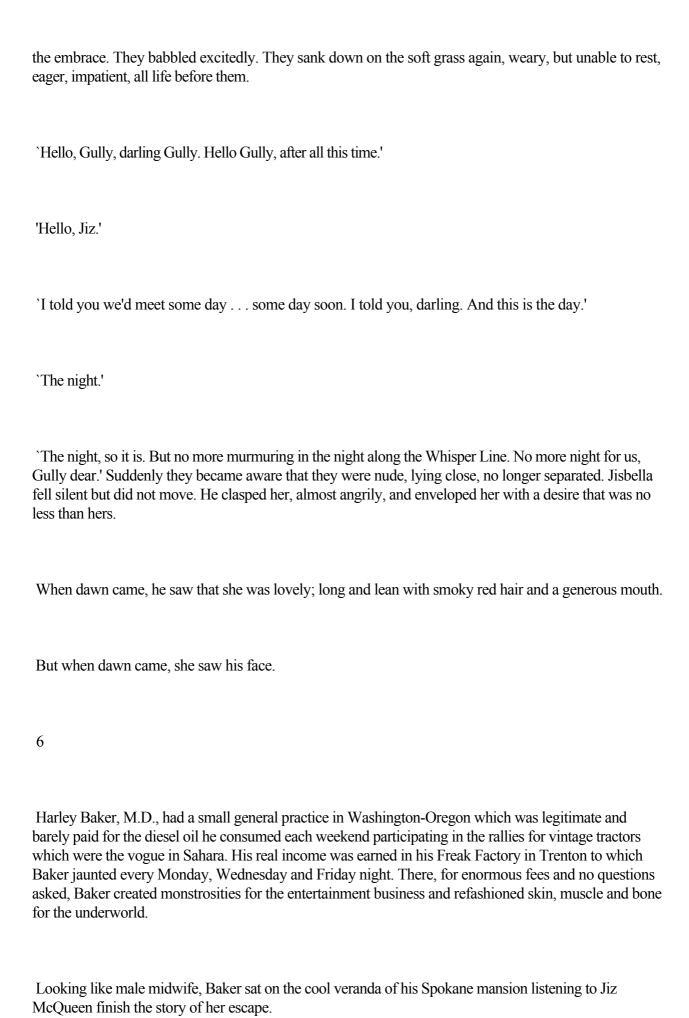


For what? I told you we had to plan . . . work out an escape . . . and now you've trapped us into this.' 'I was trapped myself. Dagenham was going to change my cell. No more Whisper Line for us. I had to, Jiz . . . and we're out, aren't we?' 'Out where? Lost in Gouffre Martel. Looking for a damned river to drown in. You're a fool, Gully, and I'm an idiot for letting you trap me into this. Damn you! You pull everything down to your imbecile level and you've pulled me down too. Run. Fight. Punch. That's all you know. Beat. Break. Blast. Destroy - Gully!' Jisbella screamed. There was a clatter of loose stone in the darkness, and her scream faded down and away to a heavy splash. Foyle heard the thrash of her body in water. He leaped forward, shouted: `Jiz!' and staggered over the edge of a precipice. He fell and struck the water flat with a stunning impact. The icy river enclosed him, and he could not tell where the surface was. He struggled, suffocated, felt the swift current drag him against the chill slime of rocks, and then was borne bubbling to the surface. He coughed and shouted. He heard Jisbella answer, her voice faint and muffled by the roaring torrent. He swam with the current, trying to overtake her. He shouted and heard her answering voice growing fainter and fainter. The roaring grew louder, and abruptly he was shot down the hissing sheet of a waterfall. He plunged to the bottom of a deep pool and struggled once more to the surface. The whirling current entangled him with a cold body bracing itself against a smooth rock wall. `Jiz!' 'Gully! Thank God!' They clung together for a moment while the water tore at them. 'Gully. . ' Jisbella coughed. 'It goes through here.'





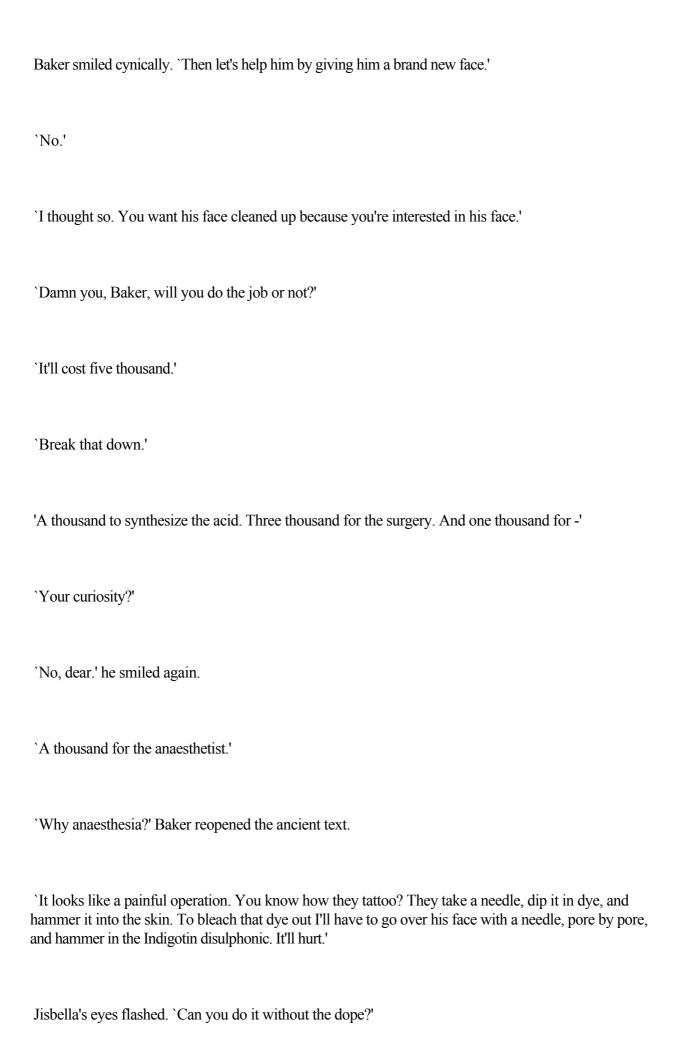


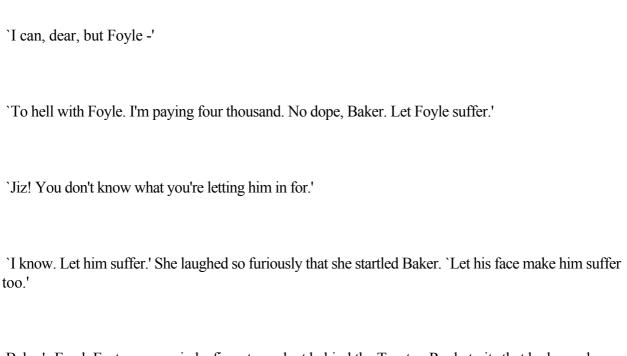


'Once we hit the open country outside Gouffre Martel it was easy. We found a shooting lodge, broke in, and got some clothes. There were guns there too lovely old steel things for killing with explosives. We took them and sold them to some locals. Then we bought rides to the nearest jaunte stage we had memorized.'
`Which?'
`Biarritz.'
`Traveled by night, eh?'
`Naturally.'
'Do anything about Foyle's face?'
'We tried make-up but that didn't work. The damned tattooing showed through. Then I bought a dark skin-surrogate and sprayed it on.'
'Did that do its?' 'No,' Jiz said angrily. 'You have to keep your face quiet or else the surrogate cracks and peels. Foyle couldn't control himself. He never can. It was hell.'
`Where is he now?'
`Sam Quatt's got him in tow.'
`I thought Sam retired from the rackets.'

'He did,' Jisbella said grimly. 'But he owes me a favor. He's minding Foyle. They're circulating on the jaunte to stay ahead of the cops.'
`Interesting,' Baker murmured. `Haven't seen a tattoo case in all my life. Thought it was a dead art. I'd like to add him to my collection. You know I collect curios, Jiz?'
`Everybody knows that zoo of yours in Trenton, Baker. It's ghastly.'
`I picked up a genuine fraternal cyst last month,' Baker began enthusiastically.
'I don't want to hear about it,' Jiz snapped. 'And I don't want Foyle in your zoo. Can you get the muck off his face? Clean it up? He says they were stymied at General Hospital.'
`They haven't had my experience, dear. Hmm. I seem to remember reading something once somewhere Now where did I -'
'Wait a minute.' Baker stood up and disappeared with a faint pop. Jisbella paced the veranda furiously until he reappeared twenty minutes later with a tattered book in his hands and a triumphant expression on his face.
'Got it,' Baker said. 'Saw it in the Caltech stacks three years ago. You may admire my memory.'
`To hell with your memory. What about his face?'
'It can be done.' Baker flipped the fragile pages and meditated. 'Yes, it can be done. Indigotin disulphonic acid. I may have to synthesize the acid but' Baker closed the test and nodded emphatically. 'I can do it. Only it seems a pity to tamper with that face if it's as unique as you describe.'
'Will you get off your hobby,' Jisbella exclaimed in exasperation. 'We're hot, understand? The first that ever broke out of Gouffre Martel. The cops won't rest until they've got us back. This is extra-special for







Baker's Freak Factory occupied a five-story plant behind the Trenton Rocket pits that had once been an A.C.W. manufactory of subway cars before jaunting ended the need for urban subways. The rear windows looked out on the circular mouths of the pits thrusting their anti-grav beams upward, and Baker's patients could amuse themselves watching the spaceships riding silently up and down the beams, their portholes blazing, recognition signals blinking, their hulls rippling with St Elmo's fire as the atmosphere carried off the electrostatic charges built up in outer space.

The basement floor of the factory contained Baker's zoo of anatomical curiosities, natural freaks and monsters bought, hired, kidnapped, abducted. Baker, like the rest of his world, was passionately devoted to these unfortunate creatures and spent long hours with them, drinking in the spectacle of their distortions the way other men saturated themselves with the beauty of art. The middle floors of the plant contained bedrooms for post-operative patients, laboratories, staff-rooms and kitchens. The top floor contained the operating theatres.

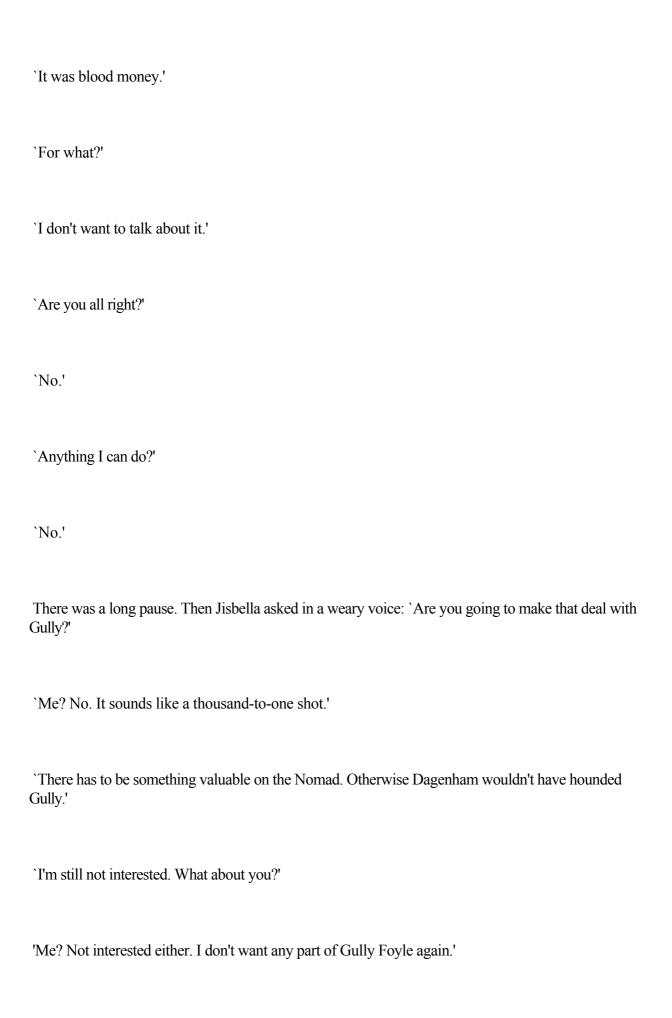
In one of the latter, a small room usually used for retinal experiments, Baker was at work on Foyle's face. Under a harsh battery of lamps, he bent over the operating-table working meticulously with a small steel hammer and a platinum needle. Baker was following the pattern of the old tattooing on Foyle's face, searching out each minute scar in the skin, and driving the needle into it. Foyle's head was gripped in a clamp, but his body was unstrapped. His muscles writhed at each tap of the hammer but he never moved his body. He gripped the sides of the operating-table.

'Control,' he said through his teeth. 'You wanted me to learn control, Jiz. I'm practicing.' He winced.



`Then it's not for me, son. I've lost my nerve. Jaunting the circuit with you, one step ahead of the cops, showed me that. I've retired for keeps. All I want is peace.'
'I'll pay fifty thousand. Don't you want fifty thousand? You could spend Sundays counting it.' The needle hammered remorselessly. Foyle's body was twitching at each impact
'I already got fifty thousand. I get ten times that in cash in a bank in Vienna,' Quatt reached into his pocket and took out a ring of glittering radioactive keys. 'Here's the key for the bank. This is the key to my place in Joburg. Twenty rooms; twenty acres. This here's the key to my Weekender in Montauk. You ain't temptin' me, son. I quit while I was ahead. I'm jaunting back to Joburg and live happy for the rest of my life.'
'Let me have the Weekender. You can sit safe in Joburg and collect.'
`Collect when?'
`When I get back.'
'You want my ship on trust and a promise to pay?'
`A guarantee.' Quatt snorted.
`What guarantee?'
'It's a salvage job in the asteroids. Ship named Nomad.'
'What's on the Nomad? What makes the salvage pay off?'







`What for?'
'Cruelty to dumb animals.'
`What's that supposed to mean?'
'Never mind. Hang around a little. Tell me about the happy life. What's so happy about it?'
'Well,' Quatt said reflectively. 'It's having everything you wanted when you were a kid. If you can have everything at fifty that you wanted when you were fifteen, you're happy. Now when I was fifteen' And Quatt went on and on describing the symbols, ambitions and frustrations of his boyhood which he was now satisfying until Baker came out of the operating theatre.
`Finished?' Jisbella asked eagerly.
`Finished. After I put him under I was able to work faster. They're bandaging his face now. He'll be out in a few minutes.'
`Weak?'
`Naturally.'
'How long before the bandages come off?'
'Six or seven days'
`His face'll be clean?'







Jisbella helped Quatt haul Foyle to his shoulder. The temporal freaks seemed to fill the ward with shrieking streaks. The ward doors burst open. A dozen bolts from pneumatic guns whined through the ward, dropping the temporal patients in their gyrations. Quatt was slammed back against a wall, dropping Foyle. A black and blue bruise appeared on his temple.

'Get to hell out of here,' Quatt roared. 'I'm done.' He gasped 'I'm done. Can't jaunte. Go, girl!'

Trying to shake off the concussion that prevented him from jaunting, Quatt straightened and charged forward, meeting the uniformed men who poured into the ward. Jisbella took Foyle's arm and dragged him out of the back of the ward, through a pantry, a clinic, a laundry supply, and down flights of ancient stairs that buckled and threw up clouds of termite dust.

They came into a victual cellar. Baker's zoo had broken out of their cells in the chaos and were raiding the cellar like bats glutting themselves with honey in an attacked hive. A Cyclops girl was cramming her mouth with handfuls of butter scooped from a tub. Her single eye above the bridge of her nose leered at them.

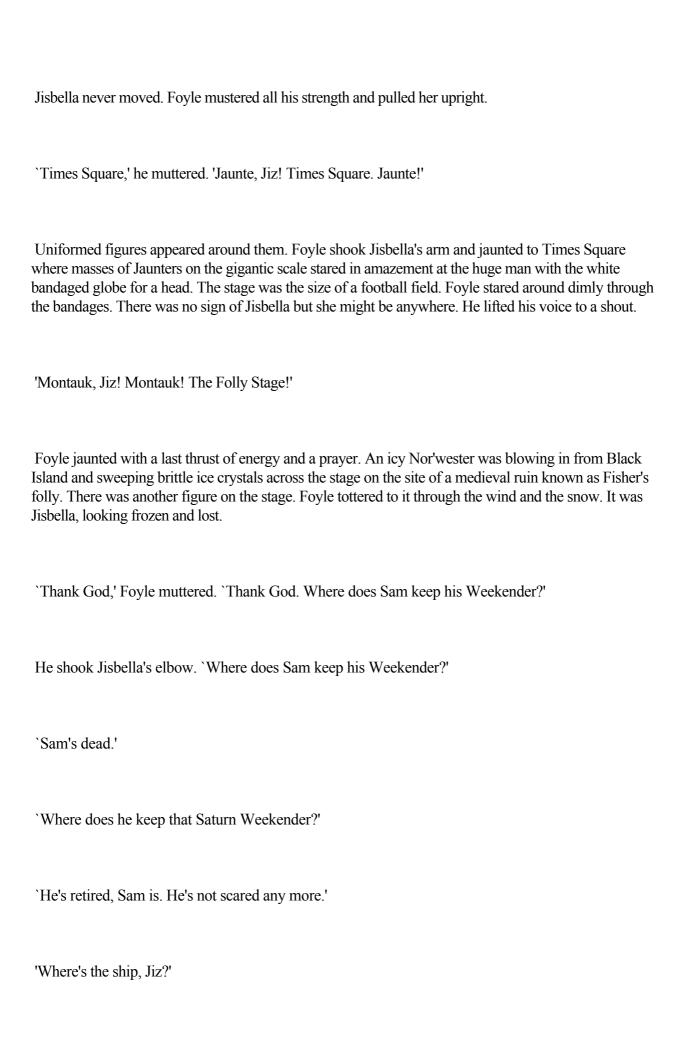
Jisbella dragged Foyle through the victual cellar, found a bolted wooden door and kicked it open. They stumbled down a flight of crumbling steps and found themselves in what had once been a coal cellar. The concussions and roarings overhead sounded deeper and hollow. A chute slot on one side of the cellar was barred with an iron door held by iron clamps. Jisbella placed Foyle's hands on the clamps. Together they opened them and climbed out of the cellar through the coal chute.

They were outside the Freak Factory, huddled against the rear wall. Before them were the Trenton Rocket pits, and as they gasped for breath, Jiz saw a freighter come sliding down an anti-gray beam into a waiting pit. Its portholes blazed and its recognition signals blinked like a lurid neon sign, illuminating the back wall of the hospital.

A figure leaped from the roof of the hospital. It was Sam Quatt, attempting a desperate flight. He sailed out into space, arms and legs flailing, trying to reach the up-thrusting anti-grav beam of the nearest pit which might catch him in mid-flight and cushion his fall. His aim was perfect. Seventy feet above ground he dropped squarely into the shaft of the beam. It was not in operation. He fell and was smashed on the edge of the pit.

Jisbella sobbed. Still automatically retaining her grip on Foyle's arm, she ran across the seamed concrete to Sam Quatt's body. There she let go of Foyle and touched Quatt's head tenderly. Her fingers were stained with blood. Foyle tore at the bandage before his eyes, working eye-holes through the gauze. He muttered to himself, listening to Jisbella weep and hearing the shouts behind him from Baker's factory. His hands fumbled at Quatt's body, then he arose and tried to pull Jisbella up.

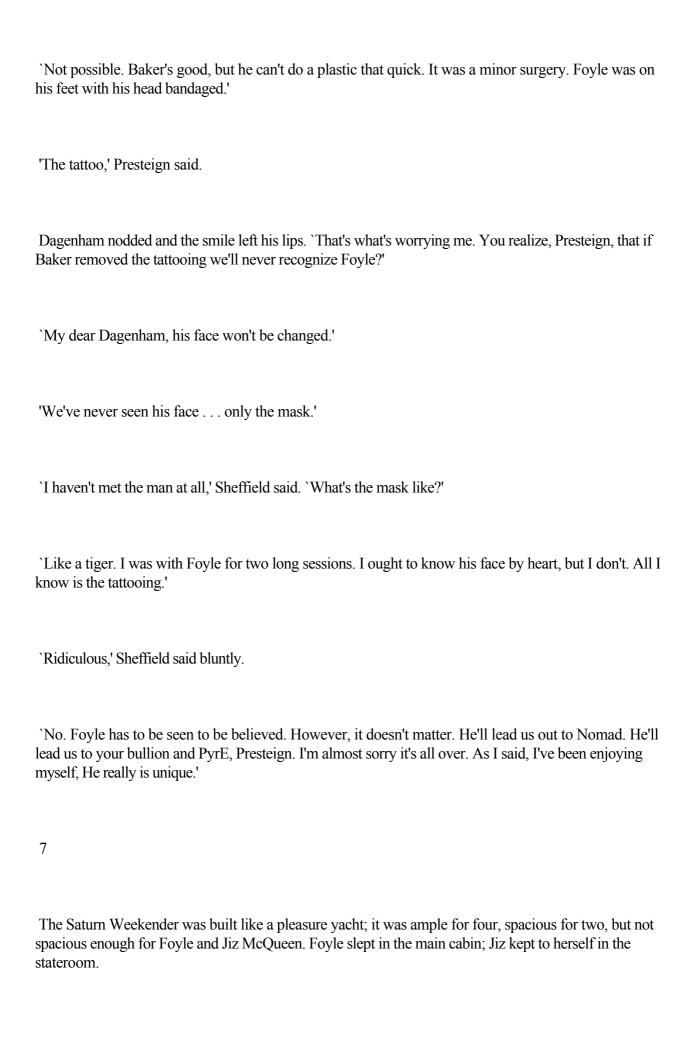
'Got to go,' he croaked. 'Got to get out. They've seen us.'



`In the yards down at the lighthouse.'
'Come on.'
`Where?'
'To Sam's ship.'
Foyle thrust his big hand before Jisbella's eyes; a bunch of radiant keys lay in his palm. `I took his keys. Come on.'
`He gave them to you?'
`I took them off his body.'
`Ghoul!'
She began to laugh. `Liar Lecher Tiger Ghoul. The walking cancer Gully Foyle.'
Nevertheless she followed him through the snowstorm to Montauk Light.
To three acrobats wearing powdered wigs, four flamboyant women carrying, pythons, a child with golden curls and a cynical mouth, a professional duelist in medieval armor, and a man wearing a hollow glass leg in which goldfish swam, Saul Dagenham said: `All right, the operation's finished. Call the rest off and tell them to report back to Courier headquarters.'

The sideshow jaunted and disappeared. Regis Sheffield rubbed his eyes and asked: `What was that

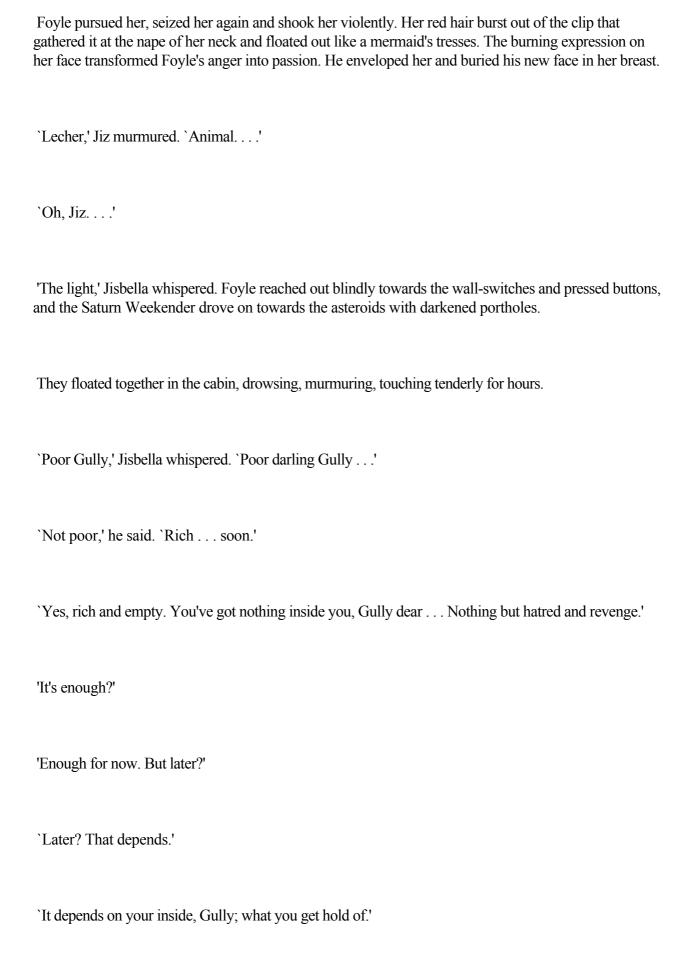
lunacy supposed to be, Dagenham?'
`Disturbs your legal mind, eh? That was part of the cast of our F.F.C.C. operation. Fun, fantasy, confusion and catastrophe.'
Dagenham turned to Presteign and smiled his deaths-head smile. `I'll return your fee if you like, Presteign.'
`You're not quitting?'
'No, I'm enjoying myself. I'll work for nothing. I've never tangled with a man of Foyle's caliber before. He's unique.'
'How?'
Sheffield demanded.
`I arranged for him to escape from Gouffre Martel. He escaped, all right, but not my way. I tried to keep him out of police hands with confusion and catastrophe. He ducked the police, but not my way his own way. I tried to keep him out of Central Intelligence's hands with fun and fantasy. He stayed clear , again his own way. I tried to detour him into a ship so he could make his try for Nomad. He wouldn't detour, but he got his ship. He's on his way out now.'
'You're following.'
'Naturally.' Dagenham hesitated. 'But what was he doing in Baker's factory?'
'Plastic surgery?' Sheffield suggested. 'A new face?'



On the seventh day out, Jisbella spoke to Foyle for the second time: `Let's get those bandages off, Ghoul.'
Foyle left the galley where he was sullenly heating coffee, and kicked back to the bathroom. He floated in after Jisbella and wedged himself into the alcove before the washbasin mirror. Jisbella braced herself on the basin, opened an ether capsule and began soaking and stripping the bandage off with hard, hating hands. The strips of gauze peeled slowly. Foyle was in agony of suspense.
`D'you think Baker did the job?' he asked. No answer.
`Could he have missed anywhere?'
The stripping continued.
'It stopped hurting two days ago.'
No answer.
`For God's sake, Jiz! Is it still war between us?'
Jisbella's hands stopped. She looked at Foyle's bandaged face with hatred. `What do you think?'
`I asked you.'
`The answer is yes.'
Why?'

`You'l	l never understand: `Make me understand.'
`Shut	up.'
`If it's	war, why'd you come with me?'
`To ge	et what's coming to Sam and me.'
`Mone	ey?'
`Shut	up.'
'You o	didn't have to. You could have trusted me.'
'Truste hands a	ed you? You?' Jisbella laughed without mirth and recommenced the peeling. Foyle struck her away.
`I'll do	it myself.'
She las	shed him across his bandaged face. 'You'll do what I tell you. Be still, Ghoul!'
dark ar	ontinued unwinding the bandage. A strip came away revealing Foyle's eyes. They stared at Jisbella, and brooding. The eyelids were clean; the bridge of the nose was clean. A strip came away from a chin. It was blue-black. Foyle, watching intently in the mirror, gasped.
`He m	issed the chin!' he exclaimed. `Baker didn't-'

`Shut up,' Jiz answered shortly. `That's beard.'	
The innermost strips came away quickly, revealing cheeks, mouth and brow. The brow was clean. The cheeks under the eyes were clean. The rest was covered with a blue-black seven day beard.	
`Shave,' Jiz commanded.	
Foyle ran water, soaked his face, rubbed in shave ointment and washed the beard off. Then he leaned close to the mirror and inspected himself, unaware that Jisbella's head was close to his as she too stared into the mirror. Not a mark of tattooing remained. Both sighed.	
`It's clean,' Foyle said. `Clean. He did the job.'	
Suddenly he leaned farther forward and inspected himself more closely. His face looked new to him, as new as it looked to Jisbella. 'I'm changed. I don't remember looking like this. Did he do surgery on me too?'	
'No,' Jisbella said. 'What's inside you changed it. That's the ghoul you're seeing, along with the liar and the cheat.'	
`For God's sake! Lay off. Let me alone!'	
'Ghoul,' Jisbella repeated, staring at Foyle's face with glowing eyes. `Liar. Cheat.'	
He took her shoulders and shoved her out into the companionway.	
She went sailing down into the main lounge, caught a guide-bar and spun herself around. 'Ghoul!' she cried. 'Liar! Cheat! Ghoul! Lecher! Beast!'	



,	No. My future depends on what I get rid of.'
	Gully why did you hold out on me in Gouffre Martel? Why didn't you tell me you knew there was a fortune aboard Nomad?'
,	'I couldn't'
,	Did you trust me?'
,	It wasn't that. I couldn't help myself. That's what's inside me what I have to get rid of.'
,	'Control again, eh Gully? You're driven.'
,	Yes, I'm driven. I can't learn control, Jiz. I want to, but can't.'
,	'Do you try?'
,	I do. God knows, I do. But then something happens, and -'
,	'And then you pounce. "Remorseless, lecherous, treacherous, kindless villain'
,	'What's that?'
,	Something a man named Shakespeare wrote. It describes you, Gully when you're out of control.'
,	If I could carry you in my pocket. Jiz to warn me stick a pin in me

'Nobody can do it for you, Gully You, have to learn yourself.'
He digested that for a long moment. Then he spoke hesitantly: `Jiz about the money?'
`To hell with the money.'
`Can I hold you to that?'
`Oh, Gully.'
`Not that I that I'm trying to hold out on you. If it wasn't for Vorga I'd give you all you wanted. All! I'll give you every cent left over when I'm finished. But I'm scared, Jiz. Vorga is a big nut to crack what with Presteign and Dagenham and that lawyer, Sheffield. I've got to hold on to every cent, Jiz. I'm afraid if I let you take one credit, that could make the difference between Vorga and I'
`Me.'
'Me.' He waited. 'Well?'
'You're all possessed,' she said wearily. 'Not just a part of you, but all of you.'
'No.'
'Yes, Gully. All of you. It's just your skin making love to me. The rest is feeding on Vorga.'

At that moment the radar alarm in the forward control cabin burst upon them, unwelcome and warning.

'Destination zero,' Foyle muttered, no longer relaxed, once more possessed. He shot forward into the control-cabin. Foyle overran the asteroid with the sudden fury of a Vandal raid. He came blasting out of space, braked with a spume of flame from the forward jets, and kicked the Weekender into a tight spin around the junk-heap. They whirled around, passing the blackened ports, the bit hatch from which Joseph and his brethren emerged to collect the drifting debris of space, the new crater Foyle had torn out of the side of the asteroid in his first plunge back to Terra. They whipped past the giant patchwork windows of the asteroid greenhouse and saw hundreds of faces peering out at them, tiny white dots mottled with tattooing. 'So I didn't murder them,' Foyle grunted. 'They've pulled back into the asteroid... Probably living deep inside while they get the rest repaired.' 'Will you help them, Gully?' 'Why?' 'You did the damage.' `To hell with them. I've got my own problems. But it's a relief. They won't be bothering us.' He circled the asteroid once more and brought the Weekender down in the mouth of the new crater. 'We'll work from here,' he said. 'Get into a suit, Jiz. Let's go! Let's go!'

He drove her, mad with impatience; he drove himself. They corked up in their spacesuits, left the Weekender, and went sprawling through the debris in the crater into the bleak bowels of the asteroid. It was like squirming through the crawling tunnels of giant wormholes. Foyle switched on his micro-wave suit-set and spoke to Jiz.



Foyle ignored her and stood glaring at Joseph while the old man made beseeching gestures, motioned to them to enter the interior of the asteroid, and then disappeared. Only then did Foyle turn to Jisbella and ask: `What? What did you say?'

Through the clear globe of the helmet she could see his face distinctly. And as the rage within Foyle died away, Jisbella saw the bloodred tattooing fade and disappear.

'Did you see that joker?' Foyle demanded. 'That was Joseph. Did you see him begging and pleading after what he did to me . . .? What did you say?'

'Your face, Gully. I know what's happened to your face.'

'What are you talking about?'

'You wanted something that would control you, Gully. Well you've got it. Your face. It -'

Jisbella began to laugh hysterically. 'You'll have to learn control now, Gully. You'll never be able to give way to emotion . . . any emotion . . . because -' But he was staring past her and suddenly he shot up the aluminum shaft with a yell. He jerked to a stop before an open door and began to whoop in triumph. The door opened into a tool locker, four by four by nine. There were shelves in the locker and a jumble of old provisions and discarded containers. It was Foyle's coffin aboard the Nomad.

Joseph and his brethren had succeeded in sealing the wreck into their asteroid before the holocaust of Foyle's escape had rendered further work impossible. The interior of the ship was virtually untouched. Foyle took Jisbella's arm and dragged her on a quick tour of the ship and finally to the purser's locker where Foyle tore at the windows of wreckage and debris until he disclosed a massive steel safe, blank and impenetrable.

'We've got a choice,' he panted. 'Either we tear the safe out of the hull and carry it bade to Terra where we can work-on it, or we open it here. I vote for here. Maybe Dagenham was lying. All depends on what tools Sam has in the Weekender anyway. Come back to the ship, Jiz.'

He never noticed her silence and preoccupation until they were back aboard the Weekender and he had finished his urgent search for tools.
'Nothing!' he exclaimed impatiently. 'There isn't a hammer or a drill aboard. Nothing but gadgets for opening bottles and rations' Jisbella didn't answer. She never took her eyes off his face.
`Why are you staring at me like that?' Foyle demanded.
`I'm fascinated,' Jisbella answered slowly.
`By what?'
`I'm going to show you something, Gully.'
`What?'
'How much I despise you.'
Jisbella slapped him thrice. Stung by the blows, Foyle started up furiously. Jisbella picked up a handmirror and held it before him.
'Look at yourself, Gully,' she said quietly. 'Look at your face.'
He looked. He saw the old tattoo marks flaming blood-red under the skin, turning his face into a scarlet and white tiger mask. He was so chilled by the appalling spectacle that his rage died at once, and simultaneously the mask disappeared.



live with it.'
Foyle flung the mirror from him in sudden rage, and again the blood-red mask flared up under his skin. He lunged out of the main cabin to the main hatch where he pulled his spate suit down and began to squirm into it.
'Gully! Where are you going? What are you going to do?'
`Get tools,' he shouted. `Tools for the God-damned safe.'
`Where?'
'In the asteroid. They've got dozens of warehouses stuffed with tools from wrecked ships. There have to be drills there; everything I need. Don't come with me. There may be trouble. How is my God-damned face now? Showing it? By Christ, I hope there is trouble!'
He corked his suit and went into the asteroid. He found a hatch separating the habited core from the outer void. He banged on, the door. He waited and banged again and continued the imperious summons until at last the hatch was opened. Arms reached out and yanked him in, and the hatch was closed behind him. It had no airlock.
He blinked in the light and scowled at Joseph and his innocent brethren gathering before him, their faces hideously decorated. And he knew that his own face must be flaming red and white for he saw Joseph start, and he saw the devil-mouth shape the syllables: Nomad.
Foyle strode through the crowd, scattering them brutally. He smashed Joseph with a backhand blow from his mailed fist. He searched through the inhabited corridors, recognizing them dimly and he came at last to the chamber, half natural cave, half antique hall, where the tools were stored.
He rooted and ferreted, gathering up drills, diamond bits, acids, thermites, crystallants, dynamite jellies, fuses. In the gently revolving asteroid the gross weight of the equipment was reduced to less than a hundred pounds. He lumped it into a mass, roughly bound it together with cable and started out of the

store-cave.

Joseph and his brethren were waiting for him, like fleas waiting for a wolf. They darted at him and he battered through them, harried, delighted, savage. The armor of his spacesuit protected him from their attacks and he went down the passages searching for a hatch that would lead out into the void.
Jisbella's voice came to him, tinny on the earphones and agitated: `Gully, can you hear me? This is Jiz. Gully, listen to me.'
`Go ahead.'
`Another ship came up two minutes ago. It's drifting on the other side of the asteroid.'
`What!'
`It's marked with yellow and black colors, like a hornet'
`Dagenham's colors!'
`Then we've been followed.'
`What else? Dagenham's probably been tailing me ever since we busted out of Gouffre Martel. I was a fool not to think of it. How'd he tail me, Jiz? Through you?'
`Gully!'
`Forget it. Just practicing jokes.'

He laughed without amusement. 'We've got to work fast, Jiz. Cork up in a suit and meet me aboard Nomad. The purser's room. Go, girl.'
`But, Gully'
'Sign off. They may be monitoring our waveband. Go!'
He drove through the asteroid, reached a barred hatch, broke through the guard before it, smashed it open and went into the void of the outer passages. The Scientific People were too desperate getting the hatch closed to stop him. But he knew they would follow him; they were raging.
He hauled the bulk of his equipment through twists and turns to the wreck of the Nomad. Jisbella was waiting for him in the purser's room. She made a move to turn on her microwave set and Foyle stopped her. He placed his helmet against hers and shouted: `No shortwave. They'll be monitoring and they'll locate us by D/F. You can hear me like this, can't you?'
She nodded.
`All right. We've got maybe an hour before Dagenham locates us. We've got maybe an hour before Joseph and his mob come after us. We're in a hell of a hole. We've got to work fast.'
She nodded again.
'No time to open the safe and transport the bullion.'
'If it's there.'
`Dagenham's here, isn't he? That's proof it's there. We'll have to cut the whole safe out of the Nomad and get it into the Weekender. Then we blast.'

`But -'	
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'Just listen to me and do what I say. Go back to the Weekender. Empty it out. Jettison everything we don't need . . . all supplies except emergency rations.'

'Why?'

'Because I don't know how many tons this safe weighs, and the ship may not be able to handle it when we come back to gravity. We've got to make allowances in advance. It'll mean a tough trip back but it's worth it. Strip the ship. Fast! Go, girl. Go!'

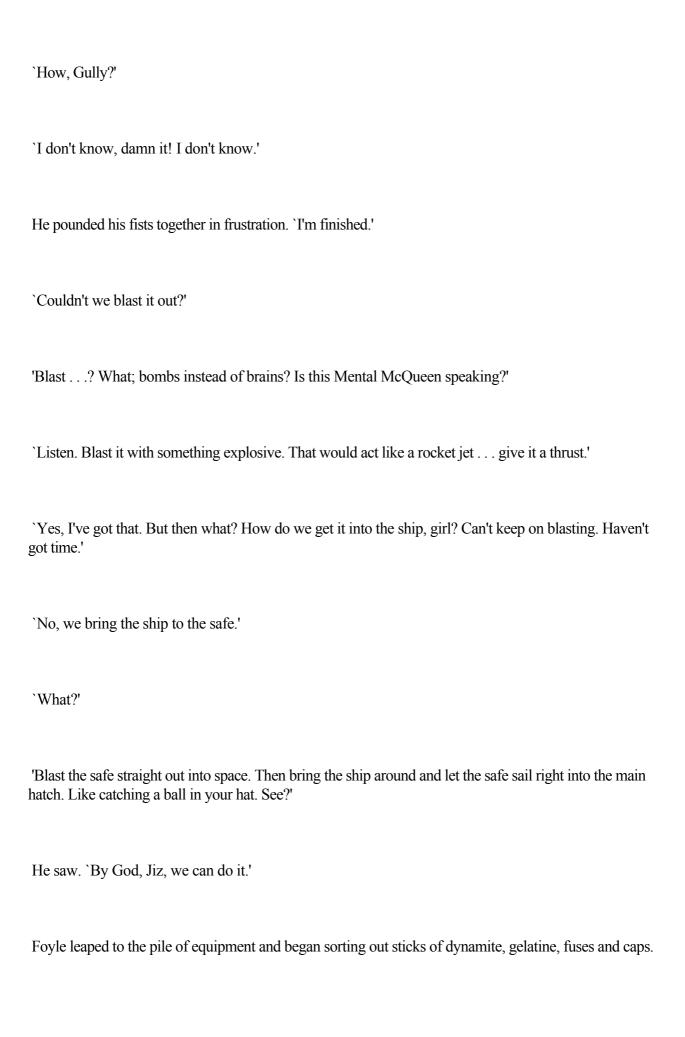
He pushed her away and without another glance in her direction, attacked the safe. It was built into the structural steel of the hull, a massive steel ball some four feet in diameter. It was welded to the strakers and ribs of the Nomad at twelve different spots. Foyle attacked each weld in turn with acids, drills, thermite and refrigerants. He was operating on the theory of structural strain . . . to heat, freeze and etch the steel until its crystalline structure was distorted and its physical strength destroyed. He was fatiguing the metal.

Jisbella returned and he realized that forty-five minutes had passed. He was dripping and shaking but the globe of the safe hung free of the hull with a dozen rough knobs protruding from its surface. Foyle motioned urgently to Jisbella and she strained her weight against the safe with him. They could not budge its mass together. As they sank back in exhaustion and despair, a quick shadow eclipsed the sunlight pouring through the rents in the Nomad hull. They stared up. A spaceship was circling the asteroid less than a quarter of a mile off.

Foyle placed his helmet against Jisbella's. 'Dagenham,' he gasped. 'Looking for us. Probably got a brew down here coming for us too. Soon as they tally to Joseph they'll be here.'

'Oh, Gully . . . !

'We've still got a chance. Maybe they won't spot Sam's Weekender until they've made a couple of revolutions. It's hidden in that crater. Maybe we can get the safe aboard in the meantime.'



'We'll have to use the shortwave. One of us stays with the safe; one of us pilots the ship. Man with the
safe talks the man with the ship into position. Right?'

'Right. You'd better pilot, Gully. I'll do the talking.'

He nodded, fixing explosive to the face of the safe, attaching caps and fuses. Then he placed his helmet against hers. 'Vacuum fuses, Jiz. Timed for two minutes. When I give the word by shortwave, just pull off the fuse heads and get the hell out of the way. Right?'

'Right' 'Stay with the safe. Once you've talked it into the ship, come right after it. Don't wait for anything. It's going to be close.'

He thumped her shoulder and returned to the Weekender. He left the outer hatch open, and the inner door of the airlock as well. The ship's air emptied out immediately. Airless and stripped by Jisbella, it looked dismal and forlorn.

Foyle went directly to the controls, sat down and switched on his micro-wave set. 'Stand by,' he muttered. 'I'm coming out now.'

He ignited the jets, blew the laterals for three seconds and then the forwards. The Weekender lifted easily, shaking debris from her back and sides like a whale surfacing. As she slid up and back, Foyle called: `Dynamite, Jiz! Now!!'

There was no blast; there was no flash. A new crater opened in the asteroid below him and a flower of rubble sprang upwards, rapidly outdistancing a dull steel ball that followed leisurely, turning in a weary spin.

`Ease off' Jisbella's voice came cold and competent over the earphones. `You're backing too fast. And incidentally, trouble's arrived.'

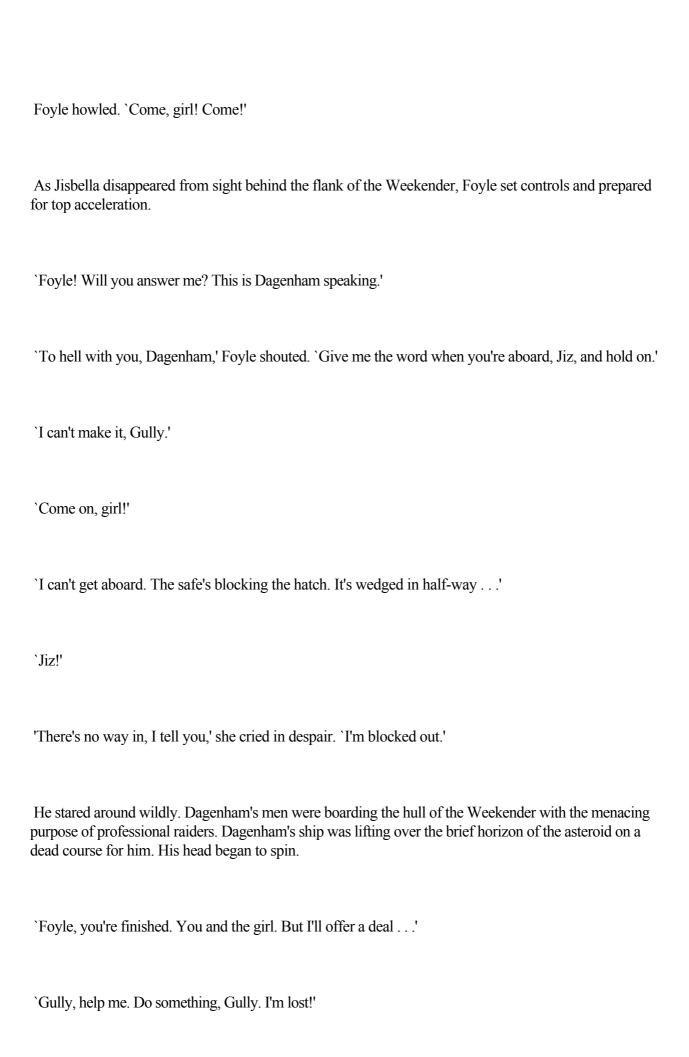
He braked with the rear jets, looking down in alarm. The surface of the asteroid was covered with a swarm of hornets. They were Dagenham's crew in yellow and black banded spacesuits. They were buzzing around a single figure in white that dodged and spun and eluded them. It was Jizbella.

'Steady as you go,' Jiz said quietly, although he could hear how hard she was breathing. 'Ease off a little more . . . Roll a quarter turn.' He obeyed her almost automatically, still watching the struggle below. The flank of the Weekender cut off any view of the trajectory of the safe as it approached him, but he could still see Jisbella and Dagenham's men. She ignited her suit rocket . . . he could see the tiny spurt of flame shoot out from her back . . . and came sailing up from the surface of the asteroid. A score of flames burst out from the backs of Dagenham's men as they followed. Half a dozen dropped the pursuit of Jisbella and came up after the Weekender. 'It's going to be close, Gully,' Jisbella was gasping now, but her voice was still steady. 'Dagenham's ship came down on the other side, but they've probably signaled him by now and he'll be on his way. Hold your position, Gully. About ten seconds now ....' The hornets closed in and engulfed the tiny white suit. `Foyle! Can you hear me? Foyle!' Dagenham's voice came in fuzzily and finally cleared. 'This is Dagenham calling on your band. Come in, Foyle!' 'Jiz! Jiz! Can you get clear of them?' 'Hold your position, Gully . . . There she goes! It's a hole in one, son!'

A crushing shock racked the Weekender as the safe, moving slowly but massively, rammed into the main hatch. At the same moment the white-suited figure broke out of the cluster of yellow wasps. It came

rocketing up to the Weekender, hotly pursued.

'Come on, Jiz! Come on!'



'Vorga,' he said in a strangled voice. He closed his eyes and tripped the controls. The tail jets roared. The Weekender shook and shuddered forward. It broke free of Dagenham's boarders, of Jisbella, of warnings and pleas. It pressed Foyle back into the pot's chair with the blackout of 10G acceleration, an acceleration that was less pressing, less painful, less treacherous than the passion that drove him.

And as he passed from sight there rose up on his face the blood-red stigmata of his possession.

With a heart of furious fancies

Whereof I am commander,

With a burning spear and a horse of air,

To the wilderness I wander.

With a knight of ghosts and shadows

I summoned am to tourney,

Ten leagues beyond the wide world's end

Methinks it is no journey.

TOM-A-BEDLAM

8

The old year soured as pestilence poisoned the planets. The war gained momentum and grew from a distant affair of romantic raids and skirmishes in space to a holocaust in the making. It became evident that the last of the World Wars was done and the first of the Solar Wars had begun.

The belligerents slowly massed men and material for the havoc. The Outer Satellites introduced universal

conscription, and the Inner Planets perforce followed suit. Industries, trades, sciences, skills and professions were drafted; regulations and oppressions followed. The armies and navies requisitioned and commanded.

Commerce obeyed, for this war (like all wars) was the shooting phase of a commercial struggle. But populations rebelled, and draft-jaunting and labor-jaunting became critical problems. Spy scares and Invasion scares spread. The hysterical became Informers and Lynchers. An ominous foreboding paralyzed every home from Baffin Island to the Falklands. The dying year was enlivened only by the advent of the Four Mile Circus.

This was the popular nickname for the grotesque entourage of Geoffrey Fourmyle of Ceres, a wealthy young buffoon from the largest of the asteroids. Fourmyle of Ceres was enormously rich; he was also enormously amusing. He was the classic bourgeois gentilhomme, the upstart nouveau riche of all time. His entourage was a cross between a country circus and the comic court of a Bulgarian Kinglet, as witness this typical arrival in Green Bay, Wisconsin.

Early in the morning a lawyer, wearing the stove-pipe hat of a legal clan, appeared with a list of camp sites in his hand and a small fortune in his pocket. He settled on a four-acre meadow facing Lake Michigan and rented it for an exorbitant fee. He was followed by a gang of surveyors from the Mason and Dixon clan. In twenty minutes the surveyors had laid out a camp site and the word had spread that the Four Mile Circus was arriving. Locals from Wisconsin, Michigan and Minnesota came to watch the fun.

Twenty roustabouts jaunted in, each carrying a tent-pack on his back. There was a mighty overture of bawled orders, shouts, curses, and the tortured scream of compressed air. Twenty giant tents ballooned upward, their lac and latex surfaces gleaming as they dried in the winter sun. The spectators cheered.

A six-motor helicopter drifted down and hovered over a giant trampoline. Its belly opened and a cascade of furnishings came down. Servants, valets, chefs and waiters jaunted in. They furnished and decorated the tents. The kitchens began smoking and the odor of frying, broiling and baking pervaded the camp. Fourmyle's private police were already on duty, patrolling the four acres, keeping the huge crowd of spectators back.

Then, by plane, by car, by bus, by truck, by bike and by jaunte came Fourmyle's entourage. Librarians and books, scientists and laboratories, philosophers, poets, athletes. Racks of swords and sabers were set up, and judo mats and a boxing ring. A fifty-foot pool was sunk in the ground and filled by pump from the lake. An interesting altercation arose between two beefy athletes as to whether the pool should be warmed for swimming or frozen for skating.

Musicians, actors, jugglers and acrobats arrived. The uproar became deafening. A crew of mechanics melted a grease-pit and began revving up Fourmyle's collection of vintage diesel harvesters. Last of all came the camp followers: wives, daughters, mistresses, whores, beggars, chisellers and grafters. By mid-morning the roar of the circus could be heard for four miles, hence the nickname.

At noon, Fourmyle of Ceres arrived with a display of conspicuous transportation so outlandish that it had been known to make seven-year melancholics laugh. A giant amphibian thrummed up from the south and landed on the lake. An L.S.T. barge emerged from the plane and droned across the water to the shore. Its forward wall banged down into a drawbridge and out came a twentieth-century staff car. Wonder piled on wonder for the delighted spectators, for the staff car drove a matter of twenty yards to the centre of camp and then stopped.

`What can possibly come next? Bike?'
'No, roller-skates.'
'He'll come out on a pogo-stick.'
Fourmyle capped their wildest speculations. The muzzle of a circus cannon thrust up from the staff car. There was the bang of a blackpowder explosion and Fourmyle of Ceres was shot out of the cannon in a graceful arc to the very door of his tent where he was caught in a net by four valets. The applause that greeted him could be heard for six miles. Fourmyle climbed on to his valet's shoulders and motioned for silence.
'Oh God! It's going to make a speech.'
`It? You mean "he", don't you?'
`No; it. It can't be human.'
`Friends, Romans, Countrymen,' Fourmyle began earnestly. `Lend me your ears. Shakespeare.

Four white doves shook themselves out of Fourmyle's sleeves and fluttered away. He regarded them with astonishment, then continued, `Friends, greetings, salutations, bonjour, bon ton, bon vivant, bon voyage, bon - What the hell?'

Fourmyle's pockets caught fire and rocketed forth Roman Candles. He tried to put himself out. Streamers and confetti burst from him. `Friends . . . Shut up! I'll get this speech straight. Quiet! Friends \_ . '

Fourmyle looked down at himself in dismay. His clothes were melting away, revealing lurid scarlet underwear. 'Kleinmann!' he bellowed furiously. 'Kleinmann! What's happened to your God-damned hypno-training?'

A hairy head thrust out of a tent. 'You stoodied for dis sbeech last night, Fourmyle?'

`Damn right. For two hours I stoodied. Never took my head out of the hypno-oven, Kleinmann on Prestidigitation.'

'No, no, no!' the hairy man bawled. 'How many times must I tell you? Prestidigitation is not sbeech-making. Is magic. Dumbkopf!! You haff the wrong hypnosis taken!'

The scarlet underwear began melting. Fourmyle toppled from the shoulders of his shaking valets and disappeared within his tent. There was a roar of laughter and cheering and the Four Mile Circus ripped into high gear. The kitchens sizzled and smoked. There was a perpetuity of eating and drinking. The music never stopped. The vaudeville never ceased.

Inside his tent, Fourmyle changed his clothes, changed his mind, changed again, undressed again, kicked his valets and called for his tailor in a bastard tongue of French, Mayfair and affectation. Half-way into a new suit, he recollected he had neglected to bathe. He slapped his tailor, ordered ten gallons of scent to be decanted into the pool, and was stricken with poetic inspiration. He summoned his resident poet.

'Take this down,' Fourmyle commanded. 'Le roi eat mort, les - Wait. What rhymes to moon?'

`June,' his poet suggested. `Croon, soon, dune, loon, noon, rune, tune, boon'
`I forgot my experiment!' Fourmyle exclaimed. `Dr Bohun! Dr Bohun!'
Half-naked, he rushed pell-mell into the laboratory where he blew himself and Dr Bohun, his resident chemist, half-way across the tent. As the chemist attempted to raise himself from the floor he found himself seized in a most painful and embarrassing stranglehold.
'Noguchi!' Fourmyle shouted. 'Hi! Noguchi! I just invented a new judo hold.'
Fourmyle stood up, lifted the suffocating chemist and jaunted to the judo mat where the little Japanese inspected the hold and shook his head.
'No, please.' He hissed politely. 'Hfffff. Pressure on windpipe are not perpetually lethal. Here I show you, please.'
He seized the dazed chemist, whirled him and deposited him on the mat in a position of perpetual self-strangulation. 'You observe, please, Fourmyle?'
But Fourmyle was in the library bludgeoning his librarian over the head with Bloch's Das Sexual Leben (eight pounds, nine ounces) because that unhappy man could produce no text on the manufacture of perpetual motion machines. He rushed to his physics laboratory where he destroyed an expensive chronometer to experiment with cog wheels, jaunted to the bandstand where he seized a baton and led the orchestra into confusion, put on skates and fell into the scented swimming pool, was hauled out, swearing fulminously at the lack of ice, and was heard to express a desire for solitude.
`I wish to commune with myself,' Fourmyle said, kicking his valets in all directions. He was snoring before the last of them limped to the door and closed it behind him.

The snoring stopped and Foyle arose. 'That ought to hold them for today,' he muttered, and went into

his dressing-room. He stood before a mirror, took a deep breath and held it, meanwhile watching his face. At the expiration of one minute it was still untainted. He continued to hold his breath, maintaining rigid control over pulse and muscle, mastering the strain with iron calm. At two minutes and twenty seconds the stigmata appeared, blood-red. Foyle let out his breath. The tiger mask faded.

'Better,' he murmured. 'Much better. The old fakir was right, Yoga is the answer. Control. Pulse, breath, bowels, brains.'

He stripped and examined his body. He was in magnificent condition, but his skin still showed delicate silver seams in a network from neck to ankles. They looked as though someone had carved an outline of the nervous system into Foyle's flesh. They were the scars of an operation and they had not yet faded.

The operation had cost Foyle Cr 200,000 bribe to the chief surgeon of the Mars Commando Brigade and had transformed him into an extraordinary fighting machine. Every nerve plexus had been rewired, microscopic transistors and transformers had been buried in muscle and bone, a minute platinum outlet showed at the base of his spine. To this Foyle affixed a power-pack the size of a pea and switched it on. His body began an internal electronic vibration that was almost mechanical.

`More machine than man,' he thought. He dressed, rejected the extravagant apparel of Fourmyle of Ceres for the anonymous black coverall of action.

He jaunted to Robin Wednesbury's apartment in the lonely building amidst the Wisconsin pines. It was the real reason for the advent of the Four Mile Circus in Green Bay. He jaunted and arrived in darkness and empty space and immediately plummeted down.

`Christ!' he thought. `Mis-jaunted?'

The broken end of a rafter dealt him a bruising blow and he landed heavily on a shattered floor upon the putrefying remains of a corpse.

Foyle leaped up in calm revulsion. He pressed hard with his tongue against his right upper first molar. The operation that had transformed half his body into an electronic machine, had located the control switchboard in his teeth. Foyle pressed a tooth with his tongue and the peripheral cells of his retina were excited into emitting a soft light. He looked down two pale beams at the corpse of a man.

The corpse lay in the apartment below Robin Wednesbury's flat. It was gutted. Foyle looked up. Above him was a ten-foot hole where the floor of Robin's living-room had been. The entire building stank of fire, smoke and rot.

'Jacked,' Foyle said softly. 'This place has been jacked. What happened?'

The jaunting age had crystallized the hoboes, tramps and vagabonds of the world into a new class. It followed the night from east to west, always in darkness, always in search of loot, the leavings of disaster, carrion. If earthquake shattered a warehouse, they were jacking it the following night. If fire opened a house or explosion split the defenses of a shop, they jaunted in and scavenged. They called themselves Jack-Jaunters. They were jackals.

Foyle climbed up through the wreckage to the corridor on the floor above. The Jack-Jaunters had a camp there. A whole calf roasted before a fire, which sparked up to the sky through a rent in the roof. There were a dozen men and three women around the fire, rough, dangerous, jabbering in the cockney rhyming slang of the jackals. They were dressed in mismatched clothes and drinking potato beer from champagne glasses.

An ominous growl of anger and terror met Foyle's appearance as the big man in black came up through the rubble, his intent eyes emitting pale beams of light. Calmly, he strode through the rising mob to the entrance of Robin Wednesbury's flat. The iron control that he was making a habit gave him an air of detachment.

`If she's dead,' he thought, `I'm finished. I've got to use her. But if she's dead . . . '

Robin's apartment was gutted like the rest of the building. The living-room was an oval of floor around the jagged hole in the centre. Foyle searched for a body. Two men and a woman were in the bed in the bedroom. The men cursed. The woman shrieked at the apparition. The men hurled themselves at Foyle. He backed a step and pressed his tongue against his upper incisors. Neural circuits buzzed and every sense and response in his body was accelerated by a factor of five.

The effect was an instantaneous reduction of the external world to extreme slow action. Sound became a deep garble, color shifted down the spectrum to the red. The two assailants seemed to float towards him with dream-like languor. To the rest of the world Foyle became a blur of action. He sidestepped the blow inching towards him, walked around the man, raised him and threw him towards the crater in the



'Was there a body here?' Foyle asked. 'Negro girl. Very tall. Very beautiful.'
The man writhed and attempted to gouge Foyle's eyes.
'You keep track of bodies,' Foyle said gently. 'Some of you Jacks like dead girls better than live ones. Did you find her body in here?'
Receiving no satisfactory answer, he picked up a torch and set fire to the mink suit. He followed the Jack-Jaunter into the living-room and watched him with detached interest. The man howled, toppled over the edge of the crater and flamed down into the darkness below.
`Was there a body?'
Foyle called down quietly. He shook his head at the answer. 'Not very deft,' he murmured. 'I've got to learn how to extract information. Dagenham could teach me a thing or two.'
He switched off his electronic system and jaunted.
He appeared in Green Bay, smelling so abominably of singed hair and scorched skin that he entered the local Presteign shop (jewels, perfumes, cosmetics, Tonics and surrogates) to buy a deodorant. But the local Mr. Presto had evidently witnessed the arrival of the Four-Mile Circus and recognized him. Foyle at once awoke from his detached intensity and became the outlandish Fourmyle of Ceres. He clowned and cavorted, bought a twelve-ounce flagon of Euge No. 5 at Cr 500 the ounce, dabbed himself delicately and tossed the bottle into the street to the edification and delight of Mr. Presto.
The Record Clerk at the County Record Office was unaware of Foyle's identity and obdurate and uncompromising.
'No, Sir. County Records Are Not Viewed Without Proper Court Order For Sufficient Cause. That Is My Final Word.'

Foyle examined him keenly and without rancor. `Asthenic type,' he decided. `Slender, long-boned, no strength. Epileptoid character. Self-centered, pedantic, single-minded, shallow. Not bribable; too repressed and straitlaced. But repression's the chink in his armor.'

An hour later six followers from the Four-Mile Circus waylaid the Record Clerk. They were of the female persuasion and richly endowed with vice. Two hours late, the Record Clerk, dazed by flesh and the devil, delivered up his information. The apartment building had been opened to Jack-jaunting by a gas explosion two weeks previous. All tenants had been forced to move. Robin Wednesbury was in protective confinement in Mercy Hospital near the Iron Mountain Proving Grounds.

'Protective confinement?'

Foyle wondered. 'What for? What's she done?'

It took thirty minutes to organize a Christmas Party in the Four-Mile Circus. It was made up of musicians, singers, actors and rabble who knew the Iron Mountain co-ordinates. Led by their chief buffoon, they jaunted up with music, fireworks, firewater, and gifts. They paraded through the town spreading largesse and laughter. They blundered into the radar field of the Proving Ground protection system and were driven out with laughter. Fourmyle of Ceres, dressed as Santa Claus, scattering banknotes from a huge sack over his shoulder and leaping in agony as the induction field of the protection system burned his bottom, made an entrancing spectacle. They burst into Mercy Hospital, following Santa Claus who roared and cavorted with the detached calm of a solemn elephant. He kissed the nurses, made drunk the attendants, pestered the patients with gifts, littered the corridors with money, and abruptly disappeared when the happy rioting reached such heights that the police had to be called. Much later it was discovered that a patient had disappeared too, despite the fact that she had been under sedation and was incapable of jaunting. As a matter of fact she departed from the hospital inside Santa's sack.

Foyle jaunted with her over his shoulder to the hospital grounds. There, in a quiet grove of pines under a frosty sky, he helped her out of the sack. She wore severe white hospital pajamas and was beautiful. He removed his own costume, watching the girl intently, waiting to see if she would recognize him and remember him.

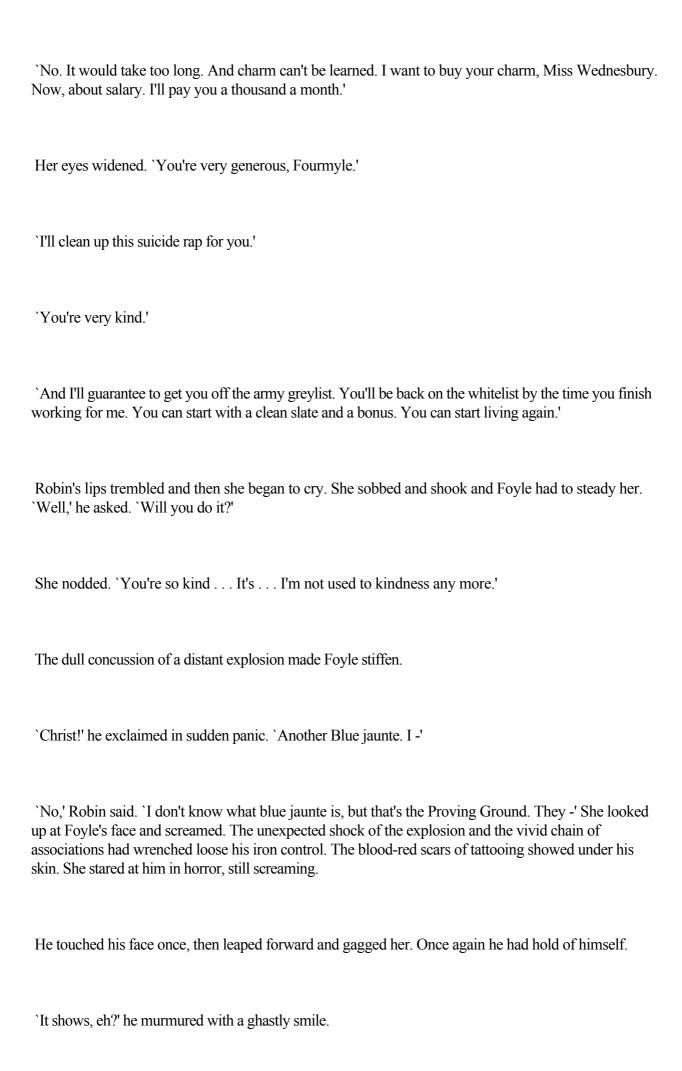
She was alarmed and confused; her telesending was like heat-lightning: `My God! Who is he? What's happened? Jacks again? Murder, this time? The music. The uproar. Why kidnapped in a sack? Drunks slurring on trombones. "Yes. Virginia, there is a Santa Claus." Adeste Fidelis. There go rockets. Feu de joi or feu d'enfer? What's he want from me? Who is he?'

`I'm Fourmyle of Ceres,' Foyle said.
`What? Who? Fourmyle of -? Yes, of course. The buffoon. The bourgeois gentilhomme. Vulgarity. Imbecility. Obscenity. The Four Mile Circus. My God! Am I telesending? Can you hear me?'
`I hear you, Miss Wednesbury,' Foyle said quietly.
'What have you done? Why? What do you want with me? I-'
'I want you to look at me.'
`Bonjour, Madame. Into my sack, Madame. Ecco! Look at me. I'm looking,' Robin said, trying to control the jangle of her thoughts. She gazed up into his face without recognition. `It's a face. I've seen so many like it. The faces of men, oh God! The features of masculinity. Everyman in rut. Will God never save us from brute's desire?'
'My rutting season's over, Miss Wednesbury.'
`I'm sorry you heard that. I'm terrified, naturally. I - You know me?'
`I know you.'
`We've met before?'
She scrutinized him closely, but still without recognition. Deep down inside Foyle there was a surge of triumph. If this woman of all women failed to remember him he was safe, provided he kept blood and brains and face under control.

`We've never met,' he said. `I've heard of you. I want something from you. That's why we're here; to talk about it. If you don't like my offer you can go back to the hospital.'
'You want something? But I've got nothing nothing, nothing. Nothing's left but shame and - Oh God! Why did the suicide fail? Why couldn't I-'
'So that's it?' Foyle interrupted softly. 'You tried to commit suicide, eh? That accounts for the gas explosion that opened the building And your protective confinement. Attempted suicide. Why weren't you hurt in the explosion?'
`So many were hurt. So many died. But I didn't. I'm unlucky, I suppose. I've been unlucky all my life.'
'Why suicide?'
'I'm tired. I'm finished. I've lost everything I'm on the army greylist suspected, watched, reported. No job. No family. No - Why suicide? Dear God, what else but suicide?'
'You can work for me.'
`I can What did you say?'
'I want you to work for me, Miss Wednesbury.'
She burst into hysterical laughter. `For you? Another camp-follower. Another Whore of Babylon in the Circus. Work for you, Fourmyle?'
'You've got sex on the brain,' he said gently. 'I'm not looking for tarts. They look for me, as a rule.'

herself. `Let me understand you. You've taken me out of the hospital to offer me a job. You've heard of me. That means you want something special. My specialty is telesending.'
'And charm.'
`What?'
'I want to buy your charm, Miss Wednesbury.'
`I don't understand.'
'Why,' Foyle said mildly. 'It ought to be simple for you. I'm the buffoon. I'm vulgarity, imbecility, obscenity. That's got to stop. I want you to be my social secretary.'
'You expect me to believe that? You could hire a hundred social secretaries a thousand, with your money. You expect me to believe that I'm the only one for you? That you had to kidnap me from protective confinement to get me?'
Foyle nodded. `That's right, there are thousands, but only one that can telesend.'
'What's that got to do with it?'
'You're going to be the ventriloquist; I'm going to be your dummy. I don't know the upper classes; you do. They have their own talk, their own joker, their own manners. If a man wants to be accepted by them he's got to talk their language. I can't, but you can. You'll talk for me, through my mouth
`But you could learn.'

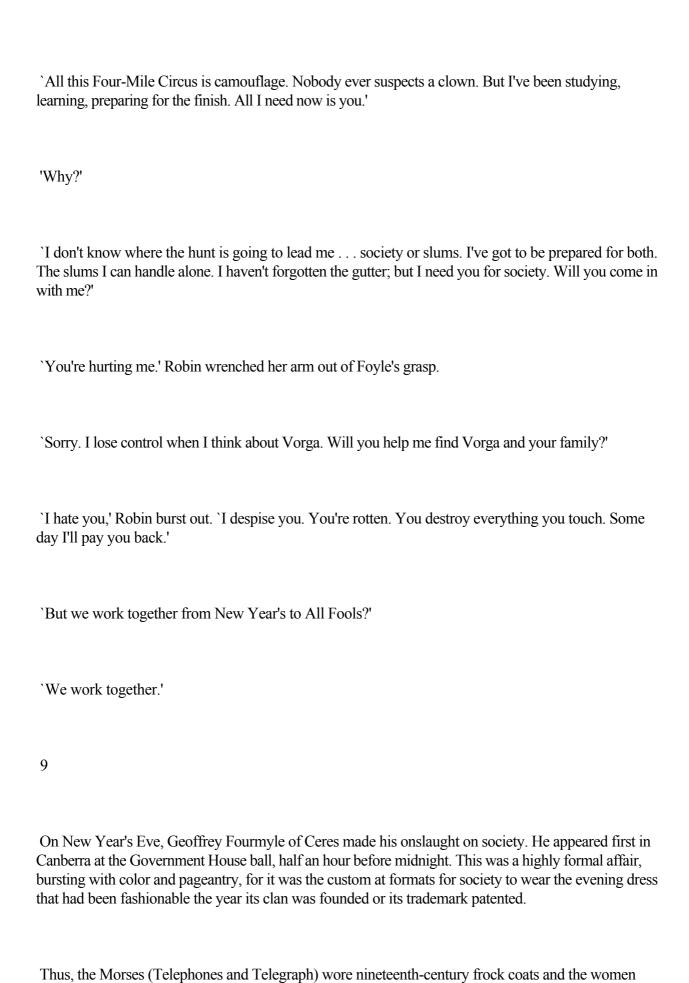
`I'm sorry. I'm obsessed by the brute who destroyed me. I - I'll try to make sense.' Robin calmed



`Lost my grip for a minute. Thought I was back in Gouffre Martel listening to a Blue jaunte. Yes, I'm Foyle. The brute who destroyed you. You had to know, sooner or later, but I'd hoped it would be later. I'm Foyle, back again. Will you be quiet and listen to me?'
She shook her head frantically, trying to struggle out of his grasp. With detached calm he punched her jaw. Robin sagged. Foyle picked her up, wrapped her in his coat and held her in his arms, waiting for consciousness to return. When he saw her eyelids flutter he spoke again.
'Don't move or you'll be sick. Maybe I didn't pull that punch enough.'
`Brute Beast'
'I could do this the wrong way,' he said. 'I could blackmail you. I know your mother and sisters are on Callisto, that you're classed as an alien belligerent by association. That puts you on the blacklist, ipso facto. Is that right? Ipso facto. "By the very fact." Latin. You can't trust hypno-learning. I could point out that all I have to do is send anonymous information to Central Intelligence and you wouldn't be just suspect any more. They'd be ripping information out of you inside twelve hours'
He felt her shudder. 'But I'm not going to do it that way. I'm going to tell you the truth because I want to turn you into a partner. Your mother's in the Inner Planets. She's in the Inner Planets,' he repeated. 'She may be on Earth.'
`Safe?' she whispered.
`I don't know.'
`Put me down.'
`You're cold.'



'It is my mother's,' Robin wept. `It She For pity's sake, where is she? What happened?'
`I don't know,' Foyle said steadily. `But I can guess. I think your mother got out of that concentration camp one way or another.'
'And my sisters too. She'd never leave them.'
'Maybe your sisters too. I think Vorga was running refugees out of Callisto. Your family paid with money and jewelry to get aboard and be taken to the Inner Planets. That's how a spaceman off the Vorga came to pawn this locket.'
`Then where are they?'
`I don't know. Maybe they were dumped on Mars or Venus. Most probably they were sold to a labor camp on the Moon, which is why they haven't been able to get in touch with you. I don't know where they are, but Vorga can tell us.'
`Are you lying? Tricking me?'
'Is that locket a lie? I'm telling the truth all the truth I know. I want to find out why they left me to die, and who gave the order. The man who gave the order will know where your mother and sisters are. He'll tell you before I kill him. He'll have plenty of time. He'll be a long time dying.'
Robin looked at him in horror. The passion that gripped him was making his face once again show the scarlet stigmata. He looked like a tiger closing in for the kill.
`I've got a fortune to spend never mind how I got it. I've got three months to finish the job. I've learned enough maths to compute the probabilities. Three months is the outside before they figure that Fourmyle of Ceres is Gully Foyle. Ninety days. From New Year's to All Fools. Will you join me?'
'You?' Robin cried with loathing. 'Join you?'



wore Victorian hoop-skirts. The Skodas (Powder and Guns) harked back to the late eighteenth century, wearing Regency tights and crinolines. The daring Peenemundes (Rockets and Reactors), dating from the 1920's wore tuxedos, and the women unashamedly revealed legs, arms and necks in the decolletee of antique Worth and Mainbocher gowns.

Fourmyle of Ceres appeared in evening clothes, very modern and very black, relieved only by a white sunburst on his shoulder, the trademark of the Ceres clan. With him was Robin Wednesbury in a glittering white gown, her slender waist tight in whalebone, the bustle of the gown accentuating her long straight back and graceful step.

The black and white contrast was so arresting that an orderly was sent to check the sunburst trademark in the Almanack of Peerages and Patents. He returned with the news that it was of the Ceres Mining Company, organized in 2250 for the exploitation of the mineral resources of Ceres, Pallos and Vesta.

The resources had never manifested themselves and the House of Ceres had gone into eclipse but had never become extinct. Apparently it was now being revived.

'Fourmyle? The clown?'

'Yes. The Four Mile Circus. Everybody's talking about him.'

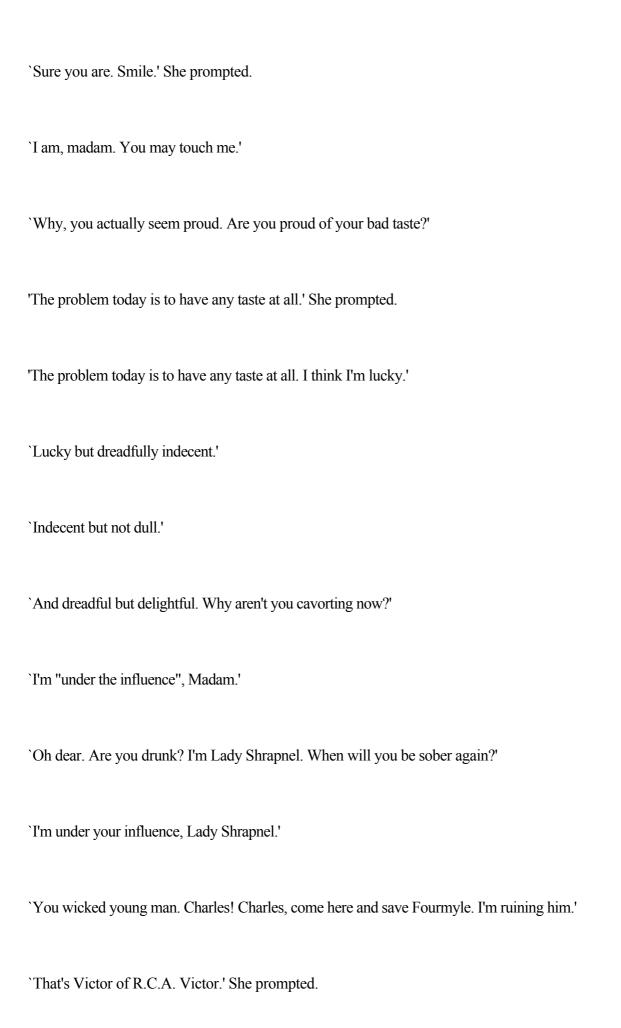
'Is that the same man?'

'Couldn't be. He looks human.' Society clustered around Fourmyle, curious but wary.

'Here they come,' Foyle muttered to Robin.

'Relax. They want the light touch. They'll accept anything if it's amusing. Stay tuned.' She prompted.

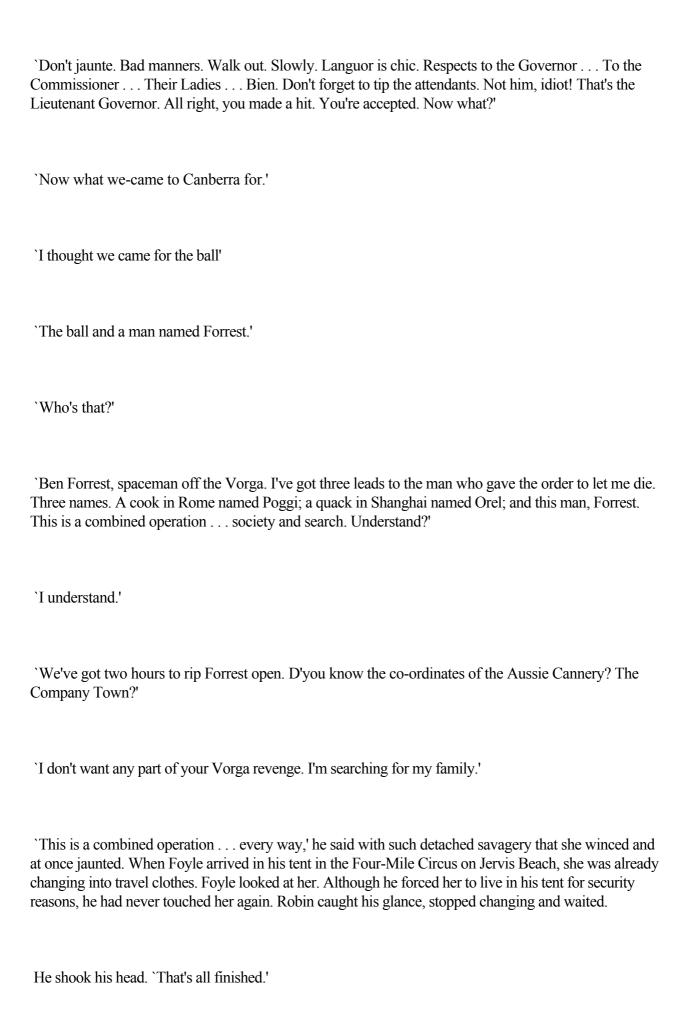
`Are you that dreadful man with the circus, Fourmyle?'











'How interesting. You've given up rape?'
`Get dressed,' he said, controlling himself. `Tell them they've got two hours to get the camp up to Shanghai.'
It was twelve-thirty when Foyle and Robin arrived at the front office of the Aussie Cannery company town. They applied for identification tags and were greeted by the mayor himself.
'Happy New Year,' he caroled. 'Happy! Happy! Visiting? A pleasure to drive you around. Permit me.'
He bundled them into a lush helicopter and took off. 'Lots of visitors tonight. Ours is a friendly town. Friendliest company town in the world.'
The plane circled giant buildings. `That's our ice palace Swimming baths on the left Big dome is the ski-jump. Snow all year 'round Tropical gardens under that glass roof. Palms, parrot, orchids, fruit. There's our market theatre got our own broadcasting company, too. 3D-SS. Take a look at the football stadium. Two of our boys made All-American this year. Turner at Right Rockne and Kowalsky at Left Heffilfinger.'
`Do tell,' Foyle murmured.
'Yessir, we've got everything. Everything. You don't have to jaunte around the world looking for fun. Aussie Cannery brings the world to you. Our town's a little universe. Happiest little universe in the world.
'Having absentee problems, I see.'
The mayor refused to falter in his sales-pitch. 'Look down at the streets. See those bikes? Motor-cycles? Cars? We can afford more luxury transportation per capita than any other town on earth. Look at those homes. Mansions. Our people are rich and happy. We keep 'em rich and happy.'

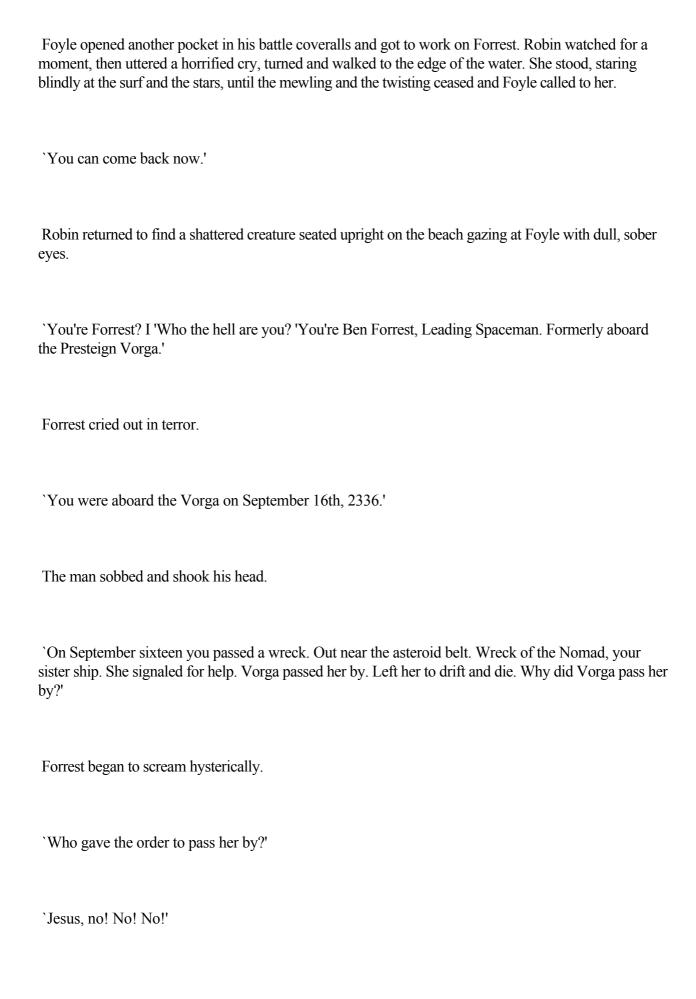


Foyle exclaimed. He and Robin peered through the window. Thirty worshippers of assorted faiths were celebrating the New Year with a combined and highly illegal service. The twenty-fourth century had not yet abolished God, but it had abolished organized religion.
'No wonder the house is man-trapped,' Foyle said. 'Filthy practices like that. Look, they've got a priest and a rabbi, and that thing behind them is a crucifix.'
'Did you ever stop to think what swearing is?' Robin asked quietly. 'You say "Jesus" and "Jesus Christ", you know what that is?'
`Just swearing, that's all. Like "Ouch" or "Pshaw'
'No, it's religion. You don't know it, but there are two thousand years of meaning behind words like that
`This is no time for dirty talk,' Foyle said impatiently. `Save it for later. Come on.'
The rear of the chalet was a solid wall of glass, the picture window of a dimly lit, empty living-room.
'Down on your face,' Foyle ordered. 'I'm going in.'
Robin lay prone on the marble patio. Foyle triggered his body, accelerated into a lightning blur, and smashed a hole in the glass wall. Far down on the sound spectrum he heard dull concussions. They were shots. Quick projectiles laced towards him. Foyle dropped to the floor and tuned his ears, sweeping from low bass to supersonic until at last he picked up the hum of the Man-Trap control mechanism. He turned his head gently, pin-pointed the location by binaural D/F, wove in through the stream of shots and demolished the mechanism. He decelerated.

`Come in, quick!'

Robin joined him in the living-room, trembling. The Cellar-Christians were pouring up into the house somewhere, emitting the sounds of martyrs.
`Wait here,' Foyle grunted. He accelerated, blurred through the house, located the Cellar-Christians in poses of frozen flight, and sorted through them. He returned to Robin and decelerated.
'None of them is Forrest,' he reported. 'Maybe he's upstairs.
The back way, while they're going out the front. Come on!'
They raced up the back stairs. On the landing they paused to take bearings.
'Have to work fast,' Foyle muttered. 'Between the shots and the religion riot, the world and his wife'll be jaunting around asking questions -' He broke off. A low mewling sound came from a door at the head of the stairs. Foyle sniffed.
`Analogue!' he exclaimed. `Must be Forrest. How about that? Religion in the cellar and dope upstairs.'
`What are you talking about?'
'I'll explain later. In here. I only hope he isn't on a gorilla kick.'
Foyle went through the door like a diesel tractor. They were in a large, bare room. A heavy rope was suspended from the ceiling. A naked man was entwined with the rope midway in the air. He squirmed up and down the rope, emitting a mewling sound and a musky odor.
'Python,' Foyle said. 'That's a break. Don't go neat him. He'll mash your bones if he touches you.'

Voices below began to call: 'Forrest! What's all the shooting? Happy New Year, Forrest! Where in hell's the celebration?'
'Here they come,' Foyle grunted. 'Have to jaunte him out of here. Meet you back at the beach. Go.'
He whipped a knife out of his pocket, cut the rope, swung the squirming man to his back and jaunted. Robin was on the empty Jervis beach a moment before him. Foyle arrived with the squirming man oozing over his neck and shoulders like a python, crushing him in a terrifying embrace. The red stigmata suddenly bursts out on Foyle's face.
`Sinbad,' he said in a strangled voice. `Old Man of the Sea. Quick, girl! Right pockets. Three over. Two down. Stingampoule. Let him have it anywh -'
His voice was choked off.
Robin opened the pocket, found a packet of glass beads and took them out. Each bead had a bee-sting end. She thrust the sting of an ampoule into the writhing man's neck. He collapsed.
Foyle shook him off and arose from the sand. 'Christ!' he muttered, massaging his throat. He took a deep breath. 'Blood and bowels. Control,' he said, resuming his air of detached calm. The scarlet tattooing faded from his face.
`What was all that horror?' Robin asked.
`Analogue. Psychiatric dope for psychotics. Illegal. A twitch has to release himself somehow; revert back to the primitive. He identifies with a particular kind of animal; gorilla, grizzly, brood bull, wolf Takes the dope and turns into the animal he admires. Forrest was queer for snakes, seems as if.'
'How do you know all this? 'Told you I've been studying preparing for Vorga. This is one of the things I learned Show you something else I've learned, if you're not chicken-livered. How to bring a twitch out of Analogue.'









'Certainly not. You know my slogan: Not one cent for entropy. Do I hear a hundred credits for this expensive and lovely creature? One hundred, gentlemen? She's all beauty and highly adaptable. Two? Thank you. Three and a half? Thank you. I'm bid - Five? Eight? Thank you. Any more bids for this remarkable product of the resident genius of the Four-Mile Circus? She walks. She talks. She adapts. She has been conditioned to respond to the highest bidder. Nine? Do I hear any more bids? Are you all done? Are you all through? Sold, to Lord Yale for nine hundred credits.'

Tumultuous applause and appalled ciphering: `Good God! An android like that must have cost ninety thousand! How can he afford it?'

'Will you turn the money over to the android, Lord Yale? She will respond suitably. Until we meet again in Rome, ladies and gentlemen . . . The Borghese Palace at midnight. Happy New Year.'

Fourmyle had already departed when Lord Yale discovered, to the delight of himself and the other bachelors, that a double deception had been perpetrated. The android was, in fact, a living, human creature, all beauty and highly adaptable. She responded magnificently to nine hundred credits. The trick was the smoking-room story of the year. The stags waited eagerly to congratulate Fourmyle.

But Foyle and Robin Wednesbury were passing under a sign that read: DOUBLE YOUR JAUNTING OR DOUBLE YOUR MONEY BACK in seven languages, and entering the emporium Of DR SERGI OREL, CELESTIAL ENLARGER OF CRANIAL CAPABILITIES.

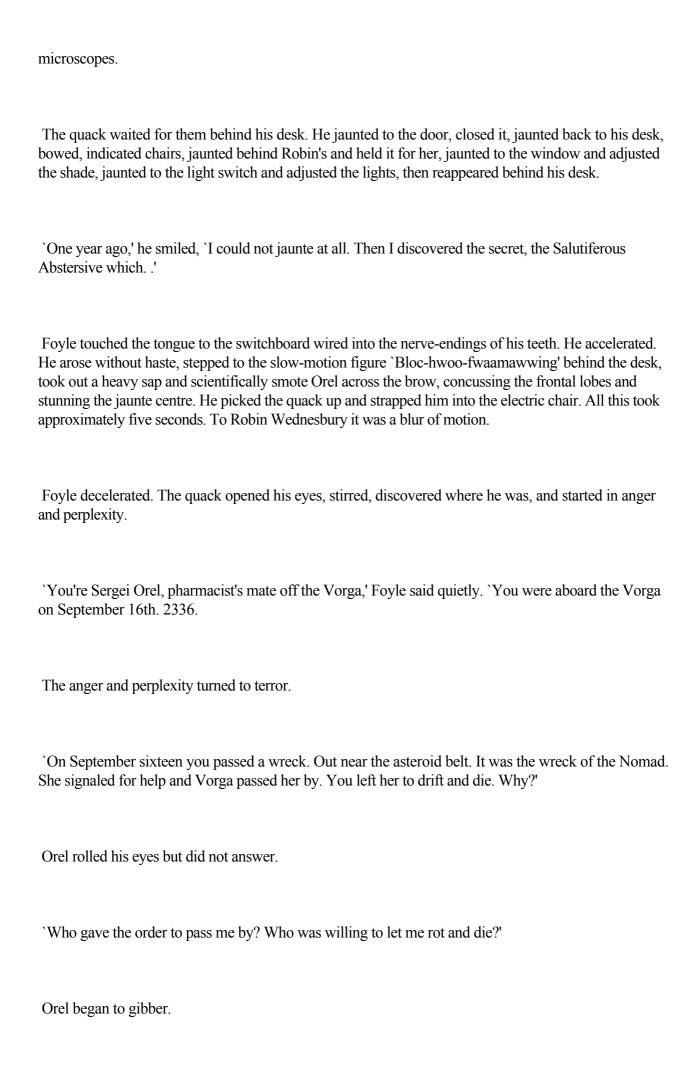
The waiting-room was decorated with lurid brain charts demonstrating how Dr Orel poulticed, cupped, balsamed and electrolysed the brain into double its capacity or double your money back. He also doubled your memory with anti-febrile purgatives, magnified your morals with tonic roborants, and adjusted all anguished psyches with Orel's Epulotic Vulnerary.

The waiting-room was empty. Foyle opened a door at a venture. He and Robin had a glimpse of along hospital ward: Foyle grunted in disgust.

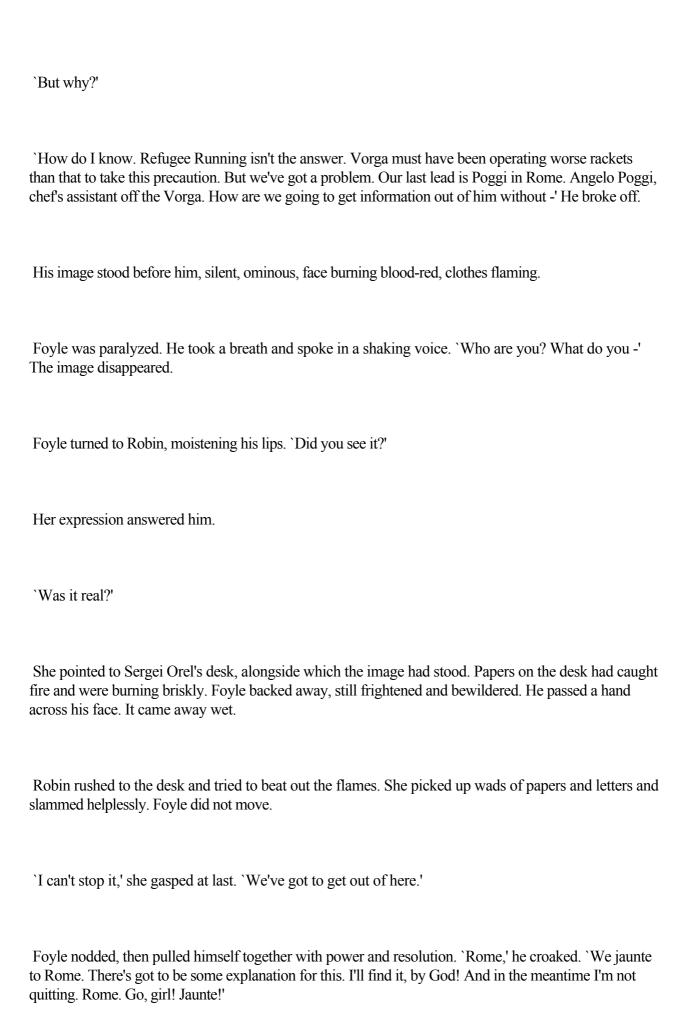
`A Snow Joint. Might have known he'd be running a dive for hop-heads too.'

This joint catered to Disease Collectors, the most hopeless of neurotic-addicts. They lay in their hospital beds, suffering mildly from illegally induced para-measles, para-flu, para-malaria; devotedly attended by

nurses in starched white uniforms, and avidly enjoying their illegal illness and the attention it brought.
`Look at them,' Foyle said contemptuously. `Disgusting. If there's anything filthier than a religion-junkie, it's a disease-bird.'
'Good evening,' a voice spoke behind them.
Foyle shut the door and turned. Dr Sergei Orel bowed. The good doctor was crisp and sterile in the classic white cap, gown and surgical mask of the medical clans, to which he belonged by fraudulent assertion only. He was short, swarthy, and olive-eyed, recognizably Russian by his name alone. More than a century of jaunting had so mingled the many populations of the world that racial types were disappearing.
'Didn't expect to find you open for business on New Year's Eve,' Foyle said.
'Our Russian New Year comes two weeks later,' Dr Orel answered. 'Step this way, please.'
He pointed to a door and disappeared with a `pop'. The door revealed a long flight of stairs. As Foyle and Robin started up the stairs, Dr Orel appeared above them. `This way, please. Oh one moment.'
He disappeared and appeared again behind them. 'You forgot to close the door.'
He shut the door and jaunted again. This time he reappeared high at the head of the stairs. 'In here, please.'
`Showing off,' Foyle muttered: `Double your jaunting or double your money back. All the same, he's pretty fast. I'll have to be faster.'
They entered the consultation-room. It was a glass-roofed penthouse. The walls were lined with gaudy but antiquated medical apparatus: a sedative bath-medicine, an electric chair for administering shock treatment to schizophrenics, an E.K.G. analyzer for tracing psychotic patterns, old optical and electronic







Since the Middle Ages the Spanish Stairs have been the centre of corruption in Rome. Rising from the Piazza di Spagna to the gardens of the Villa Borghese in a broad long sweep, the Spanish Stairs are, have been, and always will be swarming with vice. Pimps lounge on the stairs, whores, perverts, lesbians, catamites. Insolent and arrogant, they display themselves and jeer at the respectables who sometimes pass.

The Spanish Stairs were destroyed in the fission wars of the late twentieth century. They were rebuilt and destroyed again in the war of the World Restoration in the twenty-first century. Once more they were rebuilt and this time covered over with blast-proof crystal, turning the stairs into a stepped Galleria. The dome of the Galleria cut off the view from the death chamber in Keats's house. No longer would visitors peep through the narrow window and see the last sight that met the dying poet's eyes. Now they saw the smoky dome of the Spanish Stairs, and through it the distorted figures of Sodom and Gomorrah below.

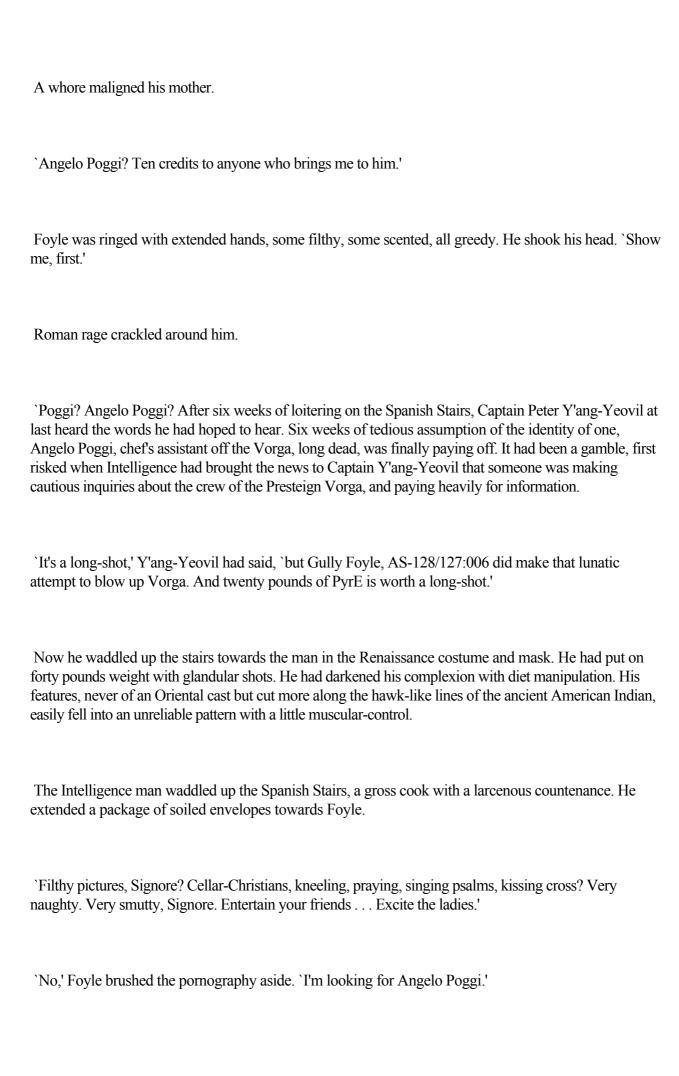
The Galleria of the Stairs was illuminated at night, and this New Year's Eve was chaotic. For a thousand years Rome has welcomed the New Year with a bombardment . . . fire-crackers, rockets, torpedoes, gunshots, bottles, shoes, old pots and pans. Romans save junk for months to be hurled out of top-floor windows when midnight strikes. The roar of fireworks inside the Stairs, and the clatter of debris clashing on the Galleria roof was deafening as Foyle and Robin Wednesbury climbed down from the carnival in the Borghese Palace.

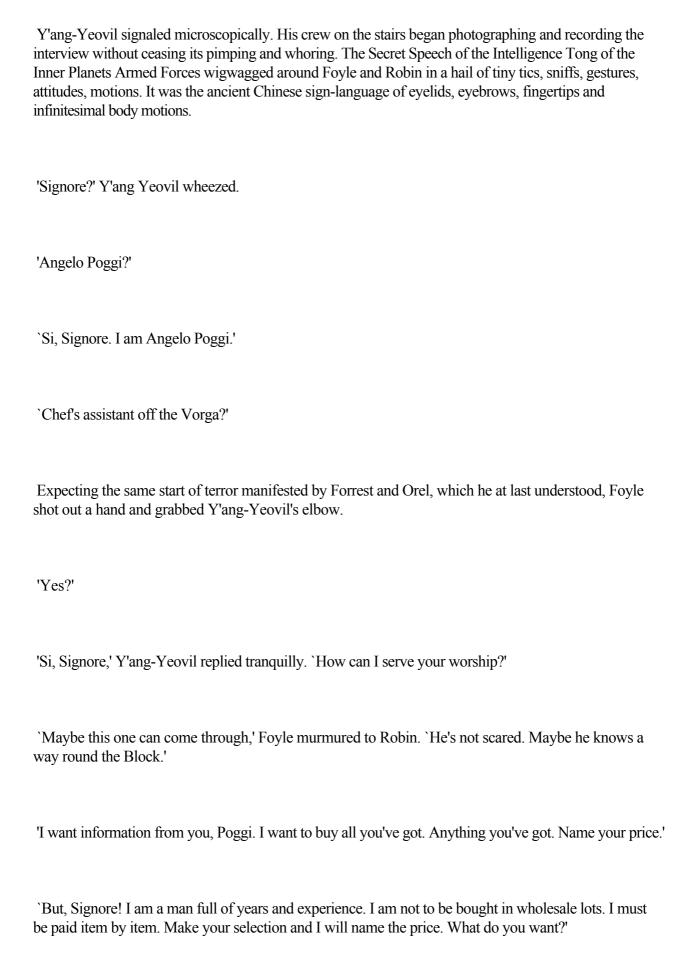
They were still in costume; Foyle in the livid crimson-and-black tights and doublet of Cesare Borgia, Robin wearing the silver encrusted gown of Lucrezia Borgia. They wore grotesque velvet masks. The contrast between their Renaissance costume and the modern clothes around them brought forth jeers and catcalls. Even the Lobos who frequented the Spanish Stairs, the unfortunate habitual criminals who had had a quarter of their brains burned out by prefrontal lobotomy, were aroused from their dreary apathy to stare. The mob seethed around the couple as they descended the Galleria.

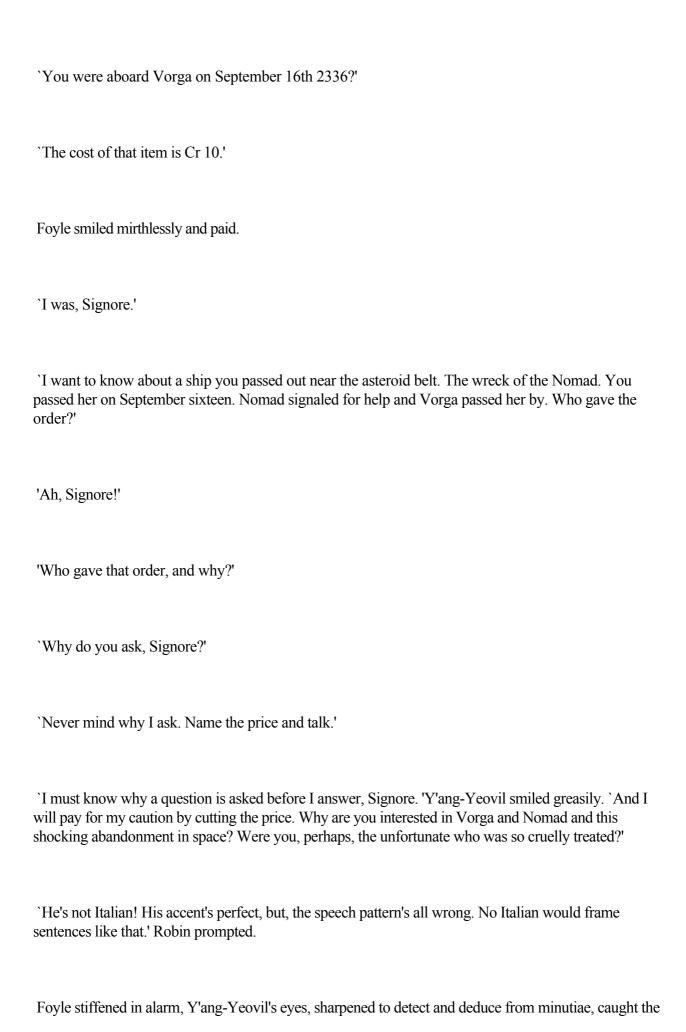
'Poggi,' Foyle called quietly. 'Angelo Poggi?'

A bawd bellowed anatomical adjurations at him.

'Poggi?' Angelo Poggi?' Foyle was impassive. 'I'm told he can be found on the Stairs at night. Angelo Poggi?'







change in attitude. He realized at once that he had slipped somehow. He signaled to his crew urgently.

A white-hot brawl broke out on the Spanish Stairs. In an instant, Foyle and Robin were caught up in a screaming, struggling mob. The crews of the Intelligence Tong were past masters of this OP-I maneuver, designed to outwit a jaunting world. Their split-second timing could knock any man off balance and strip him for identification. Their success was based on the simple fact that between unexpected assault and defensive response there must always be a recognition lag. Within the space of that lag, the Intelligence Tong guaranteed to prevent any man from saving himself.

In three-fifths of a second Foyle was battered, kneed, hammered across the forehead, dropped to the steps and spread-eagled. The mask was plucked from his face, portions of his clothes torn away, and he was ripe and helpless for the rape of the identification cameras. Then, for the first time in the history of the tong, their schedule was interrupted.

A man appeared, straddling Foyle's body . . . a huge man with a hideously tattooed face and clothes that smoked and flamed. The apparition was so appalling that the crew stopped dead and stared. A howl went up from the crowd on the Stairs at the dreadful spectacle.

'The Burning Man! Look! The Burning Man!'

'But that's Foyle,' Y'ang-Yeovil whispered.

For perhaps a quarter of a minute the apparition stood, silent, burning, staring with blind eyes. Then it disappeared. The man spread-eagled on the ground disappeared too. He turned into a lightning blur of action that whipped through the crew, locating and destroying cameras, recorders, all identification apparatus. Then the blur seized the girl in the Renaissance gown and vanished.

The Spanish Stairs came to life again, painfully, as though struggling out of a nightmare. The bewildered Intelligence crew clustered around Y'ang-Yeovil.

'What in God's name was that, Yeo?'

'I think it was our man. Gully Foyle. You saw that tattooed face.'



Y'ang-Yeovil flushed `All right,' he blurted. `I'm transparent.

'Just repetitious, Yeo. All your romances start the same way. "There's no need to manhandle that girl . . "And then Dolly Quaker, Jean Webster, Gwynn Roget, Marion -'

'No names, please!' a shocked voice interrupted. 'Does Romeo tell Juliet?'

'You're all going on latrine assignment tomorrow,' Y'ang Yeovil said. 'I'm damned if I'll stand for this salacious insubordination. No, not tomorrow; but as soon as this case is closed.'

His hawk-face darkened. 'My God, what a mess! Will you ever forget Foyle standing there like a burning brand? But where is he? What's he up to? What's it all mean?'

11

Presteign of Presteign's Mansion in Central Park was ablaze for the New Year. Charming antique electric bulbs with zigzag filaments and pointed tips shed yellow light. The jaunte-proof maze had been removed and the great door was open for the special occasion. The interior of the house was protected from the gaze of the crowd outside by a jeweled screen just inside the door.

The sightseers buzzed and exclaimed as the famous and near-famous of clan and sept arrived by car, by coach, by litter, by every form of luxurious transportation. Presteign of Presteign himself stood before the door, iron-grey, handsome, smiling his basilisk smile, and welcomed society to his open house. Hardly had a celebrity stepped through the door and disappeared behind the screen when another, even more famous, came clattering up in a vehicle even more fabulous.

The Colas arrived in a bandwagon. The Esso family (six sons, three daughters) was magnificent in a glass-topped Greyhound Bus. But Greyhound arrived (in an Edison Electric Runabout) hard on their heels and there was much laughter and chaffing at the door. But when Edison of Westinghouse dismounted from his Esso-fuelled gasoline buggy, completing the circle, the laughter on the steps turned into a roar.

Just as the crowd of guests turned to enter Presteign's home, a distant commotion attracted their attention. It was a rumble, a fierce chatter of pneumatic punches, and an outrageous metallic bellowing. It approached rapidly. The outer fringe of sightseers opened a broad lane. A heavy truck rumbled down the lane. Six men were tumbling baulks of timber out of the back of the truck. Following them came a crew of twenty arranging the baulks neatly in rows.

Presteign and his guests watched with amazement. A giant machine, bellowing and pounding, approached, crawling over the ties. Behind it were deposited parallel rails of welded steel. Crews with sledges and pneumatic punches spiked the rails to the timber ties. The track was laid to Presteign's door in a sweeping arc and then curved away. The bellowing engine and crews disappeared into the darkness.

'Good God!' Presteign was distinctly heard to say. Guests poured out of the house to watch.

A shrill whistle sounded in the distance. Down the track came a man on a white horse, carrying a large red flag. Behind him panted a steam locomotive drawing a single observation car. The train stopped before Presteign's door. A conductor swung down from the car followed by a Pullman porter. The porter arranged steps. A lady and gentleman in evening clothes descended.

'Shan't be long,' the gentleman told the conductor. 'Come back for me in an hour.'

'Good God!' Presteign exclaimed again.

The train puffed off. The couple mounted the steps.

'Good evening, Presteign,' the gentleman said. 'Terribly sorry about that horse messing up your grounds, but the old New York franchise still insists on the red flag in front of trains.'

'Fourmyle!' the guests shouted.

'Fourmyle of Ceres!' the sightseers cheered. Presteign's party was now an assured success.

Inside the vast velvet and plush reception hall, Presteign examined Fourmyle curiously. Foyle endured the keen iron-grey gaze with equanimity, meanwhile nodding and smiling to the enthusiastic admirers he had acquired from Canberra to New York.
'Control,' he thought. 'Blood, bowels and brain. He grilled me in his office for one hour after that crazy attempt I made on Vorga. Will he recognize me? Your face is familiar, Presteign,' Fourmyle said. 'Have we met before?'
'I have not had the honor of meeting a Fourmyle until tonight,' Presteign answered ambiguously. Foyle had trained himself to read men, but Presteign's hard, handsome face was inscrutable. Standing face to face, the one detached and compelled, the other reserved and indomitable, they looked like a pair of brazen statues at white heat on the verge of molten.
'I'm told that you boast of being an upstart, Fourmyle'
'Yes. I've patterned myself after the first Presteign'
'Indeed?'
'You will remember that he boasted of starting the family fortune in the plasma black market during the Third World War.'
'It was the second war, Fourmyle. But the hypocrites of our clan never acknowledge him. The name was Payne then.'
`I hadn't known.'
`And what was your unhappy name before you changed it to Fourmyle?'



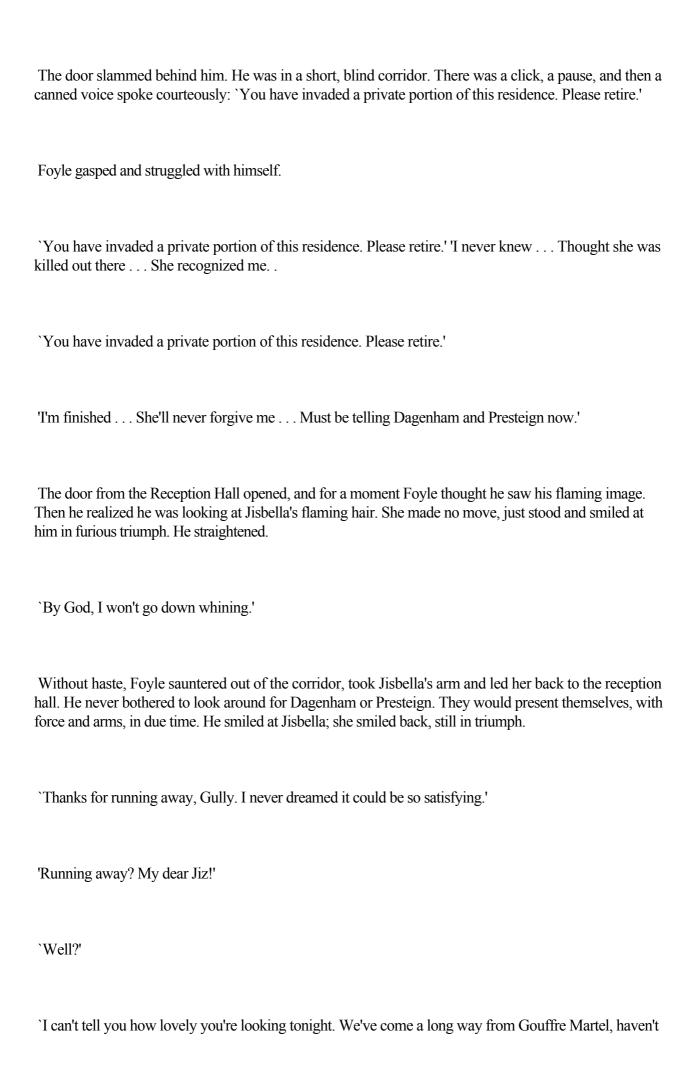
'Fourmyle, you are a young man after my own heart. If you do not claim a relationship with our clan I shall be forced to adopt you.'
'You're too late, Presteign. I've already adopted you.'
Presteign took Foyle's arm. 'You must be presented to my daughter, Lady Olivia. Will you allow me?'
They crossed the reception hall. Triumph surged within Foyle: He doesn't know. He'll never know. Then doubt came: But I'll never know if he does know. He's crucible steel. He could teach me a thing or two about control.
Acquaintances hailed Fourmyle.
'Wonderful deception you worked in Shanghai.'
'Marvelous carnival in Rome, wasn't it? Did you hear about the burning man who appeared on the Spanish Stairs?'
'We looked for you in London.'
'What a heavenly entrance that was,' Harry Sherwin-Williams called. 'Outdid us all, by God. Made us look like a pack of damned pikers.'
'You forget yourself, Harry,' Presteign said coldly. 'You know I permit no profanity in my home.'
`Sorry, Presteign. Where's the circus now, Fourmyle?'

`I don't know,' Foyle said. `Just a moment.'
A crowd gathered, grinning in anticipation of the latest Fourmyle folly. He took out a platinum watch and snapped open the case. The face of a valet appeared on the dial.
`Ahhh whatever your name is Where are we staying just now?'
The answer was tiny and tinny. 'You gave orders to make New York your permanent residence, Fourmyle.'
'Oh? Did I? And?'
`We bought St Patrick's Cathedral, Fourmyle.'
`And where is that?'
'Old St Patrick's, Fourmyle. On Fifth Avenue and what was formerly Both Street. We've pitched the camp inside.'
`Thank you.'
Fourmyle closed the platinum Hunter. 'My address is Old St Patrick's, New York: There's one thing to be said for the outlawed religions At least they built churches big enough to house a circus.'
Olivia Presteign was seated on a dais, surrounded by admirers. She was a Snow-Maiden, an Ice Princess with coral eyes and coral lips, imperious, unattainable, beautiful. Foyle looked at her once and lowered his eyes in confusion before her blind gaze that could only see electromagnetic waves and infra-red light. His heart began to beat faster.

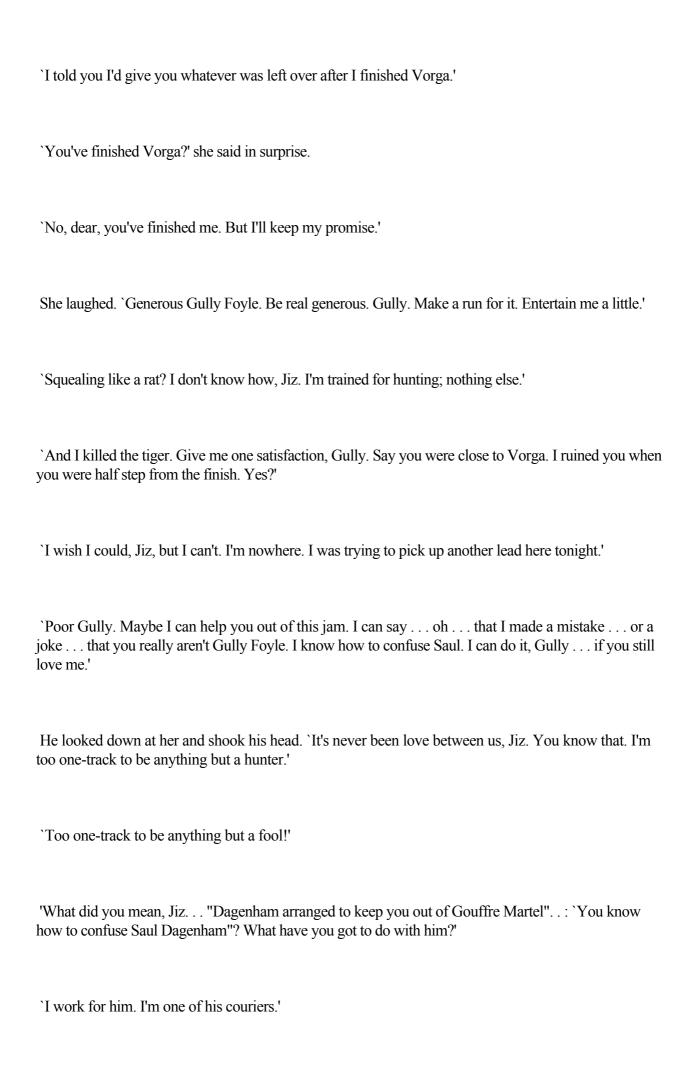
`Don't be a fool!' he thought desperately. `Control yourself. This can be dangerous
He was introduced; was addressed in a husky, silvery voice; was given a cool, slim hand; but the hand seemed to explode in his with an electric shock. It was almost a start of mutual recognition.
'Of what? She's a symbol. The Dream Princess The Unattainable Control!'
He was fighting so hard that he scarcely realized he had been dismissed, graciously and indifferently. He could not believe it. He stood, gaping like a lout.
`What? Are you still here, Fourmyle?'
'I couldn't believe I'd been dismissed, Lady Olivia.'
'Hardly that, but I'm afraid you are in the way of my'
'I'm not used to being dismissed. (No. No. All wrong.) At least by someone I'd like to count as a fiend.'
'Don't be tedious, Fourmyle. Do step down.'
'How have I offended you?'
`Offended me? Now you're being ridiculous.'
`Lady Olivia (Christ! Can't I say anything right? Where's Robin?) Can we start again, please?'
'If you're trying to be gauche, Fourmyle, you're succeeding admirably.'

'Your hand again, please. Thank you. I'm Fourmyle of Ceres.'
'All right.' She laughed. `I'll concede you're a clown. Now do step down. I'm sure you can find someone to amuse.'
`What's happened this time?'
`Really, sir, are you trying to make me angry?'
'No. (Yes, I am. Trying to touch you somehow cut through the ice.) The first time our handclasp was violent. Now it's nothing. What happened?'
'Fourmyle,' Olivia said wearily, `I'll concede that you're amusing, original, witty, fascinating anything, if you will only go away.'
He stumbled off the dais. `Bitch. Bitch. Bitch. No. She's the dream just as I dreamed her. The icy pinnacle to be stormed and taken. To lay siege invade ravish force to her knees'
He came face to face with Saul Dagenham.
He stood paralyzed, coercing blood and bowels.
'Ali, Fourmyle,' Presteign said. `This is Saul Dagenham. He can only give us thirty minutes and he insists on spending one of them with you.'
Does he know? Did he send for Dagenham to make sure? Attack. Toujours audace.

'What happened to your face, Dagenham?' Fourmyle asked with detached curiosity.
The death's-head smiled. `And I thought I was famous. Radiation poisoning. I'm hot. Time was when they said "Hotter than a pistol". Now they say "Hotter than Dagenham": The deadly eyes raked Foyle `What's behind that circus of yours?'
`A passion for notoriety.'
'I'm an old hand at camouflage myself. I recognize the signs. What's your larceny?'
`Does Dillinger tell Capone?'
Foyle smiled back, beginning to relax, restraining his triumph, 'I've outfaced them both. You look happier, Dagenham.'
Instantly he realized the slip.
Dagenham picked it up in a flash. 'Happier than when? Where did we meet before?'
'Not happier than when; happier than me.'
Foyle turned to Presteign. `I've fallen desperately in love with Lady Olivia! ` Saul, your half hour's up
Dagenham and Presteign, on either side of Foyle, turned. A tall woman approached, stately in an emerald evening gown, her red hair gleaming. It was Jisbella McQueen. Their glances met. Before the shock could seethe into his face, Foyle turned, ran six steps to the first door he saw, opened it and darted through.



we?' Foyle motioned to the ballroom. `Dance?'
Her eyes widened in surprise at his composure. She permitted him to escort her to the ballroom and take her in his firms.
'By the way, Jiz, how did you manage to keep out of Gouffre Martel?'
'Dagenham arranged it. So you dance now, Gully?'
'I dance, speak four languages miserably, study science and philosophy, write pitiful poetry, blow myself up with idiotic experiments, fence like a fool, box like a buffoon In short, I'm the notorious Fourmyle of Ceres'
'No longer Gully Foyle.'
'Only to you, dear, and whoever you've told.'
'Just Dagenham. Are you sorry I blew it?'
'You couldn't help yourself any more than I could.'
'No, I couldn't. Your name just popped out of me. What would you have paid to keep my mouth shut?'
`Don't be a fool, Jiz. This accident's going to earn you about Cr 17,980,000.'
`What d'you mean?'





'Saul isn't returning. He doesn't know. You can go to hell on your own.'
`I don't believe you.'
`D'you think it would take him this long to get you? Saul Dagenham?'
`But why didn't you tell him? After the way I ran out on you'
'Because I don't want him going to hell with you. I'm not talking about Vorga. I mean something else, PyrE. That's why they hunted you. That's what they're after. Twenty pounds of PyrE.'
`What's that?'
'When you got the safe open was there a small bog in it? Made of I.L.I Inter Lead Isomer?'
`Yes.'
`What was inside the I.L.I. box?'
`Twenty slugs that looked like compressed iodine crystals.'
`What did you do with the slugs?'
`Sent two out for analysis. No one could find out what they are. I'm trying to run an analysis on a third in my lab when I'm not clowning for the public.'

'Oh, you are, are you? Why?'
'I'm growing up, Jiz.' Foyle said gently. `It didn't take much to figure out that was what Presteign and Dagenham were after.'
'Where have you got the rest of the slugs?'
'In a safe place.'
`They're not safe. They can't ever be safe. I don't know what PyrE is, but I know it's the road to hell, and I don't want Saul walking it'
'You love him that much?'
'I respect him that much. He's the first man that eves showed me an excuse for the double standard.'
'Jiz, what is PyrE? You know.'
`I've guessed. I've pieced together the hints I've heard. I've got an idea. And I could tell you, Gully, but I won't.' The fiery in her face was luminous. 'I'm running out on you, this time. I'm leaving you to hang helpless in the dark. See what it feels like, boy! Enjoy!'
She broke away from him and swept across the ballroom floor. At that moment the first bombs fell.
They came in like meteor swarms; not so many, but far more deadly. They came in on the morning quadrant, that quarter of the globe in darkness from midnight to dawn. They collided head on with the forward side of the earth in its revolution around the sun. They had been travelling a distance of four hundred million miles.

Their excessive speed was matched by the rapidity of the Terran defense computers, which traced and intercepted these New Year gifts from the Outer Satellites within the space of micro-seconds. A multitude of fierce new stars prickled in the sky and vanished; they were bombs detected and detonated five hundred miles above their target.

But so narrow was the margin between speed of defense and speed of attack that many got through. They shot through the aurora level, the meteor level, the twilight limit, the stratosphere, and down to earth. The invisible trajectories ended in titanic convulsions.

The first atomic explosion which destroyed Newark shook the Presteign mansion with an unbelievable quake. Floors and walls shuddered and the guests were thrown in heaps along with furniture and decorations. Quake followed quake as the random shower descended around New York. They were deafening, numbing, chilling. The sounds, the shocks, the flares of lurid light on the horizon were so enormous, that reason was stripped from humanity, leaving nothing but flayed animals to shriek, cower and run. Within the space of five seconds Presteign's New Year party was transformed from elegance into anarchy.

Foyle arose from the floor. He looked at the struggling bodies on the ballroom parquet, saw Jisbella fighting to free herself, took a step towards her and then stopped. He revolved his head, dazedly, feeling it was no part of him. The thunder never ceased. He saw Robin Wednesbury in the reception hall, reeling and battered. He took a step towards her and then stopped again. He knew where he must go.

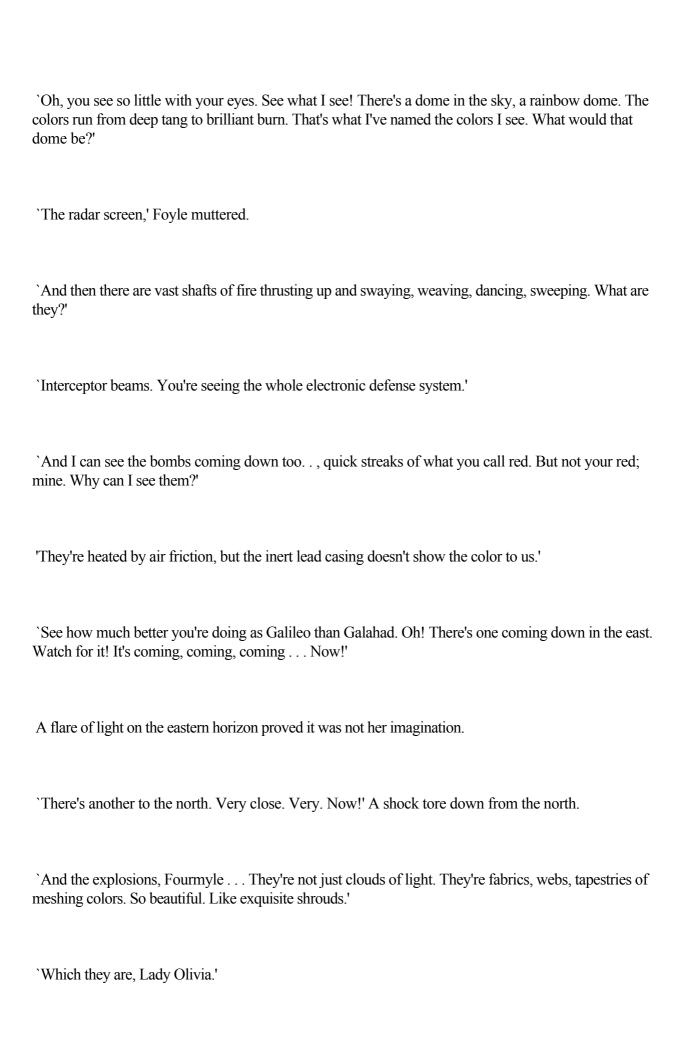
He accelerated. The thunder and lightning dropped down the spectrum to grinding and flickering. The shuddering quakes turned into greasy undulations. Foyle blurred through the giant house, searching, until at last he found her, standing in the garden, standing tiptoe on a marble bench looking like a marble statue to his accelerated senses . . . the state of exaltation.

He decelerated. Sensation leaped up the spectrum again and once more he was buffeted by that bigger-than-death size bombardment.

`Lady Olivia,' he called.
`Who is that?'

'The clown.'

`Fourmyle?'
`Yes.'
`And you came searching for me? I'm touched, really touched.'
'You're insane to be standing out here like this. I beg you to let me '
'No, no, no. It's beautiful Magnificent!'
`Let me jaunte with you to some place that's safe.'
'Ali, you see yourself as a knight in armor? Chivalry to the rescue. It doesn't suit you, my dear. You haven't the flair for it. You'd best go.'
`I'll stay.'
`As a beauty-lover?'
`As a lover.'
'You're still tedious, Fourmyle. Come, be inspired. This is Armageddon Flowering Monstrosity. Tell me what you see.'
`There's nothing much,' he answered, looking around and wincing. `There's light all over the horizon. Quick clouds of it. Above there's a a sort of sparkling effect. Like Christmas lights twinkling.'

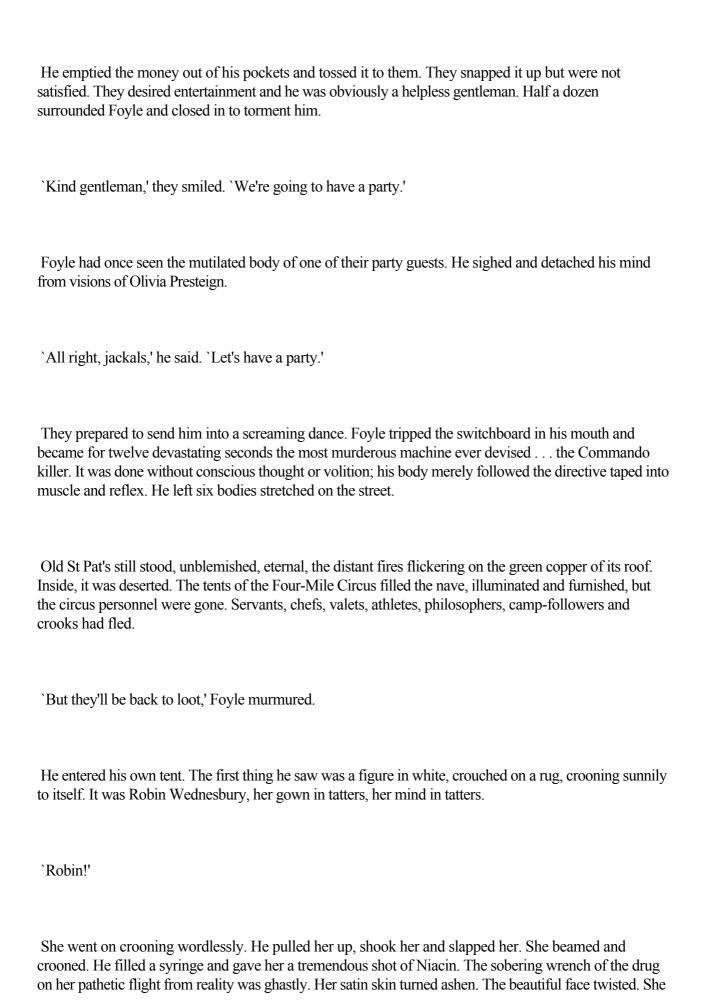




He stepped close to her, clenching his fists in rage. She touched his cheek with a cool, quiet hand, but once again there was that electric shock.
'No, it's too late, my dear,' she said quietly. 'Here comes a whole cluster of red streaks down, down, directly at us. There'll be no escaping this. Quick, now! Run! Jaunte! Take me with you. Quick! Quick!'
He swept her off the bench. 'Bitch! Never!'
He held her, found the soft coral mouth and kissed her; bruised her lips with his, waiting for the final blackout.
The concussion never came.
`Tricked!' he exclaimed. She laughed. He kissed her again and at last forced himself to release her. She gasped for breath, then laughed again, her coral eyes blazing, `It's over,' she said.
`It hasn't begun yet,'
'You mean the war?'
`The war between us.'
'Make it a human war,' she said fiercely. 'You're the first not to be deceived by my looks. Oh God! The boredom of the chivalrous knights and their milk-warm passion for the princess. But I'm not like that inside. I'm not. I'm not. Never. Make it a savage war between us. Don't win me destroy me!'

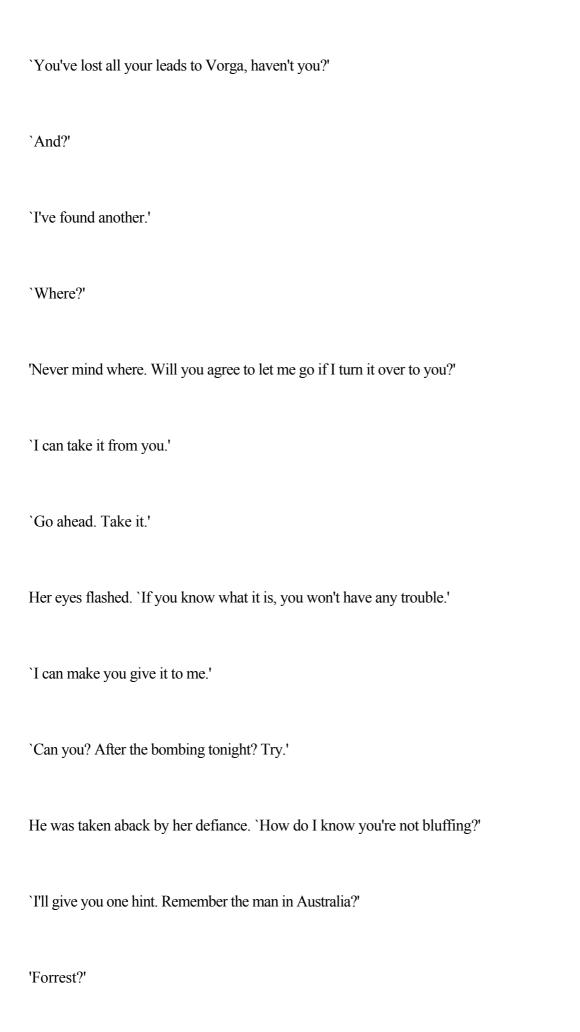
Suddenly she was Lady Olivia again, the gracious snow maiden. 'I'm afraid the bombardment has

finished, my dear Fourmyle. The show is over. But what an exciting prelude to the New Year. Good night.'
`Good night?' he echoed incredulously.
`Good night,' she repeated. `Really, my dear Fourmyle, are you so gauche that you never know when you're dismissed? You may go now. Good night.'
He hesitated, searched for words, and at last turned and lurched out of the house. He was trembling with elation and confusion. He walked in a daze, scarcely aware of the confusion and disaster around him. The horizon now was lit with the light of red flames. The shock waves of the assault had stirred the atmosphere so violently that winds still whistled in strange gusts. The tremor of the explosions had shaken the city so hard that brick, cornice, glass and metal were tumbling and crashing. And this despite the fact that no direct hit had been made on New York.
The streets were empty; the city was deserted. The entire population of New York, of every city, had jaunted in a desperate search for safety to the limit of their ability five miles, fifty miles, five hundred miles. Some had jaunted into the center of a direct hit. Thousands died in jaunte-explosions, for the public jaunte stages had never been designed to accommodate the crowding of mass exodus.
Foyle became aware of white-armored Disaster Crews appearing on the streets. An imperious signal directed at him warned him that he was about to be summarily drafted for disaster work. The problem of jaunting was not to get populations out of cities, but to force them to return and restore order. Foyle had no intention of spending a week fighting fire and looters. He accelerated and evaded the Disaster Crew.
At Fifth Avenue he decelerated; the drain of acceleration on his energy was so enormous that he was reluctant to maintain it for more than a few moments. Long periods of acceleration demanded days of recuperation.
The looters and Jack-Jaunters were already at work on the avenue, singly, in swarms, furtive yet savage; jackals rending the body of a living but helpless animal. They descended on Foyle. Anything was their prey tonight: `I'm not in the mood,' he told them.
'Play with somebody else.'





`From what?'
`From reality. You can't accept life as it is. You refuse. You attack it try to force it into your own pattern. You attack and destroy everything that stands in the way of your own insane pattern.'
She lifted her tear-stained face. 'I can't stand it any more. I want you to let me go.'
`Go? Where?'
`To live my own life.'
'What about your family?'
`And find them my own way.'
'Why? What now?'
`It's too much you and the war because you're as bad as the war. Worse. What happened to me tonight is what happens to me every moment I'm with you. I can stand one or the other; not both.'
'No,' he said. 'I need you.'
'I'm prepared to buy my way out.'
'How?'

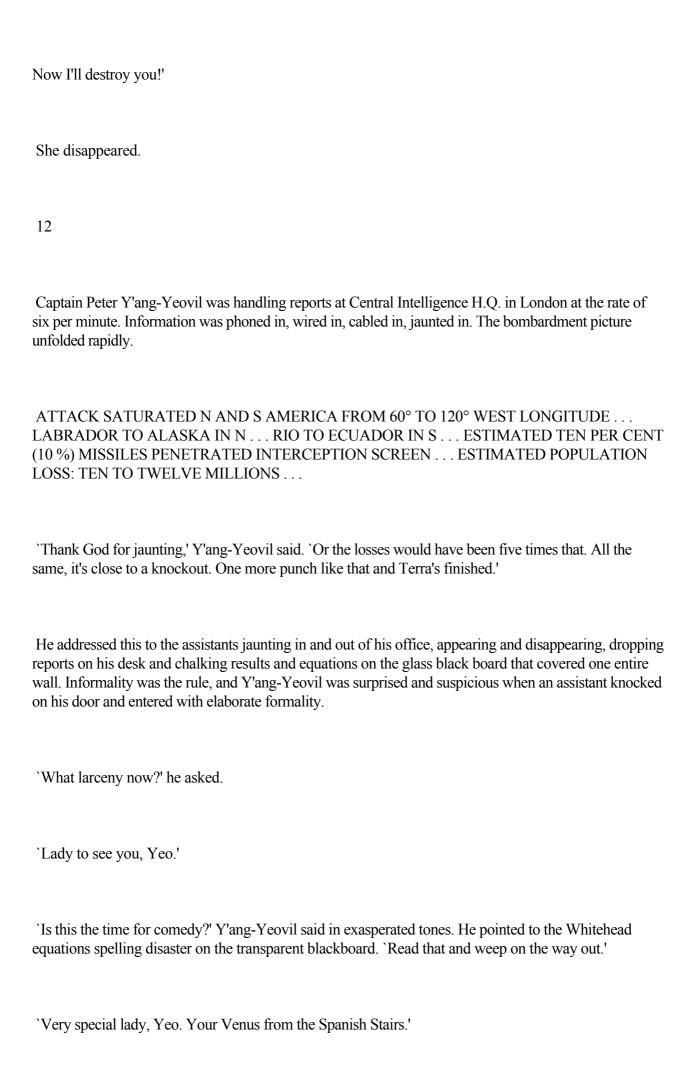




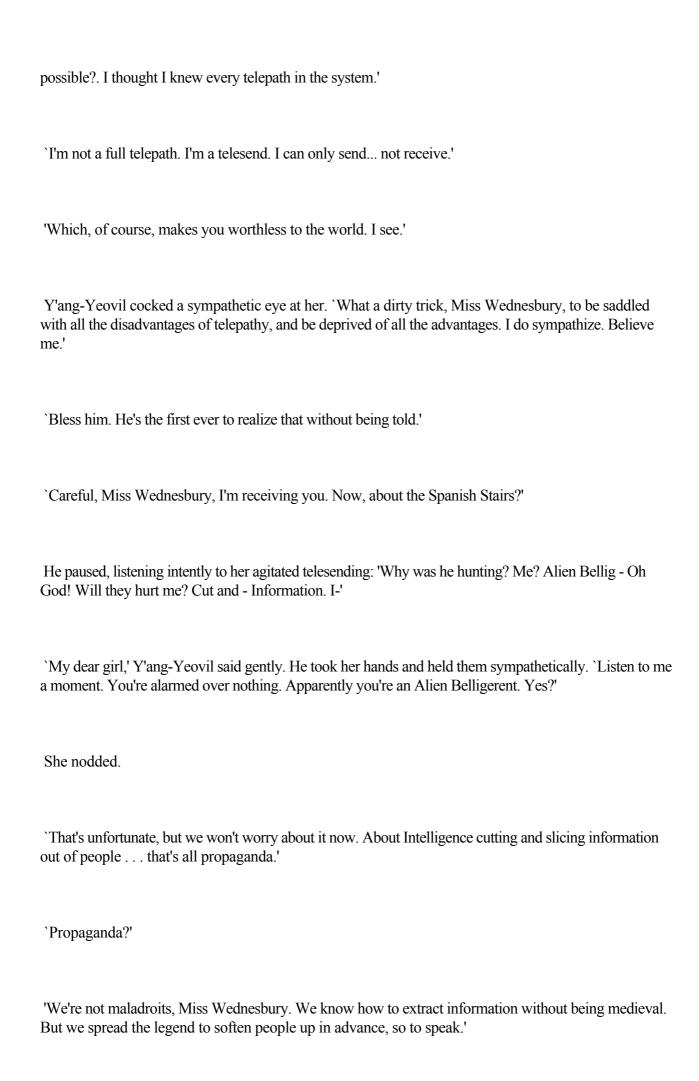
`By God!' Foyle exclaimed. 'This is the lead. We can't fail this time. We'll know what to do. He'll spill everything everything.'
He grinned at Robin. 'We leave for the moon tomorrow night. Book passage. No, there'll be no trouble on account of the attack. Buy a ship. They'll be unloading them cheap anyway.'
'We?' Robin said. 'You mean you.'
'I mean we,' Foyle answered. 'We're going to the moon. Both of us.'
'I'm leaving.'
'You're not leaving. You're staying with me.'
'But you swore you'd -'
'Grow up, girl. I had to swear to anything to get this. I need you more than ever now. Not for Vorga. I'l handle Vorga myself. For something much more important.'
He looked at her incredulous face and smiled ruefully. `It's too bad, girl. If you'd given me this letter two hours ago I'd have kept my word. But it's too late now. I need a Romance Secretary. I'm in love with Olivia Presteign.'
She leaped to her feet in a blaze of fury. 'You're in love with her? Olivia Presteign? In love with that white corpse!'

The bitter fury of her telesending was a startling revelation to him. `Ah, now you have lost me. Forever.

Moon

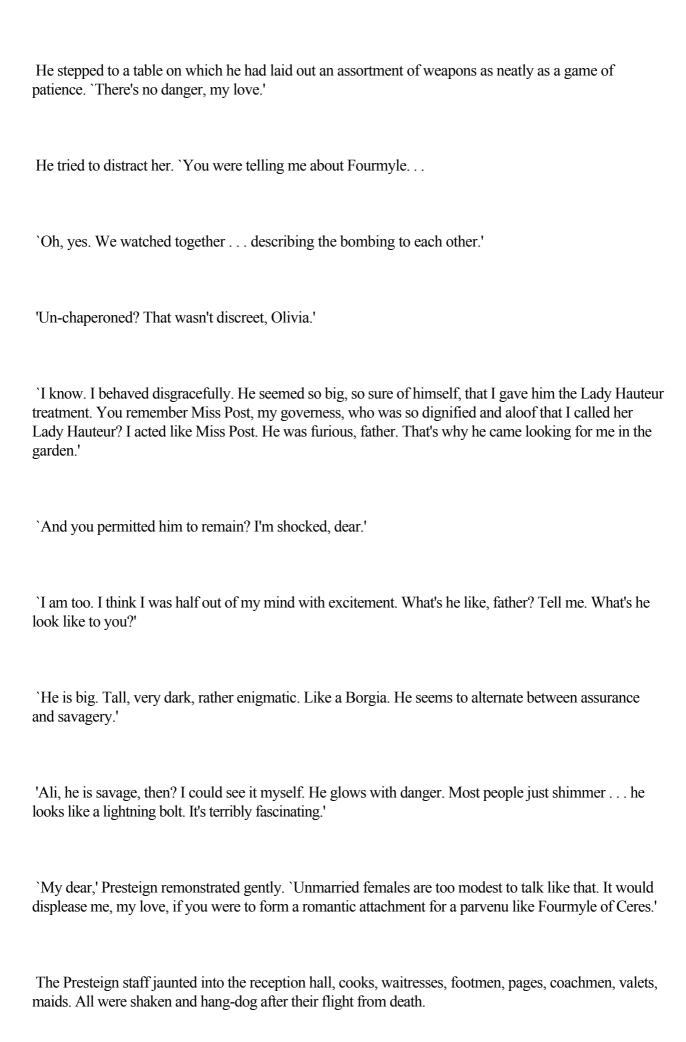








wonderful audacity.'
'Yes, he's a remarkable young man,' Presteign answered. He stood, iron-grey and iron-hard, in the reception hall of his home, alone with his daughter. He was guarding honor and life while he waited for servants and staff to return from their panic-stricken jaunte to safety. He chatted imperturbably with Olivia, never once permitting her to realize their grave danger.
`Father, I'm exhausted.'
`It's been a trying night, my dear. But please don't retire'
`Why not?'
Presteign refrained from telling her that she would be safer with him. `I'm lonely, Olivia. We'll talk for a few minutes.'
'I did a daring thing, Father. I watched the attack from the garden.'
'My dear! Alone?'
'No. With Fourmyle.'
A heavy pounding began to shake the front door, which Presteign had closed.
`What's that?'
'Looters,' Presteign answered calmly. 'Don't be alarmed, Olivia. They won't get in.'

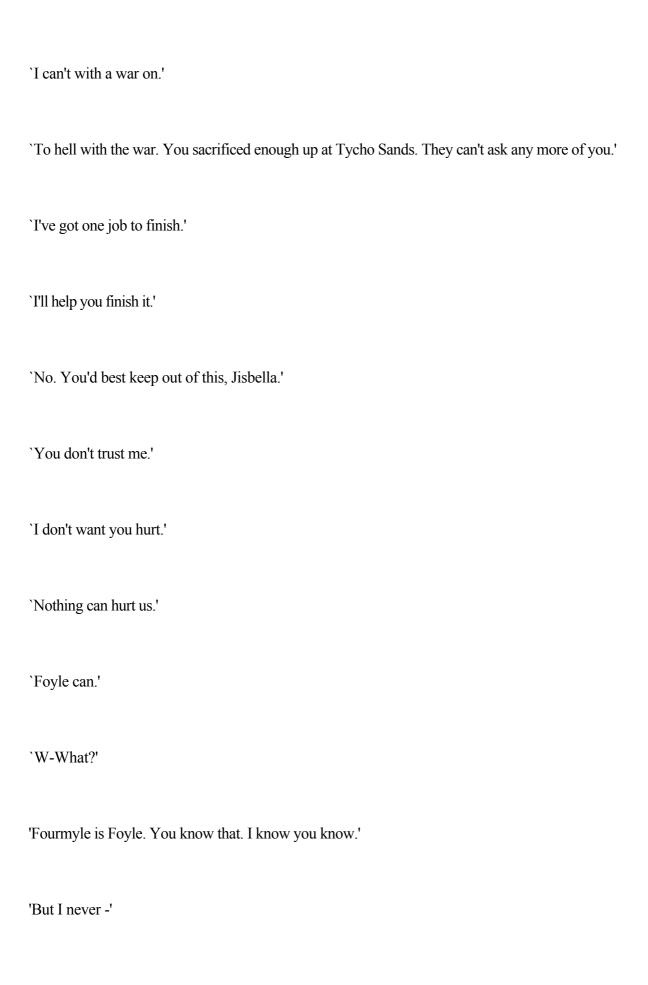


'You have deserted your posts. It will be remembered,' Presteign said coldly. 'My safety and honor are again in your hands. Guard them. Lady Olivia and I will retire.'
He took his daughter's arm and led her up the stairs, savagely protective of his ice-pure princess. `Blood and money,' Presteign murmured.
`What, father?'
'I was thinking of a family vice, Olivia. I was thanking the Deity that you have not inherited it'
'What vice is that? 'There's no need for you to know.
'It's one that Fourmyle shares.'
'Ah, he's wicked? I knew it. Like a Borgia, you said. A wicked Borgia with black eyes and lines in his face. That must account for the pattern.'
`Pattern, my dear?'
'Yes. I can see a strange pattern over his face not the usual electricity of nerve and muscle. Something laid over that. It fascinated me from the beginning.'
'What sort of pattern do you mean?'
`Fantastic Wonderfully evil. I can't describe it. Give me something to write with. I'll show you.'

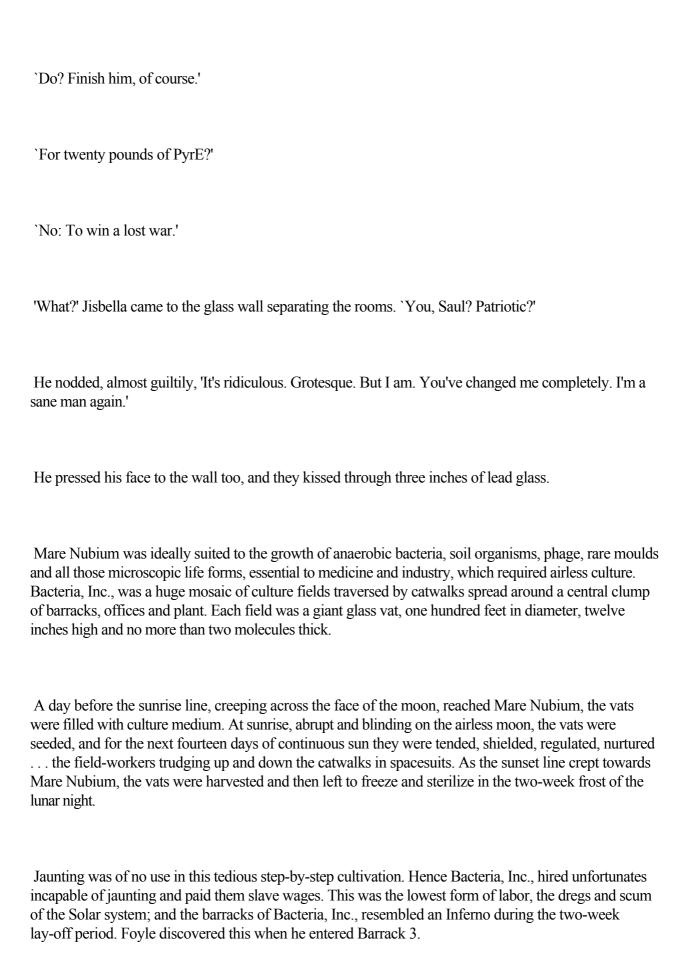
They stopped before a Chippendale cabinet. Presteign took out a silver-mounted slab of crystal and handed it to Olivia. She touched it with her fingertip; a black dot appeared. She moved her finger and the dot elongated into a line. With quick strokes she sketched the hideous swirls and blazons of a devilmask.

Saul Dagenham left the darkened bedroom. A moment later it was flooded with light as one wall illuminated. It seemed as though a giant mirror reflected Jisbella's bedroom, but with one odd quirk. Jisbella lay in the bed alone, but in the reflection Saul Dagenham sat on the edge of the bed alone. The mirror was, in fact, a sheet of lead glass separating identical rooms. Dagenham had just illuminated his.

`Love by the Clock,' Dagenham's voice came through a speaker. `Disgusting.'
'No, Saul. Never.'
`Frustrating.'
'Not that, either.'
'But unhappy.'
'No. You're greedy. Be content with what you've got.'
'God knows, it's more than I ever had. You're magnificent.'
'You're extravagant. Now go to sleep, darling. We're skiing tomorrow.'
'No, there's been a change of plan. I've got to work.'
'Oh, Saul you promised me. No more working and fretting and running. Aren't you going to keep your promise?'



'No, you never told me. You're magnificent. Keep faith with me the same way, Jisbella.'
`Then how did you find out?'
`Foyle slipped.'
'How?'
`The name.'
`Fourmyle of Ceres? He bought the Ceres company.'
`But Geoffrey Fourmyle?'
`He invented it.'
'He thinks he invented it. He remembered it. Geoffrey Fourmyle is the name they use in the Megalomania Test down in Combined Hospital in Mexico City. I used the Megal Mood on Foyle when I tried to open him up. The name must have stayed buried in his memory. He dredged it up and thought it was original. That tipped me.'
'Poor Gully.'
Dagenham smiled, 'Yes, no matter how we defend ourselves against the outside we're always licked by something from the inside. There's no defense against betrayal, and we all betray ourselves.'
'What are you going to do, Saul?'



He was met by an appalling spectacle. There were two hundred men in the giant room; there were

whores and their hard-eyed pimps, professional gamblers and their portable tables, dope-peddlers, money-lenders. There was a haze of acrid smoke and the stench of alcohol and Analogue. Furniture, bedding, clothes, unconscious bodies, empty bottles, rotting food were scattered on the floor. It was all Hogarth.

A roar challenged Foyle's appearance, but he was equipped to handle this situation. He spoke to the first hairy face thrust into his.

'Kempsey?' he asked quietly. He was answered outrageously. Nevertheless he grinned and handed the man a Cr 100 note.

`Kempsey?' he asked another. He was insulted. He paid again and continued his saunter down the barracks distributing Cr 100 notes in calm thanks for insult and invective. In the centre of the barracks he found his key man, the obvious barracks bully, a monster of a man, naked, hairless, fondling two bawds and being fed whisky by sycophants.

'Kempsey?' Foyle asked in the old gutter tongue. 'I'm diggin' Rodger Kempsey.'

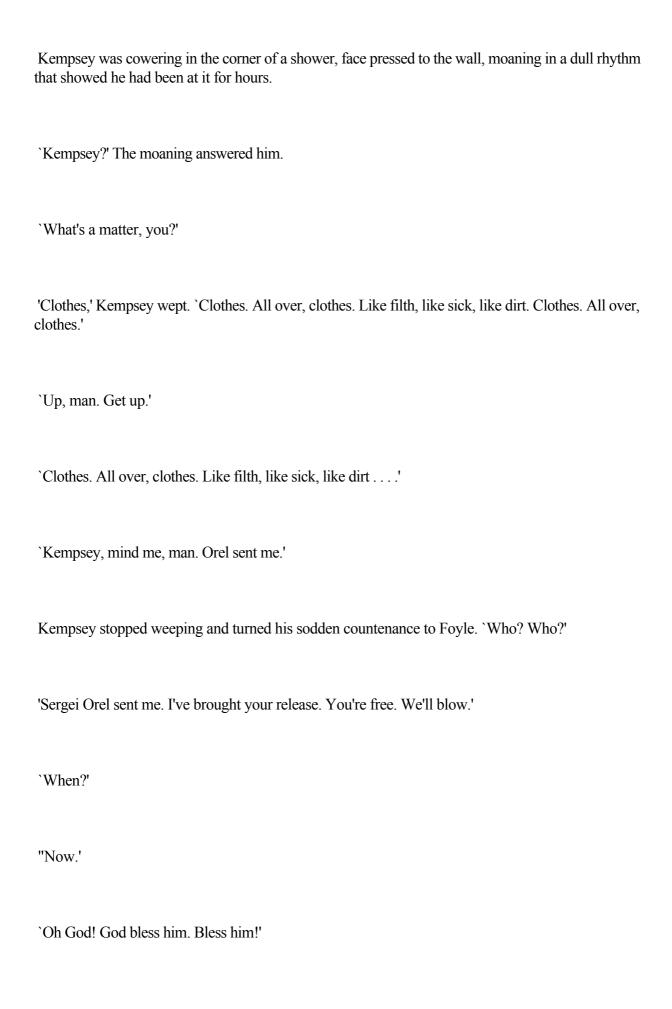
'I'm diggin' for you broke,'- the man answered, thrusting out a huge paw for Foyle's money. 'Gimmie.'

There was a delighted howl from the crowd. Foyle smiled and spat in his eye. There was an abject hush. The hairless man dumped the bawds and surged up to annihilate Foyle. Five seconds later he was groveling on the floor with Foyle's foot planted on his neck.

'Still diggin' Kempsey,' Foyle said gently. 'Diggin' hard, man. You better finger him, man, or you're gone, is all.'

'Washroom!' the hairless man howled. 'Holed up. Washroom.

'Now you broke me,' Foyle said. He dumped the rest of his money on the floor before the hairless man and walked quickly to the washroom.





ampoule like a knife. It pierced Kempsey's neck and hung quivering. Kempsey toppled.

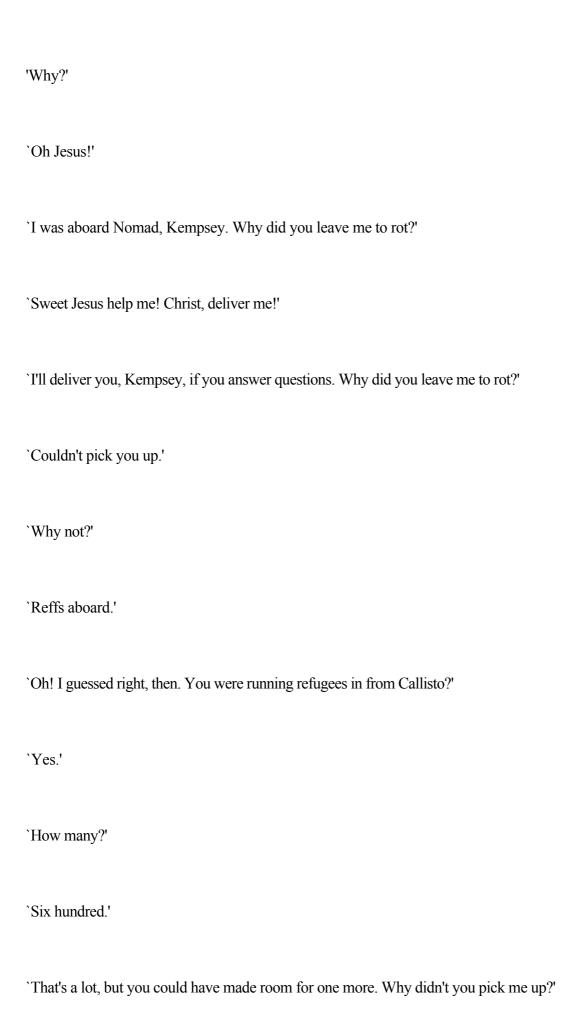
Foyle accelerated, blurred to the body, picked it up in midfall and carried it aft to the starboard stateroom. There were two main staterooms in the yawl, and Foyle had prepared both of them in advance. The starboard room had been stripped and turned into a surgery. Foyle strapped the body on the operating-table, opened a case of surgical instruments, and began the delicate operation he had learned by hypno-training that morning . . . an operation made possible only by his five-to-one acceleration.

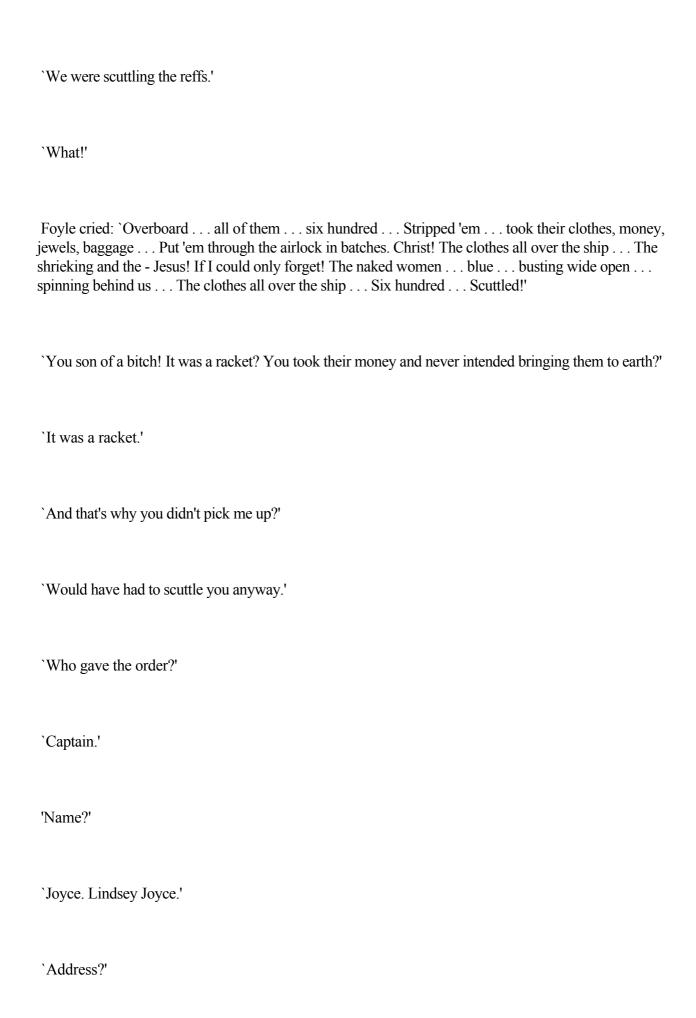
He cut through skin and fascia, sawed through the rib cage, exposed the heart, dissected it out and connected veins and arteries to the intricate blood pump alongside the table. He started the pump. Twenty seconds objective time, had elapsed. He placed an oxygen mask over Kempsey's face and switched on the alternating suction and ructation of the oxygen pump.

Foyle decelerated, checked Kempsey's temperature, shot an anti-shock series into his veins and waited. Blood gurgled through the pump and Kempsey's body. After five minutes, Foyle removed the oxygen mask. The respiration reflex continued. Kempsey was without a heart, yet alive. Foyle sat down alongside the operating table and waited. The stigmata still showed on his face.

Kempsey remained unconscious.
Foyle waited.
Kempsey awoke, screaming.
Foyle leaped up, tightened the straps and leaned over the heartless man.
'Hallo, Kempsey,' he said.
Kempsey screamed.







`Sklotsky Colony, Mars.'
`What!'
Foyle was thunderstruck. `He's a Sklotsky? You mean after hunting him for a year, can't touch him hurt him make him feel what I felt?'
He turned away from the tortured man on the table, equally tortured himself by frustration. `A Sklotsky! The one thing I never figured on After preparing that port stateroom for him What am I going to do? What, in God's name am I going to do?' he roared in fury, the stigmata showing livid on his face.
He was recalled by a desperate moan from Kempsey. He returned to the table and bent over the dissected body. `Let's get it straight for the last time. This Sklotsky, Lindsey Joyce, gave the order to scuttle the reffs?'
'Yes.'
`And to let me rot?'
'Yes. Yes. For God's sake, that's enough. Let me die.'
'Live, you pig-man filthy heartless bastard! Live without a heart. Live and suffer. I'll keep you alive for ever, you -' A lurid flash of light caught Foyle's eye. He looked up. His burning image was peering through the large square porthole of the stateroom. As he leaped to the porthole, the burning man disappeared.
Foyle left the stateroom and darted forward to main controls where the observation bubble gave him two hundred and seventy degrees of vision. The Burning Man was nowhere in sight.

`It's not real,' he muttered. `It couldn't be real. It's a sign; a good-luck sign . . . a Guardian Angel. It saved me on the Spanish Stairs. It's telling me to go ahead and find Lindsey Joyce.'

He strapped himself into the pilot chair, ignited the yawl's jets and slammed into full acceleration.

'Lindsey Joyce, Sklotsky Colony, Mars,' he thought as he was thrust back deep into the pneumatic chair. 'A Sklotsky . . . Without senses, without pleasure, without pain. The ultimate in Stoic escape. How am I going to punish him? Torture him? Put him in the port stateroom and make him feel what I felt aboard Nomad? Damnation! It's as though he's dead. He is dead. And I've got to figure how to beat a dead body and make it feel pain. To come so close to the end and have the door slammed in your face . . . The damnable frustration of revenge. Revenge is for dreams . . . never for reality.'

An hour later he released himself from the acceleration and his fury, unbuckled himself room the chair, and remembered Kempsey. He went aft to the surgery. The extreme acceleration of the take-off had choked the blood pump enough to kill Kempsey. Suddenly Foyle was overcome with a novel passion ate revulsion for himself. He fought it helplessly.

`What's a matter, you?' he whispered. `Think of the six hundred, scuttled . . . Think of yourself... Are you turning into a white-livened Cellar-Christian turning the other cheek and whining forgiveness? Olivia, what are you doing to me? Give me strength, not cowardice . . . .'

Nevertheless he averted his eyes as he scuttled the body.

ALL PERSONS KNOWN TO BE IN THE EMPLOY OF FOURMYLE OF CERES OR ASSOCIATED WITH HIM IN ANY CAPACITY TO BE HELD FOR QUESTIONING. Y-Y; CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE.

ALL EMPLOYEES OF THIS COMPANY TO MAINTAIN STRICT WATCH FOR ONE, FOURMYLE OF CERES, AND REPORT AT ONCE TO LOCAL MR. PRESTO PRESTEIGN.

ALL COURIERS WILL ABANDON PRESENT ASSIGNMENTS AND REPORT FOR REASSIGNMENT TO FOYLE CASE. DAGENHAM.

A BANK HOLIDAY WILL BE DECLARED IMMEDIATELY IN THE NAME OF THE WAR CRISIS TO CUT FOURMYLE OFF FROM ALL FUNDS. Y-Y: CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE.

ANYONE MAKING INQUIRIES RE S.S. 'VORGA' TO BE TAKEN TO CASTLE PRESTEIGN FOR EXAMINATION. PRESTEIGN.

ALL PORTS AND FIELDS IN INNER PLANETS TO BE ALERTED FOR ARRIVAL OF FOURMYLE. QUARANTINE AND CUSTOMS TO CHECK ALL LANDINGS. Y-Y. CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE.

OLD ST PATRICK'S TO BE SEARCHED AND WATCHED. DAGENHAM.

THE FILES OF BO'NESS AND UIG TO BE CHECKED, FOR NAMES OF OFFICERS AND MEN OF 'VORGA' TO ANTICIPATE, IF POSSIBLE, FOYLE'S NEXT MOVE. PRESTEIGN.

WAR CRIMES COMMISSION TO MAKE UP LIST OF PUBLIC ENEMIES GIVING FOYLE NUMBER ONE SPOT. Y-Y: CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE.

CR 4000,000 REWARD OFFERED FOR INFORMATION LEADING TO APPREHENSION OF FOURMYLE OF CERES, ALIAS GULLIVER FOYLE, ALIAS GULLY FOYLE, NOW AT LARGE IN THE INNER PLANETS. PRIORITY! URGENT DANGEROUS

After two centuries of colonization, the air-struggle on Mars was still so critical that the V-L Law, the Vegetative-Lynch Law, was still in effect. It was a killing offence to endanger or destroy any plant vital to the transformation of Mars' carbon dioxide atmosphere into an oxygen atmosphere. Even blades of grass were sacred. There was no need to erect KEEP OFF THE GRASS warnings. The man who wandered off a path on to a lawn would be instantly shot. The woman who picked a flower would be killed without mercy. Two centuries of sudden death had inspired a reverence for green growing things that almost amounted to a religion.

Foyle remembered this as he raced up the centre of the causeway leading to Mars St Michele. He had jaunted direct from the Syrtis airport to the St Michele stage at the foot of the causeway which stretched for a quarter of a mile through green fields to Mars St Michele. The rest of the distance had to be traversed on foot.

Like the original Mont St Michele on the French coast, Mars St Michele was a majestic Gothic cathedral of spires and buttresses looming on a hill and yearning towards the sky.

Ocean tides surrounded Mont St Michele on earth. Green tides of grass surrounded Mars St Michele. Both were fortresses. Mont St Michele had been a fortress of faith before organized religion was abolished. Mars St Michele was a fortress of telepathy. Within it lived Mars' sole full telepath, Sigurd Magsman.

'Now these are the defenses protecting Sigurd Magsman,' Foyle chanted, half-way between hysteria and litany. 'Firstly, the Solar System; secondly, Martial Law; thirdly Dagenham-Presteign and Co.; fourthly, the fortress itself; fifthly, the uniformed guards, attendants, servants and admirers of the bearded sage we all know so well, Sigurd Magsman, selling his awesome powers for awesome prices . . . .'

Foyle laughed immoderately; 'But there's a sixthly that I know; Sigurd Magsman's Achilles' Heel . . . For I've paid Cr 1 million to Sigurd the 3rd . . . or was he the 4th?'

He passed through the outer labyrinth of Mars St Michele with his forged credentials and was tempted to bluff or proceed direction by Commando Action to an audience with Solomon himself, but time was pressing and his enemies were closing in and he could not afford to satisfy his curiosity. Instead, he accelerated, blurred, and found a humble cottage set in a walled garden within the Mars St Michele home farm. It had drab windows and a thatched roof and might have been mistaken for a stable. Foyle slipped inside.

The cottage was a nursery. Three pleasant nannies sat motionless in rocking chairs, knitting poised in their frozen hands. The blur that was Foyle came up behind them and quietly stung them with ampoules. Then he decelerated. He looked at the ancient, ancient child; the wizened, shriveled boy who was seated on the floor playing with electronic trains.

'Hello, Sigurd,' Foyle said.

The child began to cry.



`Shut up! We're going on a trip to the Sklotsky Colony. If you behave yourself and do what you're told, I'll bring you back safe and give you a lolly or whatever the hell they bribe you with. If you don't behave, I'll beat the living daylights out of you.'

'No, you won't . . . You won't. I'm Sigurd Magsman. I'm Sigurd the telepath. You wouldn't dare.'

'Sonny, I'm Gully Foyle, Solar Enemy Number One. I'm just a step away from the finish of a year-long hunt . . . I'm risking my neck because I need you to settle accounts with a son of a bitch who - Sonny, I'm Gully Foyle. There isn't anything I wouldn't dare.'

The telepath began broadcasting terror with such an uproar that alarms sounded all over Mars St Michele. Foyle took a firm grip on the ancient child, accelerated, and carried him out of the fortress. Then he jaunted.

URGENT. MOST SECRET. SIGURD MAGSMAN KIDNAPPED BY MAN TENTATIVELY IDENTIFIED AS GULLIVER FOYLE, ALIAS FOURMYLE OF CERES, SOLAR ENEMY NUMBER ONE. DESTINATION TENTATIVELY FIXED. ALERT COMMANDO BRIGADE. INFORM CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE. URGENT! URGENT! URGENT!

The ancient Sklotsky sect of White Russia, believing that sex was the root of all evil, practiced an atrocious self-castration to extirpate the root. The modern Sklotskys, believing that sensation was the root of all evil, practiced an even more barbaric custom. Having entered the Sklotsky Colony and paid a fortune for the privilege, the initiates submitted joyously to an operation that severed the sensory nervous system, and lived out their days without sight, sound, speech, smell, taste or touch.

When they first entered the monastery, the initiates were shown elegant ivory cells in which it was intimated they would spend the remainder of their lives in rapt contemplation, lovingly tended. In actuality, the senseless creatures were packed is catacombs where they sat on rough stone slabs and were fed and exercised once a day. For twenty-three out of twenty-four hours they sat alone in the dark, untended, unguarded, unloved.

'The living dead,' Foyle muttered. He decelerated, put Sigurd Magsman down, and switched on the retinal light in his eyes, trying to pierce the womb-gloom. It was midnight above ground. It was permanent midnight down in these catacombs. Sigurd Magsman was broadcasting terror and anguish with such a telepathic bray that Foyle was forced to shake the child again.

'Shut up!' he whispered. 'You can't wake these dead. Now find me Lindsey Joyce.' `They're sick . . . all sick.. . like worm in their heads . . . worm and sickness and -' 'Christ, don't I know it. Come on, let's get it over with. There's worse to come.' They went down the twisting labyrinth of the catacombs. The stone slabs shelved the walls from floor to ceiling. The Sklotskys, white as slugs, mute as corpses, motionless as Buddhas, filled the caverns with the odor of living death. The telepathic child wept and shrieked. Foyle never relaxed his relentless grip on him; he never relaxed the hunt. 'Johnson, Wright, Keely, Graff, Nastro, Underwood . . . God, there's thousands here.' Foyle read off the bronze identification plates attached to the slabs. 'Reach out, Sigurd. Find Lindsey Joyce for me. We can't go over them name by name. Regal, Cone, Brady, Vincent - What in the?' Foyle started back. One of the bone-white figures had cuffed his brow. It was swaying and writhing, its face twitching. All the white slugs on their shelves were squirming and writhing. Sigurd Magsman's constant telepathic broadcast of anguish and terror was reaching them and torturing them. 'Shut up!' Foyle snapped. 'Stop it. Find Lindsey Joyce and we'll get out of here. Reach out and find him.' 'Down there.' Sigurd wept. 'Straight down there. Seven, eight, nine shelves down. I want to go home. I'm sick. I -' Foyle went pell-mell down the catacombs with Sigurd, reading off identification plates until at last he came to 'LINDSEY JOYCE. BOUGAINVILLE, VENUS.'

This was his enemy, the instigator of his death and the deaths of the six hundred from Callisto. This was

the enemy whom he had planned and hunted for months. This was enemy for whom he had prepared the agony of the port stateroom aboard his yawl. This was Vorga. It was a woman.
'Foyle was thunderstruck. In these days of the double standard, with women kept in purdah, there were many reported cases of women masquerading as men to enter the worlds to them, but he had never yet heard of a woman in the merchant marine masquerading her way on top officer rank.'
'This?' he exclaimed furiously. `This is Lindsey Joyce? Lindsey Joyce off the Vorga? Ask her.'
'I don't know what Vorga is.'
"Ask her!"
`But I don't - She was She like gave orders.'
`Captain?'
'I don't like what's inside her. It's all sick and dark. It hurts. I want to go home.'
`Ask her. Was she captain of the Vorga?'
`Yes. Please, please, please don't make me go inside her any more. It's twisty and hurts. I don't like her.'
`Tell her I'm the man she wouldn't pick up on September 16th, 2336. Tell her it's taken a long time but I've finally come to settle the account. Tell her I'm going to pay her back.'
`I d-don't understand. Don't understand.'

`Tell her I'm going to kill her, slow and hard. Tell her I've got a stateroom aboard my yawl, fitted up just like my locker Plyboard Nomad where I rotted for six months where she ordered Vorga to leave me to die. Tell her she's going to rot `die just like me. Tell her!'
Foyle shook the wizened child furiously `Make her feel it. Don't let her get away by turning Jerky. Tell her I kill her deadly. Read me and tell her!'
'She Sh-She didn't give that order.'
'What!'
'I can't understand her.'
'She didn't give the order to scuttle me?'
Then he realized that the cloister was brilliantly lit with artificial light. There was the tramp of shod feet and the low growl of commands. Half way up the steps, Foyle stopped and mustered himself.
`Sigurd,' he whispered. `Who's above us? Find out' ` Sogers,' the child answered.
`Soldiers? What soldiers?'
`Commando sogers.' Sigurd's crumpled face brightened. They come for me. To take me home to Nannie. HERE I AM! HERE I AM'

The telepathic clamor brought a shout from overhead. Foyle accelerated and blurred up the rest of the steps to the cloister. It was a square of Romanesque arches surrounding a green lawn. In the centre of the lawn was a giant Cedar of Lebanon. The flagged walks swarmed with Commando search parties and Foyle came face to face with his match; for an instant after they saw his blur whip up from the catacombs

they accelerated too, and all were on even terms.

But Foyle had the boy. Shooting was impossible. Cradling Sigurd in his arms, he wove through the cloister like a broken-field runner hurtling towards a goal. No one dared block him, for at plus-five acceleration a head-on collision between two bodies would be instantly fatal to both. Objectively, this break-neck skirmish looked like a five-second zigzag of lightning.

Foyle broke out of the cloister, went through the main hall of the monastery, passed through the labyrinth, and reached the public jaunte stage outside the main gate. There he stopped, decelerated and jaunted to the monastery airfield, half a mile distant. The field, too, was ablaze with lights and swarming with Commandos. Every anti-grav pit was occupied by a Brigade ship. His own yawl was under guard.

A fifth of a second after Foyle arrived at the field, the pursuers from the monastery jaunted in. He looked around desperately. He was surrounded by half a regiment of Commandos, all under acceleration, all geared for lethal-action, all his equal or better. The odds were impossible.

And then the Outer Satellites altered the odds. Exactly one week after the saturation raid on Terra, they struck at Mars.

Again the missiles came down on the midnight to dawn quadrant. Again the heavens twinkled with interceptions and detonations, and the horizon exploded great puffs of light while the ground shook. But this time there was a ghastly variation, for a brilliant nova burst overhead, flooding the nightside of the planet with garish light. A swarm of fissionheads had struck Mars' tiny satellite, Phobas, instantly vaporizing it into a sunlet.

The Recognition-Lag of the Commandos to this appalling attack gave Foyle his opportunity. He accelerated again and burst through them to his yawl. He stopped before the main hatch and saw the stunned guard-party hesitate between a continuance of the old action and a response to the new. Foyle hurled the frozen body of Sigurd Magsman up into the air like a Scotsman tossing the caber. As the guard party rushed to catch the boy, Foyle dived through them into his yawl, slammed the hatch and dogged it.

'Still under acceleration, never pausing to see if anyone was inside the yawl, he shot forward to controls, tripped the release lever, and as the yawl started to float up the anti-gray beam threw on full 10 G propulsion. He was not strapped into the pilot chair. The effect of the 10 G drive on his accelerated and unprotected body was monstrous.

A creeping force took hold of him and spilled him out of the chair. He inched back towards the rear wall of the control chamber like a sleep-walker. The wall appeared, to his accelerated senses, to approach him. He thrust out both arms, palms flat against the wall to brace himself. The sluggish power thrusting him back split his arms apart and forced him against the wall, gently at first, then harder and harder until face, jaw, chest and body were crushed against the metal.

The mounting pressure became agonizing. He tried to trip the switchboard in his mouth with his tongue, but the propulsion crushing him against the wall made it impossible for him to move his distorted mouth. A burst of explosions, so far down the sound spectrum that they sounded like sodden rockslides, told him that the Commando Brigade was bombarding hum with shots from below. As the yawl tore up into the blueblack of outer space, he began to scream in a bat-screech before he mercifully lost consciousness.

14

Foyle awoke in darkness. He was decelerated, but the exhaustion of his body told him he had been under acceleration while he was unconscious. Either his power pack had run out or . . . He inched a hand to the small of his back. The pack was gone. It had been removed.

He explored with trembling fingers. He was in bed. He listened to the murmur of ventilators and refrigerants and the click and buzz of servo-mechanisms. He was aboard a ship. He was strapped to the bed. The ship was in free fall.

Foyle unfastened himself, pressed his elbows against the mattress and floated up. He drifted through the darkness searching for a light switch or a call button. His hands brushed against a water carafe with raised letters on the glass. He read them with his fingertips. S.S. he felt. V, o, r, g, a. Vorga. He cried out.

The door of the stateroom opened. A figure drifted m through the door, silhouetted against the light of a luxurious private lounge behind it.

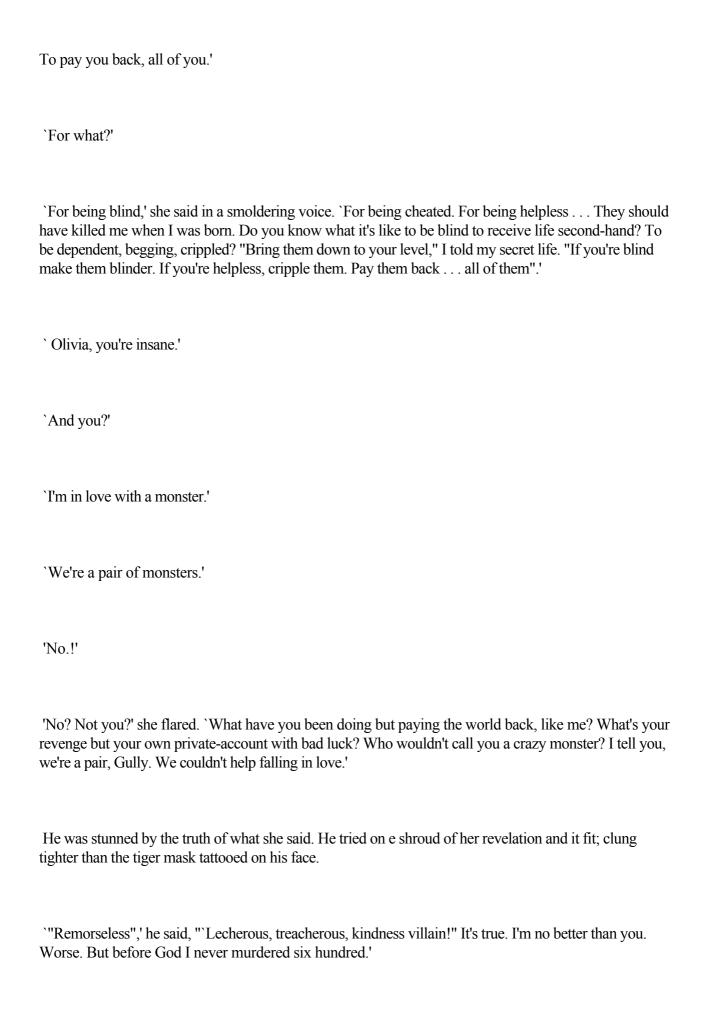
'This time we picked you up,' Olivia Presteign said.



'I knew Gully Foyle was my enemy from the beginning. I never knew he was Fourmyle until we met. Ah, if only I'd known before. How much would have been saved.'
'You knew and you've been laughing at me.'
'No.'
`Standing by and shaking with laughter.'
`Standing by and loving you. No don't interrupt. I'm trying to be rational and it's not easy.' A flush cascaded across the marble face. `I'm not playing with you now. I I betrayed you to my father. I did. Self-defense, I thought. Now that I've met him at last I can see he's too dangerous. An hour later I knew it was a mistake because I realized I was in love with you. I'm paying for it now. You need never have known.'
'You expect me to believe that?'
`Then why am I here?' She trembled slightly. `Why did I follow you? That bombing was ghastly. You'd have been dead in another minute when we picked you up. Your yawl was a wreck'
'Where are we now?'
`What difference does it make?'
`I'm stalling for time.'
`Time for what?'







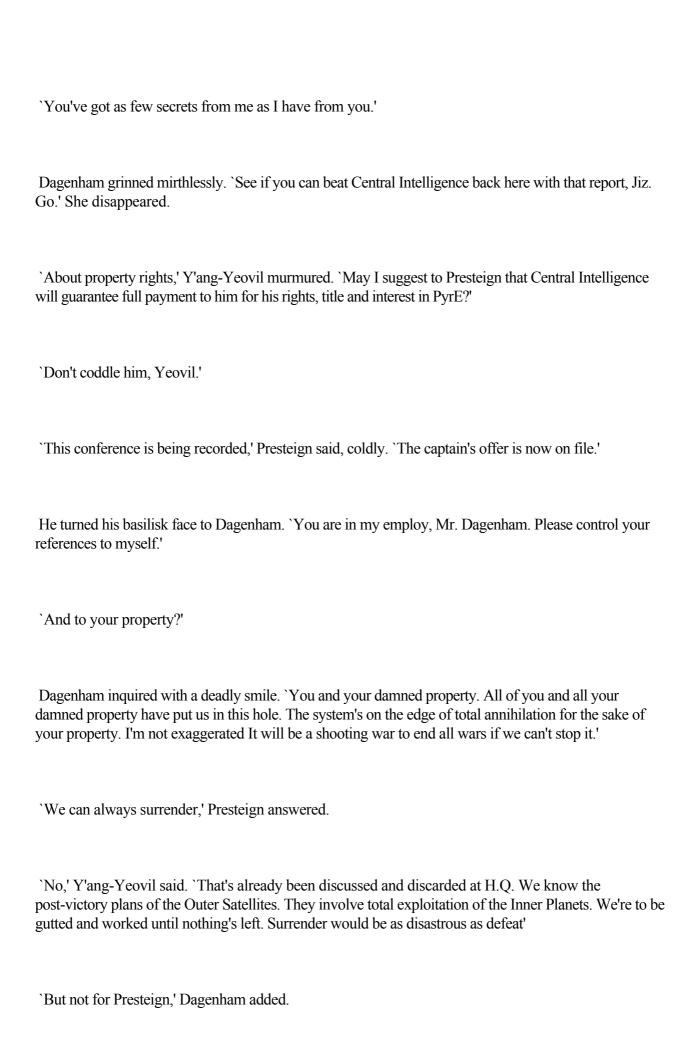




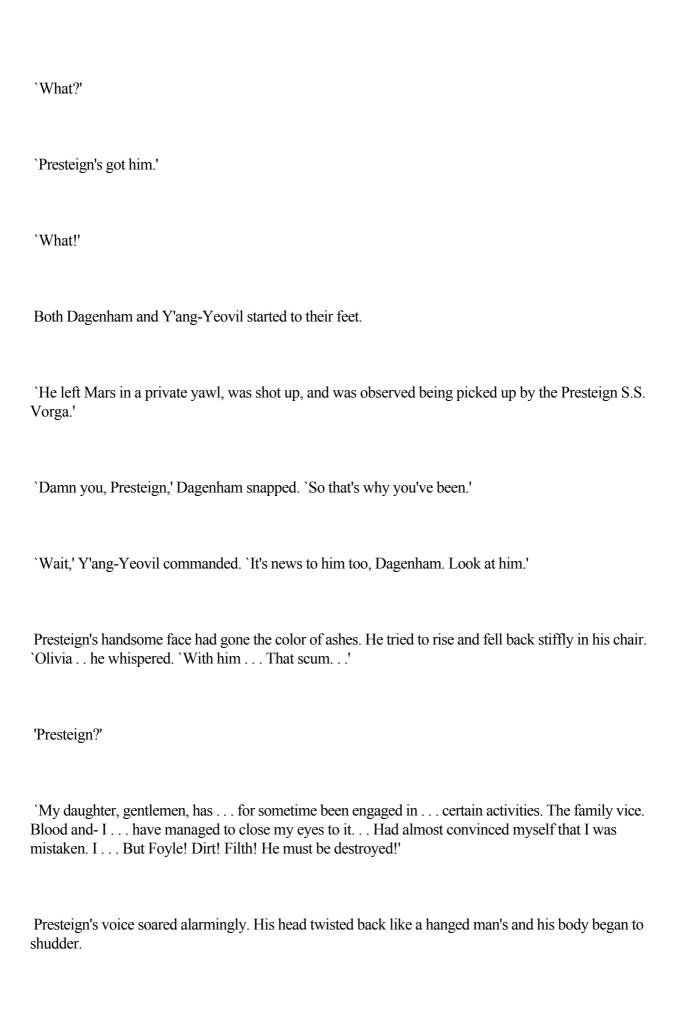
'Ah, I know what it is.'
She became tender again in an instant. 'It's your face, poor darling. You're ashamed of your tiger face; but I love it. You burn so brightly for me. You burn through the blindness. Believe me'
'My God! What a pair of loathsome freaks we are.'
`What's happened to you?' she demanded. She broke away from him, her coral eyes glittering. `Where' the man who watched the raid with me? Where's the unashamed savage who-'
'Gone, Olivia. You've lost him. We both have.'
'Gully!'
`He's lost.'
`But why? What have I done?'
'You don't understand, Olivia.'
'Where are you?'
She reached out, touched him and then dung to him. `Listen to me, darling. You're tired. You're exhausted that's all. Nothing is lost.'
The words tumbled out other. 'You're right. Of course you're right. We've been bad, both of us. Loathsome. But all that's gone now. Nothing is lost We were wicked because we were alone and unhappy. But we've found each other; we can save each other. Be my love, darling. Always. For ever. I've looked for you so long, waited and hoped and prayed



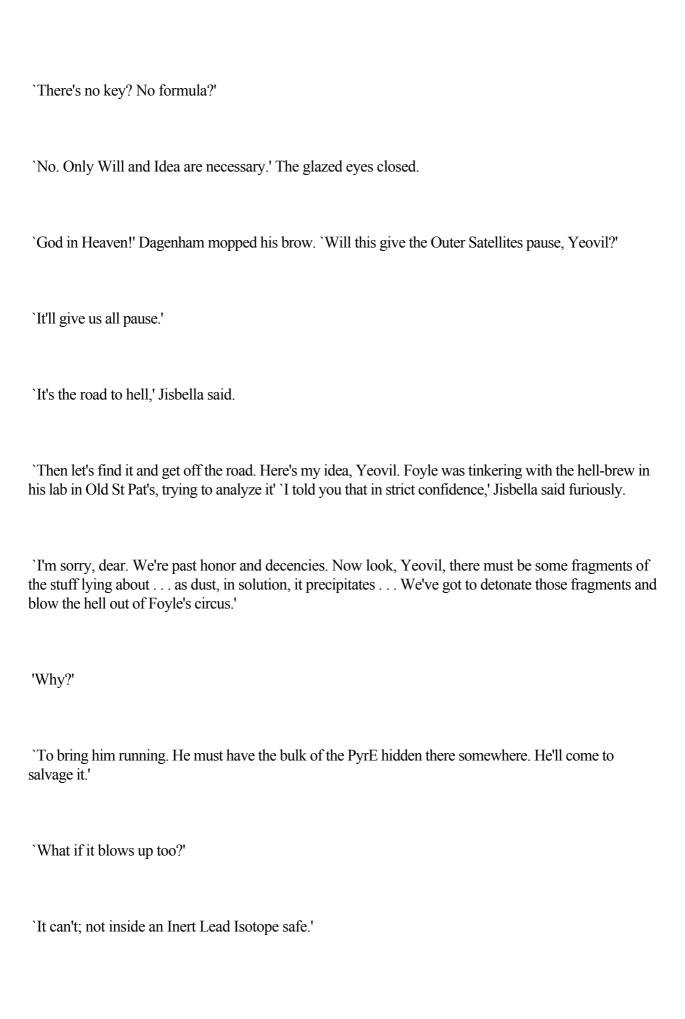
moon and found him a week later on Mars. We were bombed again. We lost him again. He's been lost for a week. Another bombing's due. Venus? The Moon? Terra again? Who knows. But we all know this one more raid without retaliation and we're lost' He glanced around the table. Against the ivory and gold background of the Star Chamber of Castle Presteign, his face, all three faces, looked strained.
Y'ang-Yeovil slitted his eyes in a frown. Presteign compressed his thin lips.
`And we know this too,' Dagenham continued. `We can't retaliate without PyrE and we can't locate the PyrE without Foyle.'
'My instructions were,' Presteign interposed, `that PyrE was not to be mentioned in public.'
`In the first place, this is not public' Dagenham snapped. `It's a private information pool. In the second place, we've gone beyond property rights. We're discussing survival, and we've all got equal rights in that. Yes, Jiz?'
Jisbella McQueen had jaunted into the Star Chamber, looking intent and furious.
`Still no sign of Foyle.'
`Old St Pat's still being watched?'
`Yes.'
`Commando Brigade's report in from Mars yet?'
'No.'
`That's my business and Most Secret,' Y'ang-Yeovil objected mildly.







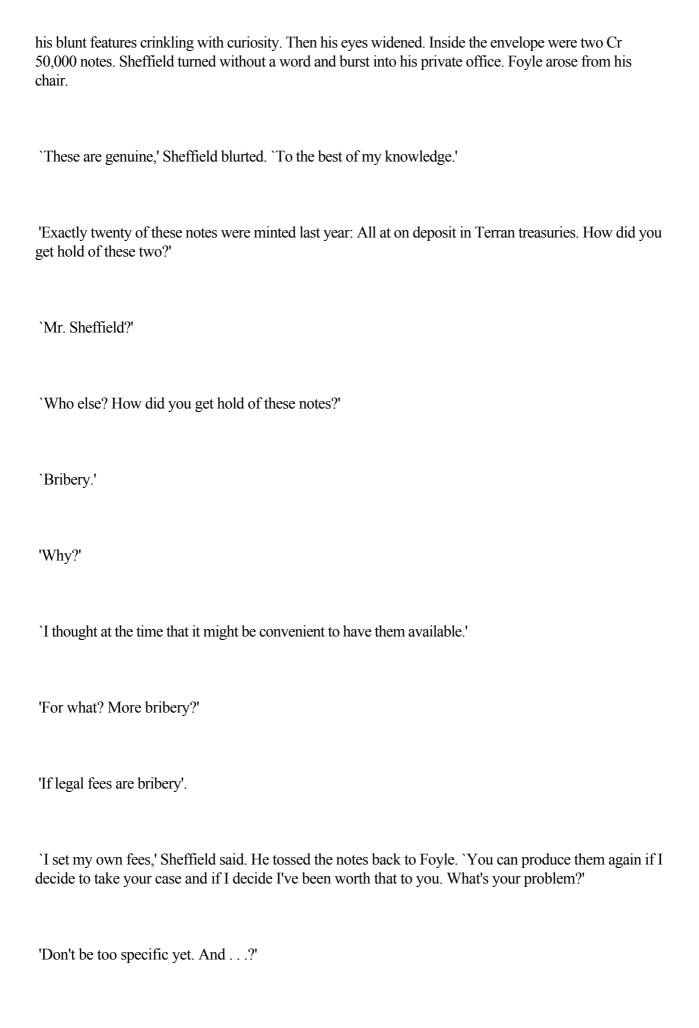
`What in the-?'
`Epilepsy,' Y'ang-Yeovil said. He pulled Presteign out of the chair on to the floor. `A spoon, Miss McQueen. Quick!'
He levered Presteign's teeth open and placed a spoon between them to protect the tongue. As suddenly as it had begun, the seizure was over. The shuddering stopped. Presteign opened his eyes.
'Petit mal,' Y'ang-Yeovil murmured, withdrawing the spoon. `But he'll be dazed for a while.'
Suddenly Presteign began to speak in a low monotone. 'PyrE is a pyrophoric alloy. A pyrophore is a metal which emits sparks when scraped or struck. PyrE emits energy, which is why E, the energy symbol, was added to the prefix Pyr. PyrE is a solid solution of trans-Plutonian isotopes, releasing thermo-nuclear energy on the order of stellar phoenix action. Its discoverer was of opinion that he had produced the equivalent of the primordial proto-matter, which exploded in the Universe.'
`My God!' Jisbella exclaimed.
Dagenham silenced her with a gesture and bent over Presteign.
'How is it brought to critical mass. Presteign? How is the energy released?'
'As the original energy was generated, in the beginning of time,' Presteign droned. 'Through Will and Idea.'
'I'm convinced he's a Cellar-Christian,' Dagenham muttered to Y'ang-Yeovil. He raised his voice. 'Will you explain, Presteign?'
`Through Will and Idea,' Presteign repeated. 'PyrE can only be exploded by psychokinesis. Its energy can only be released by thought. It must be willed to explode and the thought directed at it. That is the only way.'





we don't just have dust waiting for an accidental thought, but twenty pounds.'
Jisbella turned pale. Dagenham turned on the Intelligence man. 'You make the decision, Yeovil. Do we try it my way or do we wait?'
Y'ang-Yeovil sighed. `I was afraid of this,' he said. `Damn all scientists. I'll have to make my decision for a reason you don't know, Dagenham. The Outer Satellites are on to this too. We've got reason to believe that they've got agents looking for Foyle in the worst way. If we wait they may pick him up before us. In fact, they may have him now.'
`So your decision is?'
'The blow-up. Let's bring Foyle running if we can.'
`No!' Jisbella cried.
`How?' Dagenham asked, ignoring her.
'Oh, I've got just the one for the job. A one-way telepath named Robin Wednesbury.'
`When?'
`At once. We'll clear the entire neighborhood. We'll get full news coverage and do a full broadcast. If Foyle's anywhere in the Inner Planets, he'll hear about it'
'Not about it,' Jisbella said in despair. 'He'll hear it. It'll be the last thing any of us hear.'
As always, when he returned from a stormy civil court session in Leningrad, Regis Sheffield was pleased and complacent, rather like a cocky prizefighter who's won a tough fight. He stopped off at Blekmann's

D'orsay, and a third session in the Skin and Bones opposite Temple Bar. By the time he arrived in his New York office he was pleasantly illuminated.
As he strode through the clattering corridors and outer rooms, he was greeted by his secretary with a handful of memo-beads.
`Knocked Djargo-Dantchenko for a loop,' Sheffield reported triumphantly. `Judgement and full damages. Old D.D.'s sore as a boil. This makes the score eleven to five, my favor.'
He took the beads, juggled them, and then began tossing them into unlikely receptacles all over the office, including the open mouth of a gaping clerk.
`Really, Mr. Sheffield! Have you been drinking?'
'No more work today. The war news is too damned gloomy. Have to do something to stay cheerful. What say we brawl in the streets?'
`Mr. Sheffield!'
'Anything waiting for me that can't wait another day?'
`There's a gentleman in your office.'
'He made you let him get that far?' Sheffield looked impressed. 'Who is he? God, or somebody?'
'He won't give his name. He gave me this.'
The secretary handed Sheffield a sealed envelope. On it was scrawled: URGENT. Sheffield tore it open,



'I want to give myself up.'
`To the police?'
`For what crime?'
`Crimes.'
'Name two.'
`Robbery and rape.'
'Name two more.'
'Blackmail and murder.'
'Any other items?'
`Treason and genocide.'
`Does that exhaust your catalogue?'
`I think so. We may be able to unveil a few more when we get specific.'
`Been busy, haven't you? Either you're the Prince of Villains or insane.'





'Don't you know him, Chief?' Bunny stammered. 'That's Fourmyle of Ceres. Gully Foyle.'

More than a year ago, Regis Sheffield had been hypnotically fulminated and triggered for this moment. His body had been prepared to respond without thought, and the response was lightning. Sheffield struck Foyle in half a second; temple, throat and groin. It had been decided not to depend on weapons since none might be available.

Foyle fell. Sheffield turned on Bunny and battered him back the office. Then he spat into his palm. It had been decided not to depend on drugs since drugs might not be available. Sheffield's salivary glands had been prepared to respond with an anaphylaxis secretion to the stimulus. He open Foyle's sleeve, dug a nail deep into the hollow of his elbow and slashed. He pressed his spittle into the ragged cut and pinched the skin together.

A strange cry was torn from Foyle's lips; the tattooing showed livid on his face. Before the stunned assistant could make a move, Sheffield swung Foyle up to his shoulder and jaunted.

He arrived in the middle of the Four-Mile Circus in Old St Pat's. It was a daring but calculated move. This was the last place he would be expected to go, and the first place where he might expect to locate PyrE. He was prepared to deal with anyone he might meet in the Cathedral, but the interior of the Circus was empty.

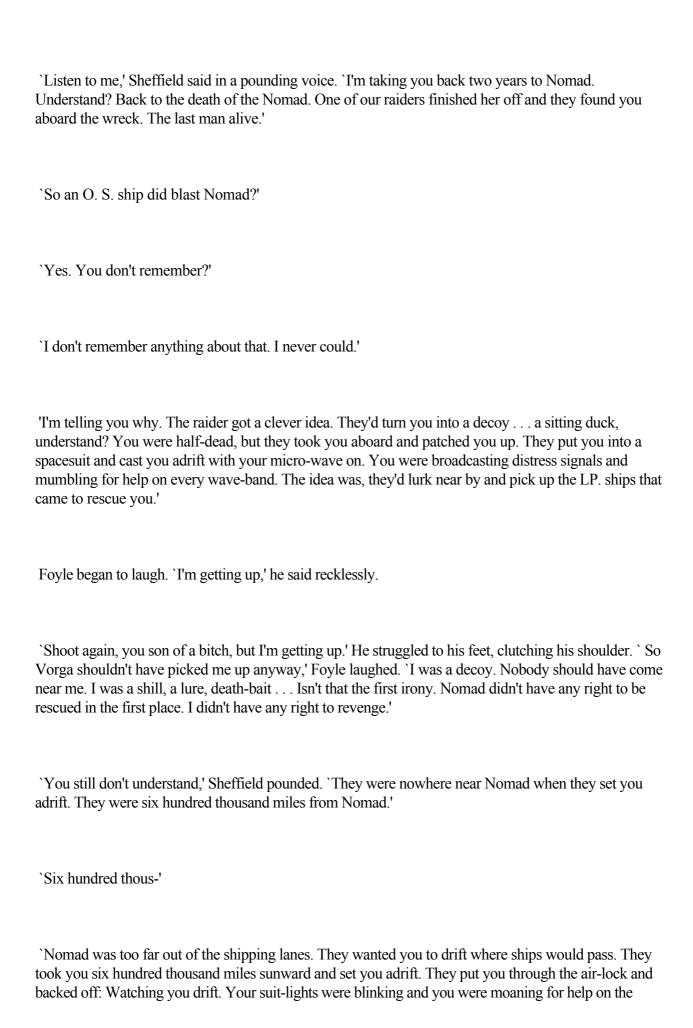
The vacant tents ballooning up in the nave looked tattered; they had already been looted. Sheffield plunged into the first he saw. It was Fourmyle's travelling library, filled with hundreds of books and thousands of glittering novel-beads. The Jack-Jaunters were not interested in literature. Sheffield threw Foyle down on the floor. Only then did he take a gun from his pocket.

Foyle's eyelids fluttered; his eyes opened.

'You're drugged,' Sheffield said rapidly. 'Don't try to jaunte. And don't move. I'm warning you. I'm prepared for anything.'

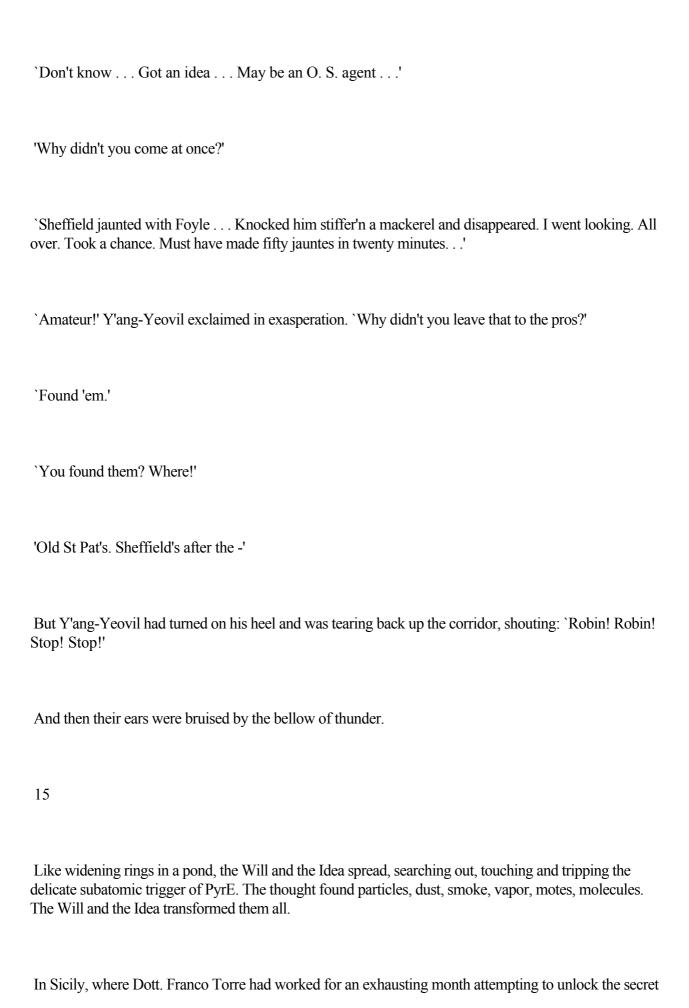
Dazedly, Foyle tried to rise. Sheffield instantly fired and seared his shoulder. Foyle was slammed back against the stone flooring. He was numbed and bewildered. There was a roaring in his ears and a poison coursing through his blood.







Just before they were about to put him out of his misery, Y'ang-Yeovil appeared.
'What's all this?' he snapped. 'I gave orders that Miss Wednesbury was to have absolute quiet'
'Yeovil!' Bunny shouted.
`Who's that?'
'Sheffield's assistant'
`What Bunny?'
`Foyle!'
Bunny howled. `Gully Foyle.'
Y'ang-Yeovil covered the fifty feet between them in exactly one-point-six-six seconds. `What about Foyle?'
`Sheffield's got him,' Bunny gasped.
`Sheffield? When?'
`Half an hour ago.'
`Why didn't he bring him here?'



of one slug of PyrE, the residues and the precipitates had been dumped down a drain which led to the sea. For many months the Mediterranean current had drifted these residues across the sea-bottom. In an instant a hump-backed mound of water towering fifty feet high traced the courses, northeast to Sardinia and south-west to Tripoli. In a micro-second the surface of the Mediterranean was raised into the twisted casting of a giant earthworm that wound around the islands of Pantelleria, Lampedusa, Linosa and Malta.

Some of the residues had been burned off; had gone up the chimney with smoke and vapor to drift for hundreds of miles before settling. These minute particles showed where they had finally settled in Morocco, Algeria, Libya and Greece with blinding pin-point explosions of incredible minuteness and intensity. And some motes, still drifting in the stratosphere, revealed their presence with brilliant gleams like daylight stars.

In Texas, where Prof John Mantley had had the same baffling experience with PyrE, most of the residues had gone down the shaft of an exhausted oil well, which was also used to accommodate radioactive wastes. A deep water table had absorbed much of the matter and spread it slowly over an area of some ten square miles. Ten square miles of Texas flats shook themselves into corduroy. A vast untapped deposit of natural gas at last found a vent and came shrieking up to the surface where sparks from flying stones ignited it into a roaring torch, two hundred feet high.

A milligram of PyrE deposited on a disc of filter paper long since discarded, forgotten, rounded up in a waste paper drive and at last pulped into a mould for type-metal, destroyed the entire late-night edition of the Glasgow Observer. A fragment of PyrE spattered on a lab smock long since converted into rag paper destroyed a Thank-You note written by Lady Shrapnel, and destroyed an additional ton of first-class mail in the process.

A shirt cuff, inadvertently dipped into an acid solution of PyrE, long abandoned along with the shirt, and now worn under his mink suit by a Jack-Jaunter, blasted off the wrist and hand of the Jack-Jaunter in one fiery amputation. A deci-milligram of PyrE, still adhering to a former evaporation crystal now in use as an ashtray, kindled a fire that scorched the office of one Baker, dealer in freaks and purveyor of monsters.

Across the length and breadth of the planet were isolated explosions, chains of explosions, traceries of fire, pin-points of fire, meteor flares in the sky, great craters and narrow channels, ploughed in the earth, exploded in the earth, vomited forth from the earth. It was as though an angry God had again visited His people with fire and brimstone.

In Old St Pat's nearly a tenth of a gram of PyrE was exposed in Fourmyle's laboratory. The rest was sealed in its Inert Lead Isomer safe, protected from accidental and intentional psychokinetic ignition. The blinding blast of energy generated from that tenth of a gram blew out the walls and split the floors as though an internal earthquake had convulsed the building. The buttresses held the pillars for a

split-second and then rumbled. Down came towers, spires, pillars, buttresses and roof in a thundering avalanche to hesitate above the yawning crater of the floor in a tangled, precarious equilibrium. A breath of wind, a distant vibration, and the collapse would continue until the crater was filled solid with pulverized rubble. The star-like heat of the explosion ignited a hundred fires and melted the ancient thick copper of the collapsed roof. If a milligram more of PyrE had been exposed to detonation, the heat would have been intense enough to vaporize the metal immediately. Instead, it glowed white and began to flow. It streamed off the wreckage of the crumbled roof and began searching its way downward through the jumbled stone, iron, wood and glass, like some monstrous molten mould creeping through a tangled web.

Dagenham and Y'ang-Yeovil arrived almost simultaneously. A moment later Robin Wednesbury appeared and then Jisbella McQueen. A dozen Intelligence operatives and six Dagenham couriers arrived along with Presteign's Jaunte-Watch and the police. They formed a cordon around the blazing block, but there were very few spectators. After the shock of the New Year's Eve raid, that single explosion had frightened half New York into another wild jaunte for safety.

The uproar of the fire was frightful, and the massive grind of tons of wreckage in uneasy balance was ominous. Everyone was forced to shout and yet was fearful of the vibrations. Y'ang-Yeovil bawled the news about Foyle and Sheffield into Dagenham's ear.

Dagenham nodded and displayed his deadly smile. 'We'll have to go in,' he shouted.

'Fire suits,' Y'ang Yeovil shouted.

He disappeared and reappeared with a pair of white Disaster Crew fire suits. At the sight of these, Robin and Jisbella began shouting hysterical objections. The two men ignored them, wriggled into the Inert Isomer armor and inched into the inferno.

Within Old St Pat's it was as though a monstrous hand had churned a log-jam of wood, stone and metal. Through every interstice crawled tongues of molten copper, slowly working downward, igniting wood, crumbling stone, shattering glass. Where the copper flowed it merely glowed, but where it poured it spattered dazzling droplets of white hot metal.

Beneath the log-jam yawned a black crater where formerly the floor of the cathedral had been. The explosion had split the flagstones asunder, revealing the cellars, sub-cellars and vaults deep below the building. These too were filled with a snarl of stones, beams, pipes, wire, the remnants of the Four Mile Circus tents; all fitfully lit small fires. Then the first of the copper dripped down into the crater and

Dagenham pounded Y'ang-Yeovil's shoulder to attract his attention and pointed. Half-way down the crater, in the midst of the tangle lay the body of Regis Sheffield, drawn and quartered by the explosion. Y'ang-Yeovil pounded Dagenham's shoulder and pointed. Almost at the bottom of the crater lay Gully Foyle, and as the blazing spatter of molten copper illuminated him, they saw him move. The two men at once turned and crawled out of the cathedral for a conference.
'He's alive.'
'How is it possible?'
'I can guess. Did you see the shreds of tent wadded near him? It must have been a freak explosion up at the other end of the cathedral and the tents in between cushioned Foyle. Then he dropped through the floor before anything else could hit him.'
`I'll buy that. We've got to get him out. He's the only man who knows where the PyrE is.'
`Could it still be here unexploded?'
`If it's in the I.L.I. safe, yes. That stuff is inert to anything. Never mind that now. How are we going to get him out?'
`Well we can't work down from above.'
`Why not?'
`Isn't it obvious? One false step and the whole mess will `Did you see that copper flowing down?'

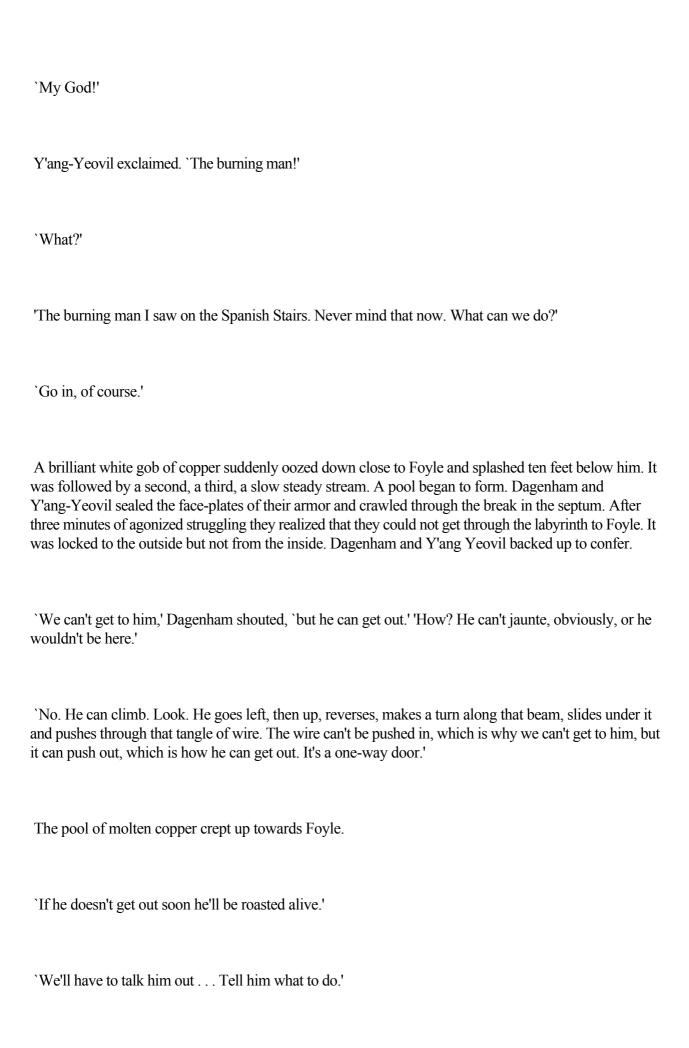
illuminated it with a brilliant molten splash.

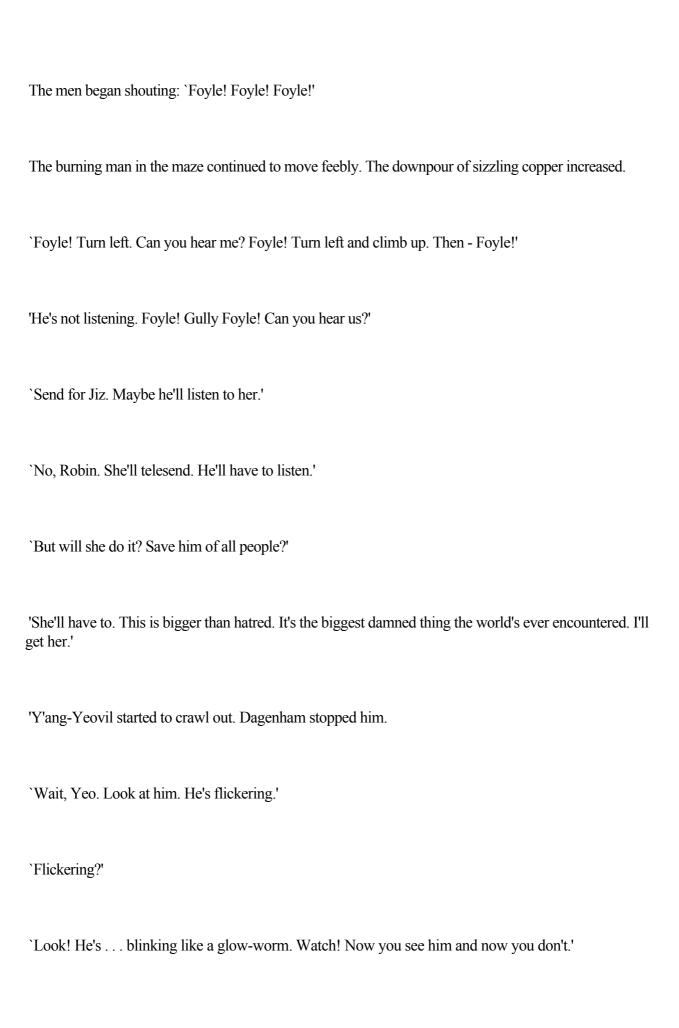
`God yes!'
'Well if we don't get him out in ten minutes, he'll be at the bottom of a pool of molten copper.'
`What can we do?'
`I've got a long-shot.'
`What?'
`The cellars of the old R.C.A. buildings across the street are as deep as St Pat's.'
`And?'
`We'll go down and try to hole through. Maybe we can pull Foyle out from the bottom.'
$\Delta$ squad broke into the old R C $\Delta$ buildings, abandoned and sealed up for two generations. They wen

A squad broke into the old R.C.A. buildings, abandoned and sealed up for two generations. They went down into the cellar arcades, crumbling museums of the retail stores of centuries past. They located the ancient elevator shafts and dropped through them into the sub-cellars filled with electric installations, heat plants and refrigeration systems. They went down into the sump-cellars, waist deep in water from the streams of pre-historic Manhattan Island, streams that still flowed beneath the streets that covered them.

As they waded through the sump-cellars, bearing east-northeast to bring up opposite the St Pat's vaults, they suddenly discovered that the pitch-dark was illuminated by a fiery flickering up ahead. Dagenham shouted and flung himself forward. The explosion that had opened the sub-cellars of St Pat's had split the septum between its vaults and those of the R.C.A. buildings. Through a jagged rent in stone and earth they could peer into the bottom of the inferno.

Fifty feet inside was Foyle, trapped in a labyrinth of twisted beams, stones, pipe, metal and wire. He was illuminated by a roaring glow from above him and fitful flames around him. His clothes were on fire and the tattooing was livid on his face. He moved feebly, like a bewildered animal in a maze.





The figure of Foyle was appearing, disappearing and reappearing in rapid succession, like a firefly caught in a flaming gyp, `What's he doing now? What's he trying to do? What's happening?'

He was trying to escape. Like a trapped firefly or some seabird caught in the blazing brazier of a naked beacon fire, he was beating about in a frenzy ... a blackened, burning creature, dashing himself against the unknown.

Sound came as sight to him, as light in strange pattern. He saw the sound of his shouted name in vivid rhythms

FOYLEFOYLEFOYLE

FOYLEFOYLEFOYLE

FOYLEFOYLEFOYLE

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Motion came as sound to him. He heard the writhing of the flames, he heard the swirls of smoke, he heard the flickering, jeering shadows . . . all speaking deafeningly in strange tongues:

`BURUU GYARR RWAWW JERRMAKING?' the steam asked, `Asha. Asha, rit-kit-dit-Zit. m'gid,' the quick shadows answered.

'Ohhh. Ahhh. Heee. Teee. Oooo. Ahhh,' the heat ripples clamored. 'Ahhh. Maaa. Paaa. Laaaaaaaaasasa!'

Even the flames smoldering on his own clothes roared gibberish 1n his ears.

'MANTERGEISTMANN!' they bellowed,

## 'UNVERTRACKINSTEIGN GAN ZELSSFURSTINLASTENBRUGG!'

Color was pain to him	. heat, cold, pressure; sensation	ns of intolerable	heights and	plunging	depths, of
tremendous accelerations	and crushing compressions:				

RED RECEDED FROM HIM.

GREEN LIGHT ATTACKED.

## INDIGO UNDULATED WITH SICKENING SPEED LIKE SHUDDERING SNAKE.

Touch was taste to him . . . the feel of wood was acrid and chalky in his mouth, metal was salt, stone tasted sour-sweet to the touch of his fingers, and the feel of glass cloyed his palate like over-rich pastry.

Smell was touch. Hot stone smelled like velvet caressing his cheek. Smoke and ash were harsh tweeds rasping his skin, almost the feel of wet canvas. Molten metal smelled like blows hammering his heart, and the ionization of the PyrE explosion filled the air with ozone that smelled like water trickling through his fingers.

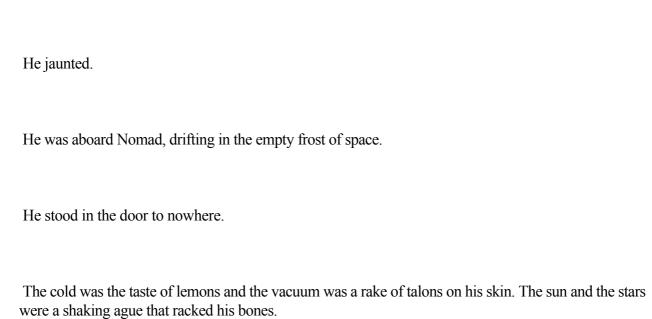
He was not blind, not deaf, not senseless. Sensation came to him, but filtered through a nervous system twisted and short-circuited by the shock of the PyrE concussion. He was suffering from Synaesthesia, that rare condition in which perception receives messages from the objective world and relays these messages to the brain, but there in the brain the sensory perceptions are confused with one another. So, in Foyle, sound registered as sight, motion registered as sound, colors became pain sensations, touch became taste and smell became touch. He was not only trapped within the labyrinth of the inferno under Old St Pat's; he was trapped in the kaleidoscope of his own cross-senses.

Again desperate, on the ghastly verge of extinction, he abandoned all disciplines and habits of living; or perhaps, they were stripped from him. He reverted from a conditioned product of environment and experience to an inchoate creature craving escape and survival and exercising every power it possessed. And again the miracle of two years ago took place.

The undivided energy of an entire human organism, of every cell, fiber, nerve and muscle empowered that craving, and again Foyle space-jaunted.

He went hurtling along the geodesical space-lines of the curving universe at the speed of thought, which far exceeds that of light. His spatial velocity was so frightful that his time-axis was twisted from the vertical line drawn from the Past through Now to the Future. He went flickering along the new near-horizontal axis, this new space-time geodesic, driven by the miracle of a human mind no longer inhibited by concepts of the impossible.

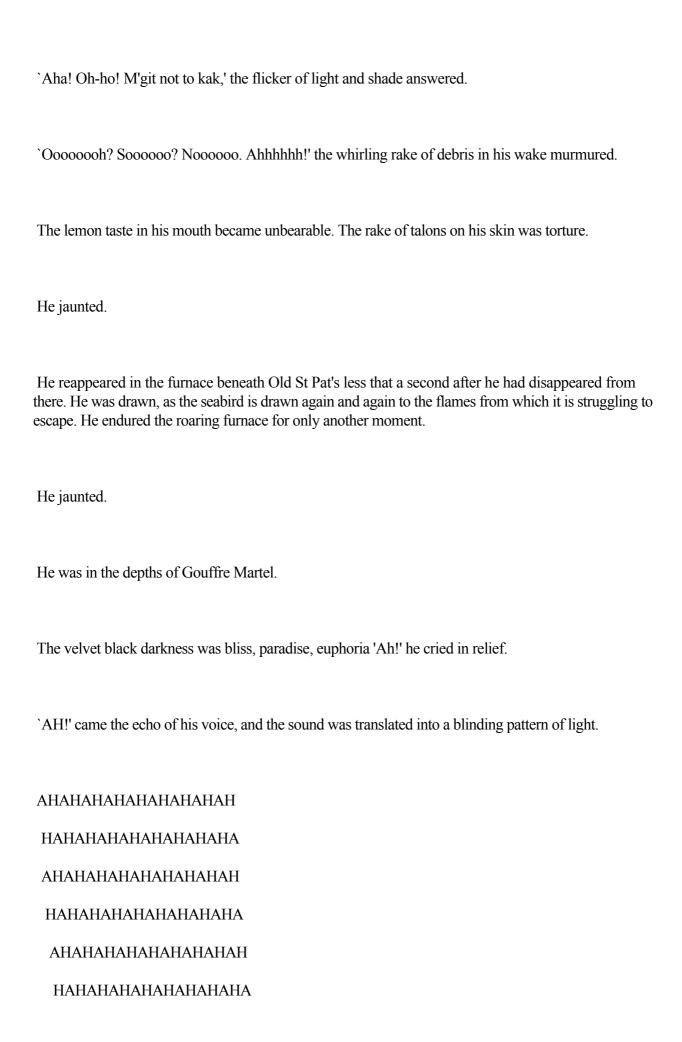
Again he achieved what Helmut Grant and Enzio Dandridge and scores of other experimenters had failed to do, because his blind panic forced him to abandon the spatio-temporal inhibitions that had defeated previous attempts. He did not jaunte to Elsewhere, but to Elsewhen. But most important, the fourth dimensional awareness, the complete picture of the Arrow of Time and his position on it which is born in every man but deeply submerged by the trivia of living, was in Foyle close to the surface. He jaunted along the space-time goedesics to Elsewheres and Elsewhens, translating `i', the square root of minus one, from an imaginary number into reality by a magnificent act of imagination.

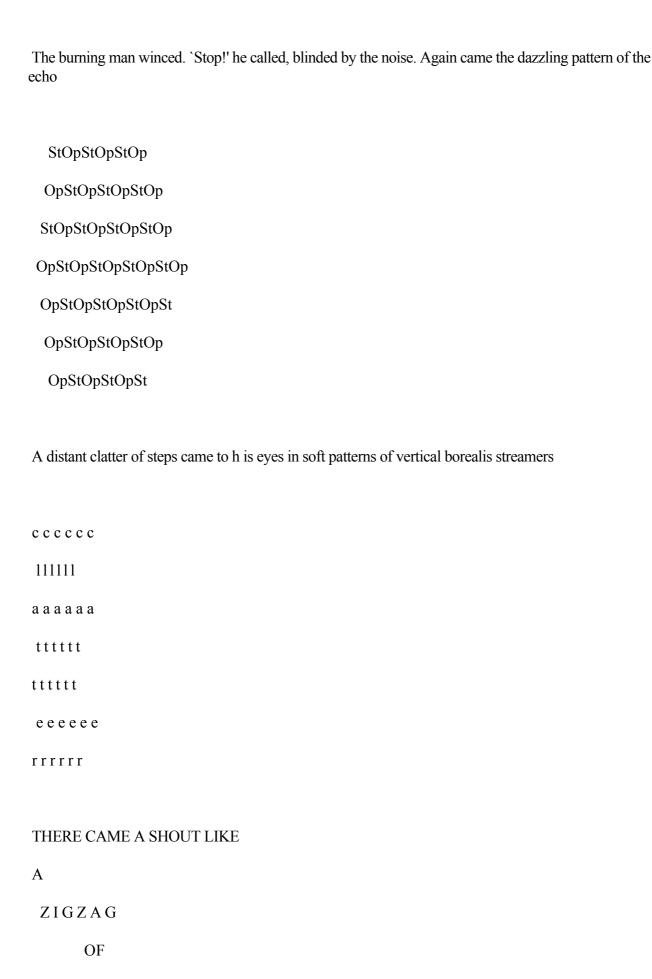


`GLOMMHA FREDNIS THE CLOMOHAMAGENSIN!' motion roared in his ears.

It was a figure with its back to him vanishing down the corridor; a figure with a copper cauldron of provisions over its shoulder; a figure darting, floating, squirming through free fall. It was Gully Foyle.

-'MEEHAT JESSROT TO CRONAGAN BUT FLIMMCORK,' the sight of his motion bellowed.





## LIGHTNING

## A BEAM OF LIGHT ATTACKED

It was the search party from the Gouffre Martel hospital, tracking Foyle and Jisbella McQueen by Geophone. The burning man disappeared, but not before he had unwittingly decoyed the searchers from the trail of the vanished fugitives.

He was back under Old St Pat's, reappearing only an instant after his last disappearance. His wild beatings into the unknown sent him stumbling up geodesic space-time lines that inevitably brought him back to the Now he was trying to escape; for in the inverted saddle-curve of space-time, his Now was the deepest depression in the curve.

He could drive himself up, up, up the geodesic lines into the past or future, but inevitably he must fall back into his own Now, like a thrown ball hurled up the sloping walls of an infinite pit, to land, hang poised for a moment, and then roll back into the depths.

But still he beat into the unknown in his desperation.

Again he jaunted.

He was on Jervis beach on the Australian coast.

The motion of the surf was bawling: `LOGGER-MIST CROTEHAVEN JALL. LOOGERMISK MOTESLAVEN DOOL.'

The churning of the surf blinded him with the lights of batteries of footlights: Gully Foyle and Robin Wednesbury stood before him. The body of a man lay on the sand, which felt like vinegar in the burning man's mouth. The wind brushing his face tasted like brown paper.

Foyle opened his mouth and exclaimed. The sound came out in burning star-bubbles: Foyle took a step. `GRASH!' the motion blared.

The burning man jaunted.

He was in the office of Dr Sergei Orel in Shanghai.

Foyle was again before him, speaking in light patterns:

WAY WAYWAY HROHROHRO

OEUOEU OEU

He flickered back to the agony of Old St Pat's and jaunted again.

HE WAS ON THE BRAWLING SPANISH

STAIRS. HE WAS ON THE BRAWLING

SPANISH STAIRS. HE WAS ON THE

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The burning man jaunted.

It was cold again, with the taste of lemons, and vacuum raked his skin with unspeakable talons. He was peering through the porthole of a silvery yawl. The jagged mountains of the Moon towered in the background. Through the porthole he could see the jangling racket of blood pumps and oxygen pumps and hear the uproar of the motion Gully Foyle made towards him. The clawing of the vacuum caught his throat in an agonizing grip.

The geodesic lines of space-time rolled him back to Now under Old St Pat's, where less than two seconds had elapsed since he first began his frenzied struggle. Once more, like a burning spear, he hurled himself into the unknown.

He was in the Sklotsky Catacomb on Mars. The white slug that was Lindsey Joyce was writhing before him.

'NO! NO! No!' her motion screamed. 'DON'T HURT ME.

DON'T KILL ME. NO PLEASE . . . PLEASE . . . PLEASE . . . 'The burning man opened his tiger mouth and laughed. 'She hurts,' he said. The sound of his voice burned his eyes.

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Н Н Н UUU R R R T T Τ S S S 'Who are you?' Foyle whispered. WWWWWWWWWWWWWWWWWW AREAREAREAREAREAREAREAREARE AREAREAREAREAREAREAREAREARE AREAREAREAREAREAREAREAREARE YYYYYYYYYYYYYYYYYYYY UUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUU The burning man winced. 'Too bright,' he said. 'Less light.' Foyle took a step forward. `BLAA-GAA-DAA-MAWWFRAA-MISHINGLISTONVISTA!' the motion roared. The burning man clapped his hands over his ears in agony. 'Too loud,' he cried. 'Don't move so loud.'

The writhing Sklotsky's motion was still screaming, beseeching: `DON'T HURT ME. DON'T HURT

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The burning man laughed again. `Listen to her. She's screaming. Begging. She doesn't want to die. She doesn't want to be hurt. Listen to her.'

'IT WAS OLIVIA PRESTEIGN GAVE THE ORDER. OLIVIA PRESTEIGN. NOT ME. DON'T HURT ME. OLIVIA PRESTEIGN.'

`She's telling who gave the order. Can't you hear? Listen with your eyes. She says Olivia.'

WHAT? WHAT? WHAT?

WHAT? WHAT? WHAT?

WHAT? WHAT? WHAT?

WHAT? WHAT? WHAT?

The checkerboard glitter of Foyle's question was too much for him.

'She says Olivia. Olivia Presteign. Olivia Presteign!

He jaunted.

He fell back into the pit under Old St Pat's, and suddenly his confusion and despair told him he was dead. This was the finish of Gully Foyle. This was eternity, and hell was real. What he had seen was the past passing before his crumbling senses in the final moment of death. What he was enduring he must endure through all time. He was dead. He knew he was dead.

He refused to submit to eternity. He beat again into the unknown.

The burning man jaunted.
He was in a scintillating mist a snowflake cluster of stars a shower of liquid diamonds. There was the touch of butterfly wings on his skin There was the taste of a strand of cool pearls in his mouth
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His crossed kaleidoscopic senses could not tell him where he was, but he knew he wanted to remain in this Nowhere for ever.
`Hello, Gully.'
'Who's that?'
`This is Robin!
'Robin?'
'Robin Wednesbury that was.'
`That was?'
`Robin Yeovil that is.'
`I don't understand. Am I dead?'
'No, Gully.'

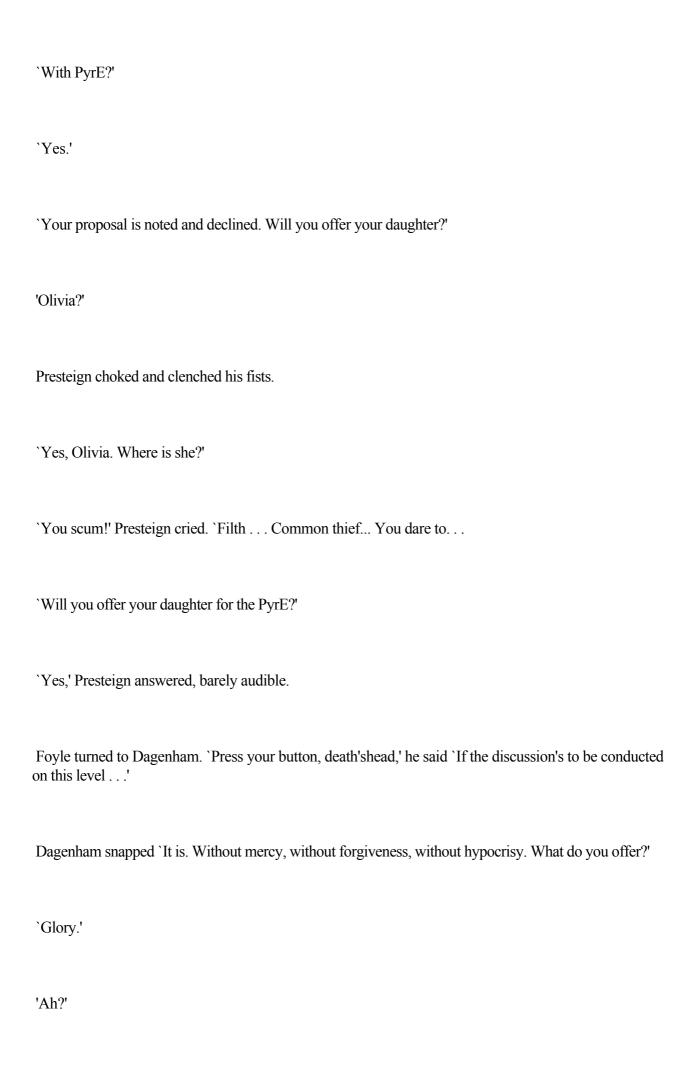


`For thirty years.'
`That's impossible.'
'No it isn't. This is a long, long way from Old St Pat's. I've been wanting to tell you how to save yourself from the fire, Gully. Will you listen?'
`I'm not dead?'
`No.'
`I'll listen.'
'Your senses are all confused. It'll pass soon, but I won't give the directions in left and right or up and down. I'll tell you what you can understand now.'
'Why are you helping me after what I've done to you?'
`That's all forgiven and forgotten, Gully. Now listen to me. When you get back to Old St Pat's, turn around until you're facing the loudest shadows. Got that?'
`Yes.'
'Go towards the noise until you feel a deep prickling on your skin. Then stop.'
`Then stop.'

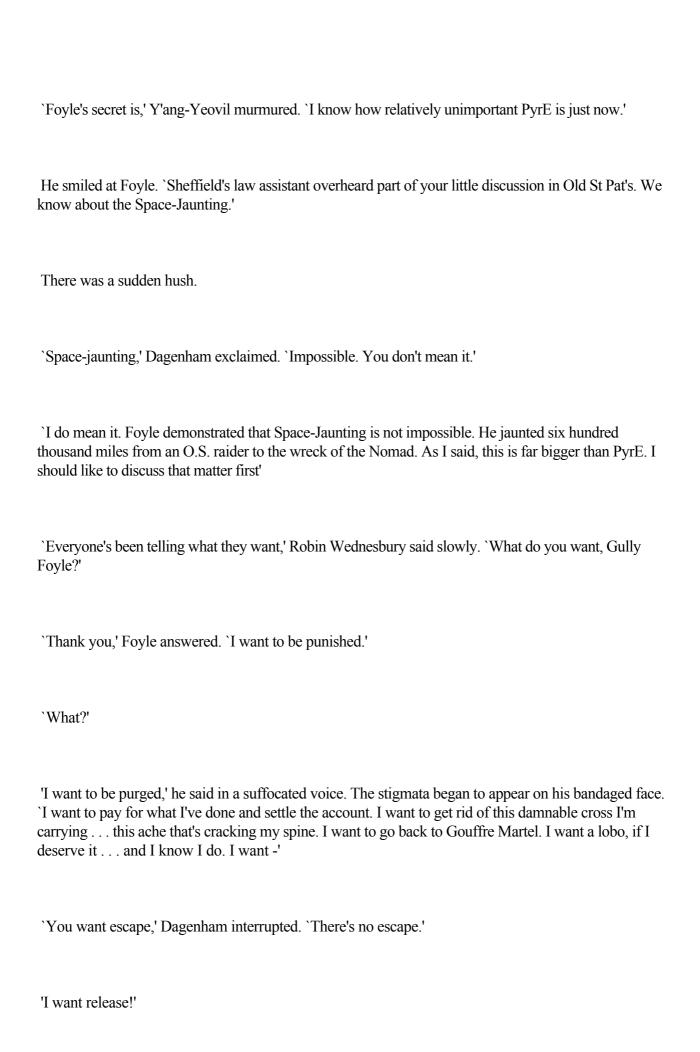


the Louis Quinze desk. Taste became taste as he sipped the cognac that the robot bartender handed him.
He knew he was at bay, faced with the decision of his life. He ignored his enemies and examined the perpetual beam carved in the robot face of the bartender, the classic Irish grin.
`Thank you,' Foyle said.
'My pleasure, sir,' the robot replied and awaited its next cue.
`Nice day,' Foyle remarked.
`Always a lovely day somewhere, sir,' the robot beamed.
`Awful day,' Foyle said.
`Always a lovely day somewhere, sir,' the robot responded.
`Day,' Foyle said.
`Always a lovely day somewhere, sir,' the robot said.
Foyle turned to the others. 'That's me,' he said, motioning to the robot. 'That's all of us. We prattle about free will, but we're nothing but response mechanical reaction in prescribed grooves. So here I am, here I am, waiting to respond. Press the buttons and I'll jump.'
He aped the canned voice of the robot. 'My pleasure to serve, sir.'

Suddenly his tone lashed them. 'What do you want?'
They stirred with uneasy purpose. Foyle was burned, beaten, chastened and yet he was taking control of all of them.
`We'll stipulate the threats,' Foyle said. `I'm to be hung, drawn and quartered, tortured in hell if I don't What? What do you want?'
'I want my property,' Presteign said, smiling coldly.
`Eighteen and some odd pounds of PyrE. Yes. What do you offer?'
`I make no offer, sir, I demand what is mine.'
Y'ang-Yeovil and Dagenham began to speak. Foyle silenced them. 'One button at a time, gentlemen. Presteign is trying to make me jump at present.'
He turned to Presteign. 'Press harder, blood and money, or find another button. Who are you to make demands at this moment?'
Presteign tightened his lips. `The law' he began.
'What? Threats?' Foyle laughed. 'Am I to be frightened into anything? Don't be an imbecile. Speak to me the way you did New Year's Eve, Presteign without mercy, without forgiveness, without hypocrisy.'
Presteign bowed, took a breath and ceased to smile. 'I offer you power,' he said. 'Adoption as my heir, partnership in Presteign Enterprises, the cheiftainship of clan and sept. Together we can own the world'



'We can't offer money or power. We can offer honor. Gully Foyle, the man who saved the Inner Planets from annihilation. We can offer security. We'll wipe out your criminal record, give you an honored name, guarantee a niche in the hall of fame.'
'No,' Jisbella McQueen cut in sharply. 'Don't accept. If you want to be a savior, destroy the secret. Don't give PyrE to anyone.'
`What is PyrE?'
`Quiet!'
Dagenham snapped.
`It's a thereto-nuclear explosive that's detonated by thought alone by psychokinesis,' Jisbella said.
`What thought?'
`The desire of anyone to detonate it, directed at it That brings it to critical mass if it's not insulated by Inert Lead Isomer.'
'I told you to be quiet,' Dagenham growled.
`If we're all to have a chance at him, I want mine.'
`This is bigger than idealism.'
'Nothing's bigger than idealism.'



`Out of the qu by lobotomy.'	estion,' Y'ang-Yeovil said. `There's too much of value locked up in your head to be lost
`We're beyond	d easy childish things like crime and punishment,' Dagenham added.
'No,' Robin o	bjected. `There must always be sin and forgiveness. We're never beyond that'
`Profit and los	s, sin and forgiveness, idealism and realism,' Foyle smiled.
	sure, so simple, so single-minded. I'm the only one in doubt. Let's see how sure you really e up Olivia Presteign? To me, yes? Will you give her up to the law? She's a killer.'
Presteign tried	I to rise, and then fell back in his chair.
`There must b sisters.'	e forgiveness, Robin? Will you forgive Olivia Presteign? She murdered your mother and
Sheffield revea	ashen. Y'ang-Yeovil tried to protest `The Outer Satellites don't have PyrE, Yeovil. aled that. Would you use it on them anyway? Will you turn my name into common ike Lynch and Boycott?'
•	o Jisbella. 'Will your idealism take you back to Gouffre Martel to serve out your you, Dagenham, will you give her up? Let her go?'
He listened to	the outcries and watched the confusion for a moment, bitter and constrained.
`Life is so sim	aple,' he said. `This decision is so simple, isn't it? Am I to respect Presteign's property





'Always a lovely day somewhere, sir,' the robot beamed. Then it fizzed, jangled and collapsed. Foyle turned on the others. 'That thing's right,' he said, 'and you're wrong. Who are we, any of us, to make a decision for the world? Let the world make its own decisions. Who are we to keep secrets from the world? Let the world know and decide for itself. Come to Old St Pat's.' He jaunted; they followed. The square block was still cordoned and by now an enormous crowd had gathered. So many of the rash and curious were jaunting into the smoking ruins that the police had set up a protective induction field to keep them out. Even so, urchins, curio-seekers and irresponsibles attempted to jaunte into the wreckage, only to be burned by the induction field and depart, squawking. At a signal from Y'ang-Yeovil, the field was turned off: Foyle went through the hot rubble to the east wall of the cathedral, which stood to a height of fifteen feet. He felt the smoking stones, pressed and levered. There came a grinding grumble and a three by five-foot section jarred open and then stuck. Foyle gripped it and pulled. The section trembled; then the roasted hinges collapsed and the stone panel crumbled. Two centuries before, when organized religion had been abolished and orthodox worshippers of all faiths had been driven underground, some devout souls had constructed this secret niche in Old St Pat's and turned it into an altar. The gold of the crucifix still shone with the brilliance of eternal faith. At the foot of the cross rested a small black box of Inert Lead Isomer. 'Is this a sign?' Foyle panted. 'Is this the answer I want?' He snatched the heavy safe before any could seize it: He jaunted a hundred yards to the remnants of the cathedral steps facing Fifth Avenue. There he opened the safe in full view of the gaping crowds. A shout of consternation went up from the Intelligence crews who knew the truth of its contents. 'Foyle!' Dagenham cried. `For God's sake, Foyle!' Y'ang-Yeovil shouted.

Foyle withdrew a slug of PyrE, the color of iodine crystals, the size of a cigarette . . . one pound of



Foyle continued to Bangkok where it was pouring rain, and Delhi where a monsoon raged . . . always pursued in his mad-dog course. In Baghdad it was three in the morning and the night-club crowd and pub-crawlers who stayed a perpetual half-hour ahead of closing time around the world, cheered him alcoholically. In Paris and again in London it was midnight and the mobs on the Champs Elysses and in Piccadilly Circus were galvanized by Foyle's appearance and passionate exhortation.

Having led his pursuers three-quarters of the way around the world in fifty minutes, Foyle permitted them to overtake him in London. He permitted them to knock him down, take the I.L.I. safe from his arms, count the remaining slugs of PyrE, and slam the safe shut.

'There's enough left for a war. Plenty left for destruction annihilation . . . if you dare.' He was laughing and sobbing in hysterical triumph. 'Millions for defense, but not one cent for survival.'

'D'you realize what you've done, you damned killer?' Dagenham shouted.

'I know what I've done.'

'Nine pounds of PyrE scattered around the world! One thought and we'll - How can we get it back without telling them the truth? For God's sake, Yeo, keep that crowd back. Don't let them hear this.'

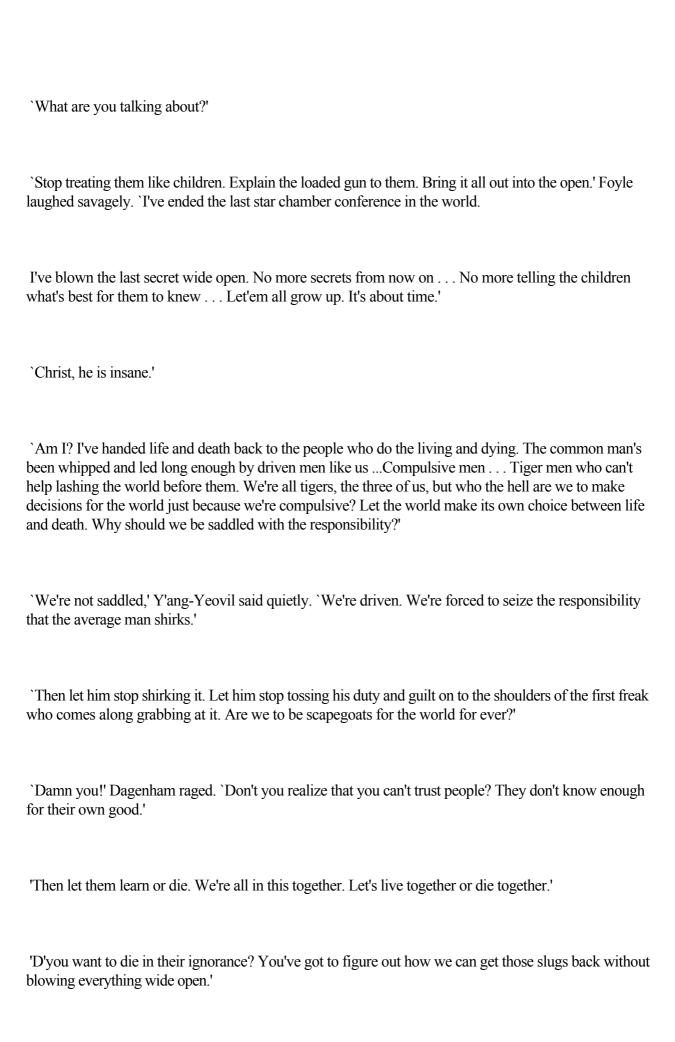
`Impossible.'

'Then let's jaunte.'

'No,' Foyle roared. 'Let them hear this. Let them hear everything.'

'You're insane, man. You've handed a loaded gun to children.'

'Stop treating them like children and they'll stop behaving like children. Who the hell are you to play monitor?'



'No. I believe in them. I was one of them before I turned tiger. They can all turn uncommon if they're kicked awake like I was.'
Foyle shook himself and abruptly jaunted to the bronze head of Eros, fifty feet above the counter of Piccadilly Circus. He perched precariously and bawled:
`Listen a me, all you! Listen, man! Gonna sermonize, me. Dig this, you!'
He was answered with a roar.
'You pigs, you. You rot like pigs, is all. You got the most in you and you use the least. You hear me, You? Got a million in you and spend pennies. Got a genius in you and think crazies. Got a heart in you and feel empties. All of you. Every you'
He was jeered. He continued with the hysterical passion of the possessed.
'Take a war to make you spend. Take a jam to make you think. Take a challenge to make you great. Rest of the time you sit around lazy, you. Pigs, you! All right, God damn you! I challenge you, me. Die or live and be great. Blow yourselves to Christ gone or come to me and I make you great. Die, damn you, or come and find me, Gully Foyle, and I make you great. I give you the stars. I make you men!'
He jaunted up the geodesic lines of space-time to an Elsewhere and an Elsewhen. He arrived in chaos. He hung in a precarious para-Now for a moment and then tumbled back into chaos.
`It can be done,' he thought. `It must be done.'
He jaunted again, a burning spear flung from unknown into unknown, and again he tumbled back into a chaos of Paraspace and Paratime. He was lost in Nowhere.



Now: Aldebaran in Taurus, a monstrous red star of a pair of stars whose sixteen planets wove high velocity ellipses around their gyrating parents. He was hurling himself through space-time with growing assurance
Now: Antares, an MI red giant, paired like Aldebaran' two hundred and fifty light years from earth, encircled by two hundred and fifty planetoids of the size of Mercury, of the climate of Eden
And lastly
NOW: He was back aboard Nomad.
The girl, Moira, found him in his tool locker aboard Nomad, curled into a tight fetal ball, his face hollow his eyes burning with divine revelation. Although the asteroid had long since been repaired and made airtight, Foyle still went through the motions of the perilous existence that had given birth to him years before.
But now he slept and meditated, digesting and encompassing the magnificence he had learned. He awoke from reverie to trance and drifted out of the locker, passing Moira with blind eyes, brushing past the awed girl who stepped aside and sank to her knees. He wandered through the empty passages and returned to the womb of the locker. He curled up again and was lost.
She touched him once; he made no move. She spoke the name that had been emblazoned on his face. He made no answer. She turned and fled to the interior of the asteroid, to the holy of holies in which Joseph reigned.
'My husband has returned to us,' Moira said.
'Your husband?'
`The God-man who destroyed us.' Joseph's face darkened with anger.



The next FatBastard release will be next Saturday 17th March 2001. Unfortunately those who promised to let me have back my copies of both Thomas Harris' The Silence of the Lambs and Captain Corellis' Mandolin, let me down. I am promised that Capt Corelli will be back before Nick Cage takes him into a wider audience so look out for him. 'Silence' though may well have gone the way of my full set of Donaldsons' Chronicles of Thomas Covenant and Hellers' Catch 22 and others - Shouldn't lend them out - at least not till I've made a backup! Next week should be another 'double header' - two of Ross

McDonalds 'Lew Archer' books.

Some experimentation last week revealed that I now cannot post anything bigger than about 100 lines through my usual ISP and their News-server. I managed to get The Green Mile out through another account. Whether this is as a result of the activities of 'Harlan' and his truly delightful solicitor is something I am hopefully not paranoid enough to worry too much about. I don't have the luxury of broadband (or even free calls) and am neither rich enough nor technically adept enough to set up foreign accounts or servers, so I have decided that I will try to get the new releases to ABEB only once for each week. If this doesnt work I'll have to release that weeks by simply passing the book onto a few selected ftp archives, and letting 'natural propagation' take place. If you are an archive and you want to help (or you would rather I didn't) let me know. Otherwise, comments (and requests) welcome at my e-mail address below. (I may not respond very quickly though, apologies in advance!) ....Algernon.

A FatBastard production. Scanned with Omnipage Pro 10. Completed and Posted 10th March 2001. Proofed (in US English!) in Word 97. Some formatting may be altered slightly. If you find any other errors, either let me know at algernon\_fatbstard@hotmail.com or update the version no and repost. Not to be reposted without the FatBastard 'Logo' below.

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