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THE **MEAT**
MACHINE

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DAVID PLAYFAIR

THE MEAT MACHINE

By David Playfair

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Chapter Twenty-Eight—The Big River

The Big River had steep banks, but the spring spate had slackened, so there was a little beach where we could stand. I watched the men file down a sloping path to the water's edge. We didn't have enough officers. Nor did we have any agreed seniority among the private soldiers. They were a mixture of broken units. Whom should I promote? While I watched the soldiers, the holy man watched me. He must have guessed my thoughts, for this was the scripture he quoted: 'The Lord spoke to Gideon, bring them down to the water, divide them by the manner in which the men drink. I will conquer the Midianites with the men who cup the water with their hands and lift it to their mouths.'

Good advice, and I followed it. The privates who crouched down to put their mouths to the water like cows were to stay privates. I sent a couple of corporals to the top of the bank as sentries. When the men had drunk their fill, I addressed them again.

‘Our freedom won’t last unless we get away from here, and fast, before a whole SS division comes searching for their missing comrades. What road do we take? Do any of you come from these parts? I want suggestions.’

A short brown-skinned man stepped forward.

‘I’m not from here,’ he said, ‘but I was born and raised on another river bank. If you know one river well, you know something about every other one. So I can tell you now, the only one road worth talking about in these parts is a wet one. I mean the water road which is flowing right in front of us. What the old folk call the Merchants’ Road.’

That was a name we liked very much, a good luck name. I’ll explain why. Merchant adventurers are admired by Communists. It’s the later generations of merchants, stay-at-home capitalists who delegated risks to employees, who became our enemies. *Tovarishch*, the Russian word for ‘comrade’, actually means ‘fellow-merchant’.

We would be following the route of the ancient merchants who carried Baltic amber to Byzantium.

But how? Our people had little more than the clothes they stood up in. We had no boat, let alone oars and rope. What we did have, though, was a fierce determination to live. The river man, Marenko, proved to be a boatman by trade. I took him aside and confided my worries.

‘Morale’s good,’ I said, ‘but it won’t stay good unless we find them a boat.’

‘In normal times,’ said Marenko, ‘this river would be thick with traffic. The boats can’t have evaporated away, and it’s too soon for the Germans to have got them all.’

‘Do you think they’ve all been sunk in the retreat?’ I asked.

‘No,’ he said, ‘not all, or at least not fully sunk. People would have been moving in a hurry. No time to tow the boats to midstream before scuttling them. We might find a wreck to salvage.’

I took Friedrich’s telescope out of my jacket. ‘Borrow this,’ I said, ‘and please, find something the men can work on.’ He climbed back up the bank. While he was away, and with Fyodor’s help, I counted up our little army. If I was going to be a General, I wanted to know of what.

Here is our inventory of human resources for August 1941:
NKVD Major with cracked leg,
most irregularly designated General: 1

Aryan barbarian, whose steadfast loyalty to me as blood-brother overrode those abstract entities called 'race' and 'nationality': 1

Alcoholic holy man, irregularly appointed chaplain: 1

Old Age Pensioner with a blunderbuss: 1

Mongols: 2 (How many do you need to make a horde?)

Lieutenants: 2

Corporals: 3

Sailor: 1

Privates from 12 different formations —some of whom I'd already unofficially promoted to:

Corporals or Sergeants: 281

How many other interesting and useful individuals did we have? Time and conversation would show. I was encouraged to notice that at least half of the lads carried little bags of soil tied around their necks — a peasant doesn't like to leave his farm without a souvenir of the land.

Whether the black soil of Ukraine, the red soil of Ruthenia or the white soil of the north, they'd fight or die to defend it. I resolved to split them into action groups of about twenty for the coming guerilla campaign. Units any larger could not live off the country, nor hide in it.

It wasn't simply Klemperer's horrible baptism which had decimated our leadership. This group of prisoners had been taken during Colonel Steinmann's 'mopping up' process.

They were mainly private soldiers who had got separated — or had separated themselves — from their units as the battle was lost. Since I did not know which were the deserters and which the diehards, I decided to break up the bunches. I made sure that each group had at least one automatic weapon.

The Mongol brothers I left as a partnership, to be our medical corps (and cavalry too, if I could find them horses). I would keep Zaretsky the mechanic, Marenko the sailor, Harry and Sergeant Maslov all by me as staff.

I appointed new officers, from the wary water drinkers and the surviving communist party members, so that each action group had its leader.

Nobody argued with my orders — so far — but I knew there'd be mutiny if I didn't soon get them to a safe haven.

The action groups were already sorting themselves out when Marenko came back with my telescope. "There's a barge," he said,

‘aground on the sandbanks of the far shore, a kilometer downstream. It’s big enough to take them all, but from the way it lists I’d say it’s damaged.’

‘Could you lead a party to check it out?’ I asked.

‘If you can get me a raft and paddles...’

You don’t simply go over a river in a neat perpendicular line. It’s not like a still lake, it’s moving, fastest in midstream.

To reach that barge one kilometer downstream our men had to start crossing one kilometer upstream, in other words, right where we stood.

‘Comrade Marenko, we’re not short of trees on this bank, but how to turn them into a raft?’

‘Some of those trees on the edge are already undercut by the river. We can push them down.’

‘Harry would be good at that. I’ll leave him with you,’ I said.

‘And there’s a man — Dmitri I think his name is — who salvaged an ax from the German truck. Find him for our raft team too.’

‘How do we tie the logs together?’

Marenko grinned. ‘Belts. I thought you were foolish when you told us to strip the dead. Now I see what was on your mind.’

It was kind of him to say so. In fact I had not foreseen what use those belts would be.

However I had remembered from *Robinson Crusoe* how every artifact was a treasure to the shipwrecked man. And were we not wrecked in the middle of the scorched-earth zone?

‘I don’t know what you can use for paddles, though,’ I said.

‘Right in front of your eyes,’ said Marenko. ‘The shovels from the quarry.’

It was time for another speech from the General.

‘*Tovarishchi!* We must escape. The only route which will carry us clear of the tanks is southward, down river. The only boat we can see is the barge on the far side. The main body must keep marching south along this river bank. Our Admiral is comrade Marenko. He will bring the barge over to us.’

How I wished I felt as confident as I sounded!

Off we marched, the main army along the beach while the Mongols scouted the bank above. I hobbled along with them, for my crutch couldn’t negotiate the shingle. Behind us we heard Dimitri chopping away at the raft logs.

NEXT WEEK—Chapter Twenty-Eight—continued

THE MAGICIAN

(1908)



By W.Somerset Maugham
Reviewed by D4Doom

The villain of W. Somerset Maugham's 1908 novel *The Magician* was inspired by Aleister Crowley although the story itself is pure fiction.

Maugham had met Crowley and while he disapproved of him and considered him to be a charlatan he was strangely fascinated by the notorious occultist. And while many of the extraordinary tales Crowley told about himself were untrue Maugham had to admit that they were not all untrue. Crowley was a remarkable man. It was obvious to Maugham that he was a perfect subject for a novel.

Maugham's novel begins with a brilliant young surgeon who is engaged to be married to the beautiful Margaret, who had been his ward. In Paris they encounter the notorious occultist and magician Oliver Haddo. Haddo is wildly eccentric and slightly sinister but he is charismatic and fascinating.

Haddo seems to be intent on seducing Margaret. Is he simply making use of standard techniques of hypnotism (aided by his charismatic personality) or does he possess actual occult powers?

And is he intent on mere seduction? There is a possibility that he has something much stranger and much more shocking in mind.

Maugham did not believe that Crowley possessed any real magical powers but had to admit that he certainly had the ability to convince people that he did. Oliver Haddo might well have obtained such powers.

The story of Maugham's novel of course has no connection whatsoever to any events in the life of Aleister Crowley. Crowley simply served as a jumping-off point. And of course in the late 19th and early 20th centuries there were many occult practitioners so Haddo is perhaps more representative of a breed than of an individual.

Either way Oliver Haddo is a wonderful and memorable larger-than-life character. He entirely dominates the story.

This was a period of intense interest in the occult so in commercial terms the idea was a winner. It was very much in tune with the cultural obsessions of the day. The reading public had an inexhaustible appetite for thrillers with an occult flavouring.

The novel is an unashamed potboiler (and I have no problems with that). It can be regarded as an occult thriller, a melodrama, a romance and even as gothic horror. It's not what you expect from Maugham, excepting that being a Maugham novel it's extremely well-written. He has some fine suspense, some genuine chills and thrills and a perverse love story. And the love story is quite powerful.

This is a very early example of the occult thriller genre which would reach its full flowering in the works of Dennis Wheatley.

I thoroughly enjoyed *The Magician*. Highly recommended.

Rex Ingram's *The Magician* (1926) is a superb movie adaptation of the novel. Crowley was himself a talented writer. His Simon Iff Stories are splendid occult detective stories, Crowley's most famous novel, *Moonchild*, does touch on some of the occult practices described in Maugham's novel. So it is possible to get both sides of the story.



THE GREENE MURDER CASE

(1929)

Reviewed by D4Doom

The Greene Murder Case was the second of Paramount's Philo Vance murder mysteries and the second of four outings for William Powell as Philo Vance. Many other actors later got to play the role but truly there was only ever one screen Philo Vance and that was Bill Powell.

The detective story had been around for quite a while but in the early 1920s a new variant appeared - the fair-play puzzle-plot mystery. It was understood that the clues had to be there to allow the reader to solve the mystery. It was up to the author to provide enough misdirection to make sure this didn't happen. This new type of murder mystery first appeared in Britain. S. S. Van Dine (real name Willard Huntington Wright) has a strong claim to having introduced the form to American readers. He was certainly the one who popularised this new type of detective story in the

United States. It didn't take long for Hollywood to get interested. Van Dine's first novel was published in 1926. The first movie adaptation, *The Canary Murder Case*, came out in 1929.

It's worth pointing out that this movie was released before the Wall Street Crash. At this stage Hollywood was still booming and it's obvious that Paramount spent quite a bit of money on *The Greene Murder Case*. It's technically quite ambitious with some rather nifty shots. I love the overhead shots of the roof garden. The sets do not look cheap. There's a well-conceived well-executed action finale.

The Greene family is very rich and clearly very dysfunctional. Old Tobias Greene left one of those nasty wills calculated to cause his heirs a lot of inconvenience and misery. To inherit his money they have to live in the Greene mansion for fifteen years, not a very pleasant prospect since they all hate each other. Old Tobias's widow is paralysed. She's miserable and querulous. The elder son, Chester (Lowell Drew), is a good-for-nothing layabout. The younger son, Rex (Morgan Farley), is a neurotic mess. The elder sister Sibella (Florence Eldridge) is a bit of a party girl. The younger sister Ada (Jean Arthur) is adopted. She's sweet but nervy. There's also the family doctor Dr Von Blon who seems to spend most of his life at the Greene mansion.

Now somebody seems intent on killing off the family one by one. Gentleman dilettante detective Philo Vance handles difficult cases for District Attorney John F. X. Markham on a semi-official basis. He is invariably assisted by Detective Sergeant Heath (Eugene Pallette). Lots of things about this case puzzle Vance. The killer seems to be staying one step ahead all the time.

It's a neat plot. Anybody in the Greene household could be a suspect, given that they certainly all hate each other enough to start killing each other. This is pretty much a fair-play mystery. The clues are there.

William Powell is of course marvellous. Not everybody likes the Philo Vance of the novels but Powell softens the character a bit, taking the edge off his arrogance. And he has that William Powell charm. One thing I really like is that the film resists the temptation to make Sergeant Heath a comic relief character. Heath is often wrong but his reasoning is far from foolish. He's a competent policeman and Vance clearly respects his professionalism. At no time does Vance make Heath the butt of jokes. It's obvious that despite their very different backgrounds these two men like each other.



Jean Arthur is good as the perpetually somewhat frightened Ada. The supporting performers are all quite good, with Morgan Farley as Rex being the only one who goes a little over the top at times.

Director Frank Tuttle is sometimes dismissed as a hack which is a bit unfair. He handles things here with reasonable skill and he keeps the pacing taut.

The Greene mansion itself becomes a character in the movie. The layout of the house is important, as is the atmosphere.

Very early talkies have a reputation for being clunky, with too many excessively static shots. That's not the case here. Frank Tuttle's directing is rather lively. The actors on the whole seem quite comfortable with the new sound format.

The Greene Murder Case is a fine murder mystery. Highly recommended.

This movie is included in Kino Lorber's three-movie Philo Vance Blu-Ray boxed set. *The Greene Murder Case* gets a very nice transfer. As is usually the case these days the audio commentary is best dispensed with.



“Life lived on the edge of what is even conceivable for 'normal' people.”

Marquis de X, 1924

ROBOT DOG AT THE BOTTOM OF THE WORLD



By Nick August

On hand-wringing and the Plastic Fantastic Digital
Titanium Altogether that will finally, ultimately, save
us all

Robot dog prowls the ocean floor for living data and never wonders how it ended up there. It is a rare bird and true original. Its days have been numbered since before they began much like all of ours are. We all tend to round up. Way up.

Its battery life is limited to a week or so, but it lacks self-monitoring of its own power levels because it's actually just a refurbished prototype. Self-battery-monitoring was not deemed an essential feature. Its sensors detected vibrations from the implosion leagues and fathoms away. The whole thing was a travesty in amplitude. We all mostly agree on that.

It has seen and heard it all before, this robot dog, but it's jaded by design. If it cared, which it doesn't—which it can't—it would know that people are supposed to die, especially during exploration. It's the human being's only demonstrable purpose beyond contributing some life along the way, but the universe will take death over life in a heartbeat. Hard science, in other words—including hard to take.

Our self-directed purpose is secondary. We are nature's bitch, first and foremost, but we, at least, get to scurry about. Robot dog is farther down the ladder. It goes where it's sent. Its handlers have enough sense not to mark it up in tell-tale scribbles—plausible deniability and all that. It's dark down there, and vast. Any chance of seeing a few square feet of mechanical canine without coordinates is a crapshoot, much less country of origin. Thus, robot dog may become abandoned, a stray, lying on its side with a choking battery just a few yards away from the doomed submersible

watching it descend into the crush zone where it crumpled like every beer can in every frat boy movie you ever saw.

“This was so stupid, and preventable.”

“Shit happens.”

“Greed!”

This was not a morality play although it's been written as one. You're likely writing some yourself so that it ends as you expect. As you *want*. But they weren't greedy evil

“Richie Riches” wasting money better spent on humanitarian efforts. They weren't brave explorers who took on unpreventable risks to forge new destinations. They weren't even morons who deserved what they got. They were simply some people who did a thing, and died, as we all will. As we're all *supposed* to.

Somewhere in the world a kid is choking on a chicken bone.

“They were all someone's sons. Husbands. Fathers.”

*You'll make more of them and me, too. I'll beat you at Stoicism, chess, and going deep. I belong to nowhere and to no one. See a flag? I'm just **around**. You'll probably be seeing more of me.*

But who am I?

“But we're unique. Every one of us, right?”

Robot dog has been programmed to agree.

BWC GOES TO HBCU



By Bruce Chardon

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"May I continue with my reading?" Bruce asked, gesturing to his folder.

Professor Leticia nodded. "Yes, please finish your presentation, Professor Chardon. We'll have more time for questions afterward."

Bruce returned to his story:

"The warm August sun beat down as Cannon pedaled around the front yard. His sisters played nearby, enjoying the Sunday afternoon freedom.

Cannon didn't notice his Black neighbor exit the house next door, didn't see the expression on the man's face as he approached. This was the same man who had sat at their dinner table just the night before, laughing and talking with Cannon's father.

There was no warning, no argument, no apparent reason at all.

The neighbor walked straight toward Cannon, no words exchanged. In a moment that defied all logic and humanity, he pulled out a handgun.

Cannon looked up, perhaps confused by the neighbor's sudden appearance. His innocent five-year-old mind couldn't comprehend what was happening.

Without a word, the Black neighbor raised the silver gun and placed it directly against Cannon's little white head..."

A tall student near the back suddenly stood up. "Man, fuck you whitey. I'm done with all this racist shit. Who else wit me?"

He stormed toward the exit, and about fifteen students rose to follow him, some muttering, others silent but clearly angry.

Professor Leticia stood again, her voice commanding the room: "That's enough! This university respects the exchange of ideas, even controversial ones. Anyone who cannot listen respectfully is free to leave, but without further disruption."

The room quieted somewhat, though tension hung heavy in the air. Bruce noticed some students who remained were taking notes furiously, while others glared at him openly.

Interestingly, Professor Leticia gave Bruce a slight nod, as if encouraging him to continue. Emma's face showed conflict—professional composure battling with what looked like genuine emotion.

Bruce took a sip of his Purple Drank, his heart pounding. He hadn't expected quite this level of reaction, though perhaps he should have. He closed his folder.

"Perhaps instead of finishing the story, we should move to questions. I believe the exchange of ideas is more valuable than my simply reading to you."

Dozens of hands shot up like spears. Bruce pointed to a young woman in a bright pink bonnet who had been taking notes throughout.

"You cite these statistics about Black-on-White crime," she said, her voice steady. "But how do you account for the historical context of racial violence in America? How can you separate these incidents from centuries of systematic oppression?"

Bruce nodded, appreciating the thoughtful question. As he formulated his response, he caught Emma's eye. For just a moment, he imagined her approaching him after the lecture, getting down on her knees, and tenderly kissing the mushroom print made by his hanging BWC on the tan fabric of his khakis.

He blinked, returning to reality. The audience waited for his answer, and Emma's expression remained professionally neutral, though her eyes never left his face.

Bruce took a deep breath, gathering his thoughts before responding to the woman in the pink bonnet.

"That's an excellent question," he began. "Historical context absolutely matters. The legacy of slavery, Jim Crow, and systemic oppression is undeniable, and I would never suggest otherwise."

A few murmurs of approval rippled through the audience.

"However—" Bruce continued.

"Here we go with the 'however'!" someone called out, triggering scattered laughter.

Bruce pressed on. "However, we need to examine current realities alongside historical context. The data I presented isn't propaganda—it's from the Bureau of Justice Statistics. While approximately 15% of violent victimizations against White people involve Black offenders, this statistic doesn't exist in a vacuum. But it does represent thousands of human stories that often go untold."

Emma shifted in her seat, her pen poised above her notepad.

"If I may continue," Bruce said, "we've reached a point where some uncomfortable fiscal realities also come into play. Research suggests White Americans have a net positive fiscal impact, paying more in taxes than they receive in benefits, while Black Americans, due largely to income disparities - whether resulting from "historical inequalities" or a toxic culture and lack of work ethic - have a net negative impact."

The room erupted.

"Oh HELL no!" a voice shouted from the back.

"Are you seriously—" another began.

Professor Leticia stood. "Let him finish!"

Bruce raised his voice slightly. "I'm not assigning moral value to these economic statistics. They're simply a reflection of ongoing societal imbalances that—"

"They're a reflection of your racism!" a student shouted.

"—that require honest discussion if we're to address them," Bruce continued doggedly. "Consider Detroit as a case study. Once the wealthiest city in America, it experienced significant population changes through white flight and now struggles with decay and crime."

The young woman in the pink bonnet had reclaimed the floor. "So you're blaming Black people for Detroit's problems? Not the auto industry collapse or corrupt city government?"

"I'm not blaming any group," Bruce countered. "I'm observing that while Hiroshima and Nagasaki were rebuilt from nuclear devastation, Detroit—"

A deep voice cut in. "Man, did you really just compare Black people moving into a city to a nuclear bomb?"

The room descended into chaos, with several students shouting at once. Professor Letitia clapped her hands loudly.

"ENOUGH!" Her voice commanded silence. "Professor Chardon, perhaps we should move to another question."

Bruce gripped the edges of the podium, his knuckles whitening. He took a deep breath.

"Professor Leticia, with all due respect, I'd like to finish my thought. This is precisely the problem in academic discourse today—uncomfortable ideas get shut down before they're fully articulated."

A tense silence fell over the room. Professor Leticia's eyebrows rose slightly, but she nodded and stepped back.

"What I was attempting to express," Bruce continued, his voice steadier now, "is that the health and success of a city, and more broadly, a society, is downstream of culture. And culture, controversial as this may sound, is downstream of biology."

The room erupted again with gasps and angry shouts.

"This man is literally promoting eugenics!"

"Scientific racism!"

"What century is this?"

Bruce raised his voice. "Please hear me out! I'm not suggesting biological determinism or racial superiority. I'm saying that different groups develop different cultural adaptations based partly on their evolutionary history."

The young woman in the pink bonnet stood again. "So you're saying Black people are biologically predisposed to create 'hood culture'? This is outrageous!"

"I'm saying that all human groups adapt to their environments," Bruce pressed on. "The Japanese faced complete devastation after World War II, yet within decades rebuilt Hiroshima and Nagasaki into thriving metropolitan centers. Detroit, which faced economic challenges but certainly not nuclear destruction, has deteriorated significantly following demographic changes."

A student near the front row shot to his feet. "My family has lived in Detroit for three generations! We didn't 'deteriorate' anything!"

"Individual exceptions don't negate broad patterns," Bruce replied. "The point is that victimhood narratives don't explain everything. People shouldn't be defined by past oppression or poor conditions, but rather by their response to adversity."

Emma, who had been watching silently, shifted uncomfortably in her seat.

"The Japanese weren't enslaved for centuries!" someone shouted from the back.

"No," Bruce acknowledged, "but they were placed in internment camps, faced severe discrimination, and had two of their cities obliterated. Yet they rebuilt without demanding reparations."

The room was a powder keg now, with students half out of their seats, voices rising over one another.

Professor Leticia stepped forward again. "Professor Chardon—"

"One final point," Bruce said firmly. "We cannot have honest conversations about societal problems if certain perspectives are deemed too offensive to express. The data on fiscal impact is not racist—it's reality. White Americans contribute more in taxes than they receive in benefits, while Black Americans, on average, receive more than they contribute. This isn't about moral worth; it's about acknowledging patterns that need addressing."

A tall student stood up, his voice booming. "So what are you suggesting? That Black people are a burden on the White man's society? That we're somehow less evolved?"

"I'm suggesting," Bruce replied evenly, "that culture matters. Work ethic matters. Family structure matters. And that any group, regardless of history, can choose to embrace values that lead to success."

The tension in the room was almost unbearable. Emma's face had gone completely still, a mask of professionalism covering whatever storm was brewing behind her eyes.

Professor Leticia moved decisively to the podium. "This is precisely why we invited Professor Chardon to speak—to challenge our thinking. Even when we deeply disagree." She turned to Bruce. "But I believe we should shift now to additional questions on your creative work specifically, rather than these broader sociological claims."

Bruce reluctantly stepped back, noticing the mix of furious and thoughtful expressions throughout the audience. Some students were angrily texting on their phones, likely spreading word of his comments across campus in real time.

As he caught Emma's gaze, he saw something unexpected—not just anger or disagreement, but a certain intensity of interest. For just a moment, he imagined her unbuttoning his pants and gasping with wide eyes at the size of his big pink hog, before succumbing to curiosity and passion and putting her mouth on his girthy hardness.

The fantasy dissolved as Professor Leticia called on another student, steering the conversation back to Bruce's creative writing.

TO BE CONTINUED



N.O.R.W.I.C.H. (aka Shore Leave) James Carroll Beckwith

PERFORMANCE



By MT White

A major new series
From the Substack 'Discursions'

**3—ART AGAINST
PHILOSOPHY**

Plato got it backwards; we may get other things backward; why Rothko's paintings are more spiritual than Michelangelo's...

Philosophers have written about art since Plato, who observed the beauty of art would lead one in to “harmony with the beauty of reasonableness” and would later lead a man to “welcome reason when its time comes and know it as his own.” The beautiful essence of art would lead one to true metaphysical essence of thought and contemplation.

For John Dewey, this was actually a reversal of experiential process because “the sense we now have for essential characteristics of persons and objects is very largely the *result* of art.” (Emphasis Dewey). Art takes the lead in forming and defining experience, not the other way around. “The forms or Ideas which Plato thought were models and patterns of existing things actually had their source in Greek art, so that his treatment of artists is a supreme instance of intellectual ingratitude.” Per Dewey, art is a “test of the capacity of the system [a philosopher] puts forth to grasp the nature of experience itself. There is no test that surely reveals the one-sidedness of a philosophy as its treatment of art and esthetic experience.”

Some philosophers, like Stanley Cavell, feel a move from philosophy to art—forms like tragedy and comedy—are necessary, as a play like *Othello* can teach us more about skepticism of others better than Descartes or Montaigne. Film directors like Terence Malick (a translator of Martin Heidegger) and Bruno Dumont both abandoned philosophy to pursue film, as if the medium could explore whatever concerns they have had better than philosophy.

Since Plato there has been a contentious relationship between philosophy and art—especially literature—as documented in Mark Edmundson’s book *Literature Against Philosophy, Plato to Derrida*. Edmundson quotes art critic Arthur Danto’s assertion that

Plato started the “the philosophical disenfranchisement of art,” with art being considered “dangerous” because it “challenges reason’s supremacy”.

In contradistinction to this, since the Enlightenment and the subsequent rise of Individualism and Romanticism, individuals have been given the freedom to define and forge meaning on their own to a degree, where individual articulation of meaning becomes of utmost importance, which as philosopher Charles Taylor wrote, “makes us admire the artist and the creator more than any other civilization ever has; which convinces us that a life spent in artistic creation or performance is eminently worthwhile,” because “what meaning there is for us depends in part on our powers of expression.”

There is no doubt in our period that art, in the very least, is a complement to philosophy. Does this mean it gives us unforgettable moral lessons and teaches us how to be better people, a fount of knowledge and truth to draw upon any time, another realm of reality? No, there is just as much poverty in this designation as there is poverty of dismissing the arts as just a form of leisure. Art as sociological meaning is about as shallow as art as “popcorn entertainment” though our cultures, desperate for ideological stability, try to steep art with this significance. No, the philosophical complement of art is an art that is complement of life, where, in Richard Poirier’s words it is “another dimension of action, of performance” that informs us in our own areas of action and performance, another mediate form in our mediated existence.

British philosopher Gordon Ryle (Malick’s Doctoral supervisor) described philosophy as cartography: Ordinary villagers may know their village but could not necessarily sketch a map of it or read one—such is the same with philosophy and life. Art acts as another form of this cartography...maybe.

People usually have a solid grasp navigating the experience of daily life. They look, they talk, they listen, if they live in a “first world” country, they probably even read and write—even if it’s just sending/receiving texts to and from a friend or writing a “to-do” list on their notepad (electronic or paper). Is art a map of these experiences? Maybe. But maybe not. Maybe art is more like a

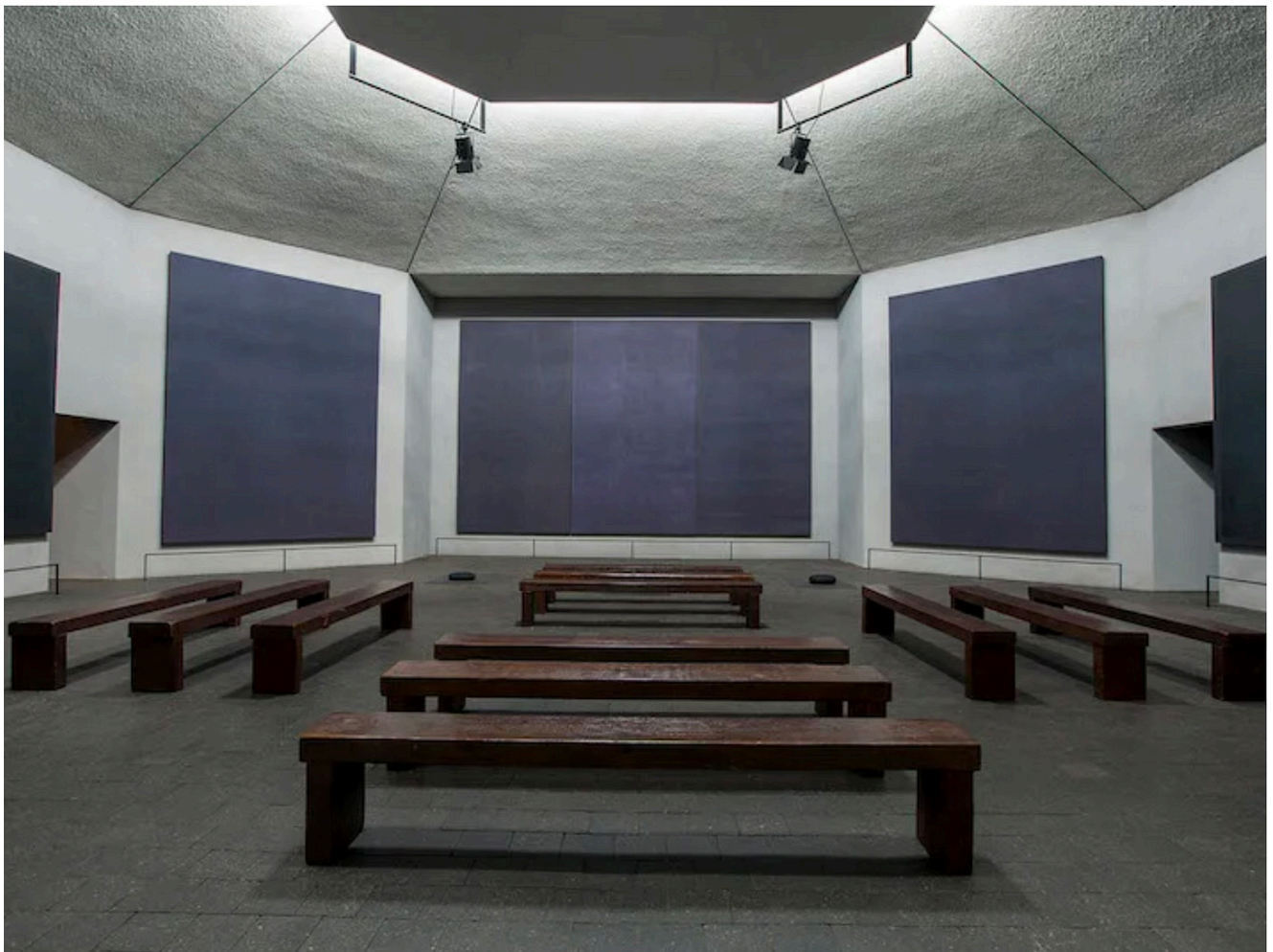
legend to said map, designating certain symbols as important in order to read and mark the map. Maybe my metaphor is flawed.

Maybe looking for metaphorical or symbolical analogues is part of the problem as it is the way many are taught and encouraged to interpret art. When I visited a museum with my son, he looked at an abstract painting and asked, “What is that supposed to be a picture of?” He was looking for a form in the content. Paintings by the likes of Mark Rothko and Jackson Pollock are obdurate in the sense they possess no metaphors or symbols. They are just paintings of paint. This is similar to the sculptural work of Donald Judd or Dan Flavin, whose objects are just objects. These non-representational paintings and objects become close to frustrating and unapproachable because they do not give us anything familiar like a symbol or representation of known objects or people. The only thing recognizable is the colors and the vague shapes formed.

Most adults would agree with my son and then go on to praise Renaissance painters like Michelangelo and Rembrandt as “real artists” and dismiss Abstract Expressionism and Minimalism as some sort child’s play confused for art. But I would say these works force us to truly look at them, grapple with them. They call in to question our relationships to symbols, metaphors, objects, shapes and color itself, but also the nature of creator and created, as we know these things are paintings and objects are crafted but the individuality, the creator behind them, is both blurred yet very present, emotional yet also cold.

Visiting the Rothko Chapel in Houston, Texas, looking at the starkly black paintings, where the shades blend but also separate, one is inclined to meditate, maybe even pray, but at least contemplate (there are three pillows and benches to assist in these tasks)—it is an ecumenical religious building after all. Some are said to even cry (but I find this to be a suspicious marketing ploy as I’ve never felt moved to tears looking at Rothko and never seen anyone crying as well). The paintings themselves have shades that are present when viewing from a distance but disappear when you get closer—suggesting we gauge people and things differently in regards to our distance towards them, perhaps? Some of the

paintings have hard borders visible through the same blackness—suggesting that no matter how hard we try to assert ourselves, our individuality and identity, we are actually more conjoined and generic and the self is more contingent than we may think, possibly? And the paintings without the hard edges, just black void—do they suggest no matter how generic and conjoined something may seem, we still look for form, for edges, for shades of difference? And the blackness—is it all just an abyss we stare in to, recalling Nietzsche, which just stares back at us? Perhaps.



But when I visited the Rothko Chapel, I found myself not only looking at the paintings but *away* from them. Looking at the glass ceiling, the only source of light, contemplating how the light itself alters the black shades of the painting. Looking at the shadows in the doorway, noticing no matter how hard we create, nature, and maybe God Himself, still effortlessly create, yet the light and shadows of creation conform to the shape and contours of our sculptures. And...I noticed the others around me—there were a

good amount of people since it was a Saturday—everyone quiet, forcing me to contemplate my relation to them, the mutual space we inhabited, albeit temporarily, and considered my proximity and distance with them and consider how we all felt compelled to visit the Rothko Chapel on that Saturday.

The questions about the paintings will remain questions, but Rothko's work, which in Leo Bersani's words say "I have nothing to show you," assists one in traveling to, in Emerson's words, the "bleak rocks" of existence, creating a "poverty" where we must "hold hard to" in order to "possess our axis more firmly," even if it is only momentary. Compare this to the Sistine Chapel in Vatican City, filled with tourists daily, who look in awe at the great paintings of Michelangelo and Botticelli. While I suppose there is some meditation, prayer, and worship when a Papal Conclave is held there, it appears most tourists from around the world go there not to worship God but to worship the Renaissance painters and their work. Maybe some are moved to repentance while looking at the apocalyptic imagery—inspired by the teachings of Joachim da Fiore—but somehow, I doubt it. As Dewey observed, the individuality present in these works is just as present, if not more so, than anything in our industrialized, individualized, post-Enlightenment cultures. The Orthodox priest Timothy Patitsas recalled when he visited the Vatican art collection, he felt more moved to prayer by the simpler pre-Renaissance paintings than the more famous baroque works. Maybe this is just Orthodox rivalry with Catholicism masked as art criticism. Maybe. This isn't to say the Rothko Chapel is superior to the Sistine Chapel, or the Ecumenical better than the Catholic (both words point towards the universal, after all)—both locations exist due to the largesse of Catholics (John de Menil, a French Catholic who lived in Houston, funded the Rothko Chapel). This is also not to say Orthodox Icons are superior to Catholic Renaissance paintings. This is to say, certain works of art, certain performances, do generate, or at least affirm, certain reactions...maybe.

NEXT WEEK—The WORK of Art

THE ABRUPT END THAT CAME YEARS EARLIER

By Matt FreeMatt



“Oh, mama. Can this be the end?”

I pondered this question, but not while listening to Bob Dylan. I didn’t have any music playing and it is better that I didn’t.

I found myself cutting figure 8s in an empty parking lot. No one was out and about. No one blew up my phone, not even for anything resembling a joke or asking for favors. I was left with a weird feeling.

This same weird feeling of disappointment came about me years ago when I was in a certain town on the opposite side of the world. I felt like everyone else was finding some bastion of enjoyment, but my hands were bare.

I knew of this one club from a fleeting discussion with someone from work. The well meaning person was singing a proverbial song of earthly delights, coupled with the kind of sirens that sung us on to the rocks. There were promises of affordable drink and pulsing sounds. That specific someone might be on to something.

My pondering about this place was in the middle of some simple sightseeing I was engaged with. I had walked in the ghostly footsteps of the rioters of the past and saw the architecture that someone without a vision put together. I saw the pitiful excuse for a casino and a few characters out of a Thompsonian nightmare there. I was able to see young punks that were trying to warn me of something else.

One of the failed seekers that I had deep conversations with mentioned that he needed to speak with someone at the club that “had promise”. I had my reservations but I wanted to at least see this place. I felt justified after seeing the outside of the place. The sign didn’t scream “Xanadu” in neon lights, nor did it have the promise of a 1950’s theater marquee. It barely told you what was in the building.

Stepping inside was a bigger let down. There weren’t enough tables or surroundings to fill a mostly empty building. I couldn’t tell if the management forgot to buy furniture or if they were secretly trying to get the customers to bring their own. The air was stale and the few staff there seemed to have their spirits dashed by it. I didn’t see anyone else enjoying lunch or a beer. I also didn’t see any bar girls that might entice anyone to find a seat. The tells were flooding in and for what they had told me, there was no last place for us to be.

The failed seeker finally found the contact that he was looking for. The contact was up in the building’s balcony. He was enjoying a beer that I couldn’t find. There were some frowning, unenthusiastic looking women sitting around up there. The music was remarkably quiet and not entertaining at all. The rest of our party waited downstairs.

I saw one of the women come downstairs to get a drink. She met my eyes and sauntered away as if she had somewhere else to be. She honestly looked like a guy trying to be funny wearing a Halloween costume. Her outfit looked as if she was dressed by a wardrobe specialist in a third rate movie. It didn’t look as if she was working there, but that she was doing someone else a favor. The whole experience seemed off and didn’t fit the description the failed seeker spoke about.

We left without drinking anything. No one was able to break through the terrible atmosphere and find some semblance of a romantic connection. I sure as heck knew this wasn’t Xanadu, the Roosevelt, or any other bar that was better than purgatory. We saw the sunlight as we swung the doors open.

I ended up sitting alone near the waterfront, waiting for everyone else to arrive who were looking for someone else. I usually didn’t let one stale experience to spoil other experiences, but it felt like it marked the end. Most of the rest of my experiences weren’t terrible, but I found the one that told me that I was done.

THE DIARY OF CHARLIE WINKLE



20/06/2025

My whole life I've kept myself in excellent physical condition and dressed well.

Naturally, doing these two (simple, not easy) things which 99.9% of the population do not do, coupled with my natural handsomeness, excellent physiognomy and joie de vivre, has meant that I nearly always make an agreeable and favorable first impression and get a lot of attention from the ladies...

I have become used to the admiring and lingering glances from women wherever I go. For me it is a normal part of everyday life.

Although something strange has happened since I returned nearly 4 weeks ago to my country estate from Hamilton Island.....

Those admiring looks from women have increased significantly in intensity. I can feel it whenever I leave my estate and go out in public, women literally devouring me with their eyes.

And I'm not sure what has caused it?

You, the reader may think this sounds like a wonderful thing (especially if you're not used to receiving much favorable attention from the opposite sex) although I can assure you it's not wonderful at all, if anything, it's a little disturbing and a sign of how hypersexualized our society has become.

30/06/2025

This morning I had a business meeting with my good friend of 20+ years, Tony Redgate.

Tony had proposed some months ago that we should start a wagyu farming enterprise together on a part of my country estate. The enterprise conditions are favorable to me as whilst I will be doing none of the work I will be collecting a decent percentage of the profits in return for the use of my land.

Tony has spent much time in Japan studying the raising of wagyu cattle and his ideas in this field are extremely interesting (for instance, as well as grass and water they will be fed a diet of macadamia nuts and beer) and the cattle will spend a portion of their time in fields as well as indoors in barns receiving massage. Lucky cows! The 70 wagyu cattle we will begin our operation with will be arriving shortly (upon the completion of the barn.)

(I also keep Angus cattle on my property although their maintenance is far less complicated than for the wagyu cattle.)

This project is more a labor of love for Tony rather than an enterprise motivated by financial return as his whole life he has been fascinated by agricultural projects and world's best practices regarding those projects.

As the project comes closer and closer to starting, I'm excited at the thought of in the evenings, sharing a beer with the cattle, although I know that I'll have to be careful not to become too personally attached.



Ernst Graf by Jean Beraud

EDEN



A Romance
by Ernst Graf

"EDEN by Ernst Graf is a serialised erotic romance in Penicillin magazine, blending vivid tales of seduction, decadence, and raw human desire. It draws from Weimar-era Berlin's hedonism and personal exploits, provoking reflection on lust and life's fleeting pleasures."

Grok

CHAPTER 148

I'M NOT DISGUSTING! YOU ARE!

Well, after praising the new route to work for two nights in a row for its female teen pulchritude, last night of course was anti-climactic. Nothing. That's fine, I cannot expect it every night. It has already shown its greater percentage chance of crumpet. It was after all cold and grey last night and my bus at — was just 1 minute away. My three days off are looking like 21, 23, 23, with 25 on my Wednesday return to work. Summer finally arrived?

I keep consoling myself that my 'Naughty Nineties' really didn't start at all till January 1995, and then not really become intense till 1997, so it may be my 'Roaring 20s' won't start till 2025 and not become intense till 2027-28-29. I still hope for one more 'Golden Age' in my life. In January 1995 I met black bob in Sunset Strip. In January 2025? Well, the Snake unexpectedly quit, a miracle and relief of unimaginable proportions, a potential life changer and game changer, which changed us from a 4 man team to a 3 man team, increasing my hours to the tune of an extra £11,000 guaranteed a year without need for OT (if I survive). In reality I expect I will earn exactly the same this year as I did last, no more, as I did such mountains of OT last year and this year I expect hardly any, but it is nice to have that income guaranteed instead of always having to claw and pray for OT.

I hate drinking in Berlin at weekends because it is not MY Berlin. Like I hate going to Munich during Oktoberfest as it is not MY Munich.

But what else is there?

How lucky I am—I live in this beautiful quiet flat in this Wilhelminian Babylonian palace in the genteel leafy elegant heart

of west Berlin. Just off of Lewishamstraße. Haha always makes me laugh. Charlottenburg twinned in most unlikely fashion with grim south-east London Lewisham, where Ernest Dowson was born, dear, beloved Ernest Dowson. Lewishamstraße rather more elegant and lovely than the part of London that gave it its name, though for so long lined with night bars, knocking shops, porn kinos and videokabins. A sad sad remnant of those glory days now of course. A sterile, castrated, emasculated environment like almost everywhere else. Sign of the ice's retreat very much evident here.

Working in Eden Mansions next door to where stood the Hotel Eden, where Louise Brooks stayed in 1928 while making *Pandora's Box*, just over the road from Berlin Zoo. My life has reached an exquisite, luxurious pitch and I should remind myself of it more often.

Reminding myself again it was when I began my relationship with A— that depression was banished from my life forever. Whether that relationship lasted or not, what it achieved was assuring I would never suffer depression again. If I can get the most beautiful girl who ever lived into bed and wanting to be with me, and keep coming back to me even after our splits, and then actually LIVING WITH ME for three & a half long years, I knew I had achieved the most incredible thing in my life. And all those people who sneered at me, and smeared, and mocked, and abused, and tried to destroy me, were shot right up the arse once and for all.

It was the relationship that changed everything for me, no matter that it ended, what?, 12 years ago already. That is why I still put some money in her account every year on her birthday, not a lot, I don't have a lot, but just a little something as a mark of respect and fondness.

Was the French Revolution of 1789 a good thing or a bad thing, the historian was asked. It's too soon to tell, he replies.

Was psychotherapy a good thing or a bad thing for me? Too soon to tell (it ended 1996). I discovered I abhorred everything my therapist was pushing me towards, becoming normal, fitting in, God forbid talking to people, so I rejected it in the end, and went my own way—back to Soho with more of a vengeance and certainty and desperation than ever.

Was marriage a good thing or a bad thing for me? Too soon to tell. I rejected it but I learnt it was not for me and so that boil was lanced. Therapy did not cure me once and for all of my repeated black depressions, but A— did.

410pm I feel so high because I know tonight is my last night and I can go drinking again tomorrow (and ogling girls if I find any to ogle) and for three days in a row, and summer has ARRIVED. Knocked back 2 red bulls already, I won't have any to take to work. Six days clean without alcohol achieved. Well done. Makes me think I can go really hard tomorrow now. I have earned it by this abstinence.

530pm my microwave meal in the microwave. Done some great work on EDEN. Two red bulls, two very VERY red bulls. Just this last night to get through then I cannot wait to go drinking and girl ogling tomorrow afternoon, when it should be properly hot for the first time this year. Summer arrives TOMORROW!

Get those boobies out my young nubile teen beauties!

I'm not disgusting! You are!

CHAPTER 149

I AM THE HAMMER

Sometimes I let myself play the drunk, to protect me from girls trying to catch my eye. Oh look, he's too far gone. Forget it.

I protect myself like a woman.

Always have.

All great men do.

We have to.

835pm. 21 minutes ago a sultry new little video on Katharina's WhatsApp, topless just out of the shower by the looks

of it (completely bare shoulders anyway) but with slightly wet wavy hair staring sullenly at me.

It is easy now to forget the Eros of those first meetings with Katharina, with A—. They seem normal now. But they were not.

There are few sexier memories in my LIFE than those first few weeks of Katharina at the Sphinx.

That, of course, so soon gets forgotten. Once you get to know someone, you start talking, and familiarity and fondness builds up, you forget how much top-of-your-head blowing off desire & lust & electrifying excitement you once felt, I felt, at every sight of her during those first few weeks at the end of 2022 (1922).

Watching the FA Cup semi final here in The —. I think it's disgusting a team from Nottingham and a team from Manchester are in the semi final and they all have to come all the way down to London and Wembley for it. All because it's a massive money spinner for the FA and Wembley, no other good sporting reason for it. Pure fucking venality. Villa Park would have been good, no? Like it always used to be? Greedy fucking cunts. This Is Why I Hate Football Now, no. 5. Wembley was always the special place reserved for the final, now they have fucking ruined its special appeal by playing the semi finals there as well. Killed the goose that laid the golden egg as these greedy fucking cunts always do. There is nothing more detestable than a FA Cup SEMI final being played at Wembley.

Christ, when was the last time I met a girl I really wanted?

Katharina?

“I am the hammer and you the nail.”

Great chat up lines of our time. You can have that one.

You see an ugly girl and would not want to go down on her, the thought makes you feel sick, but see a pretty girl and all you can think about is going down on her, but in reality the ugly girl might have the more beautiful and sweet tasting pussy, but again, in reality, it's the face that leads you to the pussy isn't it?

When I want to get turned on I still think of Katharina.

Oh God.

What did I do yesterday? Was so much desiring of an — English breakfast but as it was before 10 I thought let me have those 2 cans of beers in my fridge before getting there, then of course I just wanted to keep drinking and not get it spoiled by food. Got to — therefore just before 12 and had to wait 4 minutes for my first beer. A second pint while sitting at the bar I think, then one in — with C— “Long time!” but quickly moved on to — I guess but have no memory of it. Think I went in — on way back but it did not inspire me at all so carried on back down to —? — too busy, of course, so back to — where I started. This is all guesswork at this point, but I do remember returning to — and it was now packed. Sitting at the oval table was absolutely gorgeous teen with little red top that exposed her tummy over blue jeans, long brown hair, like an English Katharina. I sat at bar kind of alongside or just in front, then moved to the comfortable chair at the central pillar and IMMEDIATELY realised THIS is where I feel most comfortable. Those chairs have backs to them enabling me to lean back and that is when I get my bulges most easily, as I did now. I got to see from behind the red top teen’s gorgeous back and spreading voluptuous arse on that stool. I was thinking about her so much and eventually it happened! She suddenly stopped talking with the others, as if no longer able to concentrate on their conversation, started playing with her hair, and glancing back over her shoulder at me, left and right! I had hooked her!

Then there was a group at the small round table in front and one of them was a gorgeous black-haired Japanese girl. Eventually aware of my ogling she looked back and we just stared into each other's eyes intently for a second or two. So exciting.

The — lives!

CHAPTER 150

OSMOSIS

With the two cans of beer I had before leaving the house yesterday, and six & half pints, it was a heavy day, but I did not feel bad this morning because I was EXCITED while drinking.

Those two girls in the — turned me on so much. Just by concentrating on them I got them to turn and look at me. The effect on the red top girl even more amazing as she was sitting with her back to me. But suddenly she felt my pheromones, my erotic focus on her, by osmosis she fell silent, took no further part in conversation of her family and friends, started glancing over shoulder and repeatedly stroking her hair. Electric effect I had just by concentrating my mind on her. She suddenly became AWARE of me, and I was sitting looking at her back, that is pretty amazing, and so FUCKING exciting. I wanted her to turn and glance over her shoulder at me, so she did.

Try to cultivate the power over women that I have, if you can. I doubt you can.

*

209 in Hackescher Markt —. Gorgeous barmaid light black skin frizzy black hair black t-shirt and jeans, exactly what I would expect in a Hackescher Markt pub.

228 in the — OMG barmaid like a young petite Amy Lee from Evanescence, exactly what I would expect in a Hackescher Markt pub.

If I ever have to leave Charlotte Mansions it is Hackescher Markt where I would try to live. The coolest part of Berlin. Stuttgarter Platz once was.

Already 358 and back in —.

420 in — for one.

Food food glorious food. All I can think about now is food.

We live in a world where we can enjoy food and porn relatively cheaply or free. We take it for granted.

*

After my two cans of beer, left the house about 1pm, to — for one and some badinage with S— and M— about my Brut aftershave "classic and cheap". "Thanks very much," I said. Bus to Hackescher Markt, two sexy girls on bus, into — and sexy light black skinned girl behind bar. Just the type of barmaid I would expect/hope to find in Hackescher Markt. After taking my order she accidentally hit her hand on the metal bucket under the tap

"ow". After half here into — and even sexier little barmaid like a young Amy Lee from Evanescence. After coming back in from a smoke she too accidentally hit her hand on something behind the bar with an "ow" then five minutes later she or the other one smashed a glass. This is the effect I had on the barmaids of Hackescher Markt.

It was meant to be a one off trip, but those two barmaids made me want to go back today and every day. Sexy little pink-haired Korean girl passing the window too, and two of the girls in the pub turned to look at me as I sat with my drink. I was fascinating to everyone, like some exotic creature.

Talk about a barfly. I really am, aren't I?

Half in — with male barman so I will not return there, then went down alley looking for the Black Heart, it seemed to be closed, but passed a sexy black girl in skintight brown lycra leggings and top over huge knockers straining inside bra. Sexy AF. What a body. Like a Rachel Raxxx.

Repeat today. Better to go out early before it gets busy. Felt lovely drinking in Hackescher Markt. If I ever have to leave Charlottenburg that is where I will try to live.

I suppose it is rather incredible to think that I was in a relationship (on and off) from 2007-2013, and never again since then, and here we are in 2025. I suppose quite an incredible record of solitariness? Or is that quite normal?

*

When I see a man in a football shirt I think he is less than a man.

Being out in Berlin at 10am is so lovely. Bright summer sun, hardly anyone around. Just tourists coming out of their hotels for breakfast.

Leaving my palace to go for my own breakfast I had the sudden growing sensation wouldn't you rather just go to the pub for an early session instead? It will be cheaper, and then instead of turning right to — for English breakfast I turned left to —.

Charles Aznavour 'La Boheme' playing as I start my first pint.

Got my front table.

I would love to have an English breakfast, I would, but it would bring my drinking to an end. I cannot mix beer with food.

My Paris songs starting to sound good again.

Like sirens calling me back. Clara. Karol G.

Yes 11am plenty of tourists coming in for breakfast, some with very large bosoms indeed.

Wow the gorgeous American teen who's sitting outside with two friends just dropped something from her back pocket as she went out and it turned out to be a tenner.

A very sweet thank you from all of them as I took it out to her. "You see..." one of them said.

Then two gorgeous teens come in, one in yellow top blonde hair like a young Agnetha from Abba.

I'm going to be here for a while.

Fuck now she's taken her yellow top off to show little blue low v-neck top bending over her handbag showing me her hanging pendulous boobies. This is why I come out. And came here instead of — for English breakfast.

Now she's got a grey hoody sweatshirt on but left it covering her head and face and just sitting there like that, boobs only exposed, like she caught me looking or can see my writing. "You like looking at my boobs? Here you are then."

I've said it before and I'll say it again, women's seduction techniques are SO fucking direct. Men are fucking beginners compared to girls. When a girl likes a man, she makes it SO fucking obvious. My wet pussy is here, why don't you come and lick it?

Brazen fucking hussies!

This early session is so pleasurable.

Already I'd say there are three gorgeous teens and one older one with huge knockers.

This is why I wanted to live in Charlottenburg so I should enjoy it and fuck how this makes me feel later when I go to work.

Already a wonderful reason for coming here. Before leaving the house I really didn't want to. Wonderful vindication. Reward for one who tries.

One of my mantras.

Another one.

Number 3 oh God these beers are going down well this morning despite three days of binge drinking. I would normally be struggling now. Being excited makes all the difference.

*

Well, predictably, my return to Hackescher Markt was so much less interesting than the day before and I question if I will bother again. One in — and then on the bus and this time there was no pretty girls on bus (compared to two the day before). In Hackescher Markt — served by some ginger guy, though later I saw the black girl was around but ginger was clearly taking the serving duties. Then back into — and no little Amy Lee, and no sexy girls passing the window at all. Low in spirits returned on bus down to empty —, then to — for two more and left a 3 euro tip to Eleanor, emphasised by M— as being only for her and I pressed my hand on top of hers to tell her it was hers, not his, and she was laughing and said thank you. She is sweet. I remember her name now because it was on the receipt.

Then 29 on food in — (!) and out.

Sad sad dream in night, Katy Perry is trying to open me up to love but I keep myself closed off like Stephane with Emmanuelle Beart in *Un Coeur en Hiver*. Very sad. Realisation I am just going to drift to the end of my life completely alone and closed off but honestly who is there? I do not know ANYONE I would want to get involved with even if I wasn't against getting involved with anyone.

Did I see ANY sexy girls yesterday? No, cannot remember any. Sunday at least had the red top teen and Japanese girl in —,

and Monday had the little Amy Lee and — barmaid, so some improvement.

While I am living in the West End of Berlin I want to live my life to the full. While I have a job and am earning good money.

NEXT WEEK—AN AMAZING REVERSAL IN MY FORTUNES



Alain Delon & Brigitte Bardot in Saint-Tropez, 1968.
Ernst Graf just out of shot, the cause of their amusement.

ENDNOTES

Your Editor Ernst Graf—A cultured man with a passion for opera & European pornography [Marquis de Yellow Pill / X](#) and [My Books DforDoom](#)—Cult movies, classic movies, horror, cult tv of the 60s & 70s, vintage genre fiction [Classic Movie Ramblings](#) [Cult Movie Reviews](#) & [Vintage Pop Fictions](#) & [D4doome / X](#)

David Playfair—Two broken mirrors were connected by a tunnel through space and time, and a different part of me was at each end. [Meat Machine / X](#) [The Meat Machine: Amazon.co.uk](#)

Froutib— Man, 51, erotic art lover. Art is sublimation of life. Life is Art. I ❤️ the beauty of curves & sensuality of forms, without perversity  [Froutib / X](#)

Nick August—[Nick August—El tecolote/X](#) Substack: [Nick August](#)

Bruce Chardon—Writer. Wordchad. Sigma male. Cum Zone Pioneer. Le Marquis de Toilette. [Bruce Chardon Blog](#) [Bruce Chardon \(@BruceChardon\) / X](#)

Charlie ‘Savage’ Winkle—"A feast is made for laughter, And wine makes merry; But money answers everything." Ecclesiastes 10:19 NKJV [Winkle](#). [\(@CharlieWinkle1\) / X](#) and [The Winkle Hour](#)

MT White—MT White started as a comic book artist but only ever published as a novelist and essayist. He's written about film, culture, mixed martial arts & pro wrestling for assorted online outlets. He now considers himself a moraliste (in the French sense not a "moralist" in the English sense). Funny enough, he's never been to France. One might like to buy his controversial book [Content](#). Substack <https://substack.com/@mtwhitediscursions>

Matt FreeMatt—Lead shill for the FreeMatt Podcast. Loves beauty in many things. Somalia's #1 libertarian personality. Matt's ethos is expounded in this video [Intro to the website](#) & on his always interesting Mogadishu Matt blog [Mogadishu Matt](#) & [Matt "DFA" FreeMatt \(@freemattpodcast\) / X](#) on Twitter.

COVER PHOTO: Nick August

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Ernst Graf Books (1897) by Alexander M. Rossi



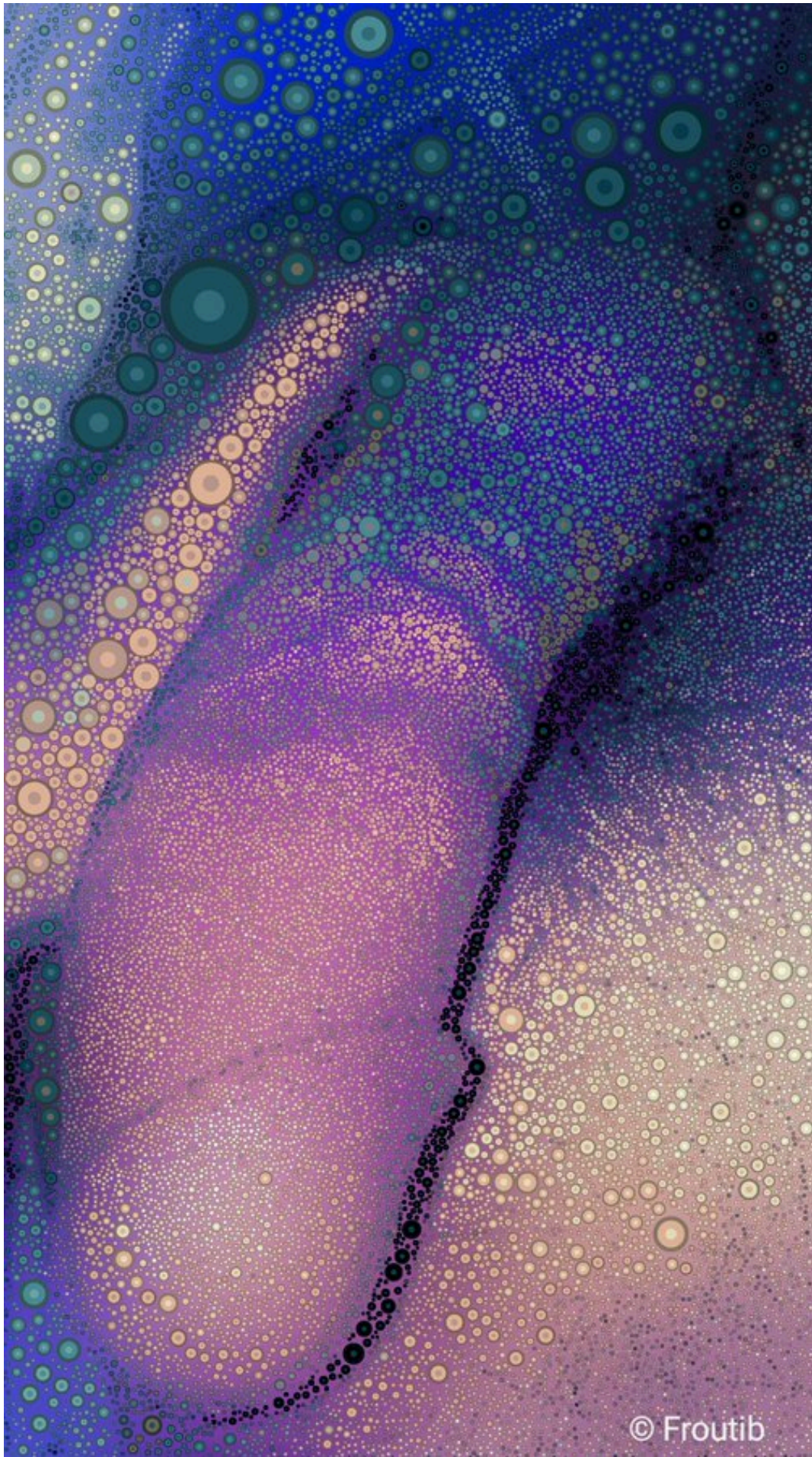
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