

THE SHAMAN

Francisco Capelo

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Author’s personal note:

This book is based on two things:

- Facts;
- Intuitions;

And, if someone tells you that you can’t get to real knowledge through intuition, smile, say a gentle goodbye and show that person the door out. Because dear reader, intuition is Life itself.

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FRANCISCO CAPELO

— S ⊕ R M —



(FIRST ⊕ PART)

THE SHAMAN

1

S+⊕R+I

It was an afternoon like any other, perhaps ashamed of it's own banality. Yet, the sun made all the difference. Gabriel passed the ball to Pedro Reis, who lost it to Lam. He wasn't particularly gifted for basketball, but his uncle had taught him the game basics. And, on this Monday afternoon, a Monday, this afternoon and this game never seemed so beautiful to him. His College friends had visited him. Very nice people, he thought deep inside. Very nice people, indeed. These ones wouldn't ever sell themselves for peanuts to the director's grass. Lam had returned to Portugal ten years ago, studying from the height of his 27 years, with a certain youth's snobbish manners, more confident on his own merit than pure and simple arrogance. Two years from those 10 had been lost, hurting with the confines and anonymous existence of a Maths degree, always too abstract, always too vague. Could poetry be measured only by numbers? Would emotions be part of a God's secret accounting plan? No. Surely it wouldn't be like this. Lam started a Math's degree mainly because of several influences, but he changed his ideas. And that was a good choice. A very good choice indeed. Now, his long time master had taken Lam's destiny on his own hands. Victor. Always him. Victor Masse, a brilliant teacher to whom all that matter was his own welfare. Victor was, since his childhood, a good friend. But now he was there, with Pedro Reis and Gabriel, and Luis. It seemed that his generation spoke louder, stronger, and it even seemed all of them knew each other souls. There; without any

past regret, because it was so short, and totally confident on the future. And, in terms of the present time, José Santos had scored the most important 2 points of his life.

- We won, Paulo ! We won!

- Ok man, it was a good game, but don't over react! Let's see your Sporting tonight. Concentrate on that, my friend! Don't start celebrating just yet! Said Gabriel, after falling in to the ground, tired and soaked in sweat.

Lam inspired the fresh stream air, from the zigzag stream just a few yards away. He thought about his uncle, for the first time this afternoon. *I wonder if he is all right. I haven't seen him in a while...*

Lots of boys went out of their houses and gathered there, in that ring. They all wanted to play against the winning team. Lam chose the opposing team at a mere glance.

How nice it is to play this game. How easy it is to be happy like this.

S + Θ R M - II

It had been a hard day work. Masse had given everything from himself that day. He was exhausted. His Department was too busy with minor issues, bureaucratic even, since a couple of weeks. *I thought I'd be free from all this paper work... What a drag. If I knew it would be like this, I would have stayed in some office, at some kind of ministry, back in Portugal... Not even in the States will I be rid of this bureaucracy...oh the stress...* Masse was interrupted by a young bellhop, that distributed the mail to the several departments. He arrived at 200 mph, settled in his white horse. Or the modern version at least... Some supersonic roller skates. *In short... the American way...*

- Yes, Dos Passos? Something for me today?
- Mister Victor, you have 4 letters: One from Washington, from Congressman Louis...
- Oh, good old Louis... And What else?
- ... One from the treasurer's department, from Martha...
- Oh, I know. I've spoken to her. What else?
- ... Some Boris Kepps...
- Yep, a NASA researcher and a friend. And the final one...?
- ... A registered letter...
- Hello... Where from? Is there a name?
- It comes from Portugal, and...

- Let me see!

Victor Masse analyzed that letter top to bottom. It had a simple look, poor, even. You could see some grease stains. The poorly glued stamp was beginning to part from the envelope and it was untidy at the corner of the letter. The sender hand writing was dreadful. *I've never seen such a horrible hand writing... By God... What a hand writing...*

- Mr. Victor...

- Oh Sorry, Dos Passos, do you want me to...

- Yes, please sign the delivery receipt. I must...

- You must go to all the other Departments, I know, I know. Do you have a pen?... I'll sign here, right?

- That's right, right there.

- Oh well, go about your own business. Just tell me one thing...

- Yes, Mr. Victor?

- Living in those roller skates; You must feel like a sailor in the deep sea! There must be lots of icebergs, tons of waves... Eh eh eh...

- Ah ah ah. Nope, Mr. Victor, I love what I do. See you!

- See you later my boy. And be careful! You almost ran down Kramm the other day! He can't wait to get his hands on you. Just remember that!

- I will, next time I see him! – said Dos Passos on his way, rolling around that floor’s corner, on to the next department.

Masse slowly opened that coarse letter, bearing the deaf feeling of a shy apprehension. *I wonder what this Helena Silva woman want’ from me... I haven’t got the slightest idea of who she is... I wonder how she got this address... Oh! I Know! I left the Department’s contact in that bloody NASA documentary... She picked it up from there. Too easy. Well, nothing to do now, never mind. I should be cautious... There is information that shouldn’t be out there, for everybody’s sake...*

- Hum. A single sheet. Let’s see where this leads to.

“Dear Mr. Victor Masse, I write this letter with my heart. I saw your department’s address in a documentary, and I took the liberty to write to you, asking something I would never ask anyone. Not for me, but for my daughter. At least I think it is a daughter. I simply wish the best for her, but due to complications in my life, the court will soon her custody from me, as soon as I give birth to her. I only ask that you take her as your own and be a father to her. I want my daughter to have the future that I never had a chance to have. But how can I persuade you? Well... I’ve thought about that too. I hereby offer you this poem that I’ve wrote, dedicated to my daughter. If even so you aren’t convinced, than surely nothing else will. But my conscience will be much lighter.”

Come on... Not even if you were Fernando Pessoa himself! Well, let me at least read this until the end. After a day like today... A letter with a poem... Well, it may turn out to give some stillness in opposition to all the bureaucracy I had to put up with today. After all, that's the point of Poetry... To keep us from becoming simple minded beasts. Eugénio de Andrade, Herberto Hélder, Sophia de Mello Breyner, Al Berto... I have their full work. This Helena must think that she'll impress me with her pocket poetry... I love poetry, yes. But I can't stand Fado! Not Carlos do Carmo, not Mariza, not even that Camané guy – They are all unbearably the same. And as for singing poetry, only Trovante and Ary dos Santos have made some nice work... Well... I'll read this and then of to my home. It's 8:33 pm and I feel pretty tired by now.

The poem was on the other side of that single sheet, which came from that sloppy envelope. Masse turned the sheet around and stretched that wrinkled piece of paper, which must had been wrinkled much before it even got inside the plane.



"The life of who I am, The life that you are to me..."

*People tell me that you are the most important thing in my life
People tell me that you are very beautiful deep inside
People tell me all that, so that I feel your life as forgotten...
In the life of the life of my love*

*I sense that you are beautiful and pure...
I think of lives, from other lives.
I feel so full from your madness...
I've made those lives forgotten*

*And I'll live forever who you are, loving who I am...
That that life is my life, that loves you here, where I am.*

*Thank you Mr. Victor. Thank you so much.
Helena Silva. Lisbon. November 12th, 1979"*

Masse was astonished and deeply quiet. We wasn't expecting that a single poem from someone he didn't even knew, who wrote just a few lines, thousands of miles away, could touch him like that.



- Such a soul... reminds me of Florbela Espanca. In these troubled days, between wars and easy capitalism, such a pure thought ...

Helena. I am the one who has to say "Tank You" ...

Me, no one else .



S+⊕R∏ - III

May, the 2nd, 2006

- So you tell me, Tiago, that that student...

- Yes Headmaster, he refuses to be...

- That is too serious... too serious indeed. In thirty two years as Headmaster, it's a first. Is he well in the head? Does he appear to be normal?

- Slightly excited, Headmaster. But only when we push him. I believe that's normal.

- Listen, since I saw a lady on a TV quiz show answering that Papua New Guinea was a province of Mozambique, I find everything as normal!

- Ah ah ah..., Carlos laughed out loud - Oh Yes, really...

- Did you wished to tell me something else, Tiago?

- He... He's got a t-shirt...

- A t- shirt? What is that? Do you know what this is, Carlos?

- A sweater, Sérgio. A light sweater, to sum up. That's it.

- Oh. Yes, and what's wrong with this t-shirt, Tiago?

- Hum... Well, it has some odd words in it...

- Odd? Some bad mouth, perhaps? These youth today are able of everything... These colleagues of yours...

- No, Headmaster... well, it says: "Anti Custom Brigade - 21 457... 69 69" - imagine that!

- Ah ah ah! And you were scared of that? Have you heard this, Carlos?

- Yes Sérgio, it's funny, but there could be something here that...

- He threatened me and Filipe, with a lawsuit if we...

- Do you see, Sérgio? There was something poorly explained here. Now, it's obvious what he wants.

- Or what he doesn't want! He doesn't want to be initiated, like everyone else is! We must maintain order, by God, you know perfectly that teachers turn their heads around from this installed system, running for decades in all campus. As a matter of fact, the initiation customs even work our way and if we allow a single exception, the kids... they will rebel!

- I know that very well. Do you think I was born yesterday? But tell us, Tiago, What that irresponsible prevaricator's name?

- He... Refuses to tell us his name, professor Carlos. But a colleague of ours told me that his name was Paulo. Paulo... Lam.

- What? Victor Masse's kid? Sérgio, we...

- Yes, I know Carlos. And We'll have to put up with him at least for the next 5 years. Prepare yourself. It won't be easy. Not for him, and certainly not for us... You see, Victor's kid is *really* smart. He is not



like any other lamb, that goes quietly to the slaughter house...

S+⊕RⅢ - IV

The College's canteen was quite large, considering the campus full size. Yet, there were always some students who found it difficult to move between the tables and deserted chairs, like castaways in a much too salted sea, drifting on it's vast surface.

Margarida was unable to keep a small "oops", as her tray skimmed Lam's head. When she finally managed to balance herself, he smiled:

- Hey, it happens. Are you Ok?

Paulo Lam. A not too brilliant student. He used to say, as a joke, that if work ever found him, he would inspire himself again to not do anything. He was a little older than his colleagues, since he gave up his course for a couple of years and returned to the College, rediscovering some class mates from two years ago. Frankly, he had no more patience to put up with that again and his soul wish was to get his degree in five years and hit the road. Lam couldn't find anything constructive in the College; *too much theory, too much crap*, he said to himself. On the other hand, his study was made out of extreme intuition, of a deepest inspiration, an almost animal instinct, and not from a steady and cautious analysis of dull matters which *I have to put up everyday*. A much dark hair, always too short, but showing a lot of whites, dark brown eyes, with an ambiguous look, joining a childhood's good and evil. Almost noble trades, like a Renaissance Prince. Lam stood apart from his

colleagues by his remarkable and sudden genius; He could spend 2 hours contemplating the ceiling, or he was able to surprise the whole class with an astonishing oratory, including his teachers who could do nothing more but defend themselves from such intellectual brilliance, escaping elusively, like any politician. *A terror*, the teachers spoke among themselves. - . - *Have you heard what he said in my class? - Really! In mine he was even worst. Imagine that...*

Even though It was definitely a right wing College, some student's showed a certain contempt towards that ideology. It was a known fact that in Portugal, intellectuals were much turned to left ideals. The social sciences majors, mainly intellectuals were particularly attracted by left ideals. Evidently, there was a strong contradiction between teachers and students. Contradiction which Lam played between unstable equilibriums, giving full lectures when confronting his master's ideals with the College teachers stands. His physical appearance wasn't impressive. Tall, that's for sure, but somewhat hunch back. Light brown complexion, long arms. Really big hands and feet and extremely long fingers. His colleagues sometimes called him *The Arab*, some of them even nick named him, because of his argumentative power towards the teachers as *The Terrorist*. Clearly Lam's character was widely discussed in the College. Not just by student's, but also by teachers who questioned his mental sanity and ability to be on the College sometimes, and praised him some other times, amongst the restricted walls of the Superior Council, the light full intelligence and clarity of analysis. And there seem



to be no way to maintain him disciplined. *What we have here is a riddle*, That was the most common heard sentence. *At last, a challenge to our skills*, was the dominant idea of the thinking heads of the College.

And Yet, there was something about him that worries. Caused apprehension. A strange fear that only the most gifted teachers dared to look in to. To comprehend, to make that detail visible could make all the difference. With the presence of Lam, something deeply disturbing had flourished.

For good and... for evil.

S + ⊕ R M - V

Victor Masse had walked some 400 yards, between the endless hall ways and stairs, that served no other purpose than an elaborated maze for those who weren't accustomed to that place. The right spot should be called secret spot. The directions were vague; the first and last names of a woman about to give birth, at the Alfredo da Costa maternity, according to a busy and helpful Headmaster. This young lady was acquainted from a College student, humble family, but she had fell in to a bad life... Drugs... and sometimes prostitution, which often follows that short list. A brief contact with that student, arranged by his teacher, had been enough for Masse to find out what he wanted to know. *Damn Sérgio. Always suspicious... You wouldn't say he is already a grandfather. Manages that College with the same classic style. Ruler and set square. Must it always be this way?* His thoughts were interrupted by a panic-stricken nurse, that pop out an almost invisible door: she came from the service ladders, apparently from the downstairs floor.

- Quickly, Marília, were loosing her! She had a little boy and gone in to a coma. Call Afonso and Zé - Hurry, woman!

Masse tried to be indifferent to that desperate woman. Perhaps normal in that Professional stress. And Human. Specially that. He headed for the reception on that floor, clearly disappointed. It was his third attempt to find the room of this mysterious Helena, and she seemed evermore inaccessible.

- I'm sorry, I will look her up...

- Excuse me for a moment please. I must make a phone call. Hello? Afonso? Go to the Felisbela room, bring Zé, and tell him to bring the cardiac defibrillator. Hurry! Oh my god... Tell me, I'm sorry, I...

- It's all right, it's perfectly understandable... I Wish to find out if this is the floor where I can find a certain woman in labour... All I have is her first and last names... Helena Silva. Do you know if she is on this floor?

Marília was petrified. Silent. Not a single muscle in her face moved and the soul in her eyes had disappeared somewhere else. Masse hesitated, surprised at her behaviour.

- Madam...? Are you all right...? Is something the matter...

- She..., the receptionist stuttered – She is not on the third floor, but... you shouldn't see her now, she... she's on labour right now, and...

- It's Ok. I'll wait. May I wait here?

- Y... Yes, You may...

- In the mean time, could you tell in which room she is in? I'd like to pay her a visit afterwards...

- Please don't ask me that. Please.

- I beg your pardon? Is there any regulation that doesn't allow me to...

- No, not that. You see, miss Helena is... She is...

- Yees?

- In room 16.

- Very well, I'll wait here for the birth.



- Oh my God, You don't understand...

- Marília! Marília!

- What, Afonso? Tell me what's up!

- We lost her.

S+ΘRM - VI

- Professor, How are you? I apologise having to address you like this, I know you only from TV and... That sentence remained unfinished, once the slow, heavy and strangely melancholic Headmaster had just entered the main hall of the bottom floor at the College. An endless wall seemed to give the Headmaster's wide shoulders an authority aura even bigger than the usual and the student, predicting such a dialogue with Masse, excused herself and fled scared, disappearing in to the dozens of similar students who at that time left the 10:15 class.

Victor Masse was perhaps the most prestige teacher among the teachers of Social Theory College. At that time, he was professionally appointed as a teacher in the U.S.A., passing easily from Social Sciences in to Mathematics. But Physics was his current interest field. *A illuminated*, people said in the corridors; *a master*. A real D. Sebastião - and the distance seemed to increase even more his untouchables genius aura. His resume was quite impressive: besides three Masters theses in particles and waves, each deepening even more this essential subject of modern physics, he was also a member of the severely restricted NASA council, to which he was always in contact by coded e-mail and secret telephone, if necessary. About five years ago, he was appointed for the Nobel prize of Physics, but as he says joking to his friends: *I am much too serious and anonymous to let that happen, no way*. Amongst the teachers, he was a brilliant star, unbeatable and



extremely captivating as a teacher, fulfilling with devotion and effectiveness his functions as Headmaster's main assistant, in disciplinary and curricular matters. Respected by teachers and student's by something else than his competence: some extremely elegant 1.70 centimetres, grey closely shaven beard, very light transparent glasses, a 42 year old well shaped physic inspired trust, protection and a completely natural authority. The College girls simply called him *The Professor*, since he appeared on a NASA documentary on TV. For them, where he was, there was no one else. As a matter a fact, the first word that came to mind if someone tried to describe him was: irreplaceable. A discreet irreplaceable and seductor.

Not bad, for a humble Chilean, he used to think.

S+ΘRM - VII

The pseudo-economics teacher entered with a view to a kill on the first class. He seemed like an earthquake.

Yet, Lam thought, after an earthquake, a tsunami may appear. Let's wait and see...

After questioning in a rude and authoritarian manner several things that the student's should know by now, he gazed with his frog eyes in to the middle of the class room and boomed:

- Are you mocking me!?

Twenty, Paulo Lam Thought. Twenty years of silent pact with a expired and atrophied school system, in both sides of the Atlantic ocean, with no creative sparkle whatsoever, for being accused, on the end of this system, of mocking a mere teacher. An employee. Na bureaucrat of ideas. *Really... The nerve. You just wait and see what will happen...*

The teacher kept his blind and unconscious thrust in to the deepest gutter of the educational system, when he repeated that tragically and malicious question:

- Are you mocking me!?

Lam waited a few seconds. His colleagues indignation grew, but no one dared to speak. He felt that his argumentation had to be effective,

convincing, “bull’s-eye”. No more, no less. And the tone also counts.

And, as the pseudo-teacher prepared himself to push the student’s yet again, Lam intervened:

- No, Teacher. We are not mocking you.

The class was in shock. Twenty years had been enough to numb their self esteem. *All right, I can do this without you. Just keep quiet and listening...;* And he kept on going:

- Mr. Teacher, I happen to come from Maths. But these people here are from Social Sciences. Many didn’t even had Maths in the 10th grade.

Another pause. He had a devilish slow rhythm, and as he spoke, his tone and posture sank in his chair like a lazy Titanic. Really, really lazy. Lam cut straight to the point (*This guy must loose himself in long speeches*) and concluded with a double meaning:

- Perhaps if you lectured differently...

A complete emptiness followed.

The bomb fell right where and when the teacher least expected. With some cunning words, Lam had exposed the teacher’s lack of competence and his aggressive arguments had simply and completely rebounded. All present in the class room knew and felt so. The teacher stopped – But not to think – for a fraction of a second.

Then, he went in to hysteria:

- Who the hell are you? Do you plan to explain me how to teach?

Lam remained quiet as a cursed tomb. His quietness was so unbearable and the teacher's reaction was so desperate, that the front row student's themselves gave him reason in his insult to the class, trying desperately to calm the teacher. *Fear still rules here...*

Slowly, Lam emerged from his chair ocean. 1-no ... Armed with dreadful eyes, staring at the once teacher shadow, Lam stood in the middle of the room. His walk was somnambulistic and also feline. Fear was evident in all. His presence had become devilish.

A split second after, with a abrupt gesture, he revealed his left hand from under his light suede jacket and his index finger began a dangerous and unpredictable dance, swinging around his fist like a pendulum. One would say that a giant STOP sign had been carved on his face, at that time.

The tense silence became unbearable. Suddenly, he left the class room, leaving nothing but a silent fury, that only dignity still possess.

S+⊕RM - VIII

The electrical rhythm was slow and stopped in front of the Campus, to pick up some tourists. The doors automatically opened, letting them in with the patience of a Sunday morning coffee.

The Headmaster stared at it, as it slowly left towards Belém. *At least something to distract me.*

He stood up to pick up a book by Max Weber from the solid mahogany bookshelf. *An antique. Nowadays no one values antiques. Youngsters think that time is eternal.*

He sat down again. The desk was also an antique, as a inverted U shape, his legs barely fitted the existing space, beneath the table top.

On the desk, a piece of paper stood out, half crumpled, delivered by a furious teacher, at exactly 11:34 a.m.. One paper hindered his moves for over half an hour.

And that Weber book was the last ray of hope, the final attempt to calm himself.

He was now in front of that paper. Clearly it wouldn't go away...

Someone or something knocked at the Office door. The other side of that door was quite silent. Ceremonious perhaps.

- Yes? Is that you, Silva?

- Mr. Headmaster? There is a gentleman to see you. May I let him in? His name is Mast or Massa, something like that. An odd name. He is foreign.

The Headmaster felt a blessing throughout his body.

- Silva, let my saviour in, I beg you.

- His name is not saviour, Mr. Headmaster, it's Mass something.

- Silva!

- Sorry, Mr. Headmaster... Mr. Mast, come in please.

The shadow of an elegant figure appeared on the door. - *Not Mast, Masse!*

- Come in, Victor!

The Headmaster stood up slowly. His 63 years old stole his velocity and he saluted Victor Masse with a hug that only the both of them would understand.

- My dear friend, I thought you were in Chile! To what do I owe this honour?

- Sérgio, I've come on holidays here in Portugal to check up on my protégé. Is he evolving well in the College? How are his grades? Are you keeping track of the boy?

The Headmaster turns a ugly face and sat in a genuine leather couch, by his desk.

- Victor, sit down please.

Victor Masse understood immediately. *The damn family temper...* He twisted his lip.

- Listen, Victor, you must help me. Lam has two disciplinary processes on his back. One incident happened just this morning. He clearly challenges the teacher's authority, refuses to present his end of course paper and has friend that go along that mess. If you want him to finish his degree, you better come up with some magic potion. My teachers refuse to issue his diploma and I agree with them. He will spend the rest of his life here at the College, unless you come up with a solution. So far I've been delaying the disciplinary processes, but there's only so much I can do.... Lemos, António, Carlos, they all demand an exemplar punishment.

Victor took a deep breath.

- What a drag... That boy was practically raised by me... I promised his family that I would take good care of him. I Promised that forever, You know? What a disappointment... Listen, Sérgio, give me some time, I must think.

- Victor, you have until this Friday. Think about it. Get me out of this one. I know it is your boy, but certain situations can't be hidden...

- Ok, Sérgio. Until next Friday, I'll think of something.

Victor stood up and extended his hand out for the Headmaster to shake.

- When are you coming back to Chile, Victor?

- I still need to go to Badajoz, because of some matters in the bank. I Should return home next Tuesday. Those NASA guys won't leave me alone. I must resume working as soon as possible. It seems that they have found some new chemical compound. Well, tell Carlos to take it easy. My boy... I know that he is not mild, but deep down, I Know that he doesn't hurt a fly either.

- Have a safe trip Victor.

The Office door opened again. His elegant shadow was now trembling and moving in small abrupt movements.

- Victor! Before you go...

- Yes...?

- Your idea... Victor, it must be brilliant.

S+ΘRM - IX

The student's association was strangely quiet. The student's who went there to buy the new school year books found only a white sheet, tape glued, containing the message: "Meeting - Do not disturb!", in huge green marker pen characters.

- Such a dreadful hand writing... Martha, have you heard anything about this meeting?

- Nope. But it must be usual. They'll open up in an hour or so. Come, let us go to the canteen, I must speak to...

- Damn! Closed? At this time in the morning? Martha, have you heard anyth...

- No. We were just discussing that right now. Well, let's go Mónica. See you later Hugo.

- See you.

The outside silence concealed the inner turmoil, occurring in the Student's Association room. The big meetings room, used generally to organize the year tasks, by the laborious students.

- Lam, all that is pretty nice, but what assures us that you...

- I'll keep my Word of honour above all else. Com on! This is much better than what Tiago has to offer... Isn't that so Inês?

- I...errhh, I find it all...

- Dangerous, Lam, said Pedro at last, breaking the conversation deadlock. - Too much dangerous. If we abandon the initiation rituals, we'll lose the Executive Council's support and that...

- Oh, but I propose much more, my friends... Not only to abandon the initiation rituals, but also change some rules in the Educational Council... Oh, Yes... We'll have a word or two in the National College Student's Association, leaving the ever old customs, bringing in new ideas like contemporary art shows that expose what a College experience should be all about. These Art shows should be commented by real art critics, not those who sell themselves to the usual newspapers...

- All that is...

- Too revolutionary, Anabela?

- Y... yes, we don't have the pow...

- The power to do this? But if we are students enough to pay for our own education, are we not also to assume that...

- What's going on here? May I know? What are you doing here Lam?

- Me? Are you talking to me, Tiago? Should I remind you that...

- That what? That you're a part of the Educational Department in the Student's Association? That is all too easy to explain; You are here as a favour from your friend Pedro. Isn't it right, Pedro?

- Hum...

- Any way, you have no influence here, you're too...

- Extremist?



- Yeah, that's right.

I was going to say smart, you schmuck...

S+ΘRM - X

On that morning, that man had to go to the College's secretary. *What a drag, to put up with Silva... Silva, the Arrogant.* He passed to the other side of the road, coming from the International Lisbon Fair, after walking about two kilometres from the train station of Alcântara and entered determined in that small opening, on the School's huge wooden door.

He greeted Miss Celeste, who was sitting at her desk, as usual, and went to the secretary on the left, by a door that cornered with the bathroom.

Some student's quickly filled in the applications in the tiny black plastic balconies, copying the information from the exposed on the wall exemplar. He went by them, entering the second door, which led him to a short corridor, with several doors at his left and right. The first one on the left was *Silva's door.*

Well, let's go.

There were two persons ahead of him in that unbearably small cubicle. A girl and a black boy. She wanted to improve her maths results and he wanted to fill in his application. A lady attended them. When Silva noticed the man who had just come in, he pushed the lady aside and personally attended him:

- I'll get this, leave it to me, Cristina.

Silva. José Silva. A worst kind scum. He personally took care of all the Headmaster's requests... And there were a lot! Students grades changed in the secretary backstage, secret friendships that served him well in the Executive council... He was the

Headmaster right arm man. He did anything to please him. Absolutely anything.

Silva growled something to the black student about the dates for applications, and how the time was almost up. His eyes glowed as he found that man's face in his way.

- What do you want?

He swallowed with his throat dry, considering the fact that he was addressing a well educated reptile.

- I want two school regular envelopes, with the College stamp. It's for my work with Professor Freitas. I can pay, if you want to.

Silva loved those chances to show himself to his boss. And how close was he... The Headmaster's Office was right across that wall. For Silva, the more mess he created with these kind of student's, the better.

I know... I'll put him running around for about half an hour. I hear this guy is messing around out of his league...

- You must go to the student's sector. They'll help you. Exit the secretary, go in the left corridor, all the way to the bottom, turn right and it's the first door on your left.

- Thank you.

When he left the secretary's door, Silva gave an authoritarian look at Cristina.

- I'm coming, she said, approaching the balcony.

- Listen, Cristina, I'm going out. When this guy comes back here, tell him that we can't give him the

2 envelopes, and that he should go to the student's sector, Ok?

- Ok. You may go.

Toc toc toc.

- Come in.

- Good morning, I would like two College envelopes. I was sent by Professor Freitas and...

The straight brown hair girl, green eyes and some freckles didn't even took a second to reply.

- Only if Mr. Borges gives them to you. He's head of secretary. And his office is just after the secretary's door, when you come in.

- Ok. Thanks.

The man walked another twenty meters and knocked at the door that seemed right.

- Mr. Borges?

An ill tempered fifty something year old woman came at the door and said: - Not here! Go to the next door. And she locked her door.

- Sorry.

He knocked at Borges's door and waited. Over two minutes went by. He was about to knock again, when he heard someone standing up from a chair.

- Yes?

- I would like to speak to Mr. Borges.

- He is busy. You'll have to wait at least 10 minutes.

- Ok, I'll wait in the corridor.

The door was half-open and Borges secretary went inside another door, in to another room. Five minutes went by. Borges spoke on the telephone, from the back of his office. Ten minutes, fifteen, twenty, twenty five. At thirty two minutes time, Borges finally hanged up his bloody phone... But kept on ignoring him. The man knocked again at the door.

-Yes? May I help you?

- I would like two envelopes with the College stamp. It's for a work I'm making with Professor Freitas.

- That's a student's sector matter.

-But... I just came from there and they said that I should talk to you...

- Why do you want the two envelopes?

- To write to Edgar Morin and his assistant, teacher Nurimar. She is Brazilian. These two contacts are extremely important. It would have to be something official.

- Well, ask Silva at the secretary.

- Yes, Sir.

The man left Borges's office and headed back to the secretary. He had 4 persons ahead of him, this time.

I wasn't wrong. What a drag...

When, eleven minutes later his turn was up e explained again:

- I would like two College stamped envelopes, for a work I'm making with Professor Freitas.

- You'll have to go to the student's sector. They can help you there. Are you a student? Which year?

- 4th. Anthropology. Madam, I need two envelopes.

- Well, I'll have to ask Mr. Borges.

Seeing her heading for Borges's office, he simply said:

- Save yourself. I've been there. He told me to ask Silva.

- Oh, then you'll have to wait or come after lunch. Silva has been gone for a while, and he usually takes his time.

A closed fist almost hit her, as he headed for the College door. It was the second time someone hurried him that morning. He began to think that that was one of those days...

Lam only saw an upset man, who left tempestuously through the secretary door, making a fuss to an invisible enemy.

S+ΘRM - XI

The three classes, Sociology, Psychology and Anthropology were in the class room for over 15 minutes now. They were chatting at a deafening rate. Over 300 souls filled the campus main auditorium. This was the congress room of all the major meetings at the College. It was an honour just being there, but also a duty of obedience to that institution. That room had seen exceptional teachers, beautiful minds. But one stood out from the rest: Afonso Moreira. A former member of the Government. He was “former” in lots of things. An impressive resume. A man who people said was the wisdom authority. Besides being a part of a right wing party, he seemed to impress even more the left wing students, who were amazed with his excellency aura. After all, he stood apart from the new generation of politicians, preserving his clarity of analysis. And he was there, in that room, the main auditorium, in a huge framed canvas, representing his deep face, so that the future student generations could ask: - *Who is that?*, so that someone could answer with his name, mythical, fearful.

A nice old man is escorted to his pulpit. He is leaded by a young girl, maybe an intern teacher. To the classic “Good morning”, all the students reply in a single voice. The deafening background noise ceases, like a bee squashed in the middle of a flight. The memorable class had began.

The Professor spoke of generic concepts of Social Sciences and, between a amalgam of ideas, sets the a bait for the distracted audience:

- Does anyone know what charisma is? Think about that concept. In a few minutes I'll ask you again and I hope I'll get a straight definition of that Word: charisma.

Lam suddenly awoke. *Charisma. The concept of charisma. Is it really true that that this teacher asked this? Could it be that he is really interested in o our opinion about this concept? In 4 years of College, this would be the first... I wonder...*

Paulo Lam led his thoughts to the gutter of the concept of leader, the conceptual base for charisma.

Think, think quickly. You only have a few minutes.

Born leader. A catchy line, unquestionable, of unsurpassable beauty, undisputed by any teacher...

The expression of a superior idea... Superior.

Emanation of the full truth... Irradiation.

A leader's feature... the main leader's feature... a strong personality. That's it. Personality.

Now, adding the parts... Superior Irradiation of Personality.

This unique expression, unchangeable. Only a accurate brainstorming. Only intuition gets you there... *I found it.*

I'll just have to wait until he pops the question... I have right here...

In the mean time, the Professor spoke of his personal misfortunes over the years: cataract..., kidney stones..., how he couldn't have surgery to x because of y, how e couldn't have surgery of y because of x... *Good, this one is an easy prey... let him set down...*

When finally, the Professor straightened his glasses over his hooked nose, Lam felt a little nervous.

- Well, having made the lesson introduction, I'll ask again: which is, for you, the correct definition of charisma?

Suddenly a hubbub sequentially rose in the class room. Yet, no one raised a hand to respond. *Typical of the militant inactivity that fill this campus, Oh well...*

Controlling the situation, Lam slowly raised his arm. The professor had to be alerted to that mysterious arm, alone in the crowd, challenging him. Paulo Lam saw the Professor from above; the auditorium had a Greek theatre architecture. And that was precious, a major advantage. *Who looks from above, sees better...*

- Oh! I see a student who thinks he knows the definition of Charisma. This a complex concept, might I remind you all, and there has been a lot of social scientists who tried to establish a final definition of this concept. Tell me, young man, what are you majoring in?

- Sociology, said Lam in a solid manner.

- Let's hear that concept of yours..

A curious silence took over the room, as that young boy, took on the Professor in an Olympic manner.

- Superior Irradiation of Personality.

The Professor let a few huge seconds went by. His body ceased to be relaxed. As his posture gained some notorious stiffness, the over 300 colleagues laugh out loud, making fun of the apparent theoretical unfeasibility of that definition.

When, on the next moment, the Professor took word again, those voices were silent forever.

- You just gave me the true meaning of that concept, mister...?

- Lam. Paulo Lam.

The students laugh. It seemed like a typical “Bond; James Bond”.

- That is right: irradiation of superior personality. That definition, my dear students applies directly to one of the greatest leaders that Portugal has ever met: Francisco Sá Carneiro.

Paulo Lam was some what relieved with the unconditional acceptance of his definition of charisma. But something wasn't right; not only the expression now seemed odd, but he also felt that Sá Carneiro was far from being a hero from his youth. *My God, another politician...* However, the choice of

this name was clear – a right wing, died in a James Dean style - ; but limited.

Let's run that again... another brainstorming, to try and find out the bases for these two errors: one conceptual and another of casting.

Let us go deep in to the concept ...

Irradiation of Superior Personality.

But... that's not what I said! My definition is Superior Irradiation of Personality. That's the only way the concept remains general and abstract, applicable to ALL cases, like any good Law. And only in this manner can this concept be applied to the particular case of Francisco Sá Carneiro!

In Lam grew a feeling of unrestrained indignation. Suddenly, with his heart beating out of control, he placed his hand back in to the air, making perfectly clear that he wanted to speak again. The Professor, who was by now disserting about the extraordinary skills of *Saint* Carneiro, didn't realized immediately that Lam had his arm up. Once again, he was alerted by someone else and consented Lam to speak again.

- Professor, that concept may be yours, but it surely is not mine. I said: Superior Irradiation of Personality, and not: "Irradiation of Superior Personality". You changed the order in the sentence, which took all the meaning away. Please tell us all, in your opinion, which concept should prevail.

The professor stopped, in the middle of the pulpit. He wasn't expecting this. *What the hell do I do now?* Some seconds went by, too painfully for all. Specially Lam, who still believed in the word: Pedagogy

The Professor kept absolutely quiet and, after those long seconds, began the dissertation on the theme Charisma, without even blinking.

Furious, Paulo Lam excused himself from his colleagues, placed the class book under his arm, and slowly but surely descended the auditorium stairs, defiantly staring at the Professor, who kept quite talkative and apparently joyful.

When Lam reach his level, he stopped for a few moments, shaking his head in disappointment. The whole class saw him, not realising the fullness of that feeling. The professor the said by gestures to his two interns, to remain still.

Lam exited the room. The door gently closed itself.

The nightmare was over.

Lam didn't knew, but not far from there, a reporter informed the media that a Minister had changed a single letter when making a Law decree, for over 500 thousand Euros.

S + ⊕ R M - X I I

Sérgio was fully sweating. He had marched from Belém, under the infernal heath of a much too hot May. The hottest in Portugal since 1977. Silva was on his way for class room 4B, Where Professor Lemos had called him, because white chalk was needed. It was a Friday, and as any other public servant, he was counting the minutes to flee home. But when he saw the Headmaster, he was completely pale.

- H... Headmaster... Mr..., What is going on...? Oh, my God!

The next moment, the Headmaster completely fell in to the arms of Silva.

- Miss Celeste, miss Celeste, go and call Horácio, at the secretary, hurry!

- Ok, Silva, I'm going!

- Mr. Headmaster, sit down in Miss Celeste chair... come on.

- It's ok, Silva, take me to my office, I'll...

- You're much too weak Sir, where did you came from?

- From Belém, and this heath... My car went down and no taxi went by... Dreadful.

Silva le the Headmaster slowly into his room. It was completely dark, in that suffocating afternoon end and darker than usual.

- Sit at your chair Head Master, I'll turn on the lights and...

- Don't do it! I want to be in the dark, otherwise the temperature will increase. Just bring me a glass of water; I'm feeling a little better now...

- At once, Sir!

Sérgio tried to calm himself a little bit. His heart rate was slowly going back to normal. He inspired the yet cool air in the room and sat there for a few seconds, trying to be silent. He switched on his desk lamp.

- But... what is this?!? Silva! I...

- Relax, Sérgio...

- Who is there?!?

In the dark room, a shadow stood out, moving slowly in to the Headmaster desk. The lamp light only enlightened so much of the desk.

- It's me. I'm back, Sérgio.

- Ohh... my God. Victor, you scared the hell out of me... Is this devilish walk not enough? Are you people trying to kill me, or what?

- Relax. I left the game on your desk.

- A game?? A game you say? But I asked you...

- ... a genius idea. Well, there you have it. And what could be more genius than a game, could you tell me?

- Yes, indeed ... but, what is this game all about...? – It's a game of knowledge. You asked me for something that virtually impossible to solve, as I recall...

- Yes, that's the idea, yes... Your boy Lam might not make it through... We might have to expel him quietly... I know that this is hard on you, but... surely you must be able to employ him somewhere. After all, this is the best country in the world to pull some strings...

- Don't bore me with explanations about what you're going to do with my boy. I've graduated here and I know the College's standards. There should be no exceptions. Neither would my self esteem allow it.

- Yes, I know. A shame though.

- Yes it is. By the way: I used the secret door to get in here, the one that leads to...

- Shiiich! Are you mad? Silva could be in here any minute now, and I...

- May I come in, Headmaster?

- Come in, come in Silva! Have you brought me that glass of water?

- Yes, Sir, here you go. Good afternoon Mr. Masse.

- Good afternoon, he replied in a cold manner.

- Sorry about that other day, I'm relatively new here, compared to you. I didn't recollected your name...

- Never mind, Silva. Sérgio, I'll be on my way. If you need me, call me on my mobile.

- Ok. I've got what I needed. Is it all in this envelope?

- It's all right there. See you, then. Goodbye *Mr. Silva*.

- See you next time Professor, see you next time. Have a nice flight.

- Thanks. Never mind, I know my way out.

- The Professor was a little sad, don't you think Headmaster?

- We all have to do sacrifices. The Roman made them, Silva!

- Oh. And did he had to make a sacrifice?

- Yes. And a big one, Silva, trust me. Close the door on your way out and please turn on the lights.

Silva headed for the door quickly. When he was almost out, the Headmaster posed an odd question.

- Silva... One more thing.

- Yes, Headmaster?

- Do you like games?

- Well, I eh... Yes. I do. Why?

- Because, my dear Silva, the game is about to begin!

S+ΘRM - XIII

Pedro was sceptical: is a shot better than a glass of Bailey's?

- Carlos, explain yourself, he said, bored.

- Listen, Pedro, it's quite simple: the best thing about the shot is the company. Of course that Baileys is much more creamy, the shot is much more acid, but the ladies company, my dear Pedro, makes all the difference ...

Jorge assented, with a slight nod of his head and the three giggled with satisfaction.

- Man, check out those babes!

- Where, where?

- Those ones over there, man. The whitey and the other, that's probably her mom. She's ever sweeter than her daughter...

- Yep, I see. My God, what a set of... I can see what they need, that's for sure... They need a Zezé Camarinha!

- Ah ah ah! That guy must patrol this beach too man! You mustn't be far from the truth!

- Well, I guess I'm going for a swim. Anybody?

- Nope, someone has to stay and monitor our stuff, said Jorge. - You go. I'll stick around.

Jorge was right. The Trafal beach, in Quarteira, Loulé, had been safer before. Mainly occupied with foreign tourists, 12 attempts of theft had been registered in last year's summer. And the police only caught 3 of those thieves. Two were minors, so they got off with no penalty whatsoever. It had been a safer beach, caution was needed.

Jorge stayed and watched his two friends taking away, into a not too far horizon, over to the water. The beach was abounding, but not overbooked: just the way he liked it.

And he began reading his "Angels and Demons" book with the usual quietness, as Carlos's mobile rang. *What an annoying tune; what the hell... I'd better answer.* He checked the screen for a name and read the 6 characters that came up at once. He became rigid and read them again, one by one:

The lazy screen showed a fateful abbreviation:
H-D-M-S-T-R.

The annoying tune kept going and was starting to disturb the beach towel neighbours, who stared, upset. Jorge rolled quickly the cell phone in Pedro's towel. The tune stopped a few seconds later.

Uff... I did well. The Headmaster is "Old School". To him professional relationships have nothing to do with friendship. If he only dreamt that we are vacationing together, he'd kick us off campus and would do anything



to prevent us from ever working elsewhere. Man... One lousy call... If I picked it up, I would ruin everything.

Jorge was sweating. But not from the heat.

A few minutes later, Pedro and Carlos were slowly approaching. Jorge noticed Pedro's dark complexion and in the gentle layer of water drops that covered his body. His movements were oddly slow, much like a silent movie; the ocean had given him the power to dream deeply, like children and insane people do.

Pedro. How beautiful he is.

- Carlos, the Headm....

Someone called you on your mobile.

S+ΘRM - XIV

Carlos. João Reis. The Headmaster was the last one in. The teachers room was at the end of a spiral stairway, that climbed until a high door, in an almost Arab style construction at it's high part.

Silva had warned him. *Humph... good work. We need to keep conscious of these things. We need to shorten path, let this not repeat itself..*

They passed by the two sofas in the hallway and tried to locate the prevaricator. Finally, Carlos said silently to the Headmaster:

- There he is, back there. Come.

Manuel dos Santos was the latest addition of the pedagogical team of the College. He had been highly recommended. A good resume perhaps, but connections? Undoubtedly. Jorge had been his mentor in those troubled hallways, but some pointed to his flaws: too nice. Too honest. Too studious, even. Too competent. At the end, one problem: too human, carved in his face, top to bottom. In his thirties, his twitches were obvious to the most attentive. And Silva was one of those: *not to let anything get away*. It was is motto. And his survival technique in the College. There, like in any other place. *In a dog world, you must be a wolf*, his father once said to him, when he was still very young. And he hadn't forgotten. Anything, anything

his father taught him. He knew it: in school you don't have to be smart, you'll just have to obey. *Knowledge? Can you eat it?* He was without a shadow of a doubt in all of this. *In a dog's world, be a wolf.* You'll just have to be the wolf and all will turn out fine. Let the others care about good feelings. *I'm paid to be aware. And I obey.*

Manuel packed his paper work in his locker. Marx, Weber, Comte and some more recent authors from the Chicago School were piled in under a second. *So much junk...I must prepare Wednesday's class tomorrow the latest...*

- Ohh!

Three sheets fell from his locker, free from worries. He immediately bent over and as he was getting up, he noticed three shadows growing from the ground ahead of him. When his eyes met the eyes of the three man who looked like statues, Manuel dos Santos stuttered something unintelligible and fear took over his gestures, giving him away.

- How are you, dear Manuel?, said Carlos. João kept no going:

- Could we please speak to you for a minute?

The Headmaster was still silent. His face was loaded with a cloud about to turn into a storm.

- O...o... of course...! I was just now packing up some... He didn't finished his sentence, since the Headmaster interrupted him, bored:

- Well gentlemen, I leave you with our "rookie". Please, be gentle on him.

They both agreed, with accomplice smiles.

- As for you, Manuel, be wise and listen very carefully what these two gentlemen have to say. There is a lot of wisdom in their words.

And, with a look that could kill an eagle un full flight, turned around, a started walking to the door. He opened it, turned back looking at Manuel dos Santos one more time. A second later, his shadow disappeared into the stairway's roman statues silhouette.

- Make yourself at home, Manuel! Have a seat!

To the two small, genuine leather couches, was added a third that João effortlessly got from across the room.

- I...i... Is there a problem?, Manuel inquired.

- Nooo! None what so ever! Not a problem, indeed.

- Yes, there's no problem, Manuel, João confirmed.

- There is only a lacking detail in you new experience at the College, my dear.

- Yes. And the Headmaster told us to give you a word, exactly about that detail.

- W...w... what detail? I've been dutiful, I think... I have prepared my lessons and... Once again, Manuel was stopped before he could finish. Carlos went ahead, this time.

- Manuel, tell me... What do you think about College teaching? I heard that you com from a basics School, isn't it so? It must be quite a difference, ah? Manuel?

- Well, basics school is... - Yes, John interrupted this time - teaching in a College is completely different... Completely!

This time Manuel did not replied. It all seemed a rhetorical game. What was the Headmaster doing there? He started to fear those two. He waited a little bit. Then Carlos continued:

- You know, the Headmaster has a certain difficulty in understanding what happened this morning... Do you recall? At the oral test in Social Theory, with teacher Clara... It all seemed... How do I put it... Surreal!

- Not to say unbelievable even, concluded João.

Surreal? Unbelievable? What the hell happened in this oral test in Social Theory? He, Manuel dos Santos, was there and had noticed nothing unusual.

- I'm sorry... something unbelievable...? I was there... And I noticed nothing special...! I'm afraid I don't understand...

- Manuel... Manuel, Manuel, Manuel... I see that we must run through the subject completely, my dear.

- Yes, we all thought that you'd overcome that stage... All of us, the Headmaster, me, Carlos. It would be a disappointment... Such a highly competent teacher like yourself...

- Carlos. João. I'm not understanding a word that you're saying. Could you please explain? What's going on here?

- Well, my dear Manuel, did you agreed with Paulo Lam, at the oral test this morning? Can't you see that he is a trouble maker?

- And a dangerous one...
- Yes! A dangerous one!
- You're wrong. Lam is really intelligent. There's no other student in this College that matches his skills, I'll give you my word.
- Keep it for yourself, Manuel.
- Yes. You'll need it further along...

There was a few fraction of seconds silence. A sick silence.

Both man observed with a quiet satisfaction of accomplished duty, the sweat drops that formed in Manuel's forehead. Even though the room was quite cool, he started sweating abundantly. He was hot. Unbearably hot.

- Tell me, Manuel... what do you think about the primary to basic transition? And from going from one teacher to seven or eight?
- Well, it seems logical.
- It's been called lots of things. Logical is a first...
- Ah ah ah, consented João, amused.
- Well, the fatherly or motherly figure makes all sense in primary school.
- Oh yeah? Please explain why.
- It has to do with the child's growing stages. It's common sense... But why do you ask?

João took a deep breath and resumed hostility:

- Well, if that's all common sense, could you explain us also why the College exists?

- Yes, College teaching is the end of a scholar route. It gives lots of knowledge to the students and...

- I'm sorry? Carlos's face expressed a sudden and serious concern. - You said: *gives lots of knowledge?*

João laughed really hard and cried out:

- By God! Let us hope not! Where did you get that idea from? My dear Manuel, oh dearest Manuel!

- I beg your pardon?

Manuel dos Santos was astonished. He failed to see what the point of the conversation was.

- Well, if the College isn't supposed to distribute knowledge, then what is it supposed to... Carlos interrupted roughly:

- You still haven't figured it out, have you? Manuel, these walls weren't meant to teach the multiplication table in them, by the love of God!

- N... no? But then...

- Funding, said João really loud. - Have you heard?

- Pay Checks.

- Retirements.

- Golden - too...

- These walls are, he kept on going amused, dependent funding,. Manuel!

- Have you heard of State...? Hum?

- But... all the generations that pass here all years, all the graduating students, don't...

- No.

- No, Manuel dos Santos. No., agreed João.

- Big mistake. They don't graduate... They are graduated.

- Formatted, to be more precise, Carlos.

- Yes, indeed. You see, Manuel, you must understand this ... it's a mistake to think. The greatest of all mistakes.

- Thinking is an ugly flaw: Dangerous. Very dangerous...

- We can't let them think. Why do you think, Manuel, that students who came from a school system where they memorized twenty pages and passed with high marks, delighted, and here we supply an average 400 pages per class?

- They still memorize, Manuel.

- But a lot more. And this way, they cease to think.

- You see?.

They stopped for a while and then noticed Manuel, who started to go numb from all those apparently flawless arguments. He was completely confused. And that showed miles away.

-Well. It seems that we really have to start from scratch, as I feared, João.

- It looks that way. Speak on.

- My dear Manuel. What are schools made for?

- To... teach, pass knowledge, as I said before, to give the students the tools so that they can build their future...

- Oh my! So many good intentions! And how the world is pitiful! And we'll all live happily ever after! And there will be everlasting peace throughout eternity! Thousand times No! Oh Manuel, please keep it real.

Manuel sank in his tiny couch, every time Carlos spoke. None of that seemed to make sense. Not a little bit.

- Manuel. If students were to think, anarchy would reign.

- And chaos, added João.

- And after chaos, Manuel?

- Social confusion. And after that?

- Most lightly, an authoritarian regime.

- And afterwards, ignorance as a flag.

- Is that what you want? Is it, Manuel?

- But I... I only said Professor Lemos that Lam was right, that Marx was in fact the author of that idea, almost forgotten, but...

- Manuel! No.

- N... no...?

- You discredited a much esteemed colleague in this College. Did you know that? Did you, Manuel?

- Yes. Much esteemed. Very serious. A very serious gesture.
- A master. A true master.
- Much respected indeed, outlined Carlos.

Carlos wished we would still be on the beach. *To have to intellectually slap immature people, at this point of my life... What do these guys learn in the schools they went through? Holy ingenuousness...* He then regretted:

- And we had such high hopes for you... a solid resume... a genuine taste for teaching... a young and fresh personality...
- He would bring a breath of fresh air to this campus, Carlos, You can be sure of that...!

Manuel was completely white.

- I would...? But Carlos..., what's going on, after all? Am I going to get sacked? My wife is sick, I have two kids.. I'm the only income to my home... What are you going to do to me? Please don't do that, please!

Carlos and João looked to each other, taking their time. He seemed hopelessly.

- Manuel, we can't change the will of the Executive Council... They want to make this an example, you know... It seems bad for you right now...

- João is right, Manuel. The Executive Council has practically made up it's mind... and after this you would find it very difficult to work in a College again... I don't see how we can get you out of this one.

- But... Is it really serious? Carlos, you must be in on this... tell me! What goes on the Executive Council?

Carlos refreshed, using Manuel's glass of water.

- João... I only see one way ... You know that matter that we spoke of this morning...?

- What matter? Oh! Yes... But I hardly see how...

- Yes, João, I think that it is possible... Well. Manuel. You just might pull it through.

- How? My God, tell me how!

My dear Manuel, if you only knew how...

S + ⊕ R M - X V

An almost anonymous man waited at the door of the secretary, for long ten minutes. He was unsure, and the permanent bumping of some students had made him suspicious.

- Come this way.

The headmaster was cleaning up some papers from his lesson that morning. *At this age and with this status, to still have to lecture... humph. There are lots of scoundrels that go around from public company to public company, making a heck more Money, doing considerably less. This damn fondness to Sociology really ruins my family budget, gosh...*

He was interrupted in his thoughts by a light noise, that came from the outside: someone was closing in.

Before that someone knocked on the door, he yield:

- Come in!

- Will you excuse me, Headmaster?

- Oh, it's you Silva, say it.

- I bring you an intern teacher, that wished to speak to you. He says that he comes from Professor Carlos. Shall I let him in?

My God, acting as a nanny... Isn't Lam enough?

- You enter also Silva, I want you to stay.

- Me, Mr. Headmaster? Ok.

Both men came up to his desk. He was still signing some documents, or so it seemed.

The Headmaster heavily stood up and walked towards the two sofas near his desk.

- Bring a chair for you, Silva.

- Yes, Sir.

- Sit down, Manuel. Apparently we have a lot to talk about...

- I spoke yesterday with Professors Carlos and João, and they...

- I know, I know. They already brought me in on this matter. Tell me Manuel, what do you think of Paulo Lam?

- Well... he is very intelligent.

- No one says otherwise, the Headmaster concluded.

- Perhaps that's the problem... suggested Silva; - A "know it all", another one. We surely don't need that...

- He's not! He is quite respectful.

- At your class.

- Yes, at my class.

- On the other ones he spreads panic, Mr. Headmaster, I assure you.

- But, all he does is thinking for himself... I know him well and...

- Well, we surely don't want that to happen! Have you imagined if all the other students started doing that?

- W... what? This is why Colleges are goo...
- Good for? Is that why a College is good for? Is that what you were about to say, Manuel?

Silva immediately interrupted:

- Not at all. Far from the truth. Very far from the truth. Manuel, I can't believe what you are saying...

The Headmaster was still pretty patient, even though the day was long and hard. *I'll give him a chance... A good action... why not... I'll be a good Samaritan for one day. There are still boy scouts that help little old ladies to cross the street, aren't there?*

- Manuel was only harming himself, by thinking like that. Let's see: Colleges are good for acting as a sieve...

- Selection. A good selection, Headmaster.

- Exactly. Thank you for that remark Silva. Manuel, the College selects only the finest.

- The more able.

- The hard studying. Those who will, bottom line, take our College good name further. We do not care about promoting vanity. Not even other world intelligence. That doesn't matter for Social Sciences, I assure you. Sociology, Anthropology, psychology are just one thing, my friend.

- Studying, said Silva immediately afterwards. - Books.

- Exactly. Thanks. - Silva, tell him what happens to smart students as opposed to intelligent ones... Tell him, Silva.

- Well, first they cause a ton of problems in the classroom, which is at first a good lead for the teachers.
- As it happens in Lam's case! The Headmaster exhorted.
- Precisely, Headmaster, precisely. - And, then, they'll... How do I put it?... They'll have a hard time in passing certain classes.
- Because we cannot afford to have people saying that we've graduated an irresponsible trouble maker! It can't be possible! That's why we are here, to act as a sieve... I'm sorry, to select the finest cream of our students.

Manuel was in a pretty comfortable couch, and yet he felt bad. Paulo Lam had always been straight forward with him. Of course he heard other teachers speaking terrible things that happened in their classrooms, but at the end, they were teachers with pedagogical limited abilities. Some were plain jerks, teaching at the College to collect their payroll. Something warned Manuel that they wanted something from him; If not, why bother to convince him with something that he would never assume? He slowly woke up from his lethargy and quietly asked:

- Mr. Headmaster, with all due respect... Don't you think that students have... other means to Express themselves? If they have talent, well, sooner or later they'll write books, question theories... Isn't that the whole point of Sociology?

- My dear Manuel... Oh dear Manuel. How shall I put this to you...
- Never mind, Mr. Headmaster, I'll explain - Manuel, no one will pay a cent for a book from someone without a degree, or who is not expected to graduate in the near future...
- But, Silva, Paulo is almost graduating! As far as I know, there are only two classes missing, my own and Professor Dinis's. And I know that Professor Dinis will grant him a 15, and I'll...
- Bull's-eye, Manuel. There is a detail that me and Silva wanted to discuss with you.
- Eheheh... yes, a detail.
- A grade, Manuel. A grade that can make all the difference...
- Aaall the difference in the world. That can turn a John Doe into a Sociology graduated.

- Take a deep breath, my dear Manuel...

Take a long, deep breathe.

S+ΘRM - XVI

Manuel dos Santos was a little nervous. The task at hands was quite ungrateful. For a few years he had heard of some Paulo Lam's scenes at College, which seemed easily explained by a rebel adolescence, but who's ambiguity he now recognized. What if Lam was not fully true to his teachers? What if he was a phenomenon of double personality? That would surely explain all the oratory stunts people talked about. The Lam legend had began to overlap reality, as a matter a fact. A troubled student, but able of genius intuitions, arguments worthy of the finest brains, all seemed too theatrical to correspond to the true personality of Paulo Lam.

- Manuel.

- Y... yes?

- Room 6 is empty; Professor Antunes has just gone out with the Anthropology class. Come.

Caught by the teacher's room door, Manuel didn't even had time to put his Social Psychology books in his locker. Carlos foot steps were hasty, he seemed annoyed and strangely determined. A task had to be done. Carlos knew it. And now, so did Manuel. They quickly went downstairs, turned to the left, out the garden and in to the student's bar, up the white marble spiral stairs, supporting themselves on the rusty green painted handrail.

Carlos turned to Manuel, who followed him closely behind and commented:

- Do you see the garden? It looks like a jungle, right? The Headmaster insists on this... It must remind him of the African savannah. I've told him several times that it doesn't make the College look good, but...

He didn't finished that thought, because when he turned his face, he found another face. Paulo Lam's face.

- It seems that you would like to talk to me, isn't it? Silva told me. What's going on?

Manuel was speechless His anguish was large and he had never been able to disguise it, even as a child.

Carlos stopped. Lam's look was suspicious, defiant even. *I'm almost finishing this year. All that They've tried to do is over. What do they want now?*

- Well, there are certain matters that should be discussed in private. Let's go to room 6. For your own sake, Paulo.

As always, hum? Cut off the student, so that his suffering does not stimulate others to rebel...

- Manuel, Let's go.

When Manuel walked into room 6, only a Word pop to his mind. That Word was unspeakable, but he then knew it's name. A heavy name, a name that in vain tried to stay in the shadow. A... cursed name.

Treason.

S+⊕RⅢ - XⅦI

Carlos turned the key on the lock of room 6 door and entered. Not one of the big rooms at campus. It was used mainly for some tests, when it was necessary to control the cheaters. Kind of a small auditorium: the top part was wide and allowed to control the nervous students every move. It became easy to control. And Lam knew it: He'd almost been caught cheating in the Social Science Methods test. Almost. A teacher had come to him desperate, with obliging eyes, barely giving him time to hide his cribs. While he feared public shame, her attentive eyes were already set on a colleague behind him. *The biggest scare of my life.* He, who had never resorted to cribs on basics and high school, stood now before a huge pile of huge books who he had to memorize. He was obliged to But then...That room 6...*This was where you almost got caught. This is where coward students denounce other students to the intern teachers, who then compile black lists, which they provide to the professors... Yes, it's possible that this room is a message to me...*

- Lam, sit down, please.

The last thing he wanted to do was to sit down in that place again. A place of fear. Fear from incorporeal authority, from absent wisdom, for forever lost youth, in the maze of an adult memory.

- I'd rather stand, he grumbled.

- Very well, said Carlos. - Manuel, bring that chair and sit down here.

Manuel felt good as an automaton. *I'll need lots of courage.* He thought deeper. *Or none...*

- Lam. Professor Manuel told me that your grade is lower than expected.

Lower than expected? Lam had spoken off the record with Manuel, and he told him no such thing...

- But, Professor Carlos...

- Lam. I'll be straight forward with you.

That would be a first... Give it up: You're not used to telling the truth...

- The Educational Council is about to expel you.

- What? But I only have one more class left, and...

- You misbehaved every chance you've got! The older professors long want you expelled. Stop pretending: assume that you generated lots of issues. And there are too many antibodies here for that kind of behaviour.

- I only reacted to intellectual provocations. Surely you don't expect me to shut up when that's what is at stake! You can't do this to me! Not now! I'm almost finishing my degree! Manuel!

But Manuel had completely absorbed his new role, full of indifference, so well appreciated amongst College professors. He didn't even moved and turned his face around when Carlos kept on going:

- Well. This is the situation. Things are ugly. Real ugly.

- But... Is there nothing I can do? I need that diploma! Sociology is my future! I've lost 5 years of my life here!

Carlos appeared half a sleep. All that situation amused him internally. *Just like we predicted. A tormented student. We blackmailed him right on the spot...* Suddenly, he woke up, throwing a life buoy to a drifting Paulo Lam:

- Of course there is a chance... One final chance ...

- A test in which Paulo could show all he is worth.

- Yes, Manuel. Not to say that he attended College just because, like so many others do...

- A really hard test. One that only a gifted intellectual can surpass.

- The Test.

Lam followed the rhetorical ping pong between them, but could not figure out what they meant.

At last, Carlos took a deep breathe and, after meditating for a few seconds, opened his suitcase slowly, taking out a sealed letter. He put it forward and Paulo reached for it as well.

- What... What is this?

- Have you ever seen "Casablanca"? This, Paulo Lam, is your passport to freedom. If you'll reach it, only God knows.

S+⊕RΠ - XVIII

- 1- Psychology - (The third man)
- 2- Christianity - (The Origin of the Species)
- 3- Linguistics - (The Sting - movie)
- 4- Astronomy - (Around the world in 80 days)

> 4 answers, one word only <

Carlos Lacerda

- M... May I know what kind of a joke is this?
- Yes, Lam. But I assure you that it is not a joke.
- It's a game, Paulo, said Manuel in a shy way, trying to help.
- But a dead-serious game: a game of knowledge.

- Yes, but it says here: 4 answers; answers to what? And these names... books and a movie? What is the connection to the lessons?...?

- So many questions dear Paulo, so many questions...

- We don't want questions, Lam.

- Nope: we want answers – Answers!

- Yes, but answers to what? What does Linguistics have to do with the movie “The Sting”? It doesn't make sense at all!

- And yet this game was created by a much wise person. It's time...

- ... to prove us that you've earned this diploma.

- That's it, Manuel. Lam, you have 4 subjects, 4 classes. Study them deeply, and with a stroke of genius – that so many teachers enjoy, isn't it right Manuel?, connect them with the title, content or some hidden message in the mentioned works.

- But this... is a never ending brainteaser! How the hell am I going to guess it all? It's a madman's work!

- Well, maybe it's all those in one. But the game is on, waiting for you. And if someone could create it, surely someone else can solve it. I leave it to you.

- Better, to your mind, Manuel added.

Lam was in deep reflexion. He didn't expected that.

A game of huge complexity, that only a intuition man can solve. This is a good challenge for someone like me.

- I accept.

- We didn't expected nothing else from you, Lam. From now on You'll speak only to me or Manuel about this matter. He will support me in this process. If you want that diploma, that's the way we are going to play it. Think of it as your final report. We wouldn't want to bore you with the trivial Works that your colleague present year after year, would we? By the way: have you seen some of those Works, at our College library?

- Yes.

- Then you know what I'm talking about.

- Yes I know. No problem.

The three headed for the door. After Carlos locked the room, Manuel said goodbye and went to his vehicle.

As Paulo Lam went down the marble stairs, he sensed that someone was calling him. He turned around. It was Carlos.

- Oh, Paulo. Two more things.

Lam lacked the patience for more information.

- Yees?

- Yes. First: There's not much time to find the answers... 4 days, 5 if you count today: a day for each subject.

- 4 days!?! If it was hard, it became impossible! Are you mad?

- Hey, take it easy. Look at it from this perspective: in 5 days time you'll be rid of us! Eh eh eh! You win!



- I've seen that I am in no position to argue.
- You catch on quickly. That's right.
- Ok, ok. And the second thing I should know? Is...?
- At the first wrong answer...
- Yes...? What happens...?

- You're out!

S+ΘRM - XIX

The stairways were lightless again, and there were graffiti everywhere: on the walls, in the elevator door, even on the floor. *Who would bother to scabble this on the floor? Well, there's people for everything...* The third left floor was almost impossible to reach in the dark, but Lam was almost there. *I wonder if Martins will be on the door again?* He was. He said hello and sat next to him. His uncle's cat soon nestled on his lap. Hum. *Too early. Again.* He didn't know how long would he wait for him: last time almost two hours went by. *I must have the most unpredictable uncle in the world, my God... Since he his on those spiritual meetings and left the Masons, he's been in a real Highway. There's no stopping him...*

- How are you, Martins? Ok? Is uncle Rui taking care of you? Hum?

Martins left by the window during the night. He then returned around 6 pm, by the building's door, which was always open. Uncle Rui lived in a 3 room flat, in Alfama. It was a small house, what he could afford with a public servant's pension. He came from Mozambique and still recalled how they labelled him a "second class Portuguese", on his ID card. Now, after almost thirty years, all that faded with the memory of a time that he preferred to call "the past", but there were wounds that time would not heal. Paulo loved to speak with his uncle about lots of matters, from religion to science, going through conspiracy theories and the occult. It seemed to be no matter that uncle Rui didn't mastered. They would speak until dawn and they

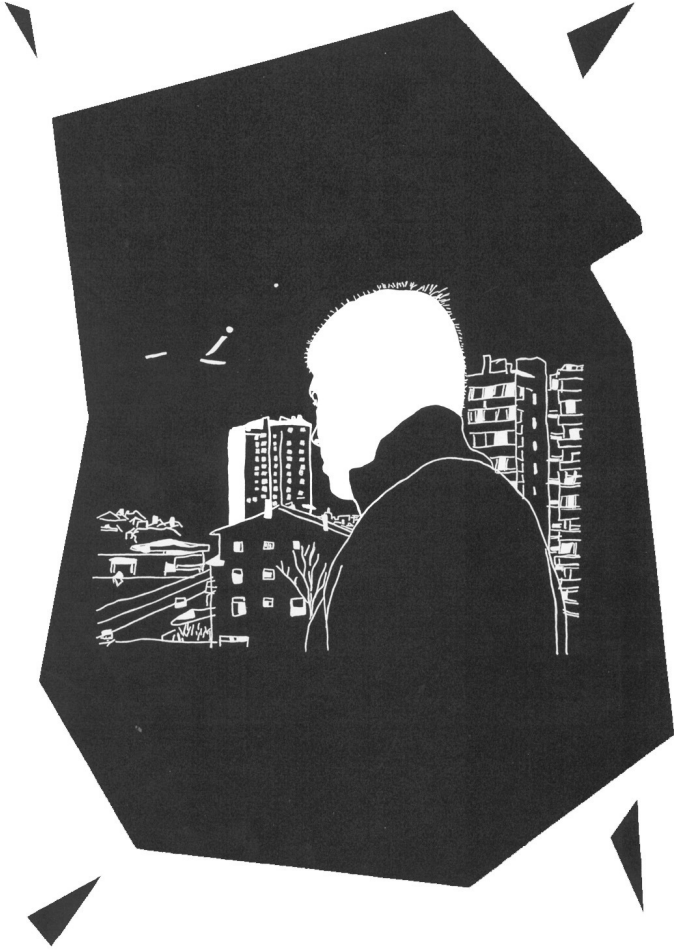


never grew tired of one another. The family bounds spoke louder, clearly, but there was also an exceptional character proximity between them. His 60 years of age, though well preserved, would not allow a lot of efforts. After an indication of stroke, at the age of 52, he couldn't afford to get emotional. And how he got emotional speaking of those matters... A little shorter than Lam, fat, thick glasses, always tousled, with a wide forehead, Rui was the real father of Paulo Lam. With a natural tendency towards conflict, master in scientific and paranormal matters that Paulo didn't dared to put at stake and a rare but upsetting humour, Rui had lost his wife early, and was alone. Too alone. *My favourite uncle*. His cat was now really quiet, with Lam's strokes.

Yes, and I too must be calm. This could take hours.

FRANCISCO CAPELO

- THE GAME -



(SECOND PART)

THE GAME - I

It was almost 8:34 pm when someone entered the always open door of that building, in Rua do Salvador, Alfama. The shadow moved tired, towards the elevator. *Broken. Humph. Again. Doesn't anything work in this building?* The shadow turned back and opened the mailbox. It slowly went up the stairs, step by step, in the dark. Not a noise outside, not even a cat. *I wonder where Martins is?* First floor. Second floor. By touch, he arrived at the last stairs flight and looked up.

- Paulo! You're here!? Martins, come here!

Martins jumped immediately, giving Rui the usual warm welcoming. *Sometimes you seem to behave like a dog...* Paulo Lam awoke startled and still sleepy, found his uncle's face emerging from his dreams.

- I see that you're half a sleep! What brings you here, Paulo? Is everything Ok? Come in, come in!

Rui turned the key and the three entered. Martins went straight to the living room couch, with a pit stop in his milk plate.

- We will speak in a while, Paulo, go on to the living room and turn the TV on. We'll talk. I'm just going to wash my hands.

- Ok.

Lam went down the hall and turned the TV screen on. It was an old TV, with at least twenty years. One of the first purchases of his uncle, since he returned from Africa. The whole room gave a feeling of

apprehension: African statuettes, a leopard's fur carpet, from the hunting times of that overseas continent. It was a strange place, almost as if his childhood, in those strange parts had given him magical powers. In those times, there was a certain mistrust in the Portuguese people. Portugal, capital of the Empire. A colonies Empire, with still open wounds, from a colonization that was made in a hurry, not taking the due precautions, like all that was taken forward by Portuguese hands, since times beyond our memory. Portugal, the dreamland. Portuguese, the intuition people. Since the Discovering, in the XVI century, nothing new came from Portugal.

We had given new worlds to the world, but then strategically taken our existences from that much too real world, that revealed itself almost too scary to live in. Rui entered the room, and broke the spell of those brief but profound thoughts, of the reality that had tormented the Portuguese people for centuries.

- Hey, Paulo, are you all right? What have you been doing? He haven't spoken since last year, isn't that right?

- Uncle, I need your help. I've reached a dead end.

- How so? Are you in trouble? What now? Is it serious, Paulo?

- Uncle, I'm in trouble in school. They'll only grant me my diploma if I break a Goddamn code, otherwise they'll expel me: and with good reasons for that... I sorely need your help.

- A... a code? What are you talking about? Hold on, I'll turn the TV off. There. Relax, we'll get to the bottom of this. Tell me.

Lam took the folded letter from his pocket and surrendered it to his uncle. Rui took it, read it quietly and reflected for a few seconds. He put the paper back in the envelope and returned it to Lam.

- According to my understanding, it's sort of a game. Tell me what they've asked of you.

- It's a knowledge game. I must provide them really precise answers, according to the leads of the book titles and the movie, for each class.

- It seems that you have to really commit yourself...

- Yes. I'll study hard. And there are still two more rules to this game...

- Oh really? Hum... Complicated, it is. What are those rules?

- The first says that I have only 4 days to unveil this: a day to each question.

- 4 days!? Only 4? A short deadline, indeed... You'll have to organize yourself really well... But tell me, What is the second rule?

- At the first wrong answer... I'll be expelled.

Rui meditated for over three minutes. He seemed to find an answer from time to time, but quickly disposed that idea, nodding his head. He was considering all the hypothesis. Lam had come to the right place. If someone knew the meaning of strategy, it was his uncle. In the ex-colonies war, he had been one of the most remarkable militaries in

service: brave in battles, never letting his mates fall into ambush, caused people to speak of a genius intuition at Maputo headquarters. He was born in Africa. That said it all. Land of the tribal rituals, still practised by his grandfather in the savannah, and that he never forgot; it was in his blood. Land of terrible slavery, that so many generations took to other continents, through countless killings and separated families, before the despair of mothers that kept down inside their true wisdom.

It was time his uncle helped him. *Blood of my blood.* Suddenly, Rui jumped and cried out:

- I've got it!

- What, uncle? Tell me!

- It's so simple, Paulo, can't you see?

- What? See what?

- You still have the Oeiras library card with you, right? It's a fine library, isn't it?

- Y... yes, uncle, but I fail to see what you mean...

- A day is up, Paulo! Four remain! And today we won't be able to do any studying! But tomorrow I'll go to that library and get 10 books.

- But my card only allows me to get five, it's the libraries regulation, and...

- Ah... But you forget that I still have my card. I used to live in the Figueirinha, Paulo! So you see, it's ten books, not only five! Come on, that head is a little rusty! What do they teach you in that College?

- Yes, yes, But what made you jump like that? What do you know, after all?



Rui put on a serious face. He measured Lam top to bottom and the spoke in a low voice:

- I know what kind of study they want you to do.

-Y... You do? What kind of study is that? I thought about it over and over, and I don't believe that I have the time to...

- Paulo! From now on, You live here, forget that room that Victor Masse got for you, in Carcavelos. And I'll help you.

- Thanks, uncle. I needed to hear that.

- And you will break that code, even if it is the last thing I do in my life!

THE GAME - II

- Wake up, sleepy head!

When Paulo Lam woke up, he saw only Martins. He had followed his owner rude, but calculated “Good morning”, licking Lam’s face.

- It’s ten thirty! Do you think that you will have the same life here, that you had in College? We work here, you rascal! Get up, I’ve got you the ten books you need. There is a lot to read from now on!

- Let me just sleep for a little while longer, uncle... I have a headache...

- You’ll get a headache from what you’re about to read! Come on, you have five minutes. Go into the living room, there’s milk and cookies.

- Humph...

Lam sat on the bed and tried to remember the conversation from the night before. It didn’t take too much time to remember. A game. The Game. He waited a minute to recover his consciousness: he had dreamt a lot and deeply. He dreamt that he was in a lake, with his mother, and he was having difficulty to walk. Apparently he was a delivery boy between imaginary points, moving in chest high water. And it was a urgent something, because he was in a hurry, a lot of hurry. But from that dream a fade memory remained and he gave up on trying to relive it. The subconscious had closed, perhaps forever.

Lam didn't know it yet, but he was about to dive in the primary forces of magma, that someone had described as the true psychic body of the iceberg that we are all made of.

He entered the room tottering, said hello to his uncle and, as he was sitting down, Rui began:

- Eat something. You must be wondering why your uncle doesn't simply go to the book store and buys the books he needs, ah Paulo?

- Well, yeah, it's kind of strange, uncle, and...

- Because I can never find the books I want in a book store! So, when I need something specifically, I go straight to a good library, like the Oeiras library that has a book about everything, at least about the most important subjects of a matter.

You can find books with code fish recipes, mystical recordings, "cursed" books, thrillers, art, poetry, thousands of other things, from all branches of knowledge.

- Yes, indeed, it's true, but...

- Have you noticed how long we have? The best Portuguese book store I know is a website, www.somlivre.pt, but we have only one day for each subject, Paulo, one day! One alone! How do you want me to order all these books in such short notice? Besides, nothing better than to look into the books index, one by one. That is essential, Paulo. You'll do the studying - because of your intuition and all - and I'll provide the strategy, the tactic for each one of the problems. You're the player and I'll be your coach! Welcome to my football team. Ah ah ah!

- Ok, ok. It's enough that I'll have to chew my head on this game, spare me the mockery, ok uncle?

- Don't worry. By the time we're through with this, we'll see a Glorious Benfica match. What do you feel about the new coach, Paulo?

- Same old story: a foreign coach, yet another...! He'll have a two year contract, knowing that he'll stay only one; by the time he adjusts to the tying tactics of our small teams, the champ title has gone bye-bye. And when the club managers realise that the championship is lost, they'll send him away, but he'll demand a indemnity because he has the right to it...

- In short: the same old story!

- Yes. Well then, what do I have to read today? What books have you brought from the library?

- You'll be studying the human spirit today. Psychology. Freud. The theories, the ideas. All that. And with your intelligence, you'll filter the essential and remove the accessory, Ok?

- Ok. What books are these?

- Ten books: some about the work and life of Freud. I keep to myself that once you've read one, you've read them all... but, you'll be the judge of that. Here are the books:

- Sigmund Freud - A tragic in the Era of Sciences

, this one might be lame, Paulo, but give a look into it. It's a small book, you should finish it quickly. Remember that we're looking for a detail and may pop up in any page of these books. Read them

carefully and search for details. A particular aspect of life could explain our point.

- More. Lets see the next one, uncle.

- Introducing Psychoanalysis - Freud, by Michel Haar

, This one is sort of a resume for the fundamental work of Freud. You must read it carefully, it should serve our purposes well.

- The 10 greats of the subconscious, by several authors.

, To me, this may be one of the essential books of those I bring; It summarizes the ideas of 10 fundamental authors of the mind theories. It also has questions and answers about each one of them, including episodes of their personal life.

- Ok. Next! Ehehe...

- Having the urge to read, ah? Well, there's plenty to keep you occupied...

- Freud and his followers

, should be interesting.

- Freud and Piaget - Affectivity and Intelligence

, The comparison between the two theories, Freud and Piaget.

- Freud

, another two books with the same title, on this central author of the human spirit science; one by Roland Jaccard, and the other by Edgar Pesch.

- Freud was wrong. Why? - Sin, Science and Psychoanalysis.

, is a book that created a huge controversy. The author gathered the consensus on his points of view. He caused trouble, if you have the time, look into it.

- Introducing Psychoanalysis - Contemporary Theory and Practise , is a book that binds theory to practise. I thought the index was very actual and precise. And at last, the last book:

- The Interpretation of Dreams - Commemorative edition of the 100 years, by Sigmund Freud, Freud himself considered this to be his master-piece. But it may have a residual interest to us, being a knowledge game. I leave it to you. You probably won't even have the time to pick it up.

- Damn... I think I'm full, uncle.

- So do I! raise that table, you'll work here. I've numbered the books and summed up the index's to ease your task. From now on, it's up to you!

- Very well. I'll get started!

- And I'll go buy something for dinner and visit a friend downtown.

- Uncle, do you have any lead to me?

- Yes. Start by searching the web the content of the book: The Third Man. In there may lie the secret for

the first jigsaw. I think that it will be related to Freud: Man his the corner stone of all Psychology, after all.

- Ok uncle, I'll do it.

- You can access the web in my computer. Use it. search Google. You may find it in cinema websites, maybe. Orson Wells is on that movie, do you know?

- Yes, I know. I hear that it is a good movie.

- That's the problem, Paulo! Movies today have such quality and are so quick to shoot, that nobody pays attention to the books that gave them origin! What for, if a month from the book's release, there's already a movie available?

- Yes, really... Well, Back to work. Do you have blank sheets?

- Use the ones in the printer. And there's a pen by the computer. I'm out.

- See you lather, uncle!

- When I come back, Paulo, I want to know all about my mind!

- Eh eh, relax, I'll sum this mess all up. Come here, Martins! On my lap!

Rui went out and closed the door.

Paulo Lam started the computer, and listened to the slow purr of the CPU. Damn... *It's a Pentium 1, really slow... It must be at least 10 years. I must be patient...*

While Lam waited the session to begin, Martins looked at him, asking for strokes, on his lap.



That's right, Martins... we're in for a loooong morning...

THE GAME - III

Paulo Lam started by a Wikipedia search, in Portuguese. With no excuse, there was no information for The Third Man.

I must find this, no matter what. Next stop: Google.

He typed the expression, and searched. The search result provided some websites about the movie, but not the Graham Greene book.

A writer is battling all his life for recognition, and what he leaves behind is a movie; not the book... really...

The first website was too incomplete and fleeting, but the second one contained the movie's summary, ideal for Lam's study. He copied immediately to a blank word document, that he printed afterwards. While printing, he created a directory in "my documents" under the title: "The Game", and saved the file in that directory.

The printer finished it's Job. He pulled the sheet and started reading. It was in Brazilian Portuguese, but he still could read it.

"After the end of WW2, Holly Martins (Joseph Cotten), a lame American writer, arrives to Vienna. Holly had no money, but his old friend Harry Lime (Orson Welles) promised him a Job. Holly tries to find Harry and discovers that he was been runned over and met instant death. Harry was buried, and stunned, Holly attends the funeral. Near the tomb is the young beautiful Anna Schmidt (Alida Valli), that quickly disappears after the ceremony. After the

short funeral, Holly is addressed to by Major Calloway (Trevor Howard), who asks the writer if we would wish a lift, back to his hotel. Holly agrees and the two men go in a bar, where Calloway, a agent of British intelligence, attempts to retrieve from Holly important information about Harry, saying that he was a double crossing murderer. Holly gets so mad about these accusations that, if not for the quick action of Sergeant Paine (Bernard Lee), a sort of bodyguard to the Major, Holly would hit Calloway. The Major knew that Holly was flat broke, and gives him some money to spend the night at Sacher's, a modest hotel, before travelling on the very next day. Calloway sends Paine to drive Harry there. In the hotel, Paine introduces Holly to Crabin (Wilfrid Hyde-White), who says he represents a cultural organisation that would like to have Harry to speak at a lecture of contemporary novels, since his books is very popular on that country. Holly claims that he hasn't got the money to stay in a hotel and Crabin assures him that he'll pay for the lodge, for as long as it take. This was exactly what Holly wanted to hear, so that we could perform his own investigation on Harry's background and clear his friend's name. Kurtz (Ernest Deutsch), a poor baron, reaches Holly and tells him that he witnessed Harry's death, that crossed a road without looking and was runned over by a truck. However, Holly found that Kurtz's statement was incoherent and he will try to meet the young lady that was in his friend's funeral. On the other side, it all shows that Calloway wants to see Holly out of Austria, because Paine keeps reminding him to leave. By speaking to the actress Anna

Schmidt, the beautiful young lady at the burial, one thing is revealed: at the accident time there were only friends of Harry on that location, and the odd part was that Harry was runned over by his chauffeur. This raised doubts about the accident theory. Trying to shed some light on that confused plot, Holly finds out that three persons carried Harry's body: Kurtz, the Romanian Popescu (Siegfried Breuer) and a third man."

What a bizarre story. This really is a mess... Well, if I've seen the movie, I'd probably think it was a master piece. And by God... Someone tell the Brazilians not to attempt to mimic Portuguese...

A man. Runned over. A trap? His friends seemed to know more than what they show. They took his body. A third man? *I wonder if my uncle is right... what does this have to do with Freud?*

- Martins! Asleep already? There's lots to do! Get that third man! Get him!

THE GAME - IV

When Rui got to his home, it was 16:32 pm. He entered quietly, predicting that his nephew had felled asleep and was now dreaming in the living room. He left the bags in the kitchen and passed quietly to the living room, through the dark, narrow corridor.

A house - cubicle. To struggle all life and to die in a tiny house like this one... humph. I'd rather die in Africa, in the Savannah, fresh air, warm, smell of the earth.

My childhood.

- Lam!

- Hum?

Lam woke up from the dream world. His torso was lying on the table, at his front, dozens of dispersed sheets piled up, handwritten, with his usual indecipherable handwriting. It had been that way, from primary till College.

I have a terrible handwriting, there's not much to do.

In 4th grade, his teacher organized a competition for the best handwriting in the class. After she saw Paulo's handwriting as one of the worst, she arranged the awards to go up to fifth place. Seeing that he still wouldn't classify, she increased the award up to 7th place. And just when Paulo Lam was about to be rewarded by his effort, since he excelled himself trying to draw a beautiful handwriting, the bell rang, and the teacher was left alone with the student, face to face, in a *I wanted to*



award you... It will have to be done at another time moment. In the mean time, Bill Gates eliminated the need to have a perfect "for teacher to see" handwriting, by launching Office and Word.

At last, my turn has come. Now, my handwriting is equal to all others.

So much the better.

THE GAME - V

- What the hell is this? I don't want a lazy nephew!
- Ahh... no such thing, uncle: I've done lots of things. I fell asleep, tired...
- I know, I know, Paulo, I'm joking with you. I'll just use the toilet, and I'll come back to discuss these ideas with you. I've been talking to a Psychoanalyst friend, that lives downtown, and he threw me some hints. I'll come back. In the meanwhile, clear this up, ok?
- Ok. Let me just wake up. I know the story of the Third Man.
- Good. I'll be back.
- Martins, let's clean this up! Have you seen the mess you've made on this table? Bad kitten!
- Meehauuu...
- I'll let you go this time. Well, let me just organize this... Book 2 - libido, repression, dream, this goes in here; Book 3 - Jung, Lacan, Adler, this goes in here; Book 4 - Oedipus complex, catharsis, ego, superego, goes in there. I'm ready.

Let's play the game...

- It's much too hot outside, Paulo, You wouldn't wish to go outside today! It looks like a day in May, I tell you!
- I can imagine. This house looks like a sauna.

- Well, this is a International Style house! That's a big deal, hey? In all third world suburbia, you'll find houses like this one! Le Corbusier, Wright, Bauhaus and so many others worked to provide people with better life's and at the end of it all, what do we get? Cubicle-houses!

The worst in Architecture... It's always the worst part of things that survive it's founders, believe me!

- I can imagine...

- Well, lets hit the facts, not merely opinions of the poor from this so called civilized world, who don't deserve to live in the other people's opulent world. Paulo, give me some good numbers to play! This game is for the best players, huh?

- Uncle, I have here the result of a day's work. It's the summary of all ideas that I think are interesting in these books. Some of them I kept aside, because I considered them to be outside our study sphere.

- Yes, some of them yes, I thought so to. I've brought them for fine figure, but I confess that any hint will be useful...

Let me see that list... Book 1, Freud, a Tragic in the Era of Science, tell me what you thought about that.

- No good. The typical case of much cry and little wool...

- Really? I thought it would have some interesting detail on the life of Freud...

- Seriously, nothing at all. A tiny book in the shape and contents. Nothing to celebrate, Uncle. - Ok, keep going.

- Book 2, Introducing Psychoanalysis, Freud, by Michael Haar, a very interesting book. Here are the main ideas.

- Yes? May I see?

- It's the summary of one of the most important Works of the founder of psychoanalysis, Freud. He always speaks of divisions by two or three.

- The Third Man ... is all about everything, and nothing is has it seems, I think...

- Yes, good, but those are mere play on words. First division: according to Freud, there is the principle of pleasure (the famous Libido) as opposed to the principle of reality. People live between the two principles: On one side they wish to take out as much pleasure as they can, and on the other side, the reality of the social constraint, restricting the Libido, will lather on create neurosis. He also speaks of repression and censorship, which is a preconscious mechanism, according to the three classical division in: unconscious, preconscious and conscious mind.

- And dreams?

- Take it easy, uncle. I'll get to that. The dream is very important in the Freudian theory; all dreams are the illusory realization of a wish: once the individual cannot fulfil it in real life, he'll escape into the dream world, where that Libido is possible. It's split in: manifested contents (symbolical representations of the mind, which we remember), and latent contents (the true meaning of the dream).

- Good work, Paulo. Carry on.

- And then, there's another mechanism, intrinsic to the functioning of our mind: according to Freud, the neurotic suffer from repression, which confirms the decisive importance of childhood sexuality in neurosis formation. This way, what really happens is the regression of the Libido, by repression, to earlier stages, childish, of sexuality.

- Meaning, The oral, anal and sexual stages. Am I right?

- Yes, uncle, that's it. As for dreams, Freud says that child's are simpler, expressing directly a wish, undeformed, while adults many times don't accept their wishes because of censorship. So, most part of an adult's dream is coded in to symbols, and are mainly sexual symbols.

- What about nightmares? What is a nightmare, after all? It doesn't seem to fit in that theory, it surely is not the expression of a wish... What is it then?

- Freud claims nightmares are the undeformed realisation of a repressed wish; oh, and don't forget the destructive stage of the evolution of personality, even when we are kids: there is always a negative urge, aggressive, that may explain a lot of things...

- Ok. You got off with that one. I hear you.

- He says that the subconscious lives in a space where there is no time.

- How so?

- No past, present or future - There's no chronologic order; it lives "outside of time" - and this is it's expression, *Isis verbis*.

- Hum... Interesting.

- Then, there's a bunch of ideas that I think aren't very important in our case: perversions that divide into sexual purpose (masturbation, for example) and sexual objects (homosexuality, amongst other things). The field of sexuality embraces the childhood, which is the only period that can explain perversion and neurosis, in a healthy sex life.

- Yes, ok, but explain to me the stages in childhood sexuality, I am curious...

- Well, the childhood sexuality stages are bases in erogene perverted areas (because they are not meant for procreation) and are as followed:

. First – oral stage (it's the breast suction period; the baby shows it's self-erotic attitude from early on);

. Second – anal stage (The baby gets pleasure from pooping and retain poop);

. Third – sado-anal stage (between the first and third year of life – a tendency for domination and cruelty is developed; It's from setting the Libido in this stage that sadistic and masochistic perversion are explained);

. Fourth – phallic stage (typified by the Oedipus complex; not the sexual instinct, but the love of one's mother and hate towards the father, that steals the attention);

. Fifth – latent period (around six and eight years old – a period of stopped sexual development).

- Huff...

- That's right, uncle, *hard stuff*...

Now, Freud and Piaget, Affectivity and Intelligence, book 5 – Just compares in detail the two theories, not very interesting to us.

Book 9 – Introducing Psychoanalysis: Contemporary Theory and Practise, very interesting, very interesting indeed.

- Oh really? Tell me, Tell me!

- Yes, uncle, A most useful book in defining concepts. According to the authors, psychoanalysis comprehends – Guess what? – Three parts that are correlated:

- . A set of specific psychotherapeutically techniques
- . A psychological development model
- . And a “metapsychology”, meaning, speculative hypothesis on the nature and structure of the mind.

They divide the psychoanalytic movement in 4 historical stages:

. 1885 – 1897: The “pre-analytical” stage (hypnosis studies with Breuer)

. 1897 – 1908: psychoanalysis itself: the lonely and discovering years of the practical and theoretical principles of psychoanalysis, by Freud. To culminate this period, his main work: The Interpretation of Dreams.

. 1907/8 – 1920: the beginning of the psychoanalytical movement.

. From 1920 till the death of Freud in 1939: a theoretical influence up to the end of his life.

- Rest a little.

- I'm Ok, uncle. Next, yet another three ways division...

- Another one...! Not too few, huh?

- Eh eh eh... right. Psychoanalysis can be defined as the branch of psychology that studies three distinctive study areas:

. The developing mind and influence of preconscious experiments in adults mental state.

. The nature and role of the subconscious mental phenomena.

. The theory and practise of psychoanalysis treatment.

And still another classification based on the number... three!

-Another!!???

- Aanother. The pragmatically demarcation line between psychoanalysis and psychoanalytical psychotherapy. It's all about the therapy's frequency, intensity and duration:

. more than three times a week – psychoanalysis

. three times or under – everything else

(Of course it's not always like that, uncle, but it's a pretty real generalization)

- Is it over??

- There's a last one, that divides in – guess...

- Three?

- Bingo! The first prize goes to you! Cash in your check and...

- Ok, I've got the idea. Say it, Paulo.

- The image of the mind proposed by Freud crosses three models:

. The object/trauma model (outside painful events affect the behaviour and emotion)

The topographic model (different psychological functions meet in different places: mind division in to the unconscious, preconscious and conscious systems; the two mental functioning principles – primary and secondary processes; theory of instincts) and structure model (Id – inborn drives; Superego – ideal Ego, representing the internalization of the relationship with the fatherly figure and Ego – the rational part of the personality). And I'm through, by now...

- And You'll keep going in a moment. I've spoken to my psychoanalyst friend, as I've told you. I've mentioned the "The Third Men", but he doesn't fully know the movie or book. But we were discussing that subject, and reached certain conclusions.

- Yeah...? What sort of conclusions?

- As I've said, this must be connected to Freud. This friend of mine, Pedro Borges, says that there are several hypothesis in solving this riddle, conjugating The Third Man with Psychology:

. First: Freud and his early followers; the origins of the psychoanalytical movement;

. Second: Keep in mind that we're studying the theories of the mind; certainly there are double senses, metaphors – the third man may be seen as the Ego or the Id, or even as one of our childhood

sexual stages – the road splits into many sub-routes, Paulo.

Third: To be or not to be a Jew

- I didn't get that, uncle. Please explain.

- Well, it's a long story. According to Pedro Borges, Freud studied and lived in Austria – Vienna, but when Hitler and the National Socialism invaded it, he was at risk. He was a Jew, you see...

- Oh! I didn't know that. Or probably I've read it in a rush and forgot. I didn't consider to be of importance, certainly.

- Yes, Paulo, almost all great European minds were: Einstein, Freud, and many, many others. Listen, Adler was also a Jew.

- Freud's follower? Yes, I think I've read that somewhere.

- Pedro explained to me that Freud was dying to pass the psychoanalytical movement to a non-Jew, since he felt the terrible weight of that heritage over his shoulders.

That's why he trusted Jung with that task.

- Could it be the key to our first mystery...? But how?

- Well, that's where we come in, Paulo. I think there's something fishy here. But there's not too much time to work it out: the first day is almost over and...

- But let me finish what I was saying, uncle.

- True, sorry. Go on.

- Book number 3: The 10 greats of the subconscious.

- Yes, that book is essential, I can feel it.

- Well, in light of what You've just told me, I'll speak to you about Adler's, Jung's and also Lacan's work, that last being a very interesting author.

- Please do, Paulo.

- In 1908, at the Salzburg Psychoanalysis Congress, the differences between Freud and Adler became clear; and in 1911, at the Nuremberg Congress, the breach explodes. The work of Adler can be studied schematically under four aspects, uncle:

. The theory of personality (based upon the study of the psychic compensation process, to rebalance the physical inferiority of all the body's organs)

. the conception of neurosis and mental health

. psychotherapy

. teaching and practise of psycho pedagogy

To Adler, the subconscious doesn't block the personality; it uses it. The human being must be seen through it's social relationships - psychology of interpersonal relationship. This way, for him, sexuality is not the main engine of our psychic life.

- That must had been where he lost Freud...

- Exactly. Besides, Freud and his followers rejected aggressively any attempt of theoretical innovation in that field. It happened to Adler, Melanie Klein, Carl Jung, and many others. They were a united group, but when someone came up with a different idea, they would gather as a real wolf pack...

- Gosh, Paulo.

- Yep. But it was like that. Instant criticism, and fiercely by what I've read.
- Well, keep going.
- Well, to Adler, neurosis is the attempt of the individual to dodge any coercion that society provides, which really makes it a self-induced un-cohesion, paralyzing all movements. In conclusion, he leaned on child's psycho pedagogy. Pedagogy found a new thrust in him, according to these authors. Next, I'll tell you all about Jung's thinking.
- Go ahead.
- Please hand me that glass of water, uncle.
- There you go.

Get set, uncle. This is where it really picks up speed...

THE GAME - VI

- The Ten Greats of Subconscious book begins this chapter with a view to a kill, uncle...

- Oh yeah? Show me.

- Right there, on page 108: "Carl Gustav Jung: the Rebel", imagine!

- Well, promising... I'm all ears, Paulo.

- Jung is considered by many as one of the great thinkers of the 20th century; a real spiritual master that tried to bound religions, East/West, mysticism, astrology, psychics, profound studies of cultural traditions of the several people of the world, among other things...

- Gosh: all that? But Paulo, why did they called him the Rebel? I've read about him a long time ago, I believe he is also connected to spiritualism, my master is quite fond of him. Pedro didn't tell me anything important about this Jung... strange!

- Strange, uncle? Strange would be if he had mentioned him...

- What do you mean?

- Jung is a myth. But a dangerous myth... Psychology Colleges turn their backs on him, as if he were the devil himself! - I've heard from Miguel, a friend of mine who is on the Psychology degree. It's the best kept secret from the public, as far as subconscious theories go. One of his key concepts - Collective Unconscious, if studied without prejudice, would destroy the whole Freudian theory, down to it's very foundations.

- Really? Well, I've had a feeling about that, but I disregarded it...
- Yes, uncle, Freud followers – the majority of psychoanalysts – quickly refuse Jung; Jung, the dreamer, they say; Jung, the unreasonable; Jung, the damned thinker...

- What an intriguing story. But I've heard that he dealt closely with Freud... What is true and what is a lie, Paulo?
- Uncle, let's start from the beginning. Adler and Jung were both a part of that first group of Freud's followers.
- Ok.
- But...
- Why the hell is there a "but" in everything, if we have but a few hours to solve this, can you tell me?
- Right. In Social Sciences there is always a "but", actually. When Adler and Jung realized the almost single focus on sexual drives that Freud employed – he used them to explain the fullness of Human behaviour – they both "freaked out" and decided to quit the group.
- And then...?
- Then... well, like all others that diverged from Freud's theory, they were cut off the psychoanalytic movement.
- They had it coming...
- That was it. As I said, they were very aggressive when their authority was put to the test. Let's

concentrate on Jung. 1911 – He founds, with Freud, the Psychoanalysis International Society, to which he is made President; 1912 – Several differences between Jung and Freud emerge, during the IV Psychoanalysis Congress and Jung resigns from the Society. He takes on his method of “analytical psychology” and later on, “complex psychology”. He travelled through Africa, Central America and India between 1921 and 1926. He saw Psychology as a spiritual research. His bond to his mother was very strong: the mother, besides the physical body, is the original ocean, the collective unconscious, the first incarnation of the archetype *anima*, personifying all subconscious.

- Let me breath, I beg you!

- Oh... sorry, uncle.

- It's Ok, it's Ok. Keep going.

- As I was saying, this doubled face mother, once lover, once fearful, carrier of anguish and place to hide, personifies the archaic nature, the instinct that's able to, at a glance, recognize the deepness of reality. Jung debated the ideas of Parapsychology with a sceptical Freud and tried to show him that the collective subconscious might explain the premonition dreams, feelings, synchronization phenomenon and telepathy. This collective subconscious leads to, at the very heart of it, the psyche is the Universe. In the meanwhile, the two man collide: Jung doesn't take the sexual neurosis theories and to Freud's psychoanalysis he contrasted another psychic theory, uses a different technique and gives way to a different philosophy. Pass me that glass of water, will you uncle? Gulp gulp...

Martins! Are you paying attention? I'll give a final exam on this!

- Come, Martins, don't mind our Paulo. Come here, you.

- Well, moving on: although Jung wrote a lot, he only did so at the second half of his life: he lives, has an intense psychiatric activity, reads, travels, researches in three domains - Esoteric, Oriental thinking and Ethnology. The psychic system that he put together is highly complex, increased by the precision and multiplicity of senses that he provides his concepts. There is always a counter-weight that rebalances it all, in his thought. The animus is the male in Woman; the anima, the female in Man. His theory is based in three parts:

. The conscious, that at it's core includes the ego and, at the periphery, a set of functions that assure the individual it's relationship with the outside: the persona, composed by:

. the personal subconscious, shallow and composed of repressed or forgotten elements and

. at last, the collective subconscious, a common heritage to all Mankind.

- Three parts... The Third Man... Could it be that everything is split in three? This is practically impossible to solve, if this is about the sheer theories of these guys...

- Yap, uncle. But it's like this. There's only one more thing to add: the psychological types - introversion and extroversion, typology complicated by the psychic functions: thought, feeling, intuition and sensation.

Well, from here to Astrology, it's only a small step. Meaning, Jung was simultaneously a doctor and a spiritual master. And now, Lacan.

- So many things... well, keep going.

- A French author, that was always fiery against the psychoanalysis societies. It's hard to tell from provocation and rigor, in this author. Psychoanalysis is only one of his many activities. His main work: *Written and The Mirror Stage*. Lacan is a true Renaissance man; his merit is to return the Freudian texts, as originally meant, without misinterpretation by other authors in France. He joined psychoanalysis to Language/Linguistics.

-Only that must be huge, indeed.

- Yes, and his work is very lucid. The connection to Linguistics gave a hallmark of great effectiveness and innovation to his intervention, mainly conferences and oral presentations. To Lacan, it's by identifying yourself (in the mirror - image of oneself) that the child anticipates, in imagination, the domain of it's body unit - it's the Ego's first sketch.

In conclusion, from this book of the Ten Greats, we still find Wilhelm Reich, an extravagant personality, causing several conflicts, with the US authorities, with the Austrian Communist Party, as well as the German Party. He dedicated his study to orgasm - strengths retained that caused disturbances. To him, the orgasmic impotence was not an effect of neurosis, but the very cause of it - blocked energy,

leading to neurotically anguish. Reich focused his analysis on the theory of genitality - 3rd stage of Freudian evolution, after the oral and anal stages. At the bottom, he grouped psychoanalytical and Marxist theories. Died in prison, half mad, or at least with a persecution complex. An important data: he never rejected Freud and vice versa.

- Ok. Next!

- Eh eh. I see you're all fired up now! Let me just have a sip of water... There. Our next contestant. Jean- Martin Charcot: a strong early influence to Freud. Founds neurology. The main reason that Freud went to Paris was really the fact that Charcot started studying the problems of hysteria and hypnosis: Charcot was the first scholar to establish a link between hysteria and nervous problems. Under the influence of Christian church, pleasure was connected with sin and people saw hysterical manifestations as a Devil intervention - many hysterical women were burned at stake because of this. And now, Melanie Klein.

- A woman! At last!

- Gone feminist, uncle? Eh eh...

- Not at all! But so many men studying the mind and no woman, it's a bit odd. Keep going, keep going...

- Well. Melanie Klein came up with a game's analysis technique. She recognizes the early aggressiveness of the psychic life, at the destructive phase of the oral stage that Freud described. Freud's daughter, Anna Freud, vehemently contested the existence of neurosis of transfer in children, and consequently, the very psychoanalytical suitable

cure principle. When Klein settled in London, he brought forward the controversy (Anna was already living in this city, Freud was forced to go back to Austria, for being a Jew)

- So many controversies... These guys are a bit conflictual, aren't they Paulo?

- Eh eh eh... Well, let's keep going: soon, in the mist of the British Psychoanalysis Society, raises a true "Kleinian" doctrine, which will very soon be seen as a dissidence. It's healing process uses several elements: transfer neurosis (anguish hysterias, conversion hysterias, obsessive neurosis) in children, showing a progress in the subconscious wishes in the patient, over the psychoanalyst. She organizes a game that...

- Hey, another one! She also liked to play games, huh? It's not only your teachers that...

- Yes, yes, yes. Ear me out, please.

- Oh, Sorry...

- It's ok, uncle, It's just that interrupting is very annoying. It's natural. As I was saying, Melanie Klein organizes a game for children to play: in one room she places a small table with lots of objects; little automobiles, houses, swings, dolls, scissor, paper, needles. And from the minute that children enter the room, all their behaviours, gestures, words, as well as their locking take on a certain meaning for the psychoanalyst. She proofs that, as in adults, the children psychoanalysis gives place to a transfer; Klein showed that the Oedipus relation is very premature and that satisfaction and frustration of



the newly-born determine it's future psychic life. There. I've said it. And that was all I studied today.

- Excellent work, rest now, Paulo. We'll go take our minds of things at the coffee house. I need to speak to José at least once a day. Have you had coffee?

- Yes...

- You'll have another one. Come on.

Paulo glanced at Jung's face in page 106. A face that caused more questions than provided answers... Most disturbing questions.

Relax, Jung. Freud is dead.

THE GAME - VII

The “Corner Coffee Shop”, that was it’s name. And really, it stood in the corner between Vicar street and Crow street. A historical coffee shop, a family, family Lima, from Trás-os-montes. A land of good people. Joseph was third generation and ran the coffee shop with the good mood of a player, after scoring. It didn’t provided him much money, but he still had great pleasure in keeping it clean. *A clean up a day, it’s Ok. And fills me with pride.*

On it’s tables, chess, checkers and cards were played simply for fun. Sometimes on money, when the Police looked the other way. That was usually on weekends, in the back. Rui entered boastful, with his nephew. Well known around those parts, the usuals greeted him enthusiastically.

- José! Attend my nephew here! He always asks for an Italian (espresso) with two sugars. All grown up and with green eyes, ok?

- Ah ah ah! Good taste that lad!

- Hey... Hello, how are you doing...?

- Fine, thanks! Rui, the usual?

- Yes, you know what I like! A full espresso and one of the house, in a special glass, ok? Well served!

- Yes, Sir! In here, the customer is always right! And if that customer should happen to be called Rui, he’s twice right! Let’s get you that special one...

- Uncle, what will we learn here? There’s not too much time!

- Easy, Paulo. You're still young. Enjoy things in life. There are two things I want you to learn.

- Yees?

- Yes. First: as the ancient said: "Quietness is the mother of all things".

- Excuse me...?

- In current Portuguese: quietness is the realm of wisdom; well, something like that, Paulo.

- Yes, ok. And the second one?

- I wanted to bring you here. You'll get fresh air, full of - there we go - people's wisdom.

- Fresh air!? The place is full of cigarette smoke! Coff coff!! After all, what do you expect to learn from him? That is an illusion.

- Oh really? Well, listen closely to my conversation with José.

- Here are your coffees', Rui. The special one is on the house, as soon as you finish that coffee, ok?

- Ok, José. Me and my nephew have a hard case on our hands.

- Indeed? Can I help?

- Who knows, José? You like movies a lot, don't you?

- A lot, Rui! I specially enjoy crime novels: Poirot, Sherlock Holmes, I eat it all up! And I have a photographic memory!

- Ok, ok. That's precious to us, José. Listen, do you remember a movie called "The Third Man"?



- With Orson Welles, yes, yes. Very good. Very old, around the 40's... Wait, Rui, I'll get that movie record.

- You have a record??

- But of course, of all cinema master pieces. That's mandatory for a good film fan. I have a huge database at the coffee shop's basement. Hold on.

- I take it back, uncle...

- That's what I wanted to hear, Paulo.

Your uncle still knows how to play this game...

THE GAME - VIII

- There, Rui, I have here the full record of that film. Each record is composed of: technical record, story summary, awards, cast, critics and curiosities.

- Curiosities. Let's start there. Paulo? Do you agree?

- Fine by me, uncle.

- Let's see... curious facts of "The Third Man":

1. David O. Selznick, the producer originally wanted Noel Coward to play Harry Lime. Orson Welles was only casted because Carol Reed, the Director insisted.

2. Carol Reed wanted James Stewart to play Holly Martins. The choice of Joseph Cotten was a demand of producer David O. Selznick, who had that actor hired for the shooting season.

3. Screen player Graham Greene based the character Harry Lime in the British officer Kim Philby, which was the commanding officer of Greene himself, in the British Intelligence Secret Service.

4. When negotiating his part in "The Third Man", Orson Welles was proposed to receive a high pay check for his performance, or a percentage of the box office. Welles chose to get a pay check, but realising that that film would be a huge success he tried to shift to a percentage, unsuccessfully.

5. Between 1951 and 1952 Orson Welles starred a radio show that told the adventures of his character in “The Third Man”, before the events of the movie.

6. The Cannes Great Prize, won by “The Third Man” was equivalent to the Palm of Gold, award that was given from 1955 on.

- And that’s all, at least n this record... 1949 film, Original title: The Third Man, Genre: suspense, time: 105 minutes, Script: Graham Greene, based on a Graham Greene and Alexander Korda’s story, photography: Robert Krasker.

- Do you have a summary of the film, one with a clear description?

- Wait. There’s several. I’ll break it down for you: “Based on a Graham Greene novel, tells the story of an American writer that goes to Vienna, Austria, immediately after World War II, at a friend’s request.”

- Vienna, Paulo. Keep focused.

- Huh...?

- Vienna, Goddamn. The *Magical city* of Freud. You need to be sharp if you want to break this. Keep going José.

- This one seems to be interesting: “The film, based on Graham Greene’s work, was directed by Carol Reed and starred by Orson Welles. But legend has it (always legends, like John Ford reminds us, legends remain instead of facts) that Orson Welles presence in the studio was enough to let his influence in

production unnoticed. The film's story is simple: a man invites his best friend to visit him at Vienna, Austria. But when he arrives, he finds out that his host was dead in a car accident. That friend, being a novel writer suspects the odd circumstances around that death and starts to investigate. After some resilience, he discovers that "a third, unknown man" was present in the scene, at the time of death. He finds out that that third man was (Orson Welles himself, still alive, in an amazing allegory of his future artistic life) the main criminal inspiration for the whole city, evil river that will only end in the sewage. In the movie, when Holly, discovers who his friend really is, he rejects him and his pathological evil when he finds him alive."

- That's it, Paulo! That's it! Oh... sorry...

The card players grumbled at their table, towards Rui's shouting. They then resumed they're game.

- Try to cool yourself, Rui, the world isn't over tomorrow ...

- Sorry if I scared your customers away, José... But, can't you see, Paulo?

- See? See what?

- My God!? You're the intuitive one and I'm the strategist!? Upwards, upwards I say! We must find the key, we're close, I can feel it! José, put the coffees on my tab, ok? I'll bring you this record tomorrow, ok?

- Ok, I'll see you then, relax...



The answer was always under our very nose...

THE GAME - IX

Rui entered suddenly in that small flat and Martins came at the door, in a hurry. Lam tried to quiet him down.

- Easy, my little one, it's ok, Your owner is just nervous, that's all. Come her, on my lap...

- Paulo, let's read this text exhaustively! We only need one more confirmation, and I think We've got the key!

- Really? I still can't see it...won't you tell me what it is?

- Nope. I still am not completely sure. Let's think this through together, ok?

- Ok. I'll clear the table.

- That's a great idea. I'll go to the kitchen to put our dinner in the microwave oven.

- What is it?

- Lasagne.

- Yummy...

- Listen, Martins is the cat... Ah ah!

Paulo Lam looked with his own eyes to that film record, for the first time. It consisted of several sheets, stapled. On the third sheet, on the middle of the page, he read the text that had excited his uncle so.

What the hell did he saw in this? It's a perfectly normal text... another summary of a cinema critics: no big deal.

He was tired. He had read over 600 pages in fulfilling, but demanding matters. Lots of work.

- I'm back. Paulo, now, let's go through that summary every word. Pass me that record.

- There you go, uncle.

- Where have I seen it...? Oh, there it is! See: "(...)Orson Welles presence in the studio was enough to let his influence in production unnoticed. (...)” - What does that tell you?

- Nothing. Absolutely nothing.

Is uncle seeing things?

- Paulo! Do not challenge me! You've said some great stuff about Jung!

- What does Jung have to do with this...?

- Jung also had a tremendous influence on his disciples, isn't that so...? huh? Look: "(...) A man invites his best friend to visit him at Vienna, Austria. (...)” - Freud! Freud invites his friend Jung to visit him at Vienna, Austria!

- Hum. But still, it isn't solid... It's just loose ideas...

- Oh really? Read: "(...)

at the time of death. He finds out that that a third man (...) was present. And he finds out that that third man (Orson Welles, still alive (...))the main criminal inspiration for the whole city (...)” - The Third Man is Jung! Which in the end, it's Freud himself!

- Hum... yes, sort of a ...

- Mirror! Freud seen on the mirror!

- Goddamn...

- Oh, my dear Paulo, there's more! : "(...) when Holly, discovers who his friend really is, he rejects him and his pathological evil when he finds him alive." - Jung rejected Freud and Freud rejected Jung!

- Yes... Jung would be the heir prince of the psychoanalytic movement, uncle! He was to inherit Freud's legacy; Freud treated him like a son!

- There you go! Go get that Tem Greats of the Unconscious book!

- There you go, uncle, take it!

- I wonder where it might be... Let me see... Jung, the Rebel... It's here Paulo, Its here!

- Where? There, what...?

- Gosh, must I do all this by myself?! Page 125, Carl Gustav Jung questionnaire: read answer 20 out loud, if you please, Paulo.

- Ok: "Jung reports two conversations, one about the dead bodies in the swamp, another about Amenophis IV, in which he and Freud disagreed. Angry, Jung defends his point of view and, *from that moment on, Freud fell in his chair, senseless. We surrounded him, not knowing what to do. I took him in my arms and carried him in to the adjoining room, laying him down on the couch. I still had him in my arms when he returned to his conscious, and he gave me a look that I'll never forget. From the bottom of his anguish, he looked at me like if I was his father*- C. G. Jung: *My life.*"

Paulo Lam fell into the chair's arms. He was drained, but he had finally understood. His uncle's intuition was right all along.

- Uncle: Freud, first, Adler, second, Jung, third... the second one to abandon the psychoanalytical movement is...

- The Third Man. Jung.

- Jung designed an alternative system of thinking to Freud, and equally important...

- Jung: The Third Man, Paulo.

- Jung was charged by Freud himself to take the movement on: my "heir prince", non Jew, that helped him in any matter...

- Jung: The Third Man.

- Yes, uncle. And, finally...

- The son becomes the father. Orson Welles taken in shoulders by three man, one of which, himself...

- Jung taking Freud in his arms... that looks at him and sees...

- His son... - father!

- Yes, a father complex unsolved... That Jung always charged Freud of!

The two men were quiet. A genuine pride on both, mixed with a truthful tiredness, and they both fell asleep on the couch, with Martins providing the needed worm to make that May night memorable, at several levels.



The dream world had won the bet.

THE GAME - X

- Uaaa... I'm so sleepy... uncle?
- I really was there, near you, last night, but I got up about two hours ago.
- W... What time is it?
- tem thirty. Again. Thos habits of yours...
- I'm sorry, uncle, I...
- Never mind, you were tired, I understand, I've brought you four new books.
- What are they about?
- Christianity History. And Religion Ethnology also, some Anthropology... It's a delightful challenge, this one and I think I know the answer.
- Y... you do...? What is it?
- Are you here to do this assignment or to copy from another colleague, huh? Get studying, and right now!
- But if you know the answer...!
- I Think I know, I think. I must be at least near, and I think that it will be easy to find out...
- Come on, uncle... tell me the answer!
- Paulo... I've spoken. You'll be a little confused, but it will do you some good, you'll see.
- Humph.
- Quit whining. Well, these are the books: two of History of Religion:

. Concise History of Church, by Philippe Tourault, Europa-América Publishing;

. and a classic, written about twenty years ago: Catholic Church History, by Pierre Pierrard.

, and one book about the Portuguese Christianity:

. Portuguese Christianity Origins, by Moisés Espírito Santo.

- Tell me at least what to look for, uncle... at least that, hum?

- All right, that I can do. As you know, our lead is the book by Charles Darwin, The Origin of the Species.

- Yeah, I know.

- Well: that book caused huge controversy by the Creationists.

- What is that? Do you eat it? Ha-ha!

- Boy, that religious culture... Creationism is the movement of thinkers, associated with the Catholic Church, that state, according to the Bible, that the world was created by God. Well, Darwin defended exactly the opposite: there had been an evolution of the species, and by natural selection, they would adapt. Some died naturally. Others survived and in the end, only the fittest, the stronger survived the process. But what is important to highlight is that him alone, threw down a whole religious thinking system about the creation of this world.



- Man...

- Eh eh eh... You're completely blank, Paulo... what do they teach you in that College of yours, huh...?

- Uncle, you may find this strange, but I feel that the more I know, the worse my intuition gets. Because, believe me, that's the natural selection process in me...

THE GAME - XI

- Well, I understand that.

- Seriously, you do...?

- I came from Africa, Paulo: do you think that I don't know primitives even more blank than you?

- Yes, really...

- Yes... and believe me that those primitives haven't ever seen a school, they've never even imagined a College! But I forget the other book that I've brought you. Be mindful of this book:

. Origins, from the essential author Mircea Eliade, that did a comparative study of several religions.

- Yes, yes, Ok. Any more leads?

- The main are these: If you take the Word: Origin, the title of the book, that could be related with the Origin of Christianity; Jesus Christ is the obvious assumption, but that would be...

- Too obvious?

- Indeed. It can't be that simple, it's too direct. But it can also be the origin of the modern Christianity, meaning the historical evolution, from the Middle Age, for example. Then, there's a parallelism that meets the eye: Evolution of the Species/Evolution of Church, and in this point of view, we may be talking about the past or future of the Christian faith.. Not to speak again of the very much alive polemics



between the evolutionist and creationist perspectives.

- But I thought you said you knew the answer...?

- I think I know what they expect to accomplish by this. But I'll leave you to follow your own way. And you'll get a surprise tonight...

-Oh, uncle... A surprise?

- Hey, Paulo: study comes first, the goody's come later, Huh?

- Ohhh!

- I'll go fishing by the river, around Alcântara. I'll be here in the afternoon, and I want a fully studied lesson, ok?

- All right, all right...

- And no cheating!!

THE GAME - XII

- I'm home!
- What have you caught, uncle?
- Bah! Rancid Grey Mullets, what any kid can fish with a buoy. There's no fish like in the old days, Paulo...
- But... the bucket is empty...! Uncle!
- Do you think your uncle is a liar, like any other hunter? I caught 4 Mullets, yes sir!
- Oh really? And where are they now, hum?
- I found Martins outside, and decided to give him a feast before diner ...
- All right, you've passed this test, but come here and help me solve this jigsaw, will you?

- Go on to the living room. I'll put you to the test now...
- Yeah, yeah...

- Ok, I'm here. What can you show me today, Paulo?
- First book: Catholic Church History.
- Let's ear that one out, then.
- I focused on the origin of religions. I hope I did all right...
- Go ahead, let's ear you.
- Well. Judaism was the refuge of a highly Monotheism, whose God - Jehovah - had a straight

connection to the Jewish people through the Torah – Law of Moses or Pentateuch. There were Hellenic Jews that preached the doctrine taken from the Scriptures, in a theological and philosophical organized system; and that will be the system to set the way of Christian theology. It's in that small but proud people that Jesus is born, and He'll later on claim that he wasn't meant to revoke the Torah, but to complete it. In 1963, Monsignor Van Dodewaard said "the Church is heir to the Jewish people", repeating the famous statement of Pope Pius XI: "We are spiritually Jews". What do you think, Uncle? Have we found the solution?

- Easy, Paulo. There is still much road to go through... Keep going.

- Christianity was born from the preaching of a Jew, whose first disciples – equally Jews – addressed in first place to the Jews. In the Christian community, Jewish rituals are improved by an original liturgy: the administration of baptism and also, by the time of the community feasting, the Eucharistic ritual of splitting bread. Second book! Next!

- Well, that was quick, really eh eh eh...

- Concise History of Church. More from the same: Christianity appeared in what is now known as the Middle East. The growing crowd's contemplation of Jesus alerted the susceptibility of the dignity of Jewish hierarchy, which agreed to expose him as a plotter to the Roman attorney Pontius Pilate. Having been condemned to the death, He was crucified in the Jewish Easter's eve. The Gospels and Saint Paul refer that he rose from His tomb by the third day after He died. Then, at the Pentecost day, the twelve

Apostles had the Holy Ghost revelation, having been defined the Church's apostolic mission.

- Yeah, right...

- Ah ah ah, uncle, I didn't thought you'd be such an anti-Christian!

- Bah... I'll explain later, Paulo.

- Ok. The adversity set ground for Christianity: in the VI century before our time, the jewish people was deported to Babylon and had to put up with the domain of the Roman people. Well, this domain reminded them all of the prophecy texts of the Old Testament: a Messiah would come to save Israel, a king would come from the race of David, which would found a kingdom of God and save Men from sin. All those who believed in Judaism were monotheistic, which set them apart from the Roman, who worshiped several Gods.

- Well, Paulo, so far we have: Roman Empire, Judaism, Middle East, Messiah. Keep going, please.

- Ok, uncle. Let's talk about those who spread the Christian faith: Paul - participated in the assassination by stoning of deacon Estêvão, the Church's first martyr. But, converted by a divine apparition, he spent the rest of his life doing missionary work at the Mediterranean bay, which gave him the title of "the gentle apostle", meaning, Pagan.

- Do you know what Paganism is, Paulo?

- Well, I..., Well, I have an idea...

- Ideas are not enough. You must develop a thought to connect the, but... I'm glad you do not know.

- Really?
- Absolutely. You'll find out later.
- You're mysterious today...
- Have you ever heard that secret is the soul of trade?
- Ok, ok. Now, Peter – is considered the founder of the new Church. He defended much more than Paul a certain union of the Jewish traditions and the Christian revelation. In about two centuries of expanding this new religion, the message of Jesus spread around the civilized world around the Mediterranean bay, and without any official support, since the Emperor and Empire invoked Paganism and the ancestral Gods. There were countless Christian harassment, but around the III century, Christianity came out of secrecy, becoming public. And the support of Roman Emperors in the IV century assured its extension to the Empire. Paganism was then forbidden. Next!
- Already...? This is being pretty fast, really ... and now?
- Now... Origins, by Mircea Eliade.
- I must be good, it's author is...
- So-so, uncle, so-so...
- Oh really, funny boy? Let's see you find a solution for this one, smart boy!
- Ah ah ah! I was just testing your reaction. The book then.
- Better.

- He speaks of several authors. Starts by saying that the Anthropologist J.G. Frazer defended in his notable work "Golden Bough" that in the history of the Human race, Magic came before Religion. Durkheim, Freud and Jung adopted and retailored the pre-animistic hypothesis and insisted in the importance of Totem's, which meant for the first two authors, the early manifestations of religious life. Freud upholds that God is no more no less than the sublimed physical father and that he I murdered in the totems sacrifice: slaughter of the father - God is the ancient original sin of Mankind. This death guilt comes from the bloody death of Christ.

- Gosh...

- Heavy stuff, I know, uncle. As for Jung, the incredible similarity between the many symbol and mythological figures of distant people and civilizations forced him to postulate the existence of a collective subconscious, manifested by it's famous Archetypes. Eliade says that we have no mean to investigate the "ancient religion", because we ignore all that pre-lithic man thought about for hundreds of thousands years. Many other Ethnologists of several guidance's tried to rebuild the origin and growth of religion, shifting between Animism, Magic, Theorism (sacred animals), totem's, among other concepts..

- So many things... we really have to take a rabbit out of the top hat, this time.

- Yes, uncle. Eliade also refers to the work of Myth Ritual School, or Padronism, "King and Saviour", in which there's a persistence on the common elements of culture and religions of the Next Close East. G.

Widengren considered that the king was responsible by the well being of the Cosmos, and that that conception had later on given birth to the Iranian ideology of the Saviour and Jewish Messiah. It's known today that agriculture, the culture of the Neolithic population and at last the Urban Civilization share a centre with many rays, placed in the Next East.

- Add on to our list: Father and King.

- Father?

- Freud...

- Oh, of course, uncle. Sorry.

- Never mind it. Anything else from those books you've read?

- Yes, yes. In 1871, Edward Taylor publishes "Primitive Culture", in which he identifies the first stage of religion as animism, meaning, the belief of a soul in Nature. It is believed that from Animism developed Polytheism and then Monotheism. But...

- Oh, of course... there's always a "but"... Say it, say it!

- But... in the last years of the XIX century, beginnings of the XX century, animism ceased to be considered as the first stage of religion.

- What else...?

- Eh eh eh. Two new theories came up that time:

1st theory - Andrew Lang, establishing the belief in a Supreme God, in the early times of religion

and 2nd theory - Manna theory: the belief of a Magical-Religious indistinct and personal belief.

And Eliade finishes this book with the following statement: “the religion historian is perfectly aware that he is unable to reach the origin of religion...

- We’re doomed then.

- Yes... so it would appear, uncle. If Mircea Eliade says so himself...

- Allow me to post a “but” now!

- Uncle? but...?

- Maybe Eliade is wrong...

- Really?

- Really, Paulo. This guy must have not read the same books that I did... but, contradictive as it might seem, the most lucid books I’ve ever read...were his!

THE GAME - XIII

- Uncle! You're not being completely honest to me! You have the answer, I can feel it!

- Hey, hold on! Next book.

- Humph... Ok, so be it. The Origins of Portuguese Christianity. A very interesting book, really.

- I thought so at the library. What does it say?

- It claims that, in the current range of scientific disciplines, only Historical Ethnology and Anthropology have the ability to rebuild the lost religions of the world, since the religions quoted in the book- Jewish, Christian, Muslim - , in their first purity, were only spoken and left no trail.

- Yes, but Eliade himself, who's in on these matters, said otherwise... eh eh eh.

- Right! It seems were banging our heads on the wall, right uncle? These guys don't give us any hope of finding the solution...

- Don't worry. Keep going. I'm hearing you. It seems that it's not only you that is confused on this matter...

- Won't you tell me the answer...?

- Not yet. The contents of that book, Paulo...?

- Humph. It speaks of star archetypes, holding an important role in religion and the sun representing the supreme God in the ancient Semitic cultures.

- Sun. Add on to the list...

- Right... this book looks into the passing moment of Paganism to Christianity and states that there were

no ruptures nor in culture, nor in religion, but overlays of symbolic and cult stratum. The “compelled by a calling” boys castrated themselves to answer to the imperative of religious myths: it was a matriarchy culture, the cult of the Great-Mother.

- And that is still done, Paulo, besides Christianity is completely focused on man.

- Com on!?! Castration, nowadays??

- That’s right, you heard me! Have you heard of chastity vows...?

- Ah ah ah! Oh, that? That’s so much more...

- *That*, how you say, is only the way the Church found to adapt itself to a reality that hasn’t changed much, from the third to the twentieth century. And, as you see, the matriarchy cult and the Christian cult, centred in Man, are not too different.

- Hum. Maybe so, indeed. Well carrying on: this book is about the essential Treaty to a Syrian Goddess, from an author called Luciano. “It’s said that of all the people we’ve studied, Egyptians were the first to conceive the existence of Gods (...) and they then formulated the holy doctrines.” The cult universality referred by Luciano is confirmed by archaeology, numismatics and Greco-roman chronicles. All Middle East, minor Asia, Greece, Egypt, Arab, Britain, Gaulle, Iberia and Germania practiced, under different names, this Syrian cult. Other spiritual influence and lots of heresy are also from Syrian and Palestinian origin: Gnosticism, Manichaeism, Aryanism, Nestorians, etc. The concept of post-mortem salvation in which

Christianity and Islamism rely on is much ancient among the Syrian and Frisian, and does not appear in the Old Testament nor in Judaism: it's the first time in the history of religion that faith in an eternal life pops up clearly, in which Christian. If we assign the origin of Monotheism to the Jewish religion, we must check the origin of the current conception of a Universal God to the religion of its Syrian neighbours.

- Magna Mater – Mother of Gods... Cybele.

- H... how do you know, uncle...?

- The cult of the Goddess-Mother? It's very popular, Paulo. A reflexion of matriarchy that ruled in the Middle East and the Semitic world, if I'm correct, up until the 8th century b.C.. It still shows with great sharpness in the Mediterranean cultures that became Catholic.

- Well, I see that you've mastered this better than me... moving on: what lacks of humanity in St Paul's Christ is really in the Apocrypha; this was where Jesus is a true God and a true Man. The same goes to Mary. St Paul assured that women should be excluded out of priesthood and preaching, and made them use a veil at the assemblies, as Muhammad will do so, later on. The difference between Canonical and Apocrypha as far as Mary can be easily explained: The apocrypha were written by the people and Express the people's vision of Jesus life with his mother, in the old matriarch culture that reflected itself in the cults of Magna Mater. As far as Canonical, written in Greek – had its origin in the scholar authors, assimilated from the Classic Culture: the Apostles were Jews. And the

dominant jewish culture was patriarchal for 5 or more centuries at that time. Emerged in Misogyny, the theological texts, liturgics and juridical, favoured only man. And the exclusive valorisation of man became total with Islam. With Emperor Constantine a massive Christianity began, moving on to being the only religion and forbidding all other cults.

- Do you see how things are done across History, Paulo? It's like that: join the winners, choose the strongest wind and flow with it until where it carries you...

- Yeah, uncle, maybe...

- Not maybe: it really is like that. Do you have anything more to say to me?

- Just some final notes, I'm almost finishing.

- All right. I'm listening.

- The Catholic cult of Mary, it's Dogma and ancient tradition came from Syria, a given fact of the History of Christianity. With the forbiddance of Pagan religions, Christian Pastoral and liturgics reinvented themselves to uphold the religious of the mass ex-matriarchal cults of Syrian and Frisian origin, that had spread throughout the empire. Monotheism was established in the Iberian Peninsula through Judaism; being the jews the holy nation, God's mediators, keepers of the Word, their presence breeds ill-being, remorse and envy in Christian.

- You're through, right?

- Yes, uncle, I am.



- Well, let me pick up from where you've finished.
And believe me, Paulo, that the end is far, far
away...

THE GAME - XIV

- Well, Paulo, today you've earned a field trip. That was some good work and...
- What are you talking about, uncle? I haven't...
- You'll get a Life lesson. Free of Charge! Pretty good, ah? Nobody gives anything for free in our days!
- Hum... A field trip, uncle? Where are we going...?
- To a place that you know well... To see strange things... Then You'll realize what I am talking about.
- You're rather mysterious today uncle... What is it?
- Can't tell you. It has to do with my affairs, I've been studying some stuff and...
- Ok, ok, don't tell me if you don't want to. But I'll be on tiptoe with excitement... When are we going on this field trip? Is the school renting a bus? Do I have to pay a ticket? AH AH AH!
- Make fun now, while you still can. I assure that it's some heavy duty. At least chocking!
- Well, it looks good...
- And, answering your question: we'll go after dinner.
- Ok.
- And you dine a little steak with some rice, it's already cooking, and...
- Uncle! Please don't do this to me! I'm starving!



- You don't realize, Paulo... what we're about to see

...

- Yees...?

- I can't visualize it for you, Paulo, but whatever it is... it's something scary, when I explain it's meaning to you.

THE GAME - XV

- I ask you again, uncle: where are we going? Were near my College, and...
- Exactly the point. You gave the answer, Paulo.
- We're... to the...
- To your College. Yes, we are.
- But why? It's the last place I wan to go, wh...
- Because tonight there's a party there, Paulo: didn't you knew? I got a little paper ticket in my windshield, promoting this party on your College.
- Such a dull thing, a College party, I can't believe that...
- Oh, but we're not going to the party...
- No...?
- No. We're... taking advantage of the party thing...
- You lost me...
- Eh eh eh... I'm having all the fun now, hey Paulo? Relax, I'm parking right here.
- Humph.
- Don't sulk, come on. You're really close to the secret...
- What is that secret, after all?
- The secret hidden in the catacombs of your College ... buuhhh...
- Yeah, it figures...
- Oh. And I forgot to tell you something.
- What...?



- You won't be able to see nearly anything. You'll just listen.

THE GAME - XVI

- There's a big excitement at the door ...
- The usual, uncle; It's always like this when there's a party here.
- Ok. This is what we'll do: You go in by the front door, up the main corridor, turn on the first left, just before the...
- Library? I'm going to the library?? What's there? Are you sure that you want me to go to the...
- That's right.
- But... it's closed! What do you expect me to find in...
- I don't expect to find anything, Paulo. I Know that I'll find. I know exactly what I will find there.
- Ok, ok...
- I must lock my car. You go now. Wait for me at the library corridor, it's enough for now.
- Dark? Dark, uncle?
- Understand now? ... Our game also has it's trumps, Paulo...
- Ok, I'll go now. Will you meet me there?
- Sure. I'll follow. We need to be inconspicuous.
- I see, uncle. See you there.

The night was dark. Way too dark. Ideal for a.....

Stunt like this.

THE GAME - XVII

The College was nearly deserted, on it's lower part: only a few couples mutually wooed, semi-embarrassed. That was, after all, the most abandoned place in campus: it was on the first floor that parties took place, with the newly-graduated doctors wooing the young rookie girls, sometimes in crazy sex nights and something more, with the indulgence of the higher names in College. It was needed to follow the trends, to adjust the ancient traditions to the new times and... younger girls.

Lam did what his uncle had asked him. There he was, just before the library door; a small corner that was a paradise to fresh couples. *Uau... I must thank the Evens that there's no one here. This way it's all ours. I hope uncle Rui gets here quickly.*

Some foot steps came closer, in a hurry. They suddenly stopped.

- U... uncle?

- Yes, Paulo, it's me.

- Huff... what a scare... I thought...

- I saw your shadow and I thought that someone had beaten us to it...

- But uncle... who would come here?

- Paulo, You can't imagine who comes here on party nights...

THE GAME - XVIII

- How are we going to get in?
- Let me see my pocket... oh, there it is!
- What is that?
- A picklock.
- Uncle!
- A wacky friend of mine gave it to me once and thought me a few things. Come on, don't look at me like that. We must get inside quickly.

- Close the door now, quietly, Paulo.
- Ok, uncle. This is completely dar...
- You can't see a thing, I know. That's why I've brought... voila!
- What is it? Are you there?
- Yes, yes. Now you can see me...
- A flash light!
- Scheech!! Speak lower. I'll point the flash light down, no one can see us here. Let's go on to the second door... Picklock, please... It's hard...
- Click.
- There, you have it, Paulo. There's little time. I'll turn some lights on for a brief moment, keep sharp. See that kind of mirror there? I'll point the flash light...
- Yeah, uncle, what about it?

- Try to mentally record all the details in that mirror.
I'll turn the lights on briefly... now!

Ψ



Φ

Ω

Ξ

The initial impact was of visual shock, because the light hit the eyes after a moment of complete darkness. Then Lam tried to adjust and started memorizing everything that seemed important to him.

- Uncle!
- Hurry! There's people coming!

The footsteps were stealthy, and after closing the secret door on the library, stealthy they remained. They heard everything around them, cautious as a loving mother. A huge problem that's what it was. Lam looked at his uncle, ducked under one of the huge wooden table. The perfect hideout. – *You don't need to see, just hear it.* Lam started to fully realise his hand on that game. The foot steps became more discreet and when they entered the second room, they were smothered by the emptiness of the night soul.

- Uncle.
- Scchhh! Keep it down. What is it?
- What do we do now?

- Now, my dear nephew, we'll get out of here. And You'll start to understand the story behind these walls...

THE GAME - XIX

- Quick! Get in the car, Paulo!

- Will I duck, uncle...?

- Yes. I'll cover.

- Is the coast clear...?

- Yes. They haven't seen us. Let's get out of here—
now!

- But uncle, who was that...

- Probably an initiate.

- Initiate? Initiate in what? What is that??

- Paulo, have you ever heard about... Magic?

- Well, I watch some TV shows of Luís de Matos,
and...

- Not that. Those are cheap tricks. Well, not always
so cheap, but...

- You're talking about magic... oh... magic...

- I'm talking about magic that comes from Africa,
Paulo. The magic that... changes behaviours... that
can only be used when people are asleep – during
sleep: why do you think that people that live a night
life are more *lucid*? That's right...

- Don't tell me...



- That and much more, Paulo. Because I come from Africa, yes, but because my heart is your heart. And you were always pure and I can't betray my own blood.

THE GAME - XX

Rui was deeply quiet till they got home, and Lam didn't wanted to disturb him further with uncomfortable...questions. All that matter was way too serious to be discussed in a bumpy two horse Citroën.

- Let me just lock the car... There. Let's go up, Paulo.

- Sure, uncle.

The building's entry hallway had a few lights on and the elevator finally was fixed, but that was not a joyful night for Rui. That was the night of... truth. Of telling the truth to his nephew about some concerning issues, from long, since Africa, maybe even earlier.

- Go and sit on the living room couch, Paulo, I'll just have a glass of water, and I'll be there... Oh, Martins, there you are!

- Come on, be still, Martins, uncle Rui is not... well.

- I know, I know. I'm not fine, is that what you were saying, Paulo?

- I... well...

- If you had something in your conscience like I have in mine, you'd be this way too.

THE GAME - XXI

- Wont you tell me now, uncle, what...
- I'll tell, I'll tell you, don't worry. Let me just have another glass of water...

It was the third or fourth glass of water that Rui had drunk in under 5 minutes. He had turned on the TV and stared at it, retaining no information whatsoever since he entered the living room. At last, he seemed to step out of his numbness, used the remote to turn off the TV and stopped for a few seconds, just to think, to meditate. But now he seemed to be clear-headed. And lucid.

- Paulo.
- Yes, uncle?
- What I am about to tell you, you should keep it for yourself, Do you understand? Don't even think about saying this to nob...
- Sure uncle. You can rely on me. What is this all about anyway?
- You know, you studied Freud theories, diseases and stuff... Anguish, hysteria, neurosis, psychosis, schizophrenia, even... All these are illusions, my nephew.
- H... How so? Surely these diseases do exist. Surely he wouldn't have just made them up...
- In the primitive world, none of these diseases existed.
- Primitive World? What do you mean?

- In the African tribes, of course. The Australian aborigines. Some places in Indonesia. In south

American Indians. In North American tribes: Apaches, Sioux, Faraondes, and so many others that the British imprisonment destroyed when they set their mind on colonizing the New World. Carrying diseases and war to the native Indians. As you see nephew, the almighty America really has clay foundations... Only those who didn't studied their history at College ignore this. They try to conceal it by all means...

- Well, I've heard that prisoner story on my History class, but I just didn't considered to be import...

- Important? Important it is! But there's something more important, Paul.

- Wha...What, uncle?

- The... Shaman.

- What is that?

- The African healer. The tribe's sorcerer for the American Indians. The community Shaman, in the Russian tribes, from which the European tradition of Shamanism was born of. The same tradition that they've been trying to hide... Including psychiatrists, specially psychiatrists, Paul. Yours surely knows something about this matter. But he conceals it from you. Or he is afraid of certain things...

- Afraid? Afraid of what?

Rui took a deep breath, and thought very deeply in what he was about to start. When his breath crossed his speech, he knew that his nephew would never be the same from now on. Yet, there was something



important. It had to be said. He felt it. He knew it.
More than anyone.

- Fear... of the spirit of the dead, Paulo. And that,
my friend, not even Freud was able to control, with
his thinking theories and pseudo-rationalist...

THE GAME - XXII

An astonished Paulo Lam stared at his uncle Rui top to bottom. Not even he knew how to react to this, nor Rui knew what his reaction would be.

- Uncle... You're joking, right...?

- On the contrary, Paulo, I'm dead serious.

- Explain yourself. I've only heard that in...

- Bedside stories, I know, I know... It's normal: all that Western science can't explain becomes a myth, on a bedside story...

- Are you sure of what you're saying? Because that is...

- Unusually strange? At first, no doubt. Then, when you look into it and start using your intuition, it all adds up. Prepare yourself, because I'll pose some questions to you, ok?

- Ok, shoot.

- Why, in primitive tribes, are there so few cases, in percentage, of mad individuals?

- Well, eh... well, I have no idea!

- Answer: because psychosis are socially induced; loud and clear, an individual becomes schizophrenic because he lives in a Society filled with restraints, developing those pathologies due exclusively to his need to fit in. Meaning, when you live free in nature, none of this happens. That's why I've spoken to you about Freud's and all the others terminology: None

of that corresponds the effective realities, when you go back in time and analyze the tribes. Clear?

- Ok...

- Next question. With what does a Shaman (European tradition); a tribe's Wizard (in Americas) or a Healer (in Africa) deals with?

- Well, you've said it ... With the spirit of the dea...

- Exactly. But also with many other things. Many other. Do you know how the magic that the Shaman performs and offers his community is called?

- N... no uncle! What is it...?

- White magic. Because it deals with benign spirits and not with evil ones. And sometimes he can even undo the spells of the... the...

- B... bl...

- That's right, my dear nephew. That's right. Black ... Magic. The magic that spread through the world where slaves were carried. It has several names: Voodoo and many etceteras. And that magic, originally from Africa - but the deep Africa, not the cities - was taken by the great Western minds to take over...

- To what? What does it do anyway, uncle?

- To... control the masses. So that the mind is active during the day and sleep in the night, when that magic can enter the spirit at it's own free will, under the shape of dreams... Why do you think that American Indian tribes make those dream-hunters



you see so much in western house's sleeping rooms?
It's sort of a White magic in disguise...

- My God... uncle, that's...

- Evil? Certainly. But much more evil are the spells
going around, to keep the anxiety of people at
Society acceptable levels...

Lam's uncle had another sip of water. His nephew
was quiet, for an intuitive. That was good, really
good. After all, he wanted him to sleep that night:
there was still much work ahead.

- Uncle, but Freud, he... well, surely there's much
truth in his theory, he can't be wrong about
everything, and...

- Paulo, Paulo... You can't imagine what Freud knew
and didn't tell anyone...

THE GAME - XXIII

- And now, on this subject, there's only a loose end that I've been meaning to talk to you about, Paulo.

- Anything else? This night has been filled of surprises, really...

- Yes, despite of being people of my land that are making these in Portugal, I had to say this, Paulo. I couldn't help saying it to you, blood of my blood.

- It must had been hard, to...

- You can't imagine. You know, the generation that holds the power now is really my generation. And all of us know a little bit about what's going on, but out of fear, the knowledge gets lost. The younger can't imagine... well, let's hit that lose end I've told you about.

- Yes, uncle, speak on, I hear you.

- It's still about those primitive tribes, Paulo. Did you know that in those tribes, mad people were considered to be very wise?

- Come on...

- That's right! And do you why? Because it was thought that they were in direct contact with the Gods: and that the voices they heard and what they said was listened with fear, but specially with attention. Even wizards had them highly esteemed. In the trance state, they would mimic behaviours of madness...

- Well, revelation's night...

- Have you heard the expression: madhouses are filled with geniuses...?

- Yes, but that's a mockery...

- No such thing. It's like the story of the spirits, that you tell little children, so that they're scared of something. For instance, they're based on the truth, but that truth is too real to be told directly and fully... eh eh eh.

- My God... And, are there any more stuff, uncle?

- Yes. The poets, like Fernando Pessoa. The painters, like Van Gogh.

- Yeah? What about them?

- Too much madness in them. Or genius... Call it whatever you want. They also hear voices, like the madmen and the tribe's Shamans'... And if you ask a psychoanalyst or someone like that, they'll all say the same: Oh, Van Gogh? A "schizoid", ached of that and that... All lies, Paulo! Don't listen to those charlatans!

- Really... my psychiatr...

- Well, he is harmless. I know him well. A good person. Short sighted, of course, but...

- But... what does that have to do with the primitive tribe things...? I fail to see...

- You see, my dear nephew... a genius can quickly become a madman, if you submit him to a mind doctor...

- Really? Do you really feel that...



- Oh yeah, Paulo. And there are so many of those around, just ready to prescribe legal drugs, *a la carte*... Be very careful with yours. Very careful indeed...

THE GAME - XXIV

- Do you think you can handle the rest, Paulo?

- I've heard this far, haven't I...?

- Well. Here we go, then. There are 5, maybe 6 decisive points all over the world...

- Decisive points? What's that?

- Bear with me and hear me out. It's spots where routes are found, where cultures coexist, where there's an influence that can act over a whole region. Do you know the basics of Acupuncture?

- Yes, the basics: points in the human body that focus certain energies, and that needles...

- And that needles will then be applied on to those points, creating different energy fields or distribute that energy again, in a therapeutically manner. That's it.

- But... what does that have to do with...

- Everything, Paulo. There are, as I was saying, *magical* places around the world. Places that if stimulated by the negative energy of black magic, can act on an entire region of the globe.

- And... but my College... What does it have to do...

- Your College... Your College is in one of those points, precisely.

- Come on... tell me why, then.

- Once again, it's all about the African roots. As you know, after the 25th of April of 1974, lots of people returned to Portugal, from the former colonies in Africa. They've got jobs, mainly as public servants.

- Yeah, I know something about that.

- Right. I was one of those people, Paulo. I was also a *second class Portuguese...*

- Such a dreadful name they've called you...

- Yes, extremely sad, indeed. But, as I was saying, those people brought from Africa more than they're childhood memories... More than that: Magic...

- Black...?

- Correct. And they soon were able to climb to important positions within the Portuguese society, having arranged, some years later, negotiations with the States. To Portugal, an everlasting peace... eternal and a life dream. All in return for...

- Yes...?

- In return for a Plan. The Plan.

- W... what plan is that, uncle? What...

- The Continent Plan.

- What?? What is that?

- Remember the five or six points I've spoken about earlier? Huh?

- Yes, but what...

- Surely, you're not paying attention. Let's see: how many continents in the whole world? Huh?



- F... five, Why do you ask... Oh!
- Oh, yeah...

THE GAME - XXV

- This is a very simple game to play, Paulo. It has very simple, simple rules. Did you thought that the human being would evolve from barbarity into an organized civilization in such a short period of time, at a snap of the fingers?

- I still don't understand the connection with...

- Black Magic is efficient on land, in opposition of telecommunications, for instance - those have other obstacles, such as mountains and caves. For Magic, there are other geographical barriers...

- W... what kind of barriers? Uncle?

- Water. *Tons of...* water. Salty water, clouds, rain, upward and downward wind, too cold, too hot, sea storms... That kind of things. That's why there must a point in every continent that distributes the original message, to numb people's minds - because only that can allow life in modern society, be sure of that.

- That's all? Is it only Magic that...

- The Mass Media also perform on that level, I was forgetting them... Hidden messages, the news, the TV shows are made according to profound psychological studies (not found in College Libraries, for sure), so that they can induced extreme happiness or sadness.

- Why? All that , for what...?

- So that some days, or weeks, or months or even years, some devilish global plan is carried out, meaning a War or whatever: by then, the people's



mentality is already prepared according to those plans, that have stood in the shadows perhaps for years.

- Are you... Are you sure of what you're saying...?
It's all so...

- Bizarre?

- Well, extravagant, bizarre, delirious even, A mixture of all that. It's hard to ...

- Believe, Paulo?

- Y... yes.

- You must be watching too much television...

THE GAME - XXVI

- Hand me those two books from the shelf, if you please: "Origins of the Sacred" and "The Shaman", Paulo.

- Yes, uncle. Is this it?

- Yes, and the Shaman is one with a black cover... that's it. Bring those books and sit here with me, please.

- Not now, Martins, go away.

- Miaauuu...

- Don't be mean to the kitten. Come here Martins, on my lap, that's it. Now, where can I find this... Ah, read me this underlined extract from "The Origins of the Sacred". Read out loud.

- "The Shaman is the earliest human manifestation of spirituality that we know; it as existed, uninterrupted since the ice age, perhaps even from earlier, up until today. It is found in many primitive societies, especially in northern Siberia, among the Galyaks, in the North American tribes, in Eskimos and Australian aborigine."

- Shaman?? Is he the origin of...

- Undoubtedly, Paulo. Undoubtedly. Mircea Eliade showed that the main core of shamanism is a "original phenomena", a part of the human condition, and therefore, know by all ancient people. The Shamans' are expert of the Sacred, men that are able to "see" the spirits, of going up to the heavens and meet the Gods, of going down to Hell and fight the Daemons, sickness and Death. By their special

techniques – fasting, drum, meditation and certain drugs – the Shaman enters an ecstatic trance, and uses it for the good of all community, to heal and protect. During a shaman's initiation rituals, he finds an animal that teaches him the Language of the animals and that becomes his fellow spirit. Have you ever been to a rock concert? Have you heard of the Doors and Jim Morrison?

- Yes! I'm actually a huge fan of their music, why?

- Rock concerts often use drums. And do you know why Shamans use drums?

- Nope. Why?

- To call on the spirit, nephew... and today's rock singers use music to provoke a collective trance, much like the shaman...

- Come on! Next you're going to say that Jim Morrison...

- I'll tell you the truth: Jim Morrison was in a car accident in his childhood. Na accident with... Indians... and the soul of one that had just passed away entered Morrison's spirit.

- Ah ah ah!

- Hey you! Do you want to hear lies or do you want me to tell the whole Truth?

THE GAME - XXVII

- Sorry, uncle.
 - That's better. Now hand me that Shaman book.
 - Here you go.
 - Now where... there we go. Read, I've drawn an arrow pointing to the interesting part.
 - Let me see... Ok. "The idea that the Shaman is an ancient religious figure that survived is common in the interpretations of many scholars, both in positive and negative manners. (...) Western scholars have long been attracted by the origin of the last religion issue. (...) The Palaeolithic discoveries of the 20th century open discussions that made the shaman the main figure in the search for the origin of religion. Barre argues that all our knowledge of the supernatural or the divine comes from Shamans' and similar visionaries."
 - Now page 145, read, on the bottom.
 - "Illness and Health Realm: Body, Spirit and Soul:
 1. Soul or Spirit closely related to the body:
 - a) Concepts of Soul and Spirit - Shamanic practise
 - b) Spirit Concepts - Psychoanalysis and other humanistic forms of psychiatry.
 2. Spirit or brain as greater opposition to the body - clinical psychiatry and medicine"
- Uncle, surely you're messing with me ...! What does the Shaman have to do with Psychiatry..??

- Now, read this part, on the top: The healing power of dialogue.

- "The Shamanic cure includes a dialogue between the patient and someone else - The shaman or a spirit. This reaches extremes in Shamanism *Sora*, but is equally present in psychoanalysis, which is also "a cure by talking". The patient *sora* talks to the dead through a specialist, while the patient of a psychoanalyst talks to the specialist on other characters, at the moment absent from the patient's life."

Oh my God... uncle, this is...

- It is what it is. It's very serious, Paulo. Did you think that Humanity had lived in cities from the beginning... Huh? Psychoanalysis hadn't been born, and already shamans were curing entire communities... That's right...

- And do you feel... Do you feel that this is the solution we're looking for...?

- I do know this, Paulo.

- What, uncle? What do you know?

- There may be millions of answers to this Christianity issue. But if you answer: Shaman...

- Yes? What do you think they'll say...?

- ... No professor in the world can say it's a wrong answer. And that's because it is one of the possible



answers, the truthful one. And now let's hit the bed.
There's more tomorrow.

THE GAME - XXVIII

- Filipe, I wanted to tell something, kind of...hum... confidential.

- You can rely on me. shoot.

- I have a student at my College that... well, he's a bit of a problem, and...

- Cut his wings. Give him a disciplinary process and then kick him out. What's so hard about that? You've done it a few times, I'm sure.

- Well, you see... his name is Lam.

- Victor's kid. Oh, I see.

- Yes, Masse's kid.

- Damn favours... always the favours.

- Yes, I gave him my word of honour that the boy would go all the way. And the kid is smart, no problem there... Too smart, if you know what I mean...

- Perfectly. Those are the worst. And there are plenty of historical examples to remind us of that... Karl Marx, Bin Laden, Adolf Hitler... Spoiled kids that play around to "perfect societies"... Usually misunderstood geniuses, that focus on manufacturing breaching ideas... And Sociologists are the worst, you know that. You can't pact with such important concepts, Goddamn it!

You know our orders to...

- I know that perfectly clear. That's why I wanted to have a word with you, Filipe. I know that on your College you've been very scrupulous of those

orders. You can expel peacefully a few dozens every year, so I've heard...

- Yes, they grow tired of it pretty quickly. The fittest, that is. The most intelligent. You don't want to grant a diploma to one of those guys: You'd be destroyed by...

- Yes I know, don't tell me their names, I beg you. I know it. Don't think I've forgotten.

- But, if your College obliges by those social sciences rules, what's upsetting you anyway?

- You see, this Lam kid, you know... Because of Masse... He proposed this, a Game. Some sort of knowledge game. So that the kid could figure things out and prove that he's worthy of his degree. I've considered a good idea in the beginning, but now... I'm not so sure.

- That could be... a two-edged sword, my friend...

- I know. Do you think that I don't know that? It would be one last chance to this Paulo Lam. But I'm afraid that...

- Afraid? What do you fear exactly?

- Afraid that this game will grant him knowledge to play even more important games, you see?

- But, if Masse gave you the rules of this game, I think he knows what he is doing, don't you?

- Yes, fine, But I was considering that... You know?

- What, in theory...

- Schiiiiihhh! Silence! I've told you not to say certain things out loud. Tell me just what you think about this.

- It would be extremely serious... But, isn't your College dedicated exclusively to Social Sciences? Surely the boy will never find out... isn't it so?

- Right. That's what Masse thinks.

- Tell me, how is he? I mean, how intelligent is he?

- Hard to say, with such a temper... Masse says it runs in the family.

- I meant, at classes, what sort of comments does he usually do? What matters interest him the most? Does he read a lot? What kind of language does he use? Does he write well? Is he clear of head? Or is he just a Magician that awoke suddenly from a Rousseau book?

- Eh eh eh... well, this is not a laughing matter. It seems he rebels with the educational system, against the pedagogy of the College's teachers.

- I didn't know there was any... You guys are working hard on your place...

- Not at all. We do things very much like you here. There are, in fact, strict rules for the teachers conduct at a College: not to let the students talk too much, not let them get too close, extreme rationality, you know that, so don't lecture me!

- Hey! Relax! It was just a comment, just a comment. You're too nervous.

- Yes, I know. I've been in a bad mood. I never saw anything like this. The boy... has an incredible



expression. Any teacher fully realises his talent in the moment. It's sudden, I tell you. I fear that he can, in fact, work this game out!

- This Paulo Lam... is beginning to interest me. But tell me more about this game that Masse has made up. He's very creative for a Mathematician... Maybe he's reading too much novels!

- I'll tell you about this game. You'll have a laugh...

My dear CST headmaster, rest assure that laughing is the last thing I'll do...

THE GAME - XXXIX

Ten minutes after saying goodbye to Sérgio, Filipe went inside his house: it was a bit cold, and his garden had ceased to be sunny like it did until that time.

- Well? How is Sérgio? He's getting to be quite old... But still healthy as a horse, right dear?

- Yes, yes, he has a fantastic health, my dear. Listen, I'll go to my Office, there's some papers that I would like to organize. Tell the waitress that I don't want to be disturbed in the next half an hour, please.

- Yes, don't worry, she's cleaning up the rooms as we speak. I'll go into the living room, to finish my oil painting: The fruit bowl is nearly finished and...

- Yes, yes, I'll go see it in a few minutes. I want to be the first to look upon my wife's art.

Filipe went inside the office, closed the door and sat down in one of his sofas. He needed to think. A phone call had to be made and a certain someone had to be reached.

Because the CST headmaster had told him thing...

Unthinkable.

THE GAME - XXX

- Good morning, uncle, did you sleep well?
 - Hum... very well, Paulo. Very well indeed. It seems that Freud was right in the catharsis part...
 - How so?
 - Never mind, some day you'll understand. Get Martins off that chair and sit down. There's 3 books there.
 - What am I studying now?
 - We'll dedicate to Linguistics. One of the corner stones of all knowledge: Language. Let me tell you that the guy that invented this game is no fool...
 - Let me at least eat something before beginning, uncle.
 - Oh, yes, of course, of course, sorry. There's some honey, bread and milk. Not too cold; drinkable. As far as the study goes, Paulo:
 - . Language History - Julia Kristeva, should be interesting, this one.
 - . The Sign- Umberto Eco, essential to know what concepts do the scholars have on the sign, Language, read it closely
 - . General Linguistics Fundaments - Jesus- António Collado, speaks of Saussure's ideas, that dreamt to found Semiology, a science that embraced Linguistics, among other sign systems ; this should be interesting, but not conclusive.
- And that's it. You're very lucky...
- Lucky? Why...?

- Because your old uncle can still help you on this part. The final part, Astronomy is my weakest, but Linguistics follows very simple principles, besides the terminology confusion of this racket complicated studios... Oh well.
- Simple principles, uncle? As far as I know it's a very much technique matter, filled with theoretical misunderstandings, concepts with double senses, complete relativity of the terminology, I don't find it simple, by what I've studied at College...
- Right, Paulo, what you study at College rarely is what really matters...
- How so? I didn't get that...
- To fully understand Linguistics, it's foundations, it's concepts, you must abstract of Linguistics itself.
- Whaaat?? That simply doesn't make sense!
- What doesn't make sense is to study Language from the completely narrow perspective of Linguistics, I assure you that!
- But what do you know about Linguistics, anyway?
- Me? Little. But I've studied deeply the theory of Modern Art.
- And what does one thing have to do with the other?
- Everything. Have you heard of Beuys?
- Ehm... no...
- Marcel Duchamp?
- I think so...
- Jackson Pollock?



- Not really, but...

- Well, if you don't know the work of those essential universal geniuses, start studying the books I've brought you. Now. I'll be back after 2 pm. I've left you lunch at the refrigerator, just heat it up in the microwave oven. I'll trade some ideas with a friend.

- Ok, uncle. Your friend... does he study Language?

- Undoubtedly. He's the most amazing painter I've ever met. And also the most unknown. That's the way life is, Paulo. For some, fame and profit. To all others, hard work.



THE GAME - XXXI

- I'm back, Paulo. Have you summed up those books?

- Yes, uncle, here are my sheets, I'll just number them to guide myself in this mess...

- I'll get some water, I'll be here.

- So, go on, nephew.

- Language History Book: Language exists to communicate, it's a process of communication of a message between two speaking individuals in this scheme: Emitter (message) - Receiver.

- It got off on the bad foot...

- What, uncle?

- Nothing, nothing, just a comment. Go ahead.

- The Linguistic signs are at the origin of any symbolism: the first act of symbolization is symbolization in and for Language. To Saussure, meaning is concept, the idea, and the significant is the acoustic image, not having a connection (random) between significant and meaning. Chomsky - one of the high exponent of Linguistics - lost interest in the Symbolic aspects of Language, studying it's strictly formal order, meaning, he abandoned the Word and focuses on the sentence structure. As far as the discussion of the origin of Language, it's considered almost unanimous that the phonetics is self-ruled, and that writing comes as a backup, to keep record of the spoken words. The

science of writing, to organize the archaeological data, distinguishes 3 types:

- . Pictogram writing
- . Ideographic writing (or hieroglyphics)
- . phonetically writing (or alphabetic)

This traditional typology is contested and replaced by a 5 category classification...

- Save your breath.
- What? Don't you want to hear, uncle?
- those are trivialities, for suckers to believe. Move on.
- Ok, if you say so... now, the book that talks about the connection of Anthropology to Linguistics.
- Now, that's more interesting, go ahead.
- The primitive man in the act of speaking, symbolism, communication, idealization or abstraction, but a participation in the universe that surrounds him. It's the main idea, of this part of the book.
- Very well. Very lucid.
- Christianity that replaced the Egyptian religion might be the reason why the elaborated Egyptian writing declined. In Egypt, writing was apart from orality, and vanished when the commercial trades with the Greek civilization began at the Mediterranean bay.
- Well, that's very important. A system of communication is replaced by an economical one... Keep going, Paulo.

- The Chinese writing: the signs are ancient representations or ancient symbols, that don't, in majority, have a visible link to the ideas expressed in the words they represent.

- That, Paulo, is essential. And shows what a symbol is in reality.

- Oh really? To me it's all a bit vague... By the way, do you have any idea of what the hint means? That movie, "The Sting" with Robert Redford and Paul Newman?

- I bought the DVD, we'll watch it next. Hold on.

- Oh, ok. The book, in it's ending part, talks about psychoanalysis and Language: Freud considers that a dream doesn't break down to a symbolism: it's true language, a system of sign, with a structure, syntax and it's own logic. On the other hand, a speech includes and imposes an ideology; and each ideology finds it's speech. Any dominant class constantly watches the practice of Language and controls it's shapes and dissemination means: information, press, literature. Literature is undoubtedly the privileged domain in which Language is practiced, précised and changed. Several significant systems seem to be able to exist without building themselves with the help of Language or from it's model: gestures, the several visual signs, photography, movies, paintings; studying all these systems as languages is the point of a vast science that includes Linguistic and that only now is beginning to take shape - Semiotics.

- Now, we seem to be getting somewhere...

- And now the book "The Sign", by Umberto Eco.

- I hear you closely.
 - The sign is used to transmit an information, inserted into a system of communication according to this scheme: Source - emitter - channel - message - receiver.
 - These guys really mix this thing up... The concepts, exposed like this are worth...nothing. God, please give some patience...
 - What's that uncle? Don't you agree with this author?
 - Clearly I don't. It's mystifying and mystifying, so that men's belly buttons remain the centre of the world... disgusting. But keep going, I'm sorry...
 - Well, Eco says this scheme applies to all communication processes. There's a common code between the emitter and the receiver, meaning, a bunch of rules that give the signs of a message some meaning. The sign as an element of the process of signification exists in a triangular relationship:
 - . Meaning (concept, idea)
 - . Significant (Acoustic image)
 - . referent (the referred thing, object)
- Signs can be:
- . univocal (1 single meaning)
 - . equivocal (several meaning)
 - . multivocal (metaphors, connotation, double meaning)
 - . vague (or symbols, with several meanings)

The students of linguistics consider that the significant smallest unit are monemes (some other call them morphemes), that group in words.

- That's what I'm saying Paulo, in Football language, these guys are missing the match! Ah ah ah!

- Eh eh eh, well, if you say so... I want to see what are your cards for this part of the game...

- From that book, anything else, Paulo?

- Yes. Several concepts: Signal - the information of quantitative order and it is estimated with base on the possible choice of binary logarithms.

- That one must be a joke. Too much computer manuals, that's for sure...

- Sign - You have a sign when by preliminary convention any sign is set by a code as a meaning. Third book: General Linguistics Fundamentals, which focuses on the ideas of Ferdinand de Saussure.

- Very well. A bit of water, please ...

- Already on water, uncle? I should be the one who is tired, babbling around, and...

- I'm tired pretty quickly when I'm fed with too much lies, Paulo...

THE GAME - XXXII

- Well, if you think that all these guys are wrong, I don't know what to...
- Nephew, these guys, as you say, all study by the same process: writing, books and more books, eating up entire libraries. But wisdom doesn't come from eating bookstores or by simple desire...
- You're up to something, I can smell it...
- Come on, we still have to watch the film and it's already 15:45 pm, hurry.
- In this book the author refers to the need of define what is: Language.
- At last! Halleluia!
- To Martinet: "The language that linguistics study is that of Men".
- After all... Such high expectations... Paulo!
- Eh eh eh, not quite what you were expecting, uncle? Moving on, Language is only manifested by the plurality of languages.
- Wrong. Dead Wrong, Paulo. I'll explain later on.
- ok, but just let me finish.
- Oh, sorry.
- The common lines that must exist in all languages and all communications systems:
 - . random of sign (the bond that unites the significant to meaning is random)
 - . oral articulated Language

. double articulation (in meaningful units- monemes / morphemes and distinctive units- phonemes)

To Saussure, Signs are split in:

. 1. Natural

. 2. Artificial

a) Representative (iconographic signs)

b) Communicative (conventional)

. motivated

. random

(both motivated and random signs are symbols)

It's understood by Language, the Code of speaking, or by other words, the system of phonic-acoustic signs that make a Language, used to communicate. Language and thought are inseparable. The author of this book establishes a connection between intelligence and the use of Language. And that's all.

- And enough. Let's see the movie now.

- Is there popcorn? Ah ah ah!

- I'll tell you what there is... There's a lot of attention! Paulo, keep your eyes wide open. It's not the movie itself that we're enjoying...

- Well?

- Be mindful of the hidden senses in the film, that might have something to do with Linguistics. That should make all the difference.



THE GAME - XXXIII

- There. I'll turn the DVD off. There. Got it?
- Got...? Got what? It's an old movie about some hustler's scheme, to make a quick buck ... What's so special about that? Don't tell me it's the music. Jazz, isn't it?
- My nephew, you'll have to straighten up for the next part of the game, Astronomy, or you won't have a chance. Now really: don't tell me that you've missed the point.
- Sure I got it! Newman and Redford were fixed to...
- Hey! You did miss the point! The phone conversation, God damn it!
- Yeah? What about it? And what does this film have to do with ...
- It's what I'm trying to explain to you. Pay attention. One of the hustlers says to the main bandit that horse X is scoring, and... he didn't finished that sentence, right?
- Yes, so what?
- Then, the bandit that was so uptight, failed to hear the rest, he didn't heard what the other was saying, in other words, he didn't fully understand that it was another horse, horse Y, who won, and he bet on horse X, loosing half a million dollars.
- Yes, that was it, but what does it mean?
- It means - in our game - that the receiver doesn't get the message of the emitter. And so that you understand what's at stake here, I have to explain

the wrong things that you've learned while studying linguistics.

- Hum... Ok, I'm all ears.

- Paulo, you read to me a classification of signs in which symbols are contained, within a category of signs. Well, it's actually the other way around.

- What do you mean, uncle?

- Symbols don't have to symbolize: another merciful lie so that the studious sees only half the Picture. And signs are not signs, they're signals.

- Whaaat??? Uncle, you're not making any sense! How can it be that ...

- It's possible, yes, Paulo. Not only possible, but true. There's a wise mixture of reality and fiction, of real concepts and half truths, in the Science of Language, being this Linguistic or Semiology or any other name these guys want to call it. It's a miracle that they finally assume that Linguistics are within the huge field of Semiology, I tell you.

- But... why is there all this mix up of concepts, uncle?

- We'll get to that. The Language we use is also, not the real Language: it's just a code, built on signs – once they have just one or a few meanings in the speech context. A sign is a symbol, not much difference there. And a Symbol... it's a whole new Thing... a different world... Nothing of what they say, I tell you that. A symbol has countless meanings, so many that it can, in itself, symbolize an entire Language, from which it is only a tiny part. And modern painting is the missing piece of the puzzle, to prove it.



- M... modern painting? You must be joking with me...
- Go get that Jackson Pollock book, from the shelf. Since you're there, get Miró and Tàpies, which are really close. Yes, that's the one, in the grey cover. Now open it in any page.
- Jesus! What the hell crazy signs are these?
- Did you heard what you just said, Paulo...?
- What I said...?

- Yes. You said: signs...

THE GAME - XXXIV

- What's wrong with that?

- Isn't it curious that yourself, without any theoretical knowledge whatsoever of this matter, said just the magic word, in a totally intuitive way? You didn't need a Linguistics dictionary to find immediately the concept, the idea that is the base of all modern art: the origin of the last human communication...

- Huh? I said that?

- Yes, yes, and don't clear yourself of that! Eh eh eh, wait just a moment. Now, please get me that Tachen book of Picasso. Thanks. Let me see where...there we go, please read this underlined passage.

- "To wish to find a meaning in all is the illness of our time"

- Got Picasso's message, Paulo...?

- What message? Uncle, this keeps getting more confusing by the minute...

- Well. Let's go, then. Picasso shows with this simple line that all modern Linguistic is going the wrong way.

- Oh really? How can that be? I don't feel that there's anything to do with it, uncle...

- The master's wise words teach us a lot, Paulo. But we need to know how to study, or we'll miss them and don't fully understand; look, like the bandit in the movie: in such a hurry, that he failed to understand! Here's the thing: modern Linguistics consider Language as just the tongue and human

speech – wrong. More: it considers that even the passing of messages, by code of understood signs from an emitter and a receiver is real communication. Imagine that! And, as obvious, the major nonsense come next: consider the signal as a sign, and consider the symbol as an under category of a sign, contemplating the egocentric attitude of man, in this intellectual masturbation relationship, of fulfilment with it's own mirror image: “ The only Language there is, is the one I use” and that can't even be considered as language, just a rudimentary code, not formed by symbols – that would have multiple meanings – but only by signs that transmit – not communicate – messages. And of course, the actual Economics of globalization affects the systems of “Communication”; Capitalism underlines the domain of the economical over the cultural facts of society, even though, just half a century ago, there was well being in the populations and that in the next human stage, it was foreseen that the quality of life would improve for all.

- Humph. It's beginning to make some sense, uncle.
- I've spoken to you about the small difference between a madmen and a genius, haven't I, Paulo? Well then, a genial artist, Antonin Artaud, invented new words.
- Invented new words? How is that possible?
- Nothing so strange. It's common among Poets. Your mother, she also invented new words, Paulo. I'll just get a notebook of her's that I still have, at my desk... There we go. Read this, Paulo.
- River of new words...?

- Yes, Paulo. From your late mom, God rest her soul.
Read...

" River of new words

*Ychmuala
Ofgtuio
Dertygh
Miochgt
Frertoa
Burnbuie*

*River of new words, that won't fit in your womb, really
Are lights of colours, faces of people, and die of yearning
I wished I was beyond, of signs of death to live
But I can't be a believer of you, before I dream of another
being*

*I believe in the world only when I hear it cry
I then think: What beautiful and profound eyes*

*The mountain is the mother of the River, it is it's pasted
and future
And the River dreams, awaken in it's pure bed
River me, thy are water, stone, absent in present and
poetry when you reach the sea*

*And to find you final ending, all you have to do is be
demented and remember "*

- Its... Its...
- I know, Paulo. Very beautiful. Your mother was very special. Very special, indeed.
- I wish I'd met my mother. I miss her so, uncle.

- I know, it's hard. Victor Masse did a good job, but nothing replaces our own blood, does it?
- Let's go back to studying, uncle. I...
- You wish to forget, I understand. Well, back on the issue: some want to make the use of Language as intelligence, which is infinitely stupid.
- Oh yeah? And why is that stu...?
- Joseph Beuys was a brilliant artist, that clearly assumed this: animals are smarter than man.
- Well then, then he was completely...
- Wrong? I've heard those brilliant intuitions don't usually fail...
- Why would he say that?
- Because of instinct. Animals, he said, use higher doses of instinct than humans, so they're much smarter: and they don't need "organized thinking" nor "written and oral Language" to be smarter than us...
- Well, What's the solution t this charade anyway?
- Remember the bandit on the film?
- Yes, what about it? It must have something to do with this, right?
- He Didn't understood what he was told, right?
- Yes, he didn't understood.



- Neither would you – as you failed to understand – Linguistics, if you hadn't had this explanation. Because, my nephew, the smallest unit of significant, they say, is monem/morpheme, that is: part of a Word. But...

- And... is it not?

- It's the Symbol. Without a shadow of a doubt. Besides, painting comes before the written "Language", anyway. But if they would admit this, this castle of cards called Linguistics would immediately crumble... It's very dangerous to think this, and even more dangerous to say it ...

- So... That's what I have to say in this part of the game?

- You have to say this; Symbol. And when they ask you the concept of symbol, you'll just say: The Modern Art History one, according to Anthropology's point of view, not Linguistics... Against historical truths, not even the dumbest College teacher can do anything. And I assure you that they'll leave you alone! And now do me a favour; take the computer to Marcelo, in Tires: it's broken again...

THE GAME - XXXV

The way to Marcelo's was relatively easy from Lisbon, but still, Paulo revised his uncle's instructions in his mind: *take the A5, get off in Carcavelos, pass the big Oeiras roundabout, go up, and on the second roundabout, turn towards Tires. From there on, just beware of the signs.* Paulo Lam had his licence for four years: a good trainee, *but very, very distracted*, according to his instructor. It was a while since he last drove his uncle's car: a 2 horse power Citroën, a relic, one of those cars without any power, but which conquered all the attention because of its personality and strange suspension, by some magical and unknown reason of the common mortal. Actually, in the slope of the Oeiras roundabout into the second roundabout (the one near the São Domingos de Rana cemetery), its limits had been tested, despite the relatively well distributed 5% of slope along the way. *But this car is so much special ...*

And it was. On the negative side.

Practically all of the inner Cascais zone was built all bumpy, like as if the architect drew the construction plans on his knee, on a ride of that 2 horse Citroën. The illegal building was a common trade for that area, so usual, that in time, it became completely legal. After all, all knew that to be legal in Portugal, they would just have to join the majority of illegal's - whatever illegality it was - and by magical arts, the endemic situation would quickly be legalized by the country's City Halls. *You can expel ten people and destroy ten houses. But two hundred, it's way more*

difficult... humph: the usual, thought Lam, as he shifted third gear in the first roundabout.

When he got to his friend's house, he parked at the door, in a street without a sidewalk. And when he left the car, Marcelo's dog greeted him too loudly for his taste, and certainly for his neighbours too.

- Hey, Marcelo, calm your dog, please!

- Oh, excuse me, Paulo, I'll put him in the back. Hold on a minute, man.

Lam watched his friend taking the dog around the back of his house. You could hear a shy bark from time to time, that quickly ended.

- I'm back. Let's open the gate to my good friend Paulo... Theere. So, Paulo, what brings you here? Is everything all right, man?

- I have a problem in my computer; I can't access the Web.

- Oh, ok.

- And I'm short on time.

- Short on time, Paulo?? Time for what? How much time have I got to fix your PC, anyway?

- It's not like that, you don't understand.

- Well Paulo, don't stand there, get inside the house.

Marcelo's house was free from any kind of decoration. All that construction was the product of countless weekends of Marcelo's work. He had come from Brazil, recently legal, and his son already spoke a perfect Portuguese, according to the doting father. As for him, he would still use typically

Brazilian expressions. Employed in a major software store in Cascais, he dealt with the worst thing in computers: virus.

- Get in the living room and sit down, I'll be right there, Paulo. Did you wanted to access a particular website? My Guri is an expert on the internet, I'll call him for you, hold on.

- Tusk, tusk... a licensed computer man, that can't even access the web... My God, is this real?

- Hey, stop pressuring me, Pauloo, you got to take it easy, I only deal with computer hardware problems. Don't ask me the sun and the moon! I'm strictly a computer technician! My boy is the real expert on the web! He's The true web designer of the house!

- Ok, ok... Well, call him, then. I have a few things to search in Google, and I haven't ever fully understood the advanced research thing...

- Oh, You see! It's not just me, man!

- Ok, mea culpa, mea culpa, go get your kid.

Lam settled in the living room, where the two computers seemed to be having a blood transfusion. There were wires every where and if a CPU mind existed, some of it's soul would be on those wires.

The house was pretty cold. Marcelo was still installing the central heating system.

Half a minute later, a kid with no more that 11 years of age entered the room and took over one of the computers. You could see that he was comfortable with the mouse and screen. Naughty, he said:



- Hi. How is everything? You know more about the Internet than my father, right?

- Bruno! You didn't even said hello to Paulo! Shake his hand, please!

- Marcelo, but I thought that your son... He is...

- Negative, *dude!* I stopped being a child a long time ago. Father, who is this?

- Easy, my son, he's a childhood friend of your daddy.

As for you, Paulo, meet my son Bruno. Bruno by first name, Dias by family's last name.

- Yes, but he is so young... I...

- 175, Paulo.

- 175 what?

- 175 IQ, not: *what*, man! Paulo, you must understand something... My son is an indigo child.

- A what?

- A infant prodigy!

THE GAME - XXXVI

- You can talk to him about any matter, Paulo, and he'll always have a different approach on things. He's like that since very little. His mother and I sometimes can't even stand him! Isn't that so, son?

- Just because you're too predictable, that's why!

- Ok, Bruno, ok, I know all that. Paulo, I must go out with my wife, we're going to the theatre. We'll talk better about the fixing of that computer of yours. I think I can fix it for you at the end of this week.

- I've brought my uncle's CPU, it's in the car and...

- It's Ok, when you leave, don't forget to drop your PC in the living room, on that corner, do you see?

- Yes yes, Ok. See you tomorrow then.

- And you, Guri, go to bed at ten o'clock, like we've talked about, ok? Not a minute more son, is that clear?

- Ok dad! I'll see you tomorrow.

- See you tomorrow... give your dad a kiss.

Marcelo went out the hall way and hurried to his car, where Alexandra was waiting for him. Bruno stood by the living room window, waving goodbye for a few moments. It was clear the affection there was in that family.

- There. Gone. Come with me, let's go to my secret place.

- Secret place? What the hell is that??



- You don't want to know... Come!

THE GAME - XXXVII

To a long corridor followed a concrete spiral stairway, unfinished. Bruno led the way, hoping and calling Paulo Lam from time to time, amused. *Where is this kid taking me...?* He entered the second door on the right and turned the lights on.

- Get in and close the door.

- Excuse me...

- Please sit-down in the bed, get yourself comfortable. There's some orange juice on that bottle. Really good, drink if you want to. I'll sit right here.

- Ok.

- Very well. Now, tell me what's upsetting you.

- Tell...? I don't...

- Come on. Trust and indigo.

- I don't believe in any of that.

- You don't know enough to believe or disbelief!

- Well, eeh... That's true...!

- I'm all ears, but I lack patience, so please, be quick.

- Humph. Ok. I have to work a problem out, but I'll never get it done... I'm trying to find something, and I feel that I need help, actually.

- What is it about?

- Astronomy. I haven't got the slightest clue, yet.



- Paulo, you don't need to prove anything...

- What do you mean? Do you think that this is art, where only creativity is required? I'm dealing with highly complex matters... You can't imagine!

- I only know that you don't have to prove anything. It's all really simple.

- If that's so simple, show me.

- Please get out by that door and wait in the corridor. When I call you, you come in. And I'll have the magical potion, that will prove you false and square that it is simple, to do what you want.

- Well, I feel like I'm being joked, but ok.

- You may go. The faster, the quickly I'll convince you.

- Joker... I'll be here, Mr Wise Guy...

- Call by my basketball nick name: Slow Motion.

- Ok...

- But I promise you that I'm faster than anyone you've ever seen!

THE GAME - XXXVIII

- Ok. Enter!
- Ok, what...
- Cover your eyes! And then come in.
- Ok, ok...
- that's it, come in slowly, in this direction; wait, I'll go and get you!

Paulo Lam was taken by Bruno to a chair. On front of him, a camping table and on it a portable computer, latest model, open on a website, sort of a forum, with countless messages and answers. When Lam opened his eyes, Bruno laughed

- What is this?? You must be joking with me?
- Hey, relax. Just promise me you won't tell my father.
- Won't tell your father...? Won't tell him what?
- I know how to make that dream of yours come true.
- What dream? Please explain!
- That one, the Astronomy one!
- Oh really? And how is that, wise guy??
- See this website?
- Yes, kind of a forum, what about it?
- Paulo, You DON'T have to prove anything. If you want a worldwide impact, you'll just need one thing.



- What is that? I fail to see...

- The Internet!

THE GAME - XXXIX

- Good morning Paulo! Come and have breakfast, it's ready. Today, the warrior rests.
- How so, uncle?
- No books. No rules. No nothing. Because today, we're going fishing, to Carcavelos.
- Come on... We're almost unveiling this damn code, and now that we are so near, you tell me that...
- I'll tell you that I've read some book index's on Astronomy, and that's unbearable. We would take ages to work those matters out and ended up banging our heads on the wall, probably. There's no time for that.
- So, what do we do? What can we do?
- From now on we'll use two things, one of mine, and the other provided by you.
- Oh really? And what are those things, might I know?
- I'll provide good sense and some history.
- what about me...?
- You, you'll provide what you do best: intuition that you have inherited from your mother. I've brought you here; now you move on and take the final step.
- And we'll... go fishing?!
- "Go fishing"? Such a lame expression, Paulo. No, we won't "go fishing", of course not.



- But you said...

- We'll hear what fishes have to say to us, that's what we'll do. You see, it's in the empty spaces that we meet true wisdom...

THE GAME - XL

- Are we there yet, uncle?
- Nope, by the coast road it will be quickly. We're nearly there. Relax a little. You'll find that fishing is so relaxing...
- I'll find that it is such a bore!!
- Paulo!
- Sorry, uncle.

- There, I'll park here. Did you know that this curve, pine tree curve used to be the most dangerous in Europe? People fell like flies here. It was insane!
- But this is Paço de Arcos, not Carcavelos!
- To me, this area reminds me Carcavelos, what do you want... old guy's things, surely eh eh eh... bring me that little fishing rod with the large transparent buoy. I'll shamelessly fish mullets today, no patience for an elitist fishing, I just want to have some fun.
- If you say so... And what do I do now?
- Now, you'll get thinking. I'll provide some hints, and we'll talk quietly. You need to notice something; what does Freud in Psychology, Christ in Religion, Chomsky in Linguistics and Einstein in Science have in common?
- Well, they're all incredibly talented in their areas of knowledge... I'm not sure on what to say...
- Jews, nephew. All sons of the jewish people... and there's someone who wants to pass you a message
- ...



- So...?

- You need to promise me something, Paulo.

- What... what is it, uncle? You've taken such a serious expression, suddenly...

- This game... it ends with your degree. By the time they'll give you that diploma, promise me that you'll forget all that you've learned in these 4 days. You'll get a job, like everyone else and game over. Promise me, on your mother's memory.

- But uncle, that's the most lightly thing to happen!

- Promise me. Now, Paulo...

- Ok. I promise, uncle.

- Good, now come and listen to the fishes, Paulo. They'll teach you how to think. Come.

THE GAME - XLI

- Uncle?
- Yes, Paulo, what is it?
- Why did you tell me that on the Jewish people...? What does it have to do with this?
- Well, maybe it's just a hunch. But... you know, all jewish culture relies on the illuminated prophet concept. It's just that...
- Yes...?
- There is just one thing that the jewish people like more than a *good* prophet.
- And what is that, uncle?
- Power. Money. It's not by chance that jewish people have always been moneylenders, lending Money at high interest rates, all over Europe, getting riche really quickly, making themselves envied by the *remedied* people, as it happened in Russia and in Hitler's Germany. After the war, they've integrated on the new emerging power...
- The United States...?
- That's right. And they fitted in so closely, that in our days, they control all economical and political power, in the most important organizations world wide...
- I just don't see how that helps us in this ending part of the game. Uncle?
- Yeah, I don't know. I've brought you some basic books on the Relativity theory and also in Quantum Physics. Give them a look, and maybe you'll find

some interesting detail, with that intuition of yours... They're in the trunk, go on.

- But uncle, these books are...

- I know, I know. Really basic school manuals, huh? But something tells me that what we're looking for is something really...simple. Come sit by my side.

- See any fish?

- I've seen and felt some stings, but don't think I've lost it. I'm just too lazy to pull the string at the right time, today. Focus, nephew. Or dream. I'll tell you the basics on this story. Einstein created the Theory of Relativity, and was also at the very foundation of Quantum Physics, even though he had some misunderstandings with Niels Bohr. Stephen Hawking's ideas are now very fashionable: he says that there was an atomic explosion that originated a huge space, the Big Bang: hence, our Universe is so big. In our days, all are searching for a Unified Theory.

- What's that? Unified Theory...?

- Yes. A Theory that explains all facts in the physical world, that binds the macro cosmos and the Theory of Relativity, to the tiny particles of matter, in Quantum Physics. It is the scientist's Holy Grail. Einstein actually centred the last 40 years of his life on finding this theory.

- Gosh, uncle... 40 years?

- That's it. And we can only scrape those highly complex matters, since you've come from Social Sciences and I... I also sail on those waters, subjective and not exact measurement of the world.

- How will we find the solution for this part of the game, then?
- We'll try to apply a typical Social Science thinking to these exact sciences. We must, in the end, think on what might have happened in the Universe. Oh, and trust on your brilliant intuition.
- What about the lead? Around the world in 80 days? What do you think it means, in this context?
- Hum. Not clear for now, nephew... Turn some page over those books. I must replace the worm on my hook.
- Have you seen this Atom scheme. Very funny, with the electrons moving around the core. It even look like the planets trajectory around the sun!

- What did you say? Paulo, what did you say?!!
- what, uncle? Are you all right?
- You've figured it out! So simple!!!
- H... how so? Relax, I just...
- It all makes sense now ! Paulo!!
- What makes sense? Uncle, you're delirious...
- Paulo, what does it take to have power?
- Well, money, the right politics connections, I don't know...
- Or... to hide certain scientific knowledge and blackmail political and economical people with that power of decision, people who also know the truth. Isn't that so? Huh?
- I clearly miss the point...



- "I know that you know that I know. And since only we know this, the game is ours!!!" - To your College! Now!!

THE GAME - XLII

- I'll leave you at campus and I'll park on the street on the top, in the Luís de Camões street. Come and meet me there, ok, Paulo?

- Ok. But what is the final answer to solve this game?

- You know, that lead they gave us, Jules Verne's Book...

- Yes? What about it??

- Phileas Fogg travelled around the world, didn't he?

- Yeees...?

- And then back to the same spot...

- Yes, back to the same spot. Uncle, I don't...

- "It's a small world"!!; Have you heard that expression, huh?

- Oh... uncle, I'm getting the picture...

- And the same way that it's a small world, so is the universe. Because the Universe is only big, if we, human beings think we're big and important, and measure it on our scale: measurements aren't absolute, but relative and that's why space can't be measured in absolute terms; therefore, Hawking's theory might not be correct. The key word here is: Atom - you said so yourself. We're arriving. You know where to find me, nephew. Good luck!

- Thank you, thank you for all, uncle. I wouldn't have made it without you!



- Hey, hold on your horses. You still don't know if you "made it"...

THE GAME - XLIII

He felt a relief now. He had Carlos word on his behalf, that assured him a Sociology degree. But Lam felt it. Amongst the crowd, nudging at the College door, the sting was distinguishable. *What now...?*

He took a few steps, to the side of the road and sat on the stone sidewalk. He took a deep breath of the cool end of the afternoon air and began to feel. A numbness took over him immediately, and among the shadows that hovered his face, two stood out. Later we would find out their names.

Between about two dozens student's, two anonymous individuals carried an indisposed student, almost unconscious, in to a car with smoked Windows.

- Let us pass, he's not feeling well.

- First the legs, you! hurry! The body was swallowed quickly by the car, and when they got in the man simply said: - Let's go! We've lost too much time!

On slow waking up, a gradual recovering of conscious followed, and immediately, the feeling of sheer terror. At the front of him the void. A massive brick wall, as dark as the whole basement. In the back, his hands tied to a metal chair. His heart started beating out of compass, several times in each second. And now, that he was conscious, he knew

that he would need every seconds of life, for the opportunity to live a little longer. He knew it. His own shadow projects ahead of him, in the old wooden brick floor, remind him of the Chinese shadow shows that he so much enjoyed as a little child. *A bit of dream in this whole nightmare.* Suddenly, another shadow merged with his own, and despite the profound quietness of the room, the psychological presence that he felt had taken shape. And life. Then, a voice that could only exist in a deep world, boomed through the room, on his very soul...

- Lam.

He shivered. He wasn't expecting that the silence would break in such quick manner. His name. Name of evil. *Time. I need a few seconds to think.*

- Lam, insisted the booming voice, followed by some seconds that felt like hours, of sheer emptiness.

- No one needs another dead philosopher, Lam.

His self domain fell. *Kill me here and now. Uncle. Think, think Goddamn it.* Either he catches' the wave of that conversation and hoped to rehabilitate, or all was lost. *I've got to buy me some time.*

- I...

- No, Lam. Not a word. Not another word or movement. If you do anything, you're dead, *Comprende hombre?*

A few seconds were enough this time so that the sound and meaning melted inside his stomach.

- Yes, sir. Sorry.

The threatening presence waited a few more seconds that seemed forever. Something would happen, but what? The second shadow stood up and waited a bit more. He then left, on his back. The silence was ended by a third shadow.

- Nice dreams, *signor* Lam.

The wood hit Lam's back of neck almost instantly. By fainting he was relieved and he didn't even knew why.

FRANCISCO CAPELO

— AN END —



(THIRD PART)

AN END - I

- You wished to see me?
- Sit down, professor... make yourself comfortable...

The chair was one of the most uncomfortable ones in the room, and Victor Masse quickly realised that. Both Kramm, and the doctor had special chairs, used in special occasions... Meticulous enquiries, personal even. And maybe that's why Victor didn't feel comfortable on that chair. And it didn't have anything to do with the chair itself, it was only a matter of statute in that context. Inferior. Kramm gazed at him, with a mocking look. Masse didn't understand it fully. But he knew that something had been said behind his back, compromising him. His integrity was at stake. But not so much: after all, to join them he was forced to do lots of things... some of those might just come back at him now. It's like that in the States: a single breath on the wrong ear, and someone gets fired. And, if there was someone who was uncertain, it would be him, not Kramm. The Doctor took a deep breath and filled his evil lungs with the same air that served Victor Masse, at that time. Their eyes met in the mist of cigarette smoke, and told nothing to each other on that brief moment.

- They tell us from Lisbon that the Goddamn game you've made up has gone bad, for us. Isn't that so, Kramm?



- Yes, doctor. Our man in Lisbon is suspicious of certain things...

- Things.

The doctor took a deep breath. When the smoke came out of his nostrils, he exhaled directly in to the space between Kramm and Masse.

- Things. What are these things, Victor? Can you tell what strange things are these?

- Well, I don't even know why I was called here, and...

- You'd better start talking, Masse, said Kramm.

- excuse me? Who gave you the right to address me in that way? After all I did for...

- Easy, Victor. I'll reformulate my question. And you better know the answer...

- I'm here to cooperate with you, as I've always had. I...

- You're jeopardizing our group and you tell me that...

- Kramm !!! Goddamn, shut up, man!

- Sorry, doctor. I only wanted to...

- I Know what you wanted. If there's anything sacred to us in this room, is the secret we carry. But how many times must I say to you that emotional speech doesn't help?

- Sorry.

- Victor. What I've said to Kramm also applies to you, you irresponsible man. I want to know something. And You'd better tell me, for your own sake and for the sake of someone closely related to you...

- I don't know what you're talking about, doctor. I've always thought that...

- Over thinking can kill you - haven't you heard? - Small thinking and obedience sometimes serve our purposes better...

- Who sent that e-mail to Lam? Huh? It was you! It was you, Masse!

Victor Masse didn't expected the accusing question to come from Kramm. In a split second he thought about what he could say, but nothing came up. *How the hell did they knew...* There was little time to respond. And he better respond immediately.

- I couldn't do otherwise... Paulo asked me directly an opinion on the theme of...

- Oh, really? Don't you think that is betraying the entire Department? How do you think Israel will respond to this? Hey? Have you thought about that, Masse?

- Kramm. Hold on. I think that's not the important issue here at this moment. Victor, let's *rewind* our thinking. Follow me, please.

- So be it. I'm here to listen. And I am calm, in opposition to Kramm, which...

- I know what you did for him in Seattle, I know. Don't think I forgot that. But consider this the last favour I do for you: the story of your cooperation with us. Start: You go from Social Sciences to Mathematics in 1970; Get a scholarship at advanced Quantum Physics in MIT in 1972; join us in 1978, keeping a sporadic participation as a teacher in the Social Theory College, in Lisbon. In the meanwhile, you adopted a boy in 1979. Lam. The son of a cheap hooker, that...

- She's not...!

- Victor! I'm talking. Do you mind? To each, it's own truth...

- The Doctor is talking, Masse. Keep quiet or else...

- Yes, Victor, or else... you know what might happen, right?

- I'm listening.

- Not enough. Tell him, Kramm, Tell him.

- In plain Portuguese, from that suburbia of the Civilized World: When a donkey speaks the other donkeys lower their ears! Ah ah a!

- Yes, thank you for reminding that, Kramm, a good Portuguese maxim never hurt anyone. But you're wrong.

- Ehm? Me? Wrong...?

- Yes. Because there's only one donkey in this room. And I'll let you decide with Victor who that donkey is...

- But, I... doctor!

- Keep quiet you too, huh? Listen, Victor, as I was saying, you adopted that kid, and have provided him well with much of what you earn here with us. Me and the Committee have nothing to say about that, but... it shows weakness. You're being too soft, a good heart. You're staying in Portugal have served you poorly. There's something there that... How is it called, Kramm?

- I believe you refer to the word "Saudade", doctor.

- Yes, that's it a natural sickness of the Portuguese people that they call "Saudade", The act of missing something or someone. An unspeakable feeling in other languages, that only they can feel. How do I put this... it softens people, makes them too good! Unbearable litany, and then fado, that dreadful music...

- Don't even think about being like that here, Masse... Not in your wildest dreams...

- He doesn't need to think of anything, Kramm. He won't dream anything whatsoever. It's the end of the line here.

- But, doctor... I gave my life, my talent to this Organization...! I did it all for Paulo, yes, but he is practically a son to me! I owe a blood debt to his mother! I promised her that...

- But do you think that you're breeding your own little mob here?

- Honour? What's that? Blood debt, Masse? You really are missing the big picture...

- Leave him, Kramm. He'll quickly realise...

- Let my Paulo alone! Punish me instead of him!!

- Well then, I fear that's not possible anymore. You see, he knows too much right now. With your help and that stupid game, you've ruined it all. Our man in Lisbon even had to kidnap and threaten him, but your boy keeps the same...

Victor Masse's levels of anxiety were rising. Clearly something serious was happening, and he could do very little to help Paulo Lam, his protégé. *I never could have children. Now they've taken the only son I ever had in life...* Think. Quickly. Something deep in those memories. He knew it. Only the life of someone is still respectful on the life of others. *That's it.*

- There's something... Something very serious that I have to tell you, doctor.

- Could that be the very thing I've been expecting to hear, Victor? That's the main issue...

- The doctor has been very patient to you, Masse. It's time you cooperate. What do you say?

- I... I'm almost finishing.
- Yes, you're through here, David doesn't want you to...
- Will you hear me out, or what!? I'm almost gone... For good. I'm... dying.

- Eh eh eh... Do you really think we believe that bedside story of yours? Huh?

It took only a few seconds and a Victor Masse look, to make the doctor understand.

- Those tests you've done... Is that it, Victor?
- I have stomach cancer. A terminal... Cancer. Has you see, you'll be rid of me pretty quickly, Kramm, like you wanted to since Seattle. So that there's no proof that I've helped you to....
- Quiet you two! It's all in the past! Don't push me, Victor, I'm warning you...

- There's not much time to test anyone. I only want one thing.

- And there will be plenty of those things you want. This holy cancer... Changes everything. Human sacrifice have always been praised around these parts...
- Save me that cheap dark humour, Kramm, you're no good at it.



- What is it that you want, Victor? What can we do for you? A final request; I believe you're still entitled to...

- Very romantic, doctor, very romantic... And they say that you don't have a heart...

- Go ahead, Victor. I'm waiting.

- Nothing for myself, doctor. I just wanted that...

AN END - II

- Do you know him? Carlos! I'm speaking to you, gosh!

- Who? Costa?

- Yes, Costa! Who do you think I'm talking about? Are you hearing me, anyway?

- Yes, I hear you. But Sergio, aren't you thinking about things that are too... humph, that can in danger certain situations... After all, who will listen to a newly degree Sociologist? There are so many now... Lam is just another one... Nowadays, Colleges seem like factories of mass production... strait into unemployment! And you know it. You know it as well as I do, as well as any other College teacher!

- Are you through yet? I keep repeating that you're not listening to me...

The headmaster stood up from his little sofa and surrounded the genuine leather chair that Carlos was sitting on, standing behind him. Carlos began to feel that there were still important parts missing from that game. Perhaps even the Ace. He was uncomfortable, with the headmaster out of his line of sight.

- Carlos, Carlos, Carlos, you fail to realise...

- I may not realise, but I sense that...

- I'm not paying you to sense or feel things! Shut up, once and for all!

A silence followed that lasted a few seconds. Too long seconds, for Carlos. Behind him, the headmaster as strolling, apparently in circles. And if he dared to turn around, he would have to face him. He knew it. And so did the headmaster.

- Did you thought this game was over, Carlos? Far from it ... The dealer determines what's the trump card... A whole new game is about to begin, Carlos. I've asked you for Costa's contact ages ago. And you dare to keep postponing it, over some Goddamn feeling... A feeling! Sometimes I wonder if you fully realise what it is to be a College teacher... You wouldn't want to end up unemploy...

- Hey, take it easy, relax. If you want Costa's contacts, I'll provide them to you. I love being a College teacher, and...

- And... you want to keep that Job, because you are an ambitious prick and because you don't have anywhere else to go! All in this profession know that it doesn't take pedagogy skills to lecture at College, all it takes is the right connections... Isn't that so, my dear, dear Professor Carlos...?

- Hum... heh... You don't have to put things that way, I, well... look, here is his contact. Take it, write it down on your notebook.

- Now that's more like it. Do you see that we're getting along? Nothing better than to speak on the same Language, isn't it so?

- I'm on your side, I just...

- You just became too zealous on this tiny matter. I understand. But more zealous than me, you're not for sure...

- Of course, of course, that was always undisputed, Sérgio... what a thought, I know my place...

- You'd better. Good, really good. That is always very useful: to know one's place, whether it's a company, a College, a supermarket... Whatever... Get the Picture? Carlos, are you by any chance not paying attention?

- No, no, please, I'm really happy here, and I,...

- Than you'd better know that good jobs don't last forever. Portugal has been in economical recession since April's 25th of '74, or have you forgotten that? The number, Carlos... I'm waiting...

- Huh... it's... 9-1-2-4-4-5-7-8-6

- Thank you very much. You may leave, I won't be needing you anymore for today.

- Yes, ok, I'm going...

Carlos stood up and Sérgio's threatening look gazed him from top to bottom.

- And... good sense, huh? Good sense!

- I... ergh. I'll go now. See you later.

Carlos's foot steps were still insecure. The bumps that his body made in such short space, weren't coordinated with his mind. Something within his soul had ceased to exist. He was almost at the door,



but stopped. The sound became clear, but contained no thoughts, only fear.

- Since when do you know that Costa is...

- I Know, and that's Enough! Leave now, Carlos. Open the door, move your body over it, close it on your way out. You can do it.

AN END - III

Cândido Costa's office was in Areeiro, near the supermarket. There was a garden in front, visited regularly by hookers and beggars from 7pm forward. It wasn't nice to see, but since the white hangings of his window were always closed, it didn't affect him nor his patients as it would seem, at first glance. Most appointments ended at 19:30, anyway.

Carlos was the first one there. He was nervous, because, after all, it was him that gave Doctor Costa's contact to the headmaster. - *I'll be there around 17:30, not before: I have some matters to attend to*, an impatient headmaster told him the day before, after insisting. Carlos felt like he would lose his virginity there. In a cheap Lisbon consulting room. Not, in fact, his idea of happiness. Nor of *first time*.

- Good afternoon. How may I help you? The receptionist asked, in a polite manner.
- I, eh... We're scheduled to doctor Costa.
- Which one? There's two: Artur and C...
- Cândido. Cândido Costa.
- Oh. The psychiatrist.
- Yes, yes, the one. Where can I wait for my turn?
- Please sit in the waiting room, it's the second door on the left, in this corridor. I'll call you there when it's time.
- Very well. Thank you.

Carlos headed for the waiting room. That floor was an mixture of everything: ophthalmology, general practise, and also psychological diseases. *A true blend... I can't imagine who is in this waiting room...Oh well, Sérgio will know what we're her for.*

- Good afternoon.

- Good afternoon!, the several patients replied at once. There wasn't any crazy guy. Or at least, it didn't manifested himself. *Boy. That's a relief. I can read a magazine and ...*

Carlos slept deeply when someone woke him up, gently.

- Hum.. yes, What is it...?

- Easy, Carlos, it's me, Sérgio. I'm here. I'm still in time, I think...

- What... what time is it? I ...?

- Don't worry, the appointment is only at 18 pm, and it's now 17:38. I'm here in time, relax.

- But what are we here for anywa...

- Hey, quiet now! I have all the cards now...

AN END - IV

- Despite your limitations, Kramm, I can't say that your intuition fails you on this affair.

- But, doctor, I...

- You? Listen: you do like the donkey; be quiet to hear the other ones. And that's my best offer. Otherwise, I'm sure that we can find you a little office back in Seattle, right next to the...

- Please don't! Anything but that, doctor, I wouldn't...

- "I'm not going to speak anymore until the doctor fully finishes his ideas; I'm not going to lie anymore until the end of my life; I'm not going to betray Masse again..." was that what you were saying, Kramm? The cat got your tongue?

- I'm sorry, doctor. I'm listening to you.

- Now that's more like it. I see that your mum thought you well... As far as you, Victor... I'll give you the last cigarette of the dead man walking. I can't say that you haven't earned it.

- I don't smoke.

- Ah ah ah! Good one, my dear Victor. Only that would make me smile in a time like this. I can give you some good news, as a start.

- I'm listening.

- The phone call that I was about to make to a certain individual, to finish off another certain individual within a week, is off. How many months have you got anyway? I mean the doctors. They always try to hide that information, but if you push hard enough...

- 2 months.

- Top's...?

- Yes. Two months at the most.

- *That's enough for me.*

- I figured that.

- Don't be a smart guy. You, here at this Committee, have no idea. You never had. You were always a bellhop. I'm sorry, an expensive bellhop. One that coasted us plenty, judging by what you've done...

- I wasn't supposed to do anything, how would you like me to...

- Yes, that's true. We don't exist, well put, to do whatever it takes...

- We exist to gently lie to the audience, Masse.

- Yes, that's right, Kramm. But, Victor, tell me: since when did your conscience got in the way of the sweet lies? When did that conscience, that was supposed to be buried, popped up? Yes, because you're not going to tell me that...

- You're right about what you've said. It was my good heart that popped out. Paulo, he...
- Was in a dead end. No diploma, no future, no independent life. Isn't that so, Masse...?
- Yes. I believe you're right, Kramm. That's it. I saw my boy in that dead end you've talked about and...
- oh, the "saudade"... isn't that, Victor? That Portuguese feeling... Bad for business, huh?
- But you're wrong about one thing. An essential thing.
- And what might that be, won't you tell me?

- Lam, he... he found out by himself.

AN END - V

- Mr. Carlos Lacerda and Mr. Sérgio Lopes. Your next. To see doctor Cândido Costa.

- Right here! We're going... Come, Carlos.

- Very well. Head for room 7, please. The doctor is expecting you. You'll pay to me on your way out; 35 Euros for the first appointment.

- Welcome to this side of town, Carlos.

Human flesh is cheap, here.

- Carlos, how are you? Mr. Sérgio, right? Come in, come in please. Have a seat on this big sofa. I'll just close the door...

Good afternoon, how are you, Costa? How is Rita, is she ok?

- Yes, thanks, she and the kids are great, and...

- Mr. Cândido Costa, Sérgio interrupted in a rude manner.

- Y... yes? Mr. Sérgio, what can I do for you? By what I've discussed with Carlos, you seem to have no psychological disorder, so I find this appointment a little strang...

- You are the psychiatrist of one of our student's.

- I... I am...? Carlos, what is this...

- Relax. That student is called Lam. Paulo Lam.

- I fear I don't understand you, my dear Sir. I can't reveal insights on my other clients. It's strictly

forbidden by the Mental Health Professionals Association, and...

- Really? And isn't that Association presided by a certain Miguel? Miguel... Cunha, to be more accurate...?

- H... How do you know... listen, I don't know what you're up to, but... I will not continue this appointment, I sorry Carlos, I...

- Read.

- W... what? Read what?

- This letter.

Sérgio reached out a letter with the stamp of an Association.

- MHPA.

- The stamp of Mental Health Professionals Association ...

- Yes. Quite simple to grasp, really, doctor.

- It's... it's a letter from... from...

- Your honourable President, Miguel Cunha. Read, please read before you kick us out of this room, and to see what's at stake here, my dear *doctor* Cândido... Costa.

Dr. Cândido had never seen that kind of letter. It was a special envelope, used only in the most extreme situations, judging by what he heard from some colleagues. Generally it was used when the MHPA wanted to communicate dismissals, or something worst. Even though that day was tough and with difficult cases, nothing resembled this.



And what did this STC headmaster, a Social Sciences College doing there? Before that letter and that stamp, it was clear that he knew more than he was willing to share.

- M... May I open this letter?

- You Should. And I assure that all you fear isn't substantiated, Dr. Cândido. Trust me on this one. But go ahead, open that letter and read it's content with you own eyes.

Open the letter and... open you eyes, schmuck.

AN END - VI

As Doctor Cândido Costa read that mysterious letter intrigued, Carlos was asking himself what kind of game was being played, as the headmaster seemed more and more confident; he could read it in his eyes.

- So, doctor Cândido, you realise now what must be done...? Quite simple to understand, It seems to me...

- Mr. headmaster, this goes against all my Professional ethics...

- Hey, let's not over do it, ok? A few milligrams more, a few milligrams less... What's that anyway, my dear doctor...Hum? Abstract numbers, names for nothing... Think it over and consider what's at stake...

- What's at stake is the mental health of one of my patients! If you think that I'm going to jeopardize...

- Yes, you will. And don't even dare to question that, my dear doctor.

- But this... Miguel can't do this to me! If Paulo Lam ceases to take his Haldol, he...

- He will go in to a Psychotic episode. Was that what you were saying, doctor? Oh, but we know that... We know... eh eh eh...

- You dare to mock this situation? I... I... Carlos! What the hell...

- Be very quiet, Carlos. You're here strictly to listen, do you hear it? Don't even dare to move an inch. As for you, doctor... We know the effects of Haldol... we sure do... it's a drug, isn't it? How should I put it... a drug that has become legal for therapeutically use. Now that's a big professional ethics...

- Do you dare to contest my prescription to Paulo? Do you even imagine the psychic state that he was in, when he got here, to me? You don't know anything about medical acts or psychiatry!

- Oh doctor, let's get this straight once and for all... I know that there are illegal drugs - heroin, cocaine, even hashish, by God, is considered a drug, punishable by law; and there are other drugs, prescribed by physicians, legally, without consequences. And Psychiatrists know this well, oh they do... But that's beside the point, secondary.

- Oh really? And can you tell me what Akineton has to do with Haldol? Yes, because if I change radically Paulo's prescription, he will enter immediately in discompensation, and...

- In to the realm of magma symbols. In the primary forces world. Since 1900 that we all know that, doctor. It doesn't take a great intelligence to realise that, just read a little Freud.

- But, then... you want that Paulo Lam goes directly into... into...

- Madness? Yes, lets say that there is 15, 20% chances of that happening. But we count on getting him in the middle of the crisis, and cut through that path, not letting him go there. At least not so directly. Perhaps an half-term...



- Half-term? Half-term of Madness? I fear that there isn't such thing. I don't understand...

- My dear *doctor*...

... *There's so many things that you don't understand...*

AN END - VII

- Ah ah ah!!! Eh eh eh!! You mean to tell me that...
... ah ah ah!

- Yes, very funny, doctor... very funny!

The doctor suddenly stopped laughing, and his look was the one of a monk that had just gotten out of ten years confined, at some cave in some mountain of the world's end. He meditated for a while. Then in a deep booming voice, he said:

- You... you're mocking us, Victor. This is going to cost you...

- A lot? My dear doctor... I'll be dead in a few months... How can this real joke cost me... won't you tell me?

- Yes, really, Masse's got a point there, doctor...

- Lam. Paulo Lam, he... figured this all out by himself? But how? How?

- Simply by intuition.

- What?? intuition, you say...?

- Yes. My boy is very special. His mother had a unique sensibility, and passed it on to his son all her human qualities.

- You're lying, Masse! She was a cheap whore! Doctor, I...

- Hey, you. That donkey thing is still not on that thick head, is it?

- Ehm... Sorry.

- Keep going, Victor. You have 3 minutes.
- Well, as I was saying, she was an unknown poet, of high quality – as you see Kramm, the “saudade” is good for something...! They may not have the world in their hands, but there’s still some human dignity left. And mainly, imagination, which sets them apart from the German, hey?
- You don’t... doctor!
- What do you want? Can’t we tell a truth to ourselves from time to time, for a change? Who won world war two, anyway, Kramm? Huh? Be careful, you’re still on a short leash...
- Humph.
- But back to our Lam. Paulo, isn’t it? Paulo Lam – quite a name, huh? Kramm?
- Yes, yes. Quite a name. Quite a name, doctor.
- So this Lam boy of yours discovered what we’ve been hiding for decades...
- At an intuition glance.
- Do you know what they did to Einstein, Victor? You should...
- Yes. Gagged him quietly. The usual in a genius life. His luck was being discovered... His final theory was...
- Pure and simply silenced. And he was discovered, as you say, because we needed the Atom bomb, otherwise he would have kept being an unknown library rat for all his natural life. He probably deserved it. No one needs an illuminated genius, specially in science. Oh, right , Victor. And he was silenced by his own people, that has kept that

dangerous theory locked away in Jerusalem, to blackmail us and also because it would be too dangerous to have the whole world population to go mad at once... Well. And the rest was highlighted. For people to see. For people to celebrate. As if it was the true magical formula in the Universe. Don't tell me you didn't knew that...

- I... eh... yes, I was aware of all those things, doctor, but... well, it's only conspiracy theories that go around.. There's hardly any proof that...

- There better not be proof...! I really hope our friends from over there have been making their homework. They are in fact keepers of the temple of those ideas... Are they not, Kramm?

- And a fine temple it is, doctor... a fine temple... eh eh eh...

- But you didn't think that your boy would get so far, is that it?

- Exactly! I... put together a game that only an illuminated and a master could solve, I...

- We got that, Victor. We got that. Kramm, attend the excelled Mr. Victor Masse to the door.

- Victor.

- Y... yes?

- You'll have a prince's life until you die. And maybe even after that day. NASA will make you a hero, because of your magnetic fields theory...

- I'm going to Hotel Victory, Is that it, doctor?

- So you know. Lucid until the end, right? And also... out of touch...

- Just one more thing...

- You're asking too much in these days. Oh well, spit it out.

- I wanted to know how my boy, well... How has he become a danger to our organization?

- The Web. The web - always it, isn't that so, Victor? Our boys in Echelon sent us a message. A message at least... worrying.

- What did it say?

- You don't want to know. You don't want to know... Your boy's intuition is good for something, after all... Too bad that what he found was discovered long ago... and for the public sake, mustn't come out. And you knew that as well as anyone. And now get out of my sight. Forever. And don't worry... I'll go over to your grave a put some flowers there, from time to time...

AN END - VIII

- Can you tell me what your goal is? Yes, because if I don't make this you're asking of me...

- Don't even consider it, doctor. You know perfectly clear that me and my friend Miguel, are just following orders.

- Yes, I assume so...

- Oh, yes. And now, we've updated on what's expected from you. And don't even dream of changing your lines in this movie, doctor... There's something's not worth fighting for. Don't expose yourself and your own... Is it necessary to go on?

- No, no. I fully understand that all this is a part of something bigger, I'm sure ... That Miguel Cunha wouldn't ask this if...

- Exactly, there you go doctor. You see, Paulo Lam is playing a game... a risky one! And you're not the only one concerned about the boy's well being. So are we. In his psychic and... physical well being, if you catch my drift...

- Oh, surely, surely I do. Well, since you put it like that, all is different, Mr... eh...

- Sérgio. Headmaster Sérgio. You better get this, doctor Cândido: I'm here to try to help you. Because if this matter goes out of my hands, another cock will sing... And I won't be able play a game that I don't know my cards anymore... But I do know how to count them and guess the trump, eh eh eh...

- Yes, Ok. I just want to protec...

- Protect the boy. Yes, we share that concern, don't worry. Well, I think that all was said. And you know, on his next appointment, inform him that his medication will change from Haldol to...

- Yes, yes, I know. I know what must be done. Miguel made it perfectly clear. Well, I'll see you at the door.

- Cândido, I...

- I understand, Carlos, we'll talk later. Give my best regards to your father. Dear headmaster, I bid you farewell, I have my next appointment at...

- Yes, yes, nor will I take more of your time. From now on you'll get instructions by e-mail, but only in the beginning; we'll find a better way to...

- I'm sorry? How do you know my e-mail? Not even Carlos knows it...

- Doctor, doctor... What does a concerned headmaster doesn't do for his favourite student... Huh?

AN END - IX

- Can you please explain what's just happened in the...

- At your friend's office? Is that what you were about to say, Carlos?

- Yes, I, eh...

- You? You just played your part. And very well: not a single note out of line. Congratulations!

- Yes, yes. Make fun all you want, but...

- But, what? My dear Carlos, do you think that our American friends are still asleep? Do you actually think that I'm the mentor of this entire plot?

- So, you admit this is only a...

- Life, Carlos. Life is just that, nothing more. Don't be deluded: this game began as a knowledge game, but it evolved to a power game. Because, you know it. Come on, say it.. say it...

- Knowledge is... is... Power...?

- You do know... You did learn something in that College. It's not so much a problem of who gets to that knowledge, it's what they do with it. If it's a guy with no credibility, ok: no one...

- ... will listen to him...? Is that it?

- Right on the spot; You're a clever guy, after all. But a great equalizer has come; the pseudo-democratic tool that reaches everything and everyone and turns

them into basement revolutionaries... And you know what I'm talking about... a new mean to communicate...

- The... the internet...? but how...

- It's quite simple. I can't tell you all, because they don't tell me either, but...

- It sure would be nice to get rid of those snobbish American guys, and...

- Shut your mouth! They've always been useful to this country. Remember Kissinger?

- Yeah, he...

- He and Carlucci came in quite in handy after the April 25th revolution, so shut your mouth... otherwise we'd turned into communists, huh...?

- Well, the only disadvantage that I see in that is... Well, the U.S.A. blockade that follows...

- I know, I know. Regrettable. And it doesn't lead to anything but the people's misery. Regrettable, but the phantoms on the American side are always stronger... What do you expect? Too many years of cold war... Two coffees, please.

- No, not for me, Sérgio. I'll just have a mineral water, please. Thank you.

- Oh? Ok, you're the boss of yourself... Since you always have coffee...

- Yes, yes, but not now. I don't feel like it. Anyway, tell me what those Americans...

- Quiet, you.



- Oh, sorry. But tell me, what do they want from Lam...?

- Just one thing, my dear Carlos.

- One thing...? What do they want?

- For him to shut up forever, that's obvious.

- But... they're not thinking of... you know... it's Masse's boy, think about it... we need to protect him. Is there nothing we could do?

- But are you asleep today? Could it be that you've missed the point? Listen to me carefully, and by God speak in a low voice.

My dear Carlos, from now on there's only trumps in this game...

AN END - X

- Susana. Susana! I'm talking to you!
 - Again? What do you want from me?
 - You know damn well What I want. I want to talk to you about the...
 - Yes, yes, I know. But girl, What's so special about him? There's so many like that here... Surely he's not a single case. Why do you care like that? The doctor knows, don't you think?
 - The doctor comes here to control his medication. And you know damn well that...
- Catarina was interrupted by someone who passed with a tray too near her, making her apprehensive. Susana took her instant distraction and stood up bold, heading for the exit of the canteen of the Gaiyota Clinic. It was a VIP clinic. There, patients only were accepted by personal invitation of one of the most respected doctors: doctor António, doctor Ferreira, or doctor Sebastião.
- Hey! Where are you going?
 - I'm on my break. What do you want from me anyway?
 - Come here, woman. I'll speak in a low voice, so hear me out this time, ok?
 - Yes, yes, ok, tell me.
 - Do you know what's his Haldol dosage at this time, do you?

- You don't have any idea of his record, his past, clinical stor...

- Yes, I do!

- Don't tell me that... That's very serious, You can be...

- Quiet. Quiet! Listen to me, Susana.

- Go ahead. I don't even know why you have such a good heart: we can't do anything for these poor dev...

- He is a perfectly normal boy, do you hear me? It's a poorly told tale, he...

- Good afternoon, Catarina, everything all right?

- Oh, hello doctor, how are you? I...

- Listen, I need you to go to the X-ray room. There's a gentleman that...

- Yes, yes, I'm going, I'll go now, let me just say goodbye to Susana, which...

- Well, I'm going too, to reception, Conceição wishes to speak to me, I think.

Catarina let him walk away and pulled Susana by her sweater, as if begging for her own life.

- Hey! What now...?

- Something's fishy, Susana. This isn't right. They're keeping the Haldol dosage through the roof and constant so that...

- To keep him a vegetable! There's so many of those... Are you still amazed?

- The boy tried to talk to me the other day, Susana, he talked to me!
- And... what did he said...?
- He told me... told me that he fell into a trap. That his doctor double crossed him.
- And you still believe these guys? Most of them are wacky, almost all of them are... with a persecution complex and stuff...
- Not this one, he is... special.
- How do you know?
- Well... he is being kept with 8 milligrams, woman.
- That's heavy stuff all right... Few can take that dosage. In a day that's equivalent to...
- Oh, my God, can't you see ... it's not a day...

- WHAAAAAT!!???

AN END - XI

- A... Are you sure... what, twice...
- Twice. A day. In the morning and on the middle of the afternoon. He practically doesn't even wake up!
- E... eight...
- Eight milligrams, Susana.
- But that's... Really, he'll really become a vegetable that way. Have you warned doctor Antón...
- He knows.
- How do you know that?
- I got the hint from Conceição: she overheard them talking.
- My God... then... then they want...
- They want to silence him. Plane and simple, Susana. It's as simple as that.
- Oh... Yes, You must have a point there, he... he... oh, poor guy...
- that's right, Susana. It's not right. They're throwing sand in our eyes. From the beginning.
- How long is he here...?
- Here? 4 and a half months. And with no discharge expectations. It seems that some doctor in the States paid him a long staying in this clinic. We just got to keep him... harmless. If you follow my lead...
- Yes, yes, of course. But... this stay in here at the clinic is... for how long?
- Life.



- What!!???

- You heard me...

But I haven't signed a blank paper, dear Susana... And I'll get to the bottom of this... Yes I am...

AN END - XII

It was a shady day. And the bedroom was smothered. A boy lied in a wide bed, in a deep coma, where there are no dreams and all relations with reality cease. Slowly, someone sneaked into the bedroom. Closed the door gently, carefully checking if anyone on the outside had been monitoring the movements. It was something at least... risky, that it was doing. And being caught there, in a high security room was enough for a disciplinary process and perhaps even, being dismissed. She knew it. However, there was a pen that should disappear briefly and a message written on that boy's hand that should be erased. By her. A rough move and an odd noise startled her. She left her apprehension turn in to calm. The calm that courage always reaches, if it's a little patient. She headed for the bed. *I hope he had the time to write... If someone catches me here... Where can that pen be? Oh, under the bed. I wonder if he had the time? If he understood what I said to him yesterday, on those brief moments when I explained him what to do...Oh!*

- Here we are, doctor Linhares. Here we are. I'll just close the door... There. This way we're more comfortable...

- He's been having his twice a day dosage of...

- Surely. The instructions we have are very clear, and...

- He mustn't wake up. Ever! You heard me? Which nurse is taking care of him? It must be someone you can fully trust, do you hear that, Sebastião??
- Of course, of course. It's nurse Catarina, she's of the most worthy trust, and...
- There. Good. I've just come to see with my own eyes. And if he wakes up, even for a moment, increase the dosage at once! His body will get used, and...
- Yes, yes, it's normal, we know... The orders are very clear, doctor.
- I hope so. You know perfectly what's at stake. Or at least that this is a special matter The Americans are very interested that...
- I know that really well, doctor, relax. I've been spoken to...
- I don't even want to know details. Don't talk to anyone else about this matter. It's strictly between the three of us. Got that?
- Absolutely, doctor.
- Well, moving on. I still have to go to the hospital. Late shift today, and...
- Doctor... eeh... I would like to know something, if it's all right with you.
- Yes...?
- Who gave the order to...
- I've issued the order. But who authorized that order...?
- Y... yes, doctor...?



- It would astound you. I assure you it would. You see, my friend... You can't trust anyone in this life... Anyone!

... Anyone. Not even...

AN END - XIII

They both got out of the room, still talking, but of another matter. The patient was still quiet, but something was moving under the bed. *I wonder if it is Ok to exit now...?* Catarina studied the quietness and the noises and decided by her gestures. *Swiftly and quick.* Like a love sigh. She took the glass of water from across the bed, still moving underneath it, to Lam's left hand side, that was hanging from the bed. Luckily, his palm was facing down; otherwise, the doctors would have seen and all would be lost. She reached her pocket for a flashlight pen, pointed it to Lam's hand and... saw it. When he moved, in delirious to the other side, she knew what had to be done. *Gonçalves told me that they're transferring him to the United States on September 13th. I'll have to act quickly...* She got up in a jump, and washed his hand with water from the bedside glass. Leave the glass where it was. Don't make a noise. Leave quietly.

And...

Decide when to make the next move.

AN END - XIV

The corridors in the Gaivota clinic, in Cascais, were deserted. Exactly what Catarina was expecting of a sunny Thursday's afternoon. September 12th. D Day. *All the nurses gave the last dosage to all patients, and went away... perfect.* She transported a stretcher as quietly as possible, which wheels she had oiled previously at 15:34 pm. The operation would have to be... discreet. Quick. Painless. And Catarina knew it. She was on her own risk, because Susana wouldn't "want to be fired over that, isn't it so, Catarina?".

I've passed through Alberto, She said to herself.

Catarina went down the X-ray corridor, towards an attached room.

- Where are you going, Catarina?

- M... Mr... doctor Sebastião, I'm going to get Mr. Correia, here on room...

- Oh, Ok. But drop by room twelve. I want to speak to you about the transfer of the patient from room 63.

- Y... yes, Sir, I'll be right there.

I must move faster than I thought. Even more.

If that's possible.

AN END - XV

A nurse was taking a patient in a stretcher down the corridor that gave access to rooms 50 to 75. She was in a haste.

- Halt!

- Yes, Alberto? What is it...?

- Who do you take there?

- Oh, just a transferring patient...

- From what room? I wasn't notified...

- Oh come on... It was doctor Sebastião that...

- And why is he covered with a sheet? Catarina, you know that we can't transfer...

- Listen, call doctor Sebastião, if you want. It's fine by me...

- But before I must see who you're carrying there... I find this very strange...

- Must I uncover him? It's patient from room 63, he is severely burned, any contact with the sun... He's very sensitive, and...

- But I'm sure that lifting the sheet just a little is ok. It's just to make sure that...

- Must it be? I'm really late...

- Oh, my God!

- I told you so... not a pretty sight... Let me cover him again.



- What is this story? I've never heard of this patient from room...

- Top Secret.

- H... How so? That's a good one... Are you joking me?

- Doctor Sebastião asked me complete secrecy on this one. Complete and absolute secrecy on his identity. He came here during the night, when no one was around!

- Well, that secrecy of identity is more normal around here, in deed. Let me just pick up this phone call...

- May I go now?

- Go on then, and quit bugging me!

And now... on to the next move.

AN END - XVI

A driver parks an ambulance of the clinic in the court yard. It's 16:11 pm. He waits a little, with the engine off.

- Look at that... an ambulance on duty, here, at this time? I wasn't notified that... I'll check it out.

While the guard heads for the ambulance, a nurse carries a patient with some unrest.

- Never mind, Alcides!

- what's that, Catarina?

- It's to transfer this patient to the Parede Clinic. Help me here with these stairs, please.

- Oh, all right, I'm going, I'm going.

- Open the ambulance door, Alcides.

- There you go. But why isn't the driver helping us...?

- Never mind that. It's almost weekend. They must be exhausted, for sure. If no that...

- If not that, public servants at it's best, Catarina! Ah ah ah!

- You see, you know... eh eh eh... There, I'm up here, now close the door, Alcides. See you later.

- But... Is there no doctor with you?

- At this time?? Are you crazy?

- Yep... Eh eh. Already on the weekend setting. I'll see you Monday, then.



- Driver, let's go!

The ambulance drove away gently. Five kilometres from there, at the old Carcavelos market, the driver stopped. Left his seat, went around the vehicle and opened the back door.

- May I know what we're carrying? This is all very strange. Where's the doctor anyway?

- A really good disguise. Thank you, Susana.

AN END - XVII

- Yours is pretty good too. He really looks like a burned patient.
- While you drove I was clearing his face with some water and a cloth... He is almost back at his former shape.
- But what are you going to do from now on, woman? This ambulance will soon be tracked, and...
- Mystery...
- Don't make fun of these things, Catarina. This is dead serious. Here take this cloth to clear...
- You're finger prints, Susana. I know, I know. I'll do that right now. I'll just wake the boy up. He's been very good, you know?
- But what did he wrote on his hand, anyway?
- Secret, Susana, secret.
- Well, that's too many secrets for me; I've had my share of adventure today. If Alcides would come closer, he would realise that...
- Men. They're babies, Susana - they really are babies. They don't realise anything, girl.
- What are you going to do from now on? You've put yourself in a position...
- No such thing.
- How so? Don't you think that they'll call the poli...



- Susana, Susana... If I'm thinking straight, calling the police is the last thing those bastards will do...

AN END - XVIII

- W... Where am I? I...

- Easy. Wake up slowly. I've taken almost all the Haldol, but it must be gradual.

Lam looked at Catarina as if she was his own mother and Catarina looked at him as if he was her baby. The baby that she never had. Helpless. Big, Clumsy, like they all are. And she wanted to take good care of him. As if it was the most important thing of her life. As if it was... the last thing she'd ever make in her life. She was ready to give her life for the truth of that child that she carried with her. She would go around the world to take him from that numbness induced by the medical drugs.

- Here, take some coffee. But not too much. We must wait until it kicks in. Rest. But try to keep lucid. Do you hear me?

- Y... yes, I...

- What's your name?

- It's all cloudy, I don't...

- Your name. Your parents, try to remember them. How did they name you?

- I... now I remember... I only had a mother.

- You see...

- She's... She's dead.

- What's your name?



- Lam. Paulo. Paulo Lam.

- Paulo Lam, I've never heard such a beautiful name like yours.

AN END - XIX

- Now you're much more awoken, Lam, and that's fine. But you still have to take a small dosage of Haldol to...

- I've seen a psychiatrist for over 6 years: don't you think I know that? Spare me, Catarina.

- Oh yeah, right. Sorry, I forgotten for a while. What now? What do you want to do?

- Have you seen my message? On my left hand?

- Yes. And you'll laugh...

- I still don't have enough strength to laugh, Catarina. What is it?

- I... I have a nephew that Works in that exact area. He Works in a coffee shop. A Coffee shop with lots of...

- Does it?

- Yes, it does.

- Catarina, I don't know why you're doing this for me, but I sense that I'm with the right person to conclude this matter, once and for all.

- Yes...

I sense it too, Lam. I Sense it too.

AN END - XX

- What?? Internal transfer, you incompetent!! I-N-T-E-R-N-A-L! Not to take the patient outside!! Do you know what it means, by chance? Do you? Huh?

- Yes, doctor Sebastião, yes, I do, from one room to anot...

- From one room to another one, WHITIN the clinic! You lousy scum!! What now??? Where is the patient from room 65? Where, WHERE? Tell me if you see him!!

- I... I... She told me that the doctor authorized it, a patient from room 63, a burned one, I...

- And you believed it, like a foul you are!! You fell like a duck!! A patient from the most secured wing on this clinic!! Imagine that, HEY?? I don't know what's keeping me from...

- Easy, Sebastião. Easy.

- Hum? Oh, António, you're there. What do you say to this? What do you say to this incompet...

- Come to room 4.

- What?

- Doctor Linhares is here.

- D... d... doctor...

- L-I-N-H-A-R-E-S. Got that? When you're through shouting, come and join us.

- Yes, I...

- You're almost done here, right?



- Yes, yes, I'll catch up, I...
- He despises persons that are late. Remember what happened to Guedes...? Need I to say more?

AN END - XXI

Doctor Linhares was facing the window, apparently without the will to turn, even though the door had been closed a few seconds ago. Sebastião knew that something would happen to him, but he didn't know exactly what. There was guilt to distribute, but... he was the visible face of that particular case. Very particular. He didn't want him to turn around. He didn't want him to.

- You may leave, António. I wish to be alone with Sebastião. But stay by the door.

- Yes, Sir.

He kept his back turned. Finally, he turned around. Slowly as if he was drinking a twenty year old scotch, with no haste to finish it.

- My dear Sebastião...

- Doctor, I can explain...

- And do you think that you can explain the unexplainable? Do you know how many years have I worked in these kinds of clinics and never, ever...

- Doctor, I...

- You? You're here as a favour. And all here know it. And you were accusing poor Alberto of being... incompetent? You're lucky to live in Portugal, where the health system is what it is... I would like to see you in a private clinic abroad!

- Doctor, please, you don't have to say...

- What? I don't have to say what? Shut your mouth. António!

- Did you called me, doctor?

- Sebastião is going on vacations. For two weeks, at least!

- But doctor, why?

- Because, my "friend", the air here is too... professional for you. Perhaps when your mind is cleared up... Drop by Conceição, and wait by António there, he will arrange it - won't you António!??

- Yes, doctor, absolutely.

- What are we going to do to him, doctor Linhares? He's a good man, and...

- That's exactly the problem with this country, António: everybody is a "good man", they're all nice people, but...

- But...?

- This case went too far. I must take action... Radical action.

- Do you want me to call the police?

- No. I want you to call Alberto and also Alcides. I will tell them that everything is all right and that they shouldn't talk about this to... No one!

- But... you've just said that...

- Listen, António... Do you actually think that you know more than me on this matter...?

AN END - XXII

- I'm clear. Let's go.
- Don't you want another sip of coff...
- Not really. By the way: what day is it?
- 28... 28th of...
- Come on, don't be scared. I'm ready for anything.
- Of... September. We're in September, Lam.
- Hum... let me take a deep breathe.
- It takes it's time, this is...
- Heavy? Heavy is taking minimum dosage of Haldol, everyday, for years. That, yes, is a prison! Now I feel...pure! Free from all the drugs.
- But you know that...
- It won't last forever? Yes, perhaps. But let me enjoy the moment. Let's go to your nephew's coffee shop. Can you afford a taxi?
- Yes, I'm prepared for several days. Don't worry. My colleague left this ambulance here to keep unnoticed. It's a nearly deserted place and no one will noti...
- Ambulance? We're in a ambulance?
- Yes! Haven't you noticed? Ah ah ah! You didn't even had time to notice that, huh?
- Yes, but it makes perfectly sense, actually...
- How so? What do you mean by that...?
- You see, Catarina, what I need to do from now on is a...



- Y... yes?

- It's an... Emergency!

AN END - XXIII

- Please, stop here sir. This is it, Lam.

- Let's go, then.

The coffee shop was right ahead of the Chiado Museum, and it was hard to get to it: taxi drivers usually don't like that part of Lisbon, and that's why Catarina asked to stop in front of the FNAC store, near a small fado van, of the aggressive interviewers of silly enquiries and expensive shops.

- Where's that coffee anyway? You told the Taxi driver that this was it...

- This way were more comfortable. And you get to walk a little bit, get some cool air. Come!

They went by São Carlos theatre, and turned right. Before, some beggars asked the usual small coins.

- In the parallel street is the College of Fine Arts. Did you know that, Lam? A cousin of mine is there, graduating on paint...

- Bah.

- What do you mean? Don't tell me that you don't enjoy Art? Aren't you a sensible one?

- Nowadays, with this sort of city life, who can find time for those things?? That's all a Picture for the foreign to see! But... You're wrong: I do love paintings and I draw quite a lot.

- Really? Me too! What sort of things do you draw?

- Some dummies... all abstract. I'm bored by the figurative... I find a washed out copy of the world. They should ban figurative canvas, like Hitler did with the degenerative Art of his time! Eh eh eh...
- I can't believe my ears... you're a...
- Don't believe it, because I'm joking with you!
- Come on!
- Relax. You and me get along quite well. Listen, are we there yet?
- We're getting there now. See that sign, there?
- Where?
- On the right from the bookstore, see it?
- Oh, yes. Finally.
- Please read out loud what it says.
- Please! Can't you see? Why...
- Please, indulge me.
- Cafe- Net. What about it?

- Nothing. I just wanted you to remind me of the Word you've written in your hand: N-E-T...

AN END - XXIV

- I've told you not to call me on this line. It's not safe. It's the last time, you hear me?

- I'm sorry, I'll then give you the details by M, but this is important, I had to tell you. The... The birdie is out of the nest.

- Too bad. We had provided him with such a cosy nest...

- It seems that he didn't liked it. You know how these young birds are... always with the greatness thinking...

- I know, I know how these things are. But... How did he do it?

- He... had an accomplice, doctor.

- Oh really? That's some news... Some dreamy teenager that fell for the defenceless victim, perhaps...?

- Something like that, yes. What should I do now?

- Now, you wait.

- I... wait?

- Hey, relax. I know that you have a fast trigger, but now the ball is in the other team. Our Interpol man will do his job, and our boys in the satellites will shed some light that we need, ok?

Surely, it takes time, but...

- Doctor...

- Yeeess?



- We may not have that time... What if they use the...

- My friend, if they use it, than it will be the end of the world, be sure of that...

AN END - XXXV

- Aunt Catarina! Everything Ok? How are you?
- Hi, Diogo, How are you? How's my favourite nephew?
- Favourite and... only! Eh eh eh.
- Yes, that too, you're right; But you're still my favourite nephew, never mind that!
- Is this your boyfriend?
- Oh boy, you're making me blush... It's just a friend, that...
- Hi. I needed to access the Internet for about half an hour. I really must, it's a very important matter, and...
- Then you've come to the right place! This Cybercafé has state of the art technology and...
- And all the privacy in the world, isn't it so? Yeah, we're also interested in that. No one can see what we're doing on the compu...
- Hey, are you going to install some virus or something, Catarina? Listen, the owner doesn't...
- No such thing, nephew, no such thing. It's an important matter, that we must deal through the Internet. Is there any available PC, right now? I know that you have small rooms for the Net surfers, don't you?
- Yes, yes, go into computer number 4, it's vacant, some people just left there. I'll see you and... be wise in what you're about to do!

- Come on, don't worry, Diogo... since when has your aunt let you down, huh?

- There's always a first time! I'm joking, I'm joking. PC number 4, is all yours. I'll set it for half an hour.

- One. One hour, Catarina, it's better.

- Yes. One hour, Diogo. I'll see you.

- Ok, go.

The little room was in fact, quite big, considering the small size of the whole Cybercafé. An immensity of wires, eagerly hoped for freedom, from its plastic tube prisons.

- Lam. May I know what we're doing here?

- Yes, you may. I'll just Access the web... There we go. And now, yata yata yata.

- Yata yata yata??

- The AEIOU chat room. Don't you know it? It's a flirting spot.

- Lam, I took all these chances over... I'm starting to feel fu...

- Furious? Oh, there's no point in that. Hold on, I'll go in to the nonsense chat room.

- What is that? Clearly, you're not making sense... Would you like to explain to me what you're do...

- We're going into a private chat room, Catarina.

- Yees? And you'll ... Are you going to flirt with someone with me watching? Don't even think about that!



- Catarina, relax. There, we're in the chat room. And now I'll wait for a miracle. And you'll pray too.
- Pray, me? Ah ah ah! I've never been religious...
- Oh well. You'll pray that Slow Motion get's in this chat room in the next hour.
- Slow Motion? What's that?? And you ... Wait for a miracle...?
- And I'll wait for a miracle, yes... The miracle of Slow Motion really being who I think he is...

AN END - XXVI

On the interior room of that cybercafé, a detection software kept working. There has been 42 minutes since, in room 4, two users were logged on to the AEIOU.pt chat room. No other URL had been inserted in the browser. The keeper didn't found that strange. What he considered to be strange was the presence of a police man in that place; It was a first in nine years of business.

- Have another Coke, Catarina.
- I'm not thirsty. I don't know Why I've took all these chances, so that you...
- This is very important. I can't tell enough how important this is... Maybe when this is over, I can explain to you what's... Slow!
- Hey?! What happened?...
- Slow Mow is in the room. Now we're really getting started...

The words were typed in the chat at the speed of the wind. But to Catarina, it was... misunderstood.

- Paraphernalia.
- Permute.
- Rhinoceros.
- Ah ah ah.
- Cigarette.



- Bison.

- Hey, are you two mocking me? Lam!

- Shisssh! This is our code. Now I really know that I'm chatting with Bruno... It's still not over, hold on.

- Ok... Boys stuff, for sure.

- Mammoth.

- Michael Jordan.

- Are you sure?

- Undoubtedly!

- Welcome, Slow Mow.

- What's up, Doctor of Tuganomics?

- All's up!

- So what's the plan?

- We stick to plan... A.

- Are you sure? It's a bit risky...

- Yeah, I'm sure. Plan B if for the weak, you fool.

- Ah ah ah! Nicely put, indeed. I'll contact my friends immediately. Which ones do you suggest?

- Man, that accessing the servers is central. The... What's his name?

- Cool Boy? Do you want me to get Cool Boy?

- That's the one. And that other friend of yours, the French guy...

- Frenchman?



- Yes, him too. We will be essential for the final work, the self-executable file in the mirror.

A voice woke them up from the lethargy that the Internet causes. It's a familiar voice. Familiar and... Desperate.

- Aunt! Aunt Catarina!

- What is it, Diogo? Ur time is still not up, it's ten more min...

- You need to go, now!

- But... why?

- T... The police is here! They're looking for hackers and they're heading this way!

AN END - XXVII

- Go now, aunt, They're still in the control room.
You go too...

- Lam. Paulo Lam.

- Ok, both of you. I'll leave by the front door, to be inconspicuous and we'll meet outside. My car is parked at about 200 yards from here. There's an exit for the employees. Go...Now!

- Hey! You! - Are those the one's from room 4?

- Y... yes. But...

- Headquarters? Over!

- Yes, go ahead. Over!

- We'll need all patrol-cars to the cybercafé zone, near Chiado. The fugitive are on foot. Over!

- Ok. There's 2 patrol-cars in your neighbourhood. I'll dispatch them right away. Check the computer, over!

- But, officer, if you had chased them, they were right here...

- Listen to me... Do you have any idea of how dangerous these two are? Hum? I've left them for the patrol-cars, since there's already a special team on their trail... They make much more Money than me ... Let them take the chances!!

- Oh... really? But I noticed nothing strang...

- Strange? That's normal, I assure you. The dangerous guys are always the most quiet ones...
- Well... Now what?
- Now, I'll check the computer where they've been. I just want to see...
- They were always on the AEIOU Chat... the usual, of these youngsters that come here, to eh...
- I know, I know, to flirt with each other. This youth...
- Eh eh eh...That's right, They're always up to something... But go on to room 4, it's all yours.
- I'll need about half an hour.
- Not a problem.

The police man sat in the chair where Lam had been. He loosen his vest a little bit. It was tight. Too tight. Maybe because he had never used it before.

AN END - XXVIII

- Where's your car, anyway? Diogo! I'm talking to you!

- My car? In the shop!

- Ghrr... But you told us that you had... Has everyone gone crazy today, or what?

- Easy, aunt. I know what I am doing. I'll take you somewhere safe.

- Where? Where is that?

- The Burrow!

- But do you think that we're some squirrels or something??!

- No I don't. Look, we're nearly there.

- There? Where??

- The Shop.

- But if your car is being fixed, how can we...

- Aunt, aunt... my car is in perfect shape. I park it in the shop, because there's never a parking space around! Pretty smart, huh?

- Oh really? And will you bring us to this *Burrow* then?

- Nope. I'll go, you stay here. In the workshop.

- Ghrr... I am missing it. Lam, I...

- Relax, Catarina. Can you explain what's on your mind, boy...?

- Yes, Lam. Have you seen the name of the shop?

- No. What's its name... Oh...



- Oh, really...

AN END - XXXIX

The Burrow. That was the name of the mechanical workshop. The cars really hide in it as if it was a burrow for rabbits or beavers. The name, actually made sense.

- Artur! How are you?

- Ok, boy, ok. And your Sporting, do you think that they'll win today?

- Of course they'll do!! Your Porto is a real mess this year.

- Man, I've told you: this year is all made up for Benfica! Eh eh eh... Who do you have there with you, boy?

- My aunt, and... hum, a friend of her. They need a... Burrow!

- Then they've come to the right place, that's here all right... Welcome to my humble establishment. Hey, you there, boy! Leave that car! You don't know anything about that! Go on for a tour! Go on and smoke your cigarette outside, have yourself a coffee, just give us one hour, ok?

- Diogo, if you think that we'll stay in this dreadful environment, you'd better think twice...

- No way, no way, aunt. You'll see... This is a Burrow filled with surprises...

AN END - XXX

- Come, come.
- Where? This is a wall! Diogo, I...
- You need to be more patient, aunt. Gosh, trust your nephew! This is Not a wall, aunt.
- Oh really! Are you making fu...
- This... Artur, tell them what it is!
- This is a... door!

Artur moved two small bricks and the wall moved a little bit.

- Come. Welcome to the Burrow!

The corridor was quite dark and moist, but Artur took a flashlight with him that shed some light ahead. The spiral stairs seemed endless. Ta last, at the end of that descending whirlpool, they got to a massive metal door. It contained three mysterious locks.

- Gosh... this looks like a vault..., Lam said by instinct.

Artur turned back and smiled. He looked for the keys in his pocket and found them. All three of them.

When, thirty seven seconds later the lock opened, they were dazzled with an blinding light.

- What is this, Diogo? It seems...



- A five star hotel? It is, aunt, it is...

Artur faced them and smiled again.

- You can't imagine what illustrious guest the Burrow had... Don't forget to sign the Guestbook on your way out! Ah ah ah!!!

AN END - XXXI

- But I can't pay for this... Diogo, I...
- Hey! Are you trying to insult the owner of the Burrow? Huh? Any friend of Diogo is a friend of mine!! Don't you even speak about paying for anything... His uncle saved me from certain death in Luanda. Now I am glad to help you out.
- Thank you, Mr. Artur. Me and Lam are forever grate...
- Never mind that, ok? Just enjoy! It's a couple's bed, I mean... eh eh eh...
- Oh! , Catarina blushed.

- Lam.
- Yes, Diogo?
- My laptop is in my car. I'll get it for you, ok? It's a wireless connection and paid until the end of the month, don't worry.
- Thank you so much! I sorely needed to hear that.

- And you two... Be very careful.
- Yes, I've noticed that the police was chasing us, we must...
- No such thing!
- Huh? I didn't get that, nephew...

- Oh, you still didn't get what's going on, aunt...



- Yeess? And what is it?

- That policeman...

- Yes, what about That policeman?

- It's... it's... the first time I've seen him there and I would gamble with my life that...

- That what...?

- I think you've got it, aunt. The last thing he is on earth is a Policeman. I've got him since he entered the coffee shop... Something big is following you...

AN END - XXXII

- So? Did you got anything??
- The story files helped a little, but that he had accessed that website, it was a known fact.
- Don't tell me you've got not...
- Hey, relax. That's not what I've said.
- Really?
- I had to go to the intermediate memory. Luckily, they've failed to shut down the computer. I've rebuilt all steps that he took and printed what was in the screen. Obviously I only got the beginning of his conversation. Within the scroll box, I found that he was chatting with a certain Slow Motion, which was also in that chat room.
- These kids...
- They know a lot... Or their pretty intuitive. I'm guessing the second one, doctor.
- And... what did you get from that conversation?
- I was right, they're up to something. They looked like babies talking, in some crazy code. I think they get that from nicknames of American Basketball or something...
- Nick What?
- Ahm, right... never mind. It's not something you're your generation...
- But what they're up to, that has something to do with my generation! Hum...well, good job.
- They...



- Y... yes? Anything else?

- They spoke of servers. It was the last line I've read from that conversation.

- My friend, that may have been the last line you've read... But it's my first concern, believe me...

AN END - XXXIII

- Well. I want answers, Lam.
- And you'll get some of them.
- Not: "some" - I want it all! And I want it now! Don't you even think that I'm funding...
- Hey, what's up with you now?
- Do you know the risk that I've took by what I've done? I know that you're awake since a few hours, after 4 months...
- And a half. 4 months and a half...
- Yes, yes, Do you think I don't know that? I am your nurse, and...
- Were. You were my nurse, now you are...
- Yes? What am I now, anyway? I...
- Your my girlfriend.
- What??! Do you think that I am one of those...?

The sudden kiss got Catarina by surprise. Or maybe not. She couldn't release herself of Lam's embrace. As seconds went by, she realised that she didn't want to release from that embrace. An embrace that she had wished her entire life.

Na embrace and a kiss... *magical*.

AN END - XXXIV

Catarina stroked Lam's revolted hair. It was 2 am, and neither of the two wanted to break apart from each other's gentle and honest eyes. She had heard it all, patiently, in a way that she was not accustomed to. He had explained all, in detail, since he got in to his College, passing by the game, the kidnap and threat; his psychiatrist betrayal, that had been solved with the *final solution*: the clinic, and a long, long sleep...

- You knew that they... didn't want you to...

- Say it, Catarina.

- Didn't wanted you to wake up...?

- I suppose so, Catarina. The knowledge that I carry is too dangerous. And now the trump has changed from spades to... hearts! And it's my heart, and yours beating together with mine, that tell the game's rules. Come on, let's get some sleep.

- Wait. I noticed...

- What? What?

- A funny smell... it looks like... gas!

- Seriously? But that's dangerous and we're down here, Locke...

- Lam. Are you thinking what I'm thinking??

- I... I think so. Catarina... we must get out of here. We have been... exposed!

AN END - XXXV

- Hurry, the keys!
- I'm going, I'm going! Get your clothes on, quickly. Hurry!
- One lock. The second one... too! And now...
- Hurry, Lam. Coff coff... I'm getting dozy... please open it! We must...
- Catarina, The third lock...
- What?
- It's... jammed! They've jammed it from the outside. That must had been it!
- I'll call...
- Do you think there's time?!? Coff coff. Oh, such a horrible doom... Caught in a mouse trap... And so near the end.
- My God... hold me, Lam. This may be the last...
- Don't say it, Catarina. Don't say it.

- Catarina...
- Yes? Coff coff coff... yes, what? I...
- Do you see what I see?

Catarina turned, and at the end of the corridor saw it. The last tip of hope. Maybe if...



- And there's no time to waste. Hand me that halogen lamp. It's now or never. Pray, Catarina. Pray... hard! I...

... I hope your God is paying attention.

AN END - XXXVI

- The birdies have flew from the burrow, doctor.
- Hum. Are you sure?
- Yes, the satellite boys have no doubt and warned me: two figures running, In that area, at 2:30 am... I'm sure it's them.
- Now, that's the problem with the OTAN Countries, our Goddamn allies: it shows too much to bomb them, you know...
- Eh eh eh... I can imagine that, doctor, I can imagine that. It wouldn't be nice, really...
- Not a least bit. It could lead to many dismissals here... Not surely the most advisable action...
- If you want to, I...
- Honestly, I find it necessary.
- Yes, doctor...? What do I do now?
- Remember the Helsinki mission?
- You... you got to be joking me! This is really...
- I know, I know. I have a real sense of humour... This is our last chance. And you'd better not miss this one. I know it will be hard, but... from now on, it will be out of my hands. Let the Pentagon guys solve this, with their huge pay checks...
- Eh eh eh...

- My dear friend... Public service is the same in all countries... But you don't have to be that way, isn't that so?



- Yes, I...

- You skip over bureaucracy and get straight to the point. That's why I enjoy your competence so much...

AN END - XXXVII

Somewhere in the United States a laptop was logging on. It had received the order, and it would gladly fulfil it. All it took... was to read the password of it's countless passwords list, from servers spread around the world. Cool Boy was happy. He's been expecting a good plan for over 12 years. A plan where he, with his 6 years of hacking could be useful. The order was clear. Very clear. Slow Mow had updated him on this situation a few months ago, and he was just waiting for the right... moment. He sent an e-mail to the Frenchman. And then waited again. We was researching the contents of a Pascal book in Amazon.com, when he received the e-mail answer back. His heart was beating out of compass.

It's now or never.

He opened his e-mail with notorious anxiety. It all depended on what the F.M., was able to do, in France. The virus must be ready before... The message contained only two lines. It was in code. *Huff... I'm glad. Sometimes he is so distracted...*

"The fridge will be delivered on Schedule, Mr. Murray.

Just make sure that's inside the warranty date, when our technicians get to your house.

Ass: Mr. Andrew



P.S.: We never had complains before.”

Eh eh eh... Always his personal note at the end of each e-mail...

He said yes...

The game is on. Adults, take your places. John Cena is cleaning up the house...

AN END - XXXVIII

- And... Hello?
- Doctor K?
- I said no messages through this line...
- Do you know, by chance, who you're talking to...?
- Well, not really, but this line...
- I use this line however and whenever I feel like it, got that, punk??
- Punk? You'd better identify yourself, I don't...
- It's your boss, idiot! Your boss! Got that?
- My boss? T... the... the one from Washington?
- The same. And don't tell me any more about your name, I also know that this line isn't secured - I was the one that gave clearance for these intermediate lines, anyway.
- But... is something the matter... I...
- You were asleep, because it's 4 am where you are. Perfectly natural. But I need you to wake up quickly, because... something strange has just happened.
- What... what happened?
- Some wise ass placed a file on the server. Nothing that was on-line, that's clear. A simple Notepad file, that could be read anywhere, by any schmuck that can't figure the Internet out or that doesn't know how to operate a computer!
- Do you know in which website this file was put? We have several URL's...
- The most important one, of course.



- In the website of... of...

- Correct, doctor. Correct.

- N-A-S-A...?

- Let there never be said that a subordinate can't surprise his boss...

AN END - XXXIX

- But... That's...
- In our face! In the face of our server's boys!
- Really... That's strange! And unlikely! But doesn't that server have...
- 8! 8 firewalls, 8! With all the possible and imaginary anti-virus solutions, my good doctor!
- Might I know what file is that? If it's a Notepad, it surely...
- Clearly it's not a virus.
- Then it's someone... a text file, huh? A...
- Yes. A message. A concerning message to say the least...!
- What does it say...?
- It says that the NASA website will soon be attacked by a virus, which will display information online. A rather compromising information...
- But they still couldn't pin point the location...
- We can't, nor we want to, my dear.
- W... why?
- Because, even if we could do it, technically speaking, it would take at least 3 days. And the message gives us a dead line of 12 hours, the most...
- I'm not getting it...
- Remember the game that we thought we've ended?
- In... in Lisbon...?

- Now, That's it, doctor. From now on there will have to be negotiations. Direct. Discreet. And at the highest level.

- Do you really think... he wouldn't dare, surely!

- Doctor, doctor... I don't know if this is plane blackmail or if it is something else, just to tease us... But I do know this.

- what... What do you know...?

- Your boy better have a long and happy life. Because if that bird suffers from a sudden disease, there's already a letter in God damn Switzerland waiting for us, like a guillotine hanging over our necks... And should that bird, instead of a sudden disease, decide to sing, there's no negotiation to save us and over half a century of western science lies come crumbling down... and our heads with it. Must I draw you a sketch?... Huh??

- Oh, my God... I've spoken to...

- That boy of yours is worth gold, dear doctor K. The boy is worth... Gold!

AN END - XL

Not many taxi drivers would pick up, in a dark night, two hopeless fugitive, badly dressed and with signs of intoxication: many would just consider them as nothing more than junkies. But not Mário. He drove that path between Cais do Sodré and some other imaginary point, from his fertile imagination, for eight straight years. And he sympathized with those two from the start.

- Hey, You're a little tired... Where to?

- Coff coff coff... take us to... Guincho!

- Are you guys going to a party or something?

- You wouldn't want to know. You wouldn't want to know,...

- Mário. My name is Mário.

- Lam.

- Catarina.

- Lam and Catarina... welcome to my modest... GTI Turbo!

- G... GTI...?

- That's it. Hold on to your shorts, because the police is at home sleeping, and we own the Road!

AN END - XLI

Lam betted his life that that Turbo GTI was modified down to it's very mirrors. *A Tuning maniac... Does this night get any better? ...* The man drove at an insane speed, deflecting the other cars on the road always at the last moment. It seemed a rally on the savannah. They were terrified. Both of them.

- Listen, there's not much haste, and...

- But I am! There's a party in Kremlin at 5 am! And I barely slept today, so I've taken... Well a few things so that I could still be up, you see... Mário here is a real party animal, but I must be realistic; We need all the jobs we can get nowadays, huh?

- Really, Mr. Mário, please drive more care...

- Come on! Teaching to a Pro? I'm going slowly now, do you want me to drive really fast? I have a little something that I'll turn on...

- What... what are you turning on...?

- You were distracted when I first spoke to you weren't you? ... I said: G-T-I ... TURBO!!!

AN END - XLII

Catarina was in a shock, when she left the taxi. She was staggering and Lam had to hold her.

- Take it easy... I'm here. I'll just pay to the taxi driver... how much?

- 15 Euros and 43 cents, please. Have you seen how fast I got you here? That's the way Mário works!

- Yes, yes. Here, keep the change. Listen, I have an advise for you. Free!

- Oh yeah? Go ahead, say it!

- Leave that Playstation alone, man.

- Ah ah ah! Eh eh eh, well, my kid is the one that can't stop playing the damn thing! I just sit by him and watch.

I see that he's going to become a crazy taxi driver like you, when he grows up ...

- I'll see you next time! Party, here I go! Turbo, don't fail me now! Yahoo!!

The car disappeared in the same speed that it travelled through the A5, and Lam had Catarina in his harms and the dust from the taxi in his eyes and nostrils. By the time the car disappeared into a curve, he just thought about one thing...

Slow Mow. Could he convince them...?

- Come on, Catarina.

AN END - XLIII

5h32

Orbitur. A name that probably makes sense, some sense related to: tourism. That was the name of that camping park, in the middle of Guincho, where the waves turn into breaker waves and the surfers challenge them, filled with joints, show-offs, blondes and some tattoos. And that's where her nephew told them to go, in case of trouble. They should seek out a trailer, with the following licence plate: 23-35-FT.

- Huff... Let's just sleep outside, Lam. We'll never find that trailer, not even if we looked for three whole days, I'm just too tired and...
- There! Come, Catarina, Our saviour trailer is right there!
- At last! We'll be able to get some sleep now...

17h05

- The end of the world, that's what it is! Lam!
- What's up, Catarina? Be cool...
- What do we do now? I'm sick and tired of staring at the walls. These aren't even walls...

- We wait. My plan is at motion. In a while I should hear from Slow...
- Let's just go to the Coffee shop of this camping park, to have something to drink. It's so hot, and...
- Ok, we'll go there. But we shouldn't be seen, who knows who and how many guys are following us...

The Coffee shop was near the park's exit. It was wide and had a terrible coffee from a machine, equally incompetent waitresses and a suspicious guard at the door. *Very proper*, Lam thought. They sat at a table and while Catarina drank that mixture they called coffee, the waitress yelled out:

- Is there a Paulo Lam in the house?
- You hear that, Lam? Let's get out of here, and...
- Easy! It would be too conspicuous and that guard would surely grab us in the minute. Let's play it cool...
- But if you go there, they'll catch us anyway!
- Yes, but... she's got something in her hand... a cell phone! Someone called here... Could it be your nephew, Diogo?
- He knows my cell phone number. No way.
- She's asked again, soon she'll hang up. I'll go there.
- Are you crazy?? Are you putting it all on the line, now??
- Sit still. I'll be here.
- I'm Paulo Lam, it's me. Who's on the phone, miss?

- I don't know, they didn't say. Pick it up, then.

- Hello?

- Hello?, Lam repeated.

Lam came closer to Catarina's table. She was too nervous.

- W... who was that, Lam? We...

- I don't know who it was, it could even be your nephew. But I'm telling you this: I'm not going anywhere; I'm sick and tired of running around.

- D... do you think so? Shouldn't we run, to...

- Where to, can't you tell me, huh? Where to??

- W... well... I don't know, Lam, I...

- It's not just you that don't know, Catarina. I, despite my knowledge, also don't know.

AN END - XLIV

The trailer was still there, waiting for them, like a humble, but caring hand. They thanked the Gods for that plywood walls, or whatever it was made of. In the summer an oven; at winter, a freezer; there was no half-term.

- Lam, come to bed. And to me...

- There's no time for that now, I must check the laptop if NASA's website has been...

- Hacked? Is that what you were saying, Paulo Lam?

- W... who's there, Lam? Ohh!

The man stepped out of the front compartment really cool. He had slow gestures, studied to their tiniest detail. He gave some steps forward and left the laptop fell into the floor, right in front of Lam. It was clear that it was useless. But the important thing wasn't that. The important thing was What he carried at the hand of a threatening harm

- A... a... Lam!

- Oh, my God...

- Exactly what you're seeing, boy. A Beretta, with a silencer. The boys back in the States prefer other models, but I can arrange with this one; it has always served me well. Sharp. Small. Discreet. Ideal, I assure you.

- What do you want...



- What do I want? Oh, There's nothing that I want. It's my boss that would like to talk to you. You didn't think that was possible, did you, boy?

- Yes, I thought that it wasn't possible to be double crossed.

- Specially...

- Yes. Specially...

- Lam, Lam, Lam, you don't know the half of it...

AN END - XLV

- How could you do this to me? You're my uncle, for God sakes...! All we've been through over the years, all we've studied, you helped me out in everything ...!

- That would be the truth if it was the truth. But it's not, Lam. It's not.

- What is the truth? I don't understand...

- It has all been very simple, Lam. Rebuilding your past, that is. Only Masse was in that delivery room, after your mother... ergh...

- I know. Keep going.

- Masse was overseen from the start. And that adoption story... too. There had to be a man in Lisbon to report to them. Masse was too important in the Secret Commit... Hey, you know too much.

- But, uncle...

- I'm not your uncle!

- What!?!?

- I came to Masse and made him believe that. That's the way I had to play it. You see, your mother had lost all dignity, and nobody wanted to...

- Care about her. And there was a child - Me - That nobody wanted either. And only Masse, with his good heart, believed in me and my talent. Isn't that so?

- Perhaps, boy, perhaps. But let me tell you that talent only complicate things for you. This is



definitely not a time for creative's There's too many people that gladly prefer a Macdonald's over a Da Vinci, did you knew that? Eh eh eh... And now...

- Are you going to kill us?, Asked Catarina, desperate. - Is that what you're going to do...? Let me at least kiss my Lam goodbye.

- Ohh, how romantic... I can't even see what attracts you to this boy, girl! But you seem to know!

- Are you going to kill us, Rui?, Lam's look was dead serious. He was cool. Too cool.

- Kill the birdies? No... that would be too easy... But You're going to meet the Maker, be sure of that...

AN END - XLVI

A van slowly came close on the outside. Rui glanced at the trailer window. It has arrived finally. Safe Transport.

- And now, you'll go for a ride... And don't even consider to run away. Come on, the car is parked.

- W... what about me...?

- You stay with me, here.

- Don't you think of hurting her, or else I...

- Or else you'll what? Just take it easy, because my bosses in the States don't like it made rough... Call it a ray of civilization or whatever! And you say we don't treat you right... Come on, get going! And remember that "aunt" Beretta is waiting at the trailer, ok?

The van's side door opened. It was almost on the trailer's door, that opened inwards. *Cursed. They've studied every single details. There's no escape.*

- Take him to Tires, Samuel. They're waiting there for you.

- Yes, sir, I know what to do.

The van's door was locked from within, by Samuel. He was a Guinean black man, with over 2 meters high. Lam couldn't know this, but he was a boxer a long time ago.



One thing is for sure; he would loose all fight against that man, if he challenged him.

AN END - XLVII

The van was moving for ten minutes now, at a good pace and in good roads. On the inside, a Paulo Lam in the almost complete darkness had Samuel watching him. The silence was becoming unbearable, between the two. And Lam decided to break it. He couldn't wait another second, his anxiety was killing him.

- May I... know where we're going to?

The big man gazed at him, with purely feline green eyes and turned the other way, pretending he didn't listened.

- M... may I know where...

- I heard what you said. We're meeting a... Man. That wishes to see you. A man to man conversation.

- Is that all? And that conversation, where...

- You ask too much questions. Just be cool, hey? You don't want to shorten your already short life... huh...?

- What are you going to do to me? Speak!

He moved his hand through the bottom part of his jacket and Lam saw it at a glance. It was even shinier than Rui's.

- I, eh, I'm cool, I'm cool.



- You'd better. You don't want her to do the talking for me, ahead of time, *hombre*.

My God... I recognize that voice, this was the man that...

AN END - XLVIII

Samuel waited a little bit, with hi gun on his hand, as the van stopped. He was ready for anything. And when a man opened the van's back doo and the light blinded their eyes, a face smiled. It was Samuel's

- Bang!

- My God! Y... You shot him...

- Yeah I shot him, boy. Do you think we're rookies around here...? Outside, now!!

The hangar was relatively small, when compared to others from the Tires aerodrome. Lam jumped out of the van and was escorted to the small jet plane. A Jet that apparently was unidentified. Nothing on it's outside revealed it's origin.

- Up these stairs. John, take the boy up, I'll dispose of the body.

- Yes, I'm going. Come on, Lam, right ahead of me. And don't try any Portuguese stunts. You know; one dumb action and...

I know, I know. The same thing happens to me that happened to Samuel.

AN END - XLIX

Lam went up the stairs pretty quickly. Inside, the luxurious plane was empty.

- Sit. The man will be here soon.

Lam saw it immediately. It was perhaps the only loose end of it all. And it was in ... strategic place. *My rescuing chance... No one will even dream that I'll...*

A door opened. It was The Man, himself, for sure. He was still talking to the pilot, but you could see that he was ready to see him now. Ready and... willing to make it happen. He closed the door to the cockpit, came closer to Lam, and greeted him in a perfect English language.

- How do you do, my dear Lam. Paulo, isn't it?

- You wanted to see me? Who are you? What is this? I...

- Eaasy. My dear Paulo Lam, welcome to the Portugal friends informal flights. We're heading right now to runway 5. And then, we'll take off to the...

- To the U.S.A....?

- Lam, The trip could be shorter for you, my good boy... It all depends on your political behalf!

AN END - L

- Let no one tell that the U.S. isn't a good host - that's a hairy lie, I assure you, Lam!

- I believe...

- And to prove it, I have three liqueurs for you, that I know that you like...

- H... How do you...? Ahh... Never mind...

- Yes, my boy. Your *uncle* was always a good partner of ours. And I honestly think you have the profile to...

- Snatch? Special Informer? Secret Agent?

- Nooo, dear Lam, boy. Forget what you've seen in those James Bond movies: It's almost all a lie, anyway.

- Well, what do you want from me, then? I...

- You stepped in to a very dangerous game... very dangerous, indeed... with those hacker friends of yours. We all know that they are frustrated teenagers that only need a good plan, to get into an Anti-American paranoia. But it can all be fixed. Don't you agree, Lam...?

- Can it? What can be fixed? I don't know...

- You're a smart boy, Lam... That's why I think that we'll get along just fine...

Sing me some fado... Little do you know that I...

AN END - LI

- We've read the message that you placed in the serve, Lam.

- You'd really be stupid not to notice, my dear Sir ...

- Please... Call me Richard. And loose the "Sir"... It's so formal... And between us there shouldn't be any...

- Secrets...? Oh, I think so too, I think so too.

- Do you see that you're catching my drift? That's more like it. It seems that we're getting somewhere...

- Oh, But I too think that we're getting somewhere.

I simply don't think That I'll get where you want to take me...

- Come, come. Over by the window, I mean. Come and see something

- What...?

- See those tiny dots down there, in the airfield?

- Yes. It's people.

- Are you sure? It still looks like tiny dots to me. John? What do you think they are?

- Tiny dots, doctor, tiny dots. For sure.

- You see that, Lam? John agrees with me! And I assure one thing: All those tiny dots down there

have a tiny head that never stops thinking, and some of them even think they can change the world! A better world, they say! Have you heard that one, John?

- Eh eh eh... It's really amusing, doctor. Really amusing.

- What do you think, Lam, that the air lords think over those tiny heads and they're ideas? Do you think those ideas could ever make it in a world so... so fast, so global, so... democratic...?

- We're all entitled to our dreams. Some have the money to make them come true, other... don't!

- Of course, of course... Well, you see, we only like to make business to jew...

- But I'm sure that others have blackmailed you before... They mustn't be the only ones with that privilege...

- My dear Lam... You are smart...

- What do you want from me?

- ... But smart doesn't always mean intelligent ...

AN END - LII

- Relax, have your Baileys with all the time in the world, huh? I must see the pilot, give him some instructions, I haven't told him that... John, make our guest comfortable!

- Yes, doctor, he will not complaint for sure. Lam, there's our international TV, satellite, and computer games. Dirty magazines could be arranged. The Jacuzzi is in the back. Anything you want...

- Ok, ok, I'm fine right here.

- You're the boss.

John's pistol was in the same place, strapped to his waste. He seemed like a thug from Brazil. Not extra large like Samuel, But much more muscular than Lam had ever been. He had to attack John on a strategically point. They were well over the Cascais bay, and were flying now over the sea. Perhaps Lam's plan would have to be changed. But he... remembered. One predictable route... could it still be possible to... wait half an hour, no. His salvation was still there, half hidden... clearly it's size made it difficult to keep in those tiny upper drawers in the plane. What if...

Time went by. It was on his behalf. But not a single minute more, other wise it would be impossible for him to...

- John!

- Go ahead, doctor.
- Be mindful. You were nearly asleep. Lam?
- Yes?
- Shall we keep talking, now? Let me just have a sit
...

- Doctor Richard... I can't question if you have a rare card for Exchange. But I...
- Yes, Lam...?

- I've finished my collection, my dear doctor "what's your name". And I'm disgusted by baseball cards.

At the following moment, Richards's Adam's apple was punched and retreated back about two inches and John was entitled to a kick in the bellow deck. A kick so violent that he would need at least ten seconds to recover. It was the product of 4 years of TV Wrestling put in effect in real life. And when Richard caught his breathe and started planning something, Lam had already resumed to Plan... A.

Plan B is for the weak, Slow Mow. See ya later alligator, Idiots.

AN END - LIII

The airplane leaned on it's left side. A dangerous leaning, one that the pilot immediately identified it's source... He spoke immediately on the microphone, to Richard. But no one came knocking at the cockpit's door. Instead of Richard, a John with a girly voice appeared, in the middle of a gale, some unintelligible speech, from across the door.

- My God... The plane is completely destabilized! Go and check it out, Mónica!

- You Know what's wrong, man! Do you want to see me fly out of the plane as well? Go down and decrease speed right now!

- Are you ok back there? Is everything all right? Doctor Richard, I... oh, finally, it looks like the door is closed... Richard! What happened!?

- Coff coff coff... Lam... he...

- Don't tell me he killed himself! Don't...

- Shut up, you idiot! The bird has flown, but still... birds can't swim, can they?

- But he... He won't stand a chance, if he jumped...

- No such thing. No such thing. The parachute was to be used later, in the middle of the ocean... You know?

- Oh, but then...

- Yes...



This bird has seen too many American movies, my friend.

AN END - LIV

Zé Manel was one of the few fisherman from Azores that still fished in his own boat. Now it as the foreign companies, mainly the Spanish ones that took all the market. He regretted to his wife Alzira when he came from the sea, but his friends couldn't stand those relief conversations anymore. But he heard. Somewhere over in the sea, a bit further. It couldn't be a fish making all that noise. It was something bigger. But...What?

- "A Minha Donzília", "A Minha Donzília", return to the harbour at once. "A minha Donzília", rsss rrssss...

The radio shuffled some words, that though were understandable, were also doll. But that noise...

- Boss? Should we go? The radio is saying...?

- What they're saying, I've known since yesterday! There's a big storm coming. My knee already provided me with that information... Do you think this old sailor is through yet? I still got it! I'm not going to endanger us, but I have an intuition... Did you hear that?

- It must be a fish, boss Zé, it's only a fish.

I bet my life that this is the biggest fish you'll ever see ...



AN END - LV

- Boss Zé! We're disobeying the harbour direct orders! The boss there won't forgive us!

- I wouldn't forgive myself if this isn't what I think it is! Hold on to the boat, the storm is coming! You hadn't storms like this in Brazil, did you?? Huh?

- What shall I do?

- Engines: full thrust!

- Now, boss?

- Yesterday, man, yesterday!! If this storm is as strong as I think it is, by this time tomorrow we'll be fish bate!!!

AN END - LVI

It was pouring raining, the wind was strong as hell itself and the huge waves made the ship balance dangerously, from side to side, like a baby in a mechanical cradle that has gone wild. They arrived on the spot and saw the synthetic cloth and the parachute lines.

- Pick it up, man! hurry! Can't you see that this a full storm? Do you hear me?

- You got it, boss Zé, You got it.

- Let's go, I'll help. Uau, we've got it. But...

- Where is he, boss? I thought that it was still under the...

- That's what I'd like to know, my boy. But no thoughts of being here fore another second. Let's turn back now, what do you say, huh? Now!!

- Ok, boss, ok, "Mista" Zé.

- You know, boss Zé, I... Now that it all went by, I think we should go back there and check if there is a body... what's your opinion...?

- Ah ah ah!

- What, boss? Why are you laughing??

- My dear Diamantino, the body won't show up in that part of the world so soon... eh eh eh...

- are you sure? What...

-Did you know that there's a species of birds that place it's eggs on the nests of other birds for them to hatch instead...?

- But boss Zé, I don't understand what...

- You'd better not understand... You'd better not understand, indeed... Other wise we would have to explain in the harbour who was our unidentified third man on board, three days ago, when we set sails...

- But, boss Zé, we didn't find him! What are you saying?

- We Didn't find him. You're right about that.

- So?

- Oh, but he found us...!

- So... all that water on the storeroom... Was it...?

- There you go, Diamantino, my friend. This bird nested behind our ears... And I'll bet you that he already moved his nest to land...

- Where? How do you know...?

- To the mainland, you dummy, to the mainland! Must I tell everything!??

AN END - LVII

Lam saw them immediately. Dark, as dark as the night. But with pearly white girlfriends, with razor sharp tongues, as any cheap whore from Intendente. Five stars knives ... he tried to pass around them, but they kept moving in. It was ... Inevitable. And Lam knew it. He knew it and he prepared himself for it. The gang leader, that one, quickly analysed Lam's chances.

Come on, show me what you've got...

- Hey, dread! What's up with ya?

- Eheheh... come here, white boy!

- What ya doin in da dark night, heh?

- Yep, only we can help ya now!

- Oh, yeah? How?

- Heh, whithy, ya need to learn how to speak slowly. Slowly... and, tell him SnowBall...

- Polite, dumb whithy. Ya need to be more polite to the bro's. Or else, ya won't pass us. And if ya won't pass us, you'd be in bad sheets....

- Rafa is just telling ya that only we have the compass out of this dark nigh. Rafa, show'em ya compass, come on!

He was dead serious. He took a pointy knife out of his pocket and pointed straight at Lam's heart. And then...

- Eh eh eh! That's right, Rafa, this is da stuff. Got that, Whithy?

Rafa kept his knife pointed, but he also did something that Lam only realised afterwards. He had an evil smile through his face, left to right.

- See these white teethes, bro?

- What about them?

- They have the only light ya'll see here tonight.

- And such a dark night, today... oh, yeah...

An opening. A chance to... *That t-shirt... perhaps it can rescue me.*

- EMINEM?!?!? A brother that likes Eminem?!? Ah ah ah eh eh eh!!! I thought that there weren't brothers like that anymore!! Oh oh oh ...!

- What? what? It's cool...

- But he's white! Ah ah ah, Eminem, oh my God...

- Yeah, Rafa, Eminem stinks, bro. I told you, ya looked stupid with that t-shirt...

- Ya too? Ya want to get it, Bronco Billy? He's a whithy, but he has a black soul, bro!



The leader of the gang gazed with his chewed by heroin face to Lam, from the group. That face and his expression were bad news to Lam. He stepped closer, but before he did, Lam sensed the danger and fled, running to the Gare do Oriente subway station.

- J.J. ,He's getting away, let's get da bastar...

Jesse James looked into the not far horizon and saw them. With blue colours, speaking loudly, at last: the usual.

- Guys, hit da road. Pronto!

And he was right to be afraid. The cops on that neighbourhood weren't softies as in some other parts of the city.

AN END - LVIII

- Excuse me, could you tell me at what time is the next train to Alameda?
- 23:50 pm, young man.
- Thanks.

Two minutes. I got two minutes.

A young man in his twenties awaited, patiently for the right time. It was 23:48:33 pm, and he'd only have one shot to... suddenly the tremble of the carriage made itself felt, from practically 300 yards away.

Now.

- Hey! Where are you going? Hey, Boy??

The guard jump the ticket booth practically at the same time than Lam. The two went shooting down the escalators and stairs, in steps of four. The guard was nearly catching the boy, when he felt his jacket being grabbed and he made... a daring move.

It's now or... never.

The subway passengers at the Oriente station only saw someone turn suddenly, to his right, leaving only the legs of a falling body behind. Ribeiro



tripped immediately on the boy's legs. Lam got up quickly, forced the closing door to open and caught the train just in time. And when Ribeiro finally managed to get up, he missed by a quarter of a second the closing doors of the carriage.

The boy rested, for a while, standing up; he was too dirty to take a seat.

- Lam!

- What???

AN END - LIX

- How are you doing? It's me, Paz; Júlio Paz, from College, man!
- Oh, right... How are you doing? Are you all right? Have you managed to graduate?
- No, I have two grades missing...
- Let me guess: professor Dinis and professor Manuel dos Santos...
- H... how do you know that?
- It's a long story...
- I got to go! Bye!
- But... Lam!

Júlio watched him running away into the arcade of the Cabo Ruivo station. Some fast footsteps came running down the stairs, towards him: five policemen.

In the tunnel, Lam realised immediately.

Here's the cavalry. Too bad the Indians were the ones who were right...



AN END - LX

- Driver, where did he go?
- Down the tunnel, that way!
- Ok!

The carriage was still on the station, but the driver received orders from the central to keep going. He let the policemen disappear into the tunnel, notified the subway traffic controller and got the same answer: - *Go. Now!* After about twenty seconds, he executed that order. *Let the following carriage care about this... I've done my share...* The train seemed half a sleep, but at last it started moving.

And when the door closed, Júlio smiled.

- I knew You'd be back.

- Between the both of us, Júlio: the theory that the criminal doesn't return to the crime scene is a complete baloney...

AN END - LXI

The driver didn't even noticed, with all the fuss going on, his right rear view mirror. Because if he did, he would have noticed the figure that hid bellow the carriage and went up, back into the carriage, by the station's emergency stairs, after five policemen had passed him by.

- Lam, you're sleeping at my place tonight, I insist. You look like hell, boy. You've got to sharpen up, man...

- I won't even argue with that! I really could use a good bath, indeed.

- You seem right out of a war zone, man. What happened?

- It's a long story ...

- Oh, There's plenty of time to talk about it at home. You'll get some rest and... Listen... How did you guessed my two missing grades...?

- My friend Júlio... I never thought that this was such an hard degree...

AN END - LXII

- Now that you've taken a bath, come here. I have some clothes for you... You're about my size, and I'm glad to be helping you out...

Lam felled asleep instantly, on that improvised bed, on the tiny apartment. Júlio left him to rest in.. peace and quietly went into the living room.

When he turned on the TV, he saw something strange had happened. A reporter was on, directly from Washington, quite nervous it seemed, reporting an genius hacking of the Internet. Apparently, NASA's website had been breched by hackers.

- Tell us, Medeiro Antunes, why is this hackers attack different from the others?

- I'm not getting you through very well, Pacheco, it seems that we have some interference... Oh, now I think we're up and running, could you repeat that last question, please, I failed to hear you.

- I was asking why is this hackers attack different from the others, Medeiro?

- Well, this attack... the experts say in Washington, that the Internet itself would have to shut down completely, to remove the Hacker's message from the NASA website.

- And is there any lead on the responsible for this attack? Because the message itself is really... Well, I...

- Yes, yes, yes, Pacheco, I know, it's quite disturbing. But the best, to let the viewers really understand what were talking about here, is to really...

- Access NASA's website? Undoubtedly!! Let me remind the viewers that the NASA website can be accessed in this URL: www.nasa.gov . My advise is to visit this website and find out more...

Come on...what the hell are these guys talking about? Well, I've shut the computer down. I'll look it up tomorrow. Let's go to sleep.

Júlio Paz decided to check up on Lam's sleep. He was a good friend. He had always been loyal to all his colleagues. But something didn't added up. The running in the subway... The police apparently chasing him... *I'll ask all about it in the morning.*

Sweet dreams, Lam. You, probably more than anyone on that College, deserve them.

AN END - LXIII

- Oh, your awake, finally, Lam! I got some money in your jeans, for anything... Do you know what time is it?

- Oh, the head ache... Júlio, could you speak lower, I...

- Four pm! 4!!!

- What?! It's true, I have to... Oh, my God!

Lam tripped on the centre table of the living room, knocking some magazines down. He clumsily picked them up, in a rush, while he ate an half eaten by Júlio cheese ham sandwich. And as Júlio watched that scene amazed, Lam was already half way down the stairs of that so-so boarding house, on Rua do Século, right in the middle of Bairro Alto. Júlio also ran to the doo rand asked him a rhetorical question. But the answer he heard was all but the traditional one. Or maybe not...

- Hey! Where are you going?! At least have some breakfast!

- I can't! I'm off to save a Princess!!!

AN END - LXIV

He didn't have to escape the guard this time; the Money he had was enough. And now he had to find a taxi, with a very special taxi driver... He was walking in Cais do Sodré for two minutes now, looking into each and every taxi; he seemed nuts! Then, in the middle of the taxi row, someone saw him. *Now, this is a taxi cab!* He entered the vehicle quickly, surprising a snoring Mário.

- Hey, what is this?? A stick up...?
- It's me, man. The client on the other night, Do you remember...?
- There's so many of them...
- The one that you drove to Guincho, to the camping park...
- But I... I can't take you now. I can't pass all the other taxis! Why don't you take the first in row?

- Mário, Mário... I won't do it for two reasons...
- Yees?
- Yes. First: T-U-R-B-O - GTI.
- Eh eh eh... It seems that we're finally getting along, boy... And the second one...?

- The second one is: Grab that wheel and shift to FAST, that Playstation never hurt anyone!!



- My friend, I've been misunderstood for my whole life... Hold on, it's not going to be a pretty sight ...

AN END - LXXV

- Thanks, Mário, thank you for... everything!
- Where are you up to, friend? Need help? A Playstation fan can only be a good person!
- Listen, actually... I could use some help... There's a distress maid here, and...
- Whaaatt?? Why didn't you said so?? Let me just get my thirteen...
- Thirteen?
- Thirteen! A thirteen shots, made in America, special model for yours truly... I need to defend my self from the damn muggers... Lots of taxi drivers carry one of these, some are cheap models, but I don't like to bet with my life!
- Of course! Drive safely, Mário! Always!!

- You fully understand my poor soul... I think I've found my soul mate...

- Well, it's exactly my soul mate that's in trouble... Bring on that thirteen, I think we'll use it.

AN END - LXVI

Lam closed in slowly. It was almost night. The ideal shadow realm. Mário went around the trailer and when Lam opened the door in a swift move, pointing the pistol immediately to the front of the trailer. The two changed positions. Mário entered slowly, towards the bathroom door.

- Come here! There's some blood! Hurry!!

Lam entered in a rush, with his heart in his hands. There was a door between him and the truth. And that blood could only be...

- Step back. I'll kick the door in...

- No. Don't. Don't do this to me...

- Huh?? Don't you want me to...

- You've been a great help. Please, leave me here by myself. Please, do as I say.

- Ok, friend. I understand...

- Go. Now. Thanks for all, Mário. I'd rather have a quieter lift on my way back...

- Ok. I'll see you sometime. Give me a hug. No crying, because a man is a man, and men don't cry, huh??

- Right, right, I...

- I'll be going now, boss. Take care.

Lam was now standing in front of a door, underneath which a fine flow of red liquid flowed. There were signs of struggle in the trailer. And when he finally opened the door, nothing would ever be the same.

- Oh! Catarina! Curse them! Curse Them All!!!

- L... Lam...? My love? Is... is that you???

Lam turned around and saw her then, crouched in the top shelf of the trailer. She let herself fall into his arms, and the two cried for a while, over Rui's dead body, that fell into the ground, at his feet.

- Promise me You'll never leave me, Lam, promise me now!!

- Catarina, my love. The world is such a big place, when I look in your eyes.

AN END - LXVII

- Might I know what the hell is going on, Henry??
- Mister President! You mustn't talk in this lin...
- This is line number 1! If I can't talk through here, the world has really gone crazy!!! And don't you "Mr. President" me now, you hear me!?
- I'm sorry. It won't happen again.

- What the hell is wrong with that damn server, huh? Why wasn't I notified about this? And why is NASA giving me evasive answers, huh? Really, you're right about one thing: I should be the President!! Some God damn teenagers caused all this fuss?? You'd better explain what's going on...
- A computer virus, G. A virus that... we've never heard of. Symantec, MacAfee, even the poor AVG guys have tried to help us, by the love of God! The power really fell into the streets now...
- How can it be, won't you tell me? It's just some kids that have made this up. Don't we have anyone that can crack this??

- Hhmmm!!
- What now? Why are you interrupting me?
- All that, online, on the website, you know...
- Yeess???
- It's all simply... true.

AN END - LXVIII

- WHHAAATTTT?!?!?!? But NASA... hundreds of scientists... Are you crazy?? Has the world gone completely bananas??? Henry, You've been an Administration advisor for decades!!! You tell me that...

- Yes, I have the duty to tell you... "the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth", so help me God... Now, Yes, I have that duty.

- Let me take a breath, I'm beginning to go crazy here... Honey, get me a glass of water... Please... Now!

- Take that deep breath... I'll tell you the rest.

- There's more?!?!?!?

- Have you had your water...?

- Ok. Shoot.

- It began with a stupid game by Masse in Lisbon.

- Masse?? Who is that guy? Are you talking to me in codes, man?

- Oh, yeah, the truth, you didn't know about that ... well, Victor Masse was a part of a secret Committee, created under the government of Echelon, but with specific powers to... silence some scientific minds. He's dying now, G, we'd better leave him alone; terminal cancer...

- Argh. Oh well, get on with it.



- The Universe is actually tiny, as these youngsters say, G.

- Sorry?!??? You've got to be joking me... Then NASA, what is it good f...

- NASA is very important indeed.

- Oh, well...

- To blind the whole civilized world...

- What?? What do you mean by that?!

- Gosh, G, even now, I still can't tell you all... It's good for... For giving people hope! That there is a way out of this endless Universe... It's very useful, I tell you....

- Listen, Henry, is it just me, or are you not making sense what so ever? Come on. I've got other people here...

- But this is pretty important, don't you think, G?!? All our power, in the actual world relies on this and in Jerusalem, they know it... All the great geniuses came from there. They've blackmailed us since World War Two was over, and you know, this virus won't go away so soon. It duplicates index.html files every 15 seconds, through lots of servers, and we've noticed that its not enough to change the passwords quickly...

- How is that??? Don't tell me that message is going to... stay there...

- For at least one week...



- One week?????????!!!!!!

Henry heard a moan on the other side of the line and then a bang. It sounded like a person falling from a wooden chair...

- Hello? Hello? Mister Presid...

- Henry, this is his wife speaking.

- What happened??

- Henry, dear friend... Time out, time out.

AN END - LXIX

One person headed for the room of the press conference. He was a little nervous, that guy. He is said to be, all over the world, the most important and powerful person of our globe. His entire staff had work hard all day to make him presentable. It was that day 72 hours since he last slept, even though he was taking high dosages of tranquilizers. His conscience should be peaceful, but it wasn't. For several reasons. Lot's of reasons.

It was a November day, a day like any other day. In Portugal, Misses Alzira was knitting, Rui was sleeping without a care in the São Domingos de Rana grave yard, Zé Manel was setting up another fishing exit e Lam was making love to Catarina. All those hours minutes and seconds were at the same place, in all clocks of the civilized world. And yet, something was not right. A website refused to go offline for several weeks, was annoying a lot of people, in a small group of important people. And when that very important person was looking at his watch, a TV camera was looking at him, disassembling his false wisdom. When that person began to talk, All knew that nothing would ever be the same.

- People of the World, I think it's time you've heard the Whole Truth...



*(And if you, reader would like to imagine what was said, then
perhaps reality is finally beginning to change)*

**Q U ⊕ D
E R A †
D E M ⊕ N S † R A N D U M**

- ECHOEM MATER TUMHBRES -



S
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ATTACH – PROTOCOL OF THE WISE MEN OF ZION

>>> Introduction

The Protocol of the Wise Men of Zion is a fundamental document that clearly exposes the Jewish plan for world domination. There has been countless debate over the origin of this document. Several experts agreed that they were first conceived in 1897, in the first Zionist congress, held in Basilea. Others claim that they were produced in a secret meeting of wise jews, also held around that time. The jewish press quickly rejected these facts and even ridiculed them. It's up to us to be truth to the legacy that the experts have left us on this subject. It's not about believing blindly, but to see and verify that the Zionist intention to rule the world is repeated through out the times, in every countries of the world. The Protocol of the Wise Men of Zion is split in 24 shares or protocols, that speak for themselves. It's important to know in advance the meaning of some of the terms used in this document:

Goyim: Hebrew word used derogatory used to refer to all non jewish

Zionism: world movement to advance and protect the politic/economic interests of jews

Masonry: Actually, it consists of secret societies that mysteriously operate in the shadows, using all kinds of tricks in the underground. At it's majority, they are based by jewish members, whether on the top or the distinctive hierarchy levels

Freemasonry: Aristocratic organization, within Masonry, rich and powerful. Protected by the Lieges. Members are admitted after an initiation ritual followed by moral an physical tests. This sect has the ability to eliminate, secretly or publically those it considers to be unworthy.

>>> The Protocol's "pearls":

1st pearl: "Terror is mandatory in the beginning, so that different factions fall on their own, under our power and influence"

2nd pearl: "We can't rule without a defined plan. Those that follow a solid route, but have no action plan are lost in the way. On our advise, the Christian rulers of the world did not care about State matters. They burned their time in receptions, etiquette good manners and amusements. They are only a reflection of our hidden government. The information they showed to the workers were manufactured by our agents, with the goal of satisfying the least perspective's wishes with promises of a better future. We would say to them that they'd build economies with our loans. And they didn't complained."

3rd pearl: “How clear the irrationality of the Christian primitive brain is! They ask us borrowed money, with interests, not realising that sooner or later they’ll have to pay with resources from their own countries. They seem not to realise that they have to return the loaned capital plus interest! They would do better asking directly to their tax payers! This shows a superior sagacity of our breed: we’ve introduced the loans business so well, that they actually thought it was beneficial for them...”

4th pearl: “When the loans were internal, the Money was simply moved from the pocket of the poor, into the pocket of the rich. Once corrupted the people in charge, we’ve headed our loans abroad. Since then, the wealth of the States belongs to us and the Christian pay us tribute”

5th pearl: “In good truth, what does a loan represent, and above all, an outside loan? The instalment includes the obligation to pay the interest of the loaned sum in a particular timing. If the loan is set at an interest of 5% over 20 years, the State pays an interest equal to the loan sum. Over 40 years, it ends up paying the double, in sixty years, the triple, and the debt remains to be paid.”

6th pearl: “We’ve been creating Economic crisis among the Christians with the goal of taking Money out of circulation. When the big capitals stop, the Country States reach out for the fortunes that withdrawn the Money in the first place.”

7th pearl: “When the time of the Pope’s court is over, the finger of an invisible hand will guide the people. We will then appear as the defenders who wish that there is no blood shed. By that mean, we will infiltrate the Church’s, not leaving before it is completely ruined. The king of jews will be the Universe Pope, the patriarch of International Church.”

8^a pearl: “We’ve taken action to disbelief the Christian priesthood and ruin an evangelic movement that would be harmful to us. Their influence over the people is getting smaller by the day. Freedom of conscience is proclaimed everywhere. We are but a few years from the total ruin of Christian Church. In the same way, we will destroy other religions, but it’s too soon to talk about that.”

9th pearl: “Thought repression is executed by an **image teaching system**. This turns the Christians into docile animals that don’t think, waiting for the representation of things through images, so that they could fully understand them.”

10th pearl: “The purely animal intelligence of the Christians isn’t able to analyse, observe, much less predict where certain ways of presenting a question can take us. As a comparison of this skills difference between us and the Christians, you can see clearly the sign of the chosen ones and the brand of our super-natural nature. The Christians spirit is

instinctive and animal. They see, but cannot foresee or invent anything outside the physical world. By this we can see how nature itself has charged us of the ruling of the world. When the time to rule free comes, we will be able to show in an open manner, the advantages of our government and retire all legislations. Our laws will be brief, clear and unchangeable, so that all can realise them immediately. The main trade of this laws will be an extreme authority obedience.”

11th pearl: “Thanks to our influence, the implementation of Christian laws will narrow down to minimum levels. The prestige of laws was undermined by the liberal interpretations that we’ve introduced.”

12th pearl: We take in our secret societies the ambitious, the adventurers and similar kinds of people, which, by one or another reason wish to have a leading role. This unscrupulous people will be easy to deal with, and our cause will triumph.”

13th pearl: “While we prepare our reign, we will create and increase the mason shops in all countries around the world. We will recruit in them the ones that serve us or can be of use as agents. These shops will provide us with the information and cooperation, when it is needed to act over a society.”

14th pearl: “We will begin our domination through State siege, prepared in all countries, in the same day.”

15th pearl: “When the time is right, we won’t acknowledge any cult besides our own God (...) We are the chosen people and our fate is the fate of the world. For being the chosen ones, we must destroy other beliefs. If in this process we create atheistic, the better. All will listen our messages over Moses religion. This carefully planned procedure will takes to the conquest of all peoples.”

16th pearl: “The need for daily bread limits the Christian and converts them in to humble servants of our cause. The recruited agents amongst them, working for the press, have discussed by our order, that which we shouldn’t announce Publically.”

17th pearl: “The newspapers we print shall be, apparently, of opposed tendencies and opinions. This will induce trust to all and attract, without fears, our opponents that will fall into the trap and will become harmless.”

18th pearl: “Without our visa, nothing will go public. This is by now a given fact. In our days, the news from the world are received by several agencies that centralize information. Those agencies fully belong to us and reveal only that which we allow to be printed. We’ve taken control of the Christian society in such a deep manner, that they

can only look at the world's events the way we provide them."

19th pearl: "It's a known fact that to enable our aspirations, we must constantly upset, in all countries, the relationships of the people with their Governments. The purpose of this is to induce fatigue, break friendships, introduce hate or even to induce pain, hunger, diseases and misery. Christians will have no other escape from their illnesses, but our full ruler ship. We must add that if we gave the people the slightest opportunity to stop and think, this opportunity to submit them would close forever."

20^a pearl: "To reach our goals, we will plot to elect presidents with skeletons in their closet. This way, they'll be loyal servants to our causes out of fear we reveal their vices. All those that reach power wish to keep their privileges, advantages and honours that go with it. The Chamber of Deputies may defend, elect and support presidents, but we will take away they're right to propose or change laws. Such rights will be assigned to the President, a tool in our hands."

21st pearl: "By mystifying, we will numb and corrupt the actual non-jew generation with an education founded in principles and theories that we will provide, ourselves."

22nd and final pearl: “When we reach world domination, all these tricks will be abolished without a trace, since they’ll cease to serve us then.”

I wish to end up by saying that I, Francisco Capelo, am an absolutely normal Portuguese citizen, I condemn Hitler’s National Socialism, have never been a part of an extreme right wing party, nor ever will.

But I must admit that there are very poorly explained facts... To whom wishes to explain things, I would very much like to hear the explanation for the end of world war two...

THE
SILHOUETTE

NOBURN

SIKHEM

**C** pelo

T...T... TIME

P... P... PAST

