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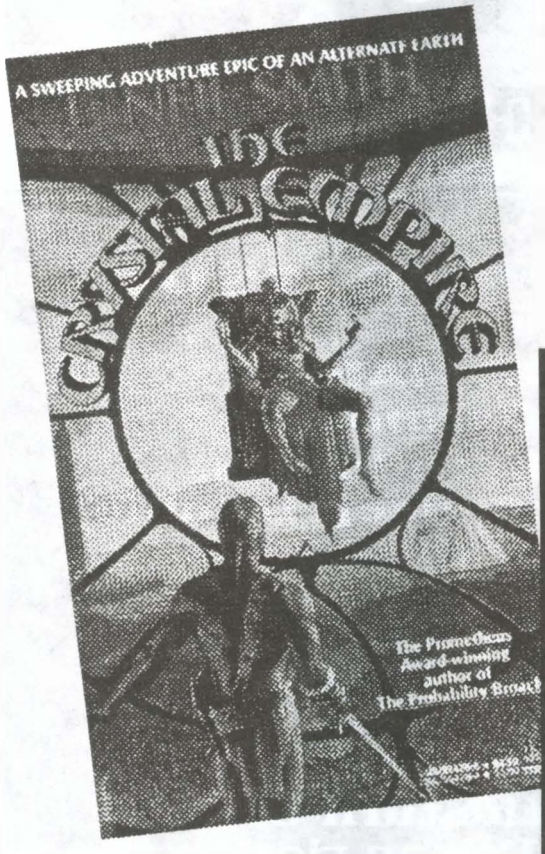

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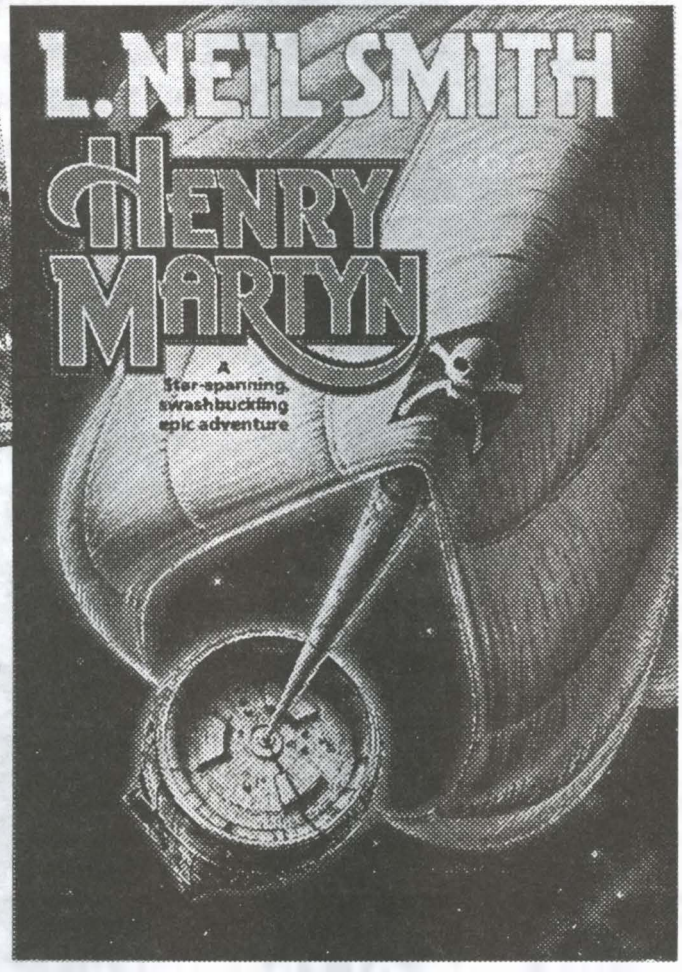

HENRY MARTYN

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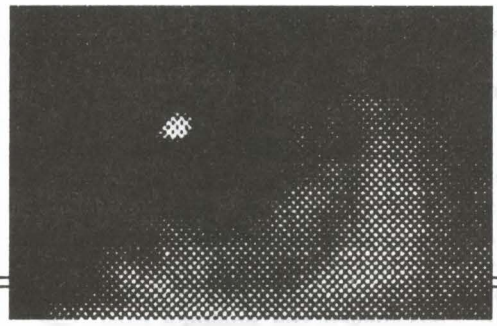


LOOKING FOR MARIE

Once they had been lovers, now she was in deep, deep, trouble—a crime story of the 1950s...

by Thomas Carmody

I CRAMPED THE WHEELS of the U-drive Ford hard into the curb, set the emergency against the incline of the hill, and climbed out through the right hand door.

The building I wanted was an ancient San Francisco Gothic frame house. Two men in coveralls were laying asbestos shingles against the side facing the bay. They weren't making a production of the job; there was a quart bottle of beer between them on the scaffold, and they each had a red plastic thermos cup in their hands.

"Podestas live here?"

The paunchy, black-haired one put down his cup. "What do you want?" He made it sound like I'd ruined his beer. "Joe's out on the boat. They won't be back until Friday morning, likely."

"I want to see Mrs. Anna Podesta. It's about her sister Marie. I want to talk to Mrs. Podesta about her."

The young, blond man jerked, and spilled his cup down the front of his coveralls.

The paunchy man's face darkened. "My sister's upstairs you want to talk to her. I don't think she's got anything to tell you, but you talk to her if you want to." He thought for a moment. "You from Mangano?"

"I don't know the man."

I climbed up the high, seamed stairs to the porch. They had torn off the gingerbread and I could see out over the embarcadero to the Bay Bridge. Alcatraz was out there, a yellow fortress in the afternoon sun. Mangano had called it home back in the thirties—five years for income tax evasion.

Anna Podesta was having a bad pregnancy. She was puffy overweight; under her eyes the pouches were black pads of fat. Clumsily, she turned herself through the door and put her hands against the sides of the opening. She posed there like a crucifixion scene.

"Joe's fishing. He won't be back until Friday morning," she mumbled.

"I want to see you, Mrs. Podesta. About Marie. Not about Joe."

Fear, like an incision, cut across her features. She stepped back into the hallway, awkwardly trying to close the heavy door. "You tell him I don't know where she is. It's none of his business, anyway. She don't want to live with him, she don't have to." Anna looked at me in sudden fury, blood rising in her face. "Maybe that's the reason she don't want anything to do with him. Any kind of a man would come himself; he wouldn't send a hired man to bring his wife back."

"I'm not from Mangano. My name is John Barbera. Maybe you heard Marie talk about me before she got married. We saw quite a lot of each other then. It is very important that I find her and talk to her before he locates her. She's in a great deal of danger. I don't want to see her hurt."

"You were going to marry Marie?"

"Yes."

She squinted at me. "You look like the picture. You want to come in?"

The living room had recently been redecorated. The wallpaper was covered with a flat green water-base paint. The floor was painted a reddish brown. They hadn't done anything about the lighting, though; a tarnished gold chandelier with orange light bulbs hung down from the ceiling like a grappling hook.

On the table in front of the couch there was a square bottle labeled *Gilbey's*, a bowl of half-melted ice cubes, and a heavy, restaurant-style water glass. "Want some?" she asked. She didn't make any attempt to get another glass. I shook my head. Anna chased an ice cube around in the bowl and dropped it into the glass; she splashed some of the gin in after it. "I'll sure be glad when this baby of mine gets here. It's hell on the legs."

"Do you know where Marie is?" I asked her.

"I'm not supposed to tell anybody." She took a pull on the glass and sighed.

"Look," I said, "Marie's in trouble—real bad trouble. I got the word down in L.A. This isn't just a family spat, Anna. Mangano could have her killed."

"My sister can take care of herself. Maybe she'll get a bouncing around, a few bruises. She's had them before. This isn't the first time she's left him. He never hurt her

bad. Just let him cool down a little, that's all."

"She never tried blackmailing him before, either."

Her eyes rolled up like I'd pulled a handle. "I told her— Marie never had good sense about some things. Sure, I'll get you the address. She's staying over in Oakland." Anna waddled to a table with a cracked glass top and a long black panther that had ivy growing out of his back. She shoveled through the drawers and came up with a ragged dime store address book. Her pudgy fingers turned through the pages

"Twenty-two twenty-two Tenth Avenue. She's in apartment 10. She's calling herself Joan Perry."

I thanked her and went to the door.

Anna tapped her glass against the jamb. "What's this to you, um?"

"You don't forget somebody you were going to marry, Anna. I don't, anyway...

Marie's address was hanging on the edge of gentility by greasy fingernails. A muddy herd of kids were in the vacant lot next to her apartment fighting a sod war. The ones at the far end of the lot had the best of it. The grass was longer there and they could get more of a handle on the clods of dirt.

I parked the Ford across the street and locked it. There was a long, thin drink of water doubled up in the baby Studebaker parked in front of the lot. A bad overthrow by one of the kids, trailing a streamer of wild grass, slammed into the far side of the car. The drink of water stared at the kids with eyes that looked ice picks. He didn't move.

I crossed the street and walked between the lot and the Stude. There were half a dozen hits on the car beside the fresh one. The kids had been at it quite a while; two of the hits had dried to a light brown.

Marie's apartment building was built back in the late twenties. The first floor was garage and foyer. The house phone had an out-of-order sign on it. All of the name-slips under the doorbells were a dirty yellow, except one. A white slip of paper listed Joan Perry in Apartment 10. I used my car key to open the front door lock.

The foyer smelled of mildew and insect spray, and the green patterned flooring was patched by a stretch of brown carpet that ran from the entrance to the stairway. Lint and bits of paper were scattered across the floor. There was a baby carriage in the far corner. One of its wheels was off. A pile of shopping throwaways overflowed the package rack. Getting to the stairs was like cutting through an abandoned dump.

Apartment 10 was on my right at the head of the first flight. It overlooked the street—probably from the bay windows I had noticed down below. I avoided the bell and knocked lightly on the door. There was a muffled creak of fatigued floorboards. Someone was freezing in mid-motion.

"Miss Perry—Miss Perry," I said softly.

"...Yes. Who is it?" Marie's voice was strained and unnatural. There was a hesitancy in the blurred velvet voice that I did not remember. Pete Mangano had her scared, all right. I couldn't imagine what she looked like in there, frightened and alone. I couldn't ever remember her being either of those things.

"Maintenance, Miss Perry," I said, upping my voice an octave. "I'd like to talk with you, miss."

"...Just a minute." Nervous high heels came to the door; the knob turned.

"Johnny!"

Pale and tense, even so, Marie was more of a woman than she had ever been before. She wasn't the girl I had been going to marry, but she was mature now with the womanliness of kept promises. Under the black wool dress, her body was full and ripe and sweet. The sickness of desire I had always felt with her was in me again, as strong as it had always been. Perhaps even stronger, seeing her this way.

"God! Oh, God Almighty...Johnny...Johnny..." She fell against me—breasts and belly and thighs like flesh I had undressed—crying hysterically and worrying her head into my chest. I half carried, half pushed her into the apartment and closed the door. Then I found the orchid meatiness of her mouth. There was the salt of tears and the thick heat of her breath...

"Besides Anna, who knows you're here?" I asked.

"Johnny, you've got to get me away from him. Pete'll kill me. He will, really, Johnny."

The telephone rang. It rang like a churchbell on Monday. Her body tensed and coiled, almost as though in a spasm of love. She ran away from my arms, away from the sound.

I said, "Who knows your phone number? Who else knows you're here?" Marie stood there, white as a glass of skim milk. "Who knows you're here?" I asked again, and grabbed her violently by the shoulders. I had to know.

"Just Florence...Florence Rizzoli. You remember her—" Her pupils were suddenly small black dots. "Johnny, it's Pete! I know it's him. He got to her."

I picked up the receiver. "Merit Finance, Mr. Grey speaking. May I help—?" With a muffled growl, whoever was at the other end of the line slammed down the phone. "I don't know, Marie. Maybe it was Mangano." I hung up. "Look, I've got to know what you've done to set him off like this." I grabbed her wrist and pulled her into the living room. She came like an animal fighting the leash, her thigh's trembling, her red mouth open and gasping.

I pointed out of the bay window to the Studebaker below. "How long has that car been there? Just today, yesterday—how long?"

"The last couple or three days, I guess. I've been afraid to go out. I guess a couple of days."

"There's a tall, thin man down there. Getting gray at the sides. Black, curly hair—"

"That's Joe Haas," She fell into a chair like a stringless puppet. "Pete's errand boy. He knew I was here all the time. Why hasn't he done anything? My God, Johnny, what's he going to do to me?"

"You tell me what this is about and maybe I can get us out. I have to know everything, every last goddamn thing that started this. If you want to save that fine white neck of yours from Mangano." I cupped her shoulder in my hand and kissed her on the lips. "You and me, sweet, just the way it used to be."

Marie crossed her legs and rested

her head against the back of the chair. The motion stirred the heavy lift of her breasts. Even while she was sick with fear Marie excited me. Perhaps her fear was some sort of the excitement.

"I shouldn't have married Pete," she said. "It never had a chance to work out, not with the way he is. It wasn't too bad at first—plenty of money, clothes. Pete's a big spender when you get him going. Knocked me around a little. Not too bad." Her pupils were beginning to dilate again.

"Then he started with some bitch down the Peninsula. Railroad money. Pete's good in bed, don't think he isn't." She touched her throat with the tips of her fingers. "And he's a gentleman of a racketman—just the thing for her to show off. Sell you heroin with one hand and slip you change for the March of Dimes with the other.

"I figured I needed some protection. I began to pick things up. A little here, a little there. Pete's drug tie-up is with Lou Carbo—down south, you know. I figured if I could get evidence of his purchases, maybe I could use that to get a kind of annuity out of Pete, instead of living on the dole he hands out when he feels sporty."

"And now you have something," I said. "And Pete knows you've got it."

Marie had been working a sodden pack of cigarettes around in her hands. I gave her a fresh one and lighted it and another for myself. She must have been living on them. All the trays were heaping full and there was the cold stink of stale smoke heavy in the room. She puffed on the cigarette like she was inhaling mustard gas, in shaking, gasping drags.

"Sure I got it," she said.

"On paper?"

"Up here," she said, tapping her forehead.

"That was your first mistake. Stuff like that you should always have down on paper."

I had been standing at the window and now I moved back, out of the line of the afternoon sun that slanted through the curtains. A '55 Lincoln Capri was parking across the street, just on the other side of my U-drive. A medium sized man with smooth, black hair got out and crossed to the Stude. Mangano. While I was on my way up the apartment, Haas had probably called from the corner grocery. That was what Pete's call had been for. He was checking on Joe Haas, making sure that I was there.

"He made two buys of the heavy from Lou Carbo. I got it in my head, names, dates, figures. Pete can't wiggle out of this, not if I get away."

Mangano and Haas were still talking down on the street.

"You should have gotten it on paper, sweet—or told somebody, anyway." I shook my head. "You aren't going to take him like this. Not alone."

"I tell you I didn't have time. Besides, I knew I'd be cutting my throat for sure if I told anyone. Pete'd never stand still for that... Oh, Pete and I got in a beef and the first thing I knew I was shooting my mouth off. Jesus, what he said to me..."

Haas got out of the car. I watched him ease the door shut. Mangano pointed toward the entrance.

"Now hold on to yourself, sweet," I said. "You do what I tell you and we'll be out of here in five minutes. Pete and Haas are coming upstairs now. I'm going to go up to the next landing. When they ring, open the door and step to the left. I'll be right behind them."

She stood white and still in the hallway as I slid out the door and eased up the stairs, keeping close to the wall where the steps were still solidly nailed.

The entrance door below clicked open; the two of them came up the stairs. I heard Haas's long stride pace the length of the hall and return to the head of the stairs. They were being careful. Then there was the dim *brrrr* of Marie's doorbell. I heard the spring lock turn. I took the .38 from back of my belt buckle.

In ten steps I was down the stairs and behind them.

"Fold your hands together over your head!" I kicked the door shut behind me. "Okay, now on into the living room. Slow. Sweet, you all right?"

"Sure, Johnny..."

Marie came to my side. I said, "Not so close. Don't get between us. We have plenty of time later."

There was the thick sound of hate in Mangano's throat.

I stood them against the wall and shook them down. Haas was carrying an S&W .38. Mangano had a transparent plastic pocket comb. He was a member of the leisure class; he had all his work done for him.

"Both of you—fold your arms and get down on the floor. On your bellies. Keep your hands against your chest. And don't make any noise or I'll let you have it right now."

They sprawled out like two hamstrung wolves.

"I don't want to kill you, Pete. No beef and you won't get hurt bad." I brought the pistol down in two arcs. In a daze, Haas tried to get to his feet. I caught him back of the ear and tore the muzzle forward, half ripping his earlobe off. He fell forward on his face, twitching, the muscles in his legs drawing them up like a grasshopper's. Mangano lay on the floor like it was two hours to breakfast.

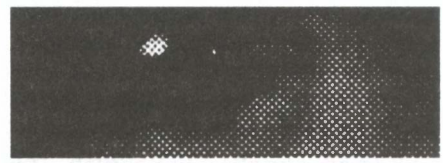
I put the .38 back in my waistband. From my left inside breast pocket, I took a bone handled switch knife. I pressed the switch, watched the thin-edged blade slide out smoothly.

"Pete just wanted you scared, sweet," I said. "Frightened back into line. He didn't want to hurt you. Haas was only keeping an eye out. Maybe it would have worked for awhile, but sometime you'd have talked. Women always do."

"What...?" Comprehension was coming to her. Slowly, but it was coming. That fine body, naked in its clothing, began to tremble again. Then her face fell apart like a broken jigsaw puzzle, her eyes wide with disbelief. "But you can't be from—"

"I'm a volunteer, sweet. I'm from Lou Carbo."

The blade was in Marie's heart before she could scream. ❑



THOMAS CARMODY, under a variety of bylines, was one of the most prolific crime-fiction writers of the 1950s. He is still active today.

"I AM CONVICT 16766, BY NAME, MORRELL"

by Ed. Morrell

The author of this memoir of San Quentin Prison at the turn-of-the-century was once the most famous prisoner in America. Jack London based his novel Star-Rover on Ed. Morrell's experiences in solitary confinement—and the prison riot in Jack Boyle's "Boston Blackie's Mary," republished in the May 1990 ARGOSY, was inspired by the true story you are about to read.

I: THE TWENTY-FIFTH MAN

BULKED UPON a rocky point, jutting out into the north arm of San Francisco Bay, stands a medieval structure. From the top of Mt. Tamalpais it resembles a feudal castle on the Rhine, massive, turreted, with square donjon and frowning loop-holed towers. A trail for horsemen leads up to the rampart on whose battlements pace human beings, reminding one of the wielders of tar-pot and lead-ladle.

The enclosure is rectangular, its door iron-studded, swinging on ponderous hinges. It occupies a strategical position, impenetrable from all angles, grim, forbidding, an overwhelming sight even when softened to a shadow by the white mists of the bay.

Approaching, the trail becomes a road, with battlements, walls manned by guards armed with modern weapons, and towers, the vantage point of defense. What resembled the Donjon of the Lord or Baron is but the Administration Building, the iron-studded door a man-gate, and so on until the feudal castle, increasing in its severity, is San Quentin, one of the largest prisons on the North American Continent.

At the man-gate the feudal likeness ends. Once within, San Quentin, as its name implies, is Spanish. The four cell houses are long, low and squatty, grouped in parallel lines four deep, opposite the Captain of the Yard's quarters. There is a patio, too, with fountains and a great variety of shrubs.

San Quentin at the time of which I write, after nearly half a century's existence, had made history as a notorious man-killing jail—inhuman, terrible, the very flagstones standing as mute accusers against the shocking brutalities committed there in the name of the law, on defenseless victims.

The visitor, being permitted to go no further than the balcony of the Administration Building, where he might enjoy the garden, flower-scented air, and a silence which to him was not oppressive, usually believed he had glimpsed an idyllic Utopian scene. How could he penetrate what lay beyond; how know the true San Quentin a sinister place black as Hell, a volcano, a smoldering cauldron? He was not allowed inside.

And how could he observe that even the windows of the Female Department facing the garden were heavily coated with drab paint and were nailed down, lest the soul-starved inmates might see its flowers or breathe their fragrance.

He never visited the "Bullpen," a corral no larger than a small city block, where nineteen hundred convicts were herded together like cattle in the stock yards of Chicago, during hours not devoted to man-killing toil in the Jute Mill.

There was no way for him to discover that every type, race, creed, and color; good men, bad men, strong men, weak men; defiled and defilers, moral and immoral, healthy and sick; bright-eyed, vigorous boys just emerging from adolescence, and men pitted and pocked from every imaginable disease; all rubbed cheek-by-jowl so near that cheerful garden upon which the proscribed might never gaze.

The visitor was naturally unaware of the Bullpen's fetid mist of stifling, sickening odors. He could never have guessed that—surrounded by water on the outside—there would be an absence of it within. If he did, he must surely have believed that in later years, a Warden with a penchant for novelties who had constructed a swimming tank of approximately ten by twenty feet, had solved the problem. He heard whispers about this luxury having cost the taxpayers twenty-five thousand dollars, and there his knowledge ended. He never could have learned that its popularity waned immediately after the grand opening; that those confined to San Quentin found it to be a pool of contagion instead of a health-giving agency, and were forced back to the time-honored "bucket brigade"—those who washed doing so within their cells—while the Bullpen odors continued as stifling as ever.

Thus, having looked upon the flower garden from the balcony, the visitor departed, believing he had seen a great prison, satisfied that conditions within were ideal. Most institutions are investigated that way, with perhaps a good dinner thrown in at the Warden's house for the professional "whitewasher."

To a student of penology, San Quentin must have represented a strange admixture of insanity and coddling paternalism under the cheap pretense of a system, with brute force and ignorance answering for rules and regulations. He alone might realize that nineteen hundred men were crowded in a place foul and stench-ridden, hardly large enough to house comfortably five hundred. That everything about it was unsanitary. That clubbings and beatings by inhuman guards were the order of the day. That prisoners were pitted against one another to the utter destruction of the good by the bad. And that the enforced silence was oppressive and unnatural, producing an abnormal condition of mind.

Like most prisons, San Quentin was ruled under a system of blind stupidity, and thus I found it.

I was standing alone, thinking over this very situation, when someone approached me, a fellow prisoner. He knew I was a Folsom transfer. "I have it straight from headquarters that word has been sent down the line to crush you," said Happy Jack. "Hell is going to pop in this prison. We want to pull off a big rumpus, but if the mob ever gets started and we lose control, there'll be killing—and every one of us will be hung. What do you think about it?"

We were in the Bullpen. It was my first Sunday in San Quentin and my Folsom ring-around strips were too noticeable. In order not to attract attention, he moved away immediately after I explained my desire to try to make good here, not having been given a chance in Folsom. I was a lifer, and there were friends with money who could aid me if I kept a clean record. I told Happy that I would answer later on as to what part I should play in the strike.

THE TROUBLE hinged around the mess hall, that storm center of all American prisons. The food beggared description. The common diet—unseasoned beans in all stages of decay—was served twenty-one times a week. The odors from the meat, purchased by the Commissary Department through a system of collusion with favored political contract bidders, would turn the stomach of even a healthy dog. The scanty vegetables were frequently rotten. And the flour, scrapings from the mills, was full of weevils, soggy, black and unpalatable, spelling dysentery and death. Meanwhile, the State paid the very highest prices for food which never reached the convicts.

Graft had been an accepted chronic condition even at Folsom, but it had never developed to such an abandon, though we were constantly hungry there through short rations.

While I was still at Folsom, rumors were rife that the cap would soon blow off the inferno on Frisco Bay with a mutiny worse than any that had ever occurred in the history of the country. Only the spark of some overt act was needed to precipitate it. San Quentin moaned and groaned in terrible silent ferment. The hospital and the old tubercular ward were filled to capacity, and dungeon and punishment cells were jammed full of convicts who had dared protest. San Quentin was rife with an unspeakable atmosphere of suppressed murder, and only awaited the responsibility of leadership. Something was holding the convicts in check. Perhaps news that had seeped in of an impending transfer from Folsom of twenty-five desperate convicts, the worst ever confined during the history of that institution. Among them might be a leader.

It had just turned dark as the mangate opened to admit our zebra-striped line of sullen and dark-visaged creatures, leg-shackled, hand-shackled and manacled, with a heavy bull chain which bound us twenty-five proscribed men rattling ominously at every step.

The convicts incarcerated in the front tiers of the cell building facing the offices stared in mute amazement at the gruesome sight, then as though by magic, joyously passed the word on to the rest of the prison confined. San Quentin became a beehive of buzzing sounds.

We had been tanned and blackened by the blistering suns of the Folsom rock quarries until we looked like Mexicans. We had eaten nothing since our morning meal of "bootleg coffee," dry bread, and a scanty pan of beans, and it had taken all day to ride from that prison in the northeastern section of the state to San Quentin, locked and bolted like cattle in a Southern Pacific car. We were famished and weak. Those poor convicts not physically robust were hardly able to stand.

The manhandling Folsom escort guard stepped among us, the heavy clanging bull chain fell to the stone flags of the prison yard, and in pairs we were marched to the general mess.

God, what a meal! San Quentin food was even worse than we had anticipated. It had lain served on the table for hours awaiting our arrival—cold, clammy bull stew in tin pans; dry, soggy bread; and "bootleg" in tin cups, that unpalatable mixture of burnt bread crusts, oats and other crudely compounded ingredients, the curse of every American prison. There were salt and pepper on the table. There were half gallon jugs of deadly acid, a substitute for vinegar.

None of us spoke a word, but the low, grumbling jail sound could be heard. The silent system prevailed at that time in the general mess, and the guards pounded their heavy clubs on the flagstones as a sinister warning.

We had been half-starved at Folsom, had been train-riding all day, and though famished, it was impossible even to bolt down the slop placed before us that night.

The fifteen minutes allowed for eating soon passed, and it was a welcome relief to be herded out. The regular prison staff were plainly disgruntled, gruff, brutal orders showing their attitude. This would mean extra work. Their general feeling was mirrored in the actions of the Captain of the Yard. "Take them to Hell below," he grumbled under his breath, stepping from his private office to confront us, lined up before him. "Why the hell should I be bothered with them tonight? Clean out one side of the dungeon and lock 'em there."

The true meaning of the strange order did not dawn on us until lodged in six of those dungeon cells. The punishment dungeon after that long day of hard travel! And we wondered what next? The lanterns vanished, doors clanged shut. We were in darkness, without so much as a blanket, and had not been allowed to bathe or wash after the ordeal of transfer through a scorching hot valley. In

misery we twenty-five sank exhausted to the cold stone floor of San Quentin's dungeons.

EVEN THAT FIRST Sunday after our transfer, without Happy Jack's timely warning, I could see trouble was brewing. There was a strained feeling of unrest in the Bullpen, where nineteen hundred men were crowded together. Contrary to the customary din and noise, sinister silence prevailed. The Bullpen was the only place where no attempt was made to control the actions of the convicts—but on this day, freemen with clubs moved about among us. Rifle guards on the wall above held us under relentless scrutiny, every little while exchanging signals with their fellow freemen in the yard.

We Folsom transfers were hideously conspicuous, still wearing the grimy convict stripes of that prison as a badge of incorrigibility, and the guards watched for the least excuse to place us under arrest. I was marked as a leader, having been pointed out to every freeman as a notorious desperate character, a life convict, an ex-bandit, a bad man who would surely start something at the first opportunity. But even with all this against me, I still determined to make good, and until I could be convinced of the general intention toward me at San Quentin, which was not so much a private lockup of the railroad company as Folsom, I had urged my friend Happy Jack to wait for his answer.

I WAS PUT to work in that Hell of San Quentin, the Jute Mill. More than a thousand others were there, also, making grain sacks amid the deafening clatter, in air filled with jute dust so thick at times that it was hard to distinguish more than a faint outline of the blue-coated guards who stood over us with loaded clubs to see that we turned out our one hundred yards of cloth each day.

It was indeed an inferno, where men with painfully drawn faces strove amid the jarring roar to perform the required weekly task. The alternative was to spend Saturday and Sunday in the dungeon on a bread and water diet if they failed, or if they incensed a guard. Then they must return on Monday to accomplish an amount of work hard for a well man to produce—in fetid air, amid pandemonium, ever enduring bitter imprecations and vile oaths.

The same discontent was evident in the Jute Mill as I had noticed in the Bullpen the Sunday following our arrival, but it was all centered on food, not the unthinkable conditions of labor. Even this employment was better than idleness. A prisoner without friends, money, or political pull had no rights. It was not the Jute Mill, the long, grinding hours of toil with every human emotion suppressed, the nights in prison dens, stench-ridden and degrading, but the impure food furnished by the Commissary Department when the State paid for the very best. They might trample on all other rights of the convict, but the condition of food is at the bottom of every prison riot, without exception

At the end of about a week in the Jute Mill I was summoned to the Captain's office. He had received my punishment record from Folsom. I stood rigidly at attention, listening as he read it aloud. It sounded more like a death warrant, and when he had finished I tried to speak.

"I'm doin' the talking," he cut in. "You just listen and listen damned close. I am putting a special watch on you, and the first time you bat an eye, by God yer going to hit the hole!"

Again I made an effort to speak. The Captain called for silence, repeating the trite, sinister warning. "The first time you bat an eye, I say, you'll think Folsom was paradise in comparison to this place. Go back to your work. Cons don't do no talkin', here, understand!"

Happy Jack was correct. Still, I wanted to make good. I did hope that sometime I might gain liberty through the front door. Most prisoners feel the same before the machine begins its grinding process.

In a few more days, I began to taste real bitterness. A guard accused me of crowding and jerked me out of line. "He's a bad actor and I've had my eyes on him. He's trying to stir up trouble, Captain," the guard explained.

"Dungeon! Twenty days!"

The same guard brought me back to the office shortly after my release. "This stiff is trying to stir up trouble. Worst man in my section."

I was asked to give a reason for my actions but remained silent. They knew that I was raging and desired nothing more than to hear me break loose on a tirade that would furnish grounds for more punishment.

"An officer's addressing you, and when an officer speaks, answer, damn you!" prodded the Captain. I remained erect and silent. "Put him in the hole for thirty days, and see that he don't get too much bread and water."

After that, I saw much of the punishment dungeon, grew accustomed to being chained by one foot, to a cold stone floor and a shivering body, to chilling air, to darkness and dampness. I had not even so much as a blanket.

Until he was moved, the same guard was always responsible for my torture. He openly boasted of taking this means to avenge the death of a relative, a gunman and bloodmoney hunter who had been killed by the California Outlaws during a chase. When my tormentor left, there were others to take his place—to try and instill in me a fear of their guns and clubs—to make me docile and meek. Times without number I was sent to the "hole," until, as in Folsom, my prison life became a case of just in and just out of the dungeon, even though I bent every effort to obedience.

I could, at last, see that I was doomed, a hopeless lifer, and an undying hatred sprang up within me toward everything that smacked of restraint. My decision was quick. I would undertake the dangerous task of leadership.

II: PRISON MUTINY

IT WAS MORNING. The great Jute Mill was in full operation. Everything appeared as usual. All were in their places, even the guards. Only the air was different. It seemed surcharged with something terrifying. The guards, silent, restless, uneasy looked about, their customary bravado gone.

I was working on a loom under the

tutelage of a convict weaver. That morning, my trips to the cobs house for new supplied were frequent. I grasped every opportunity to pass a word here and there to trusted men. On the last trip, I glided unseen with my new supply of cobs to another part of the Mill, where Happy Jack stood, alert and anxious.

"What's the word, Ed?"

"Pass the signal in ten minutes. That will be ten o'clock sharp. Give me a chance to return to my station, so that everything will look right. Remember, each man must stand firm, above all guarding against the first bad break. Are you sure of everyone? If we lose control, we'll pay the penalty with a rope."

On a Sunday about three weeks before, Happy Jack and I with twenty-three others had held a meeting. It may be hard to understand how so many convicts could gather together in San Quentin openly and without interference.

There were big dormitories on the ground floor of the front cell house facing the offices. Room-tenders were in complete charge there, and during the hours on Sunday when the other prisoners were forced to remain in the Bullpen, they rented them out to groups of moneyed convicts.

The money circulation within the prison walls was from three to fifteen thousand dollars and while the poor and friendless alternately sweltered in the sun or became drenched with rain, suffering all manner of inhuman torture for the slightest infraction of rules, or for nothing in instances where they had been singled out for crushing, a favored few were wined and dined in these rooms at five dollars a plate. Or did until complaint at the imposition made it dangerous, for on such occasions food was taken from the guards' and officers' mess or even the larder of the Warden. Then, when the freemen grumbled, a shrinkage in the meager rations of the convicts was evident. It was an underground system of graft almost as baneful as that practiced by the Commissary Department.

The convicts were helpless, though well aware of the situation. They knew that in those big rooms food was set up as daintily as in some of the leading hotels in the country, that gambling went on without interference—faro, poker, stud and draw, three card monte, chuck luck, honest John, and even the Negro game of "rolling bones," and that heavy tolls in the form of a head price of graft were exacted from each of the moneyed owners of some particular game. They were also conscious of the staging of opium parties. These debaucheries scarcely caused passing comment, much less a reprimand. Pampered prison pets could break rules with impunity and the convicts all knew that those who could afford the price in cold cash did anything and everything.

Taking advantage of the very system we were seeking to destroy, it had been possible to charter room number five in the front cell house building for a handsome sum of money. At room lockup on Sunday morning, when the other convicts were forced into the Bullpen, we filed inside by twos and threes apparently to banquet. The door was locked behind us and absolute privacy was secured. Not even the room-tender was admitted.

Happy Jack was appointed chairman. He called the meeting to order and two plans of mutiny were considered, another's and my own.

The first called for seizing the prison with one hundred picked men. The man's mutiny plan also called for the mining of the institution so that complete destruction would result, the walls shattered, the gatling guns wrecked, and the Jute Mill with its millions of dollars worth of machinery utterly demolished.

There was no interruption during the man's reading, and even I could not refrain from admiring the mind capable of conceiving a plot that portrayed such a remarkable power of organization. This man was a dominant character. Of course he functioned toward evil, but it was a clear case of misdirected energy.

My project was indeed mild in comparison. It involved the capture of the Jute Mill, officers and guards there to be held as hostages until the Administration, through the Warden, compromised.

I read the demands to be presented by a committee from the Jute Mill. Then took up the other plan, dissecting it for bad points. Lives would undoubtedly be sacrificed, and profound horror created throughout the country when the nineteen hundred convicts should leave the prison to roam the foothills after years of incarceration. The one hundred responsible for carrying out the plans of mutiny, who could not possibly escape far, would be executed.

My plan was accepted by a majority of twenty-three votes—the author of the first program and his crony no doubt withholding the two.

It had been agreed after a careful weighing of the situation that my connection with the plot should never be known, except to the other twenty-four conspirator, that they should stand between me as chief instigator and the hundred trusted prisoners who where to take active part. If the officials had even become suspicious of me as the directing mind, I would have been placed under arrest; or perhaps, in keeping with their intense desire to crush me, framed on a murder charge by some stool pigeon for which I should be hanged.

THREE WEEKS HAD now passed. After speaking to Happy Jack, I had returned to my station. The guard was eyeing me strangely when something happened! It came with the suddenness of an explosion, only this one was reversed. Instead of silence broken by a loud rending crash, the jarring noises of the Jute Mill stopped on the instant of ten o'clock and the calm became oppressive. Machinery, millions of dollars worth, ceased to operate, and not a sound of any kind could be heard.

The silence was more overpowering than the noise. Then the sounds of talking broke the stillness. It was the jail whisper rising into loud speech, strange and foreign to all of us convicts so accustomed to suppression. Then came the screeching hyena-like gibbering of a strike mob, staccatoed by sharp words and hurried commands from those brave, dependable men Happy Jack had declared we could trust implicitly. In groups of five and six they moved about methodically from position to position, each of them brandishing a keen-edged dagger. I overheard the orders they gave to the guard at my station.

"Say, good little man," said one, "stay right where you are and see that all your men remain in their places. Just keep your noses clean today. Arrest the first man who disobeys or tries to damage one scrap of

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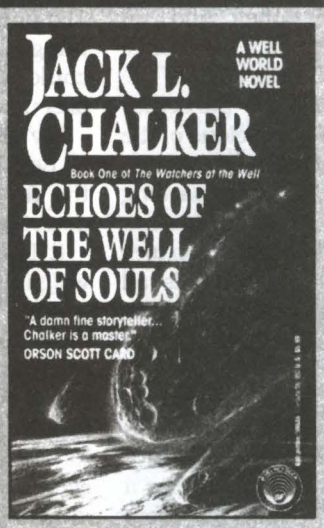

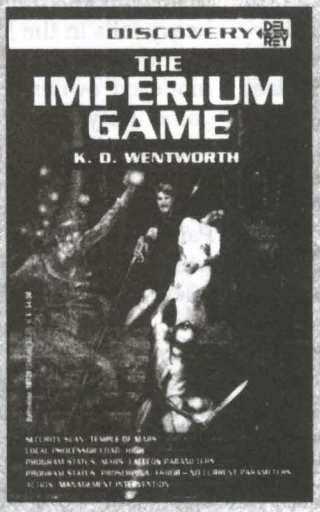

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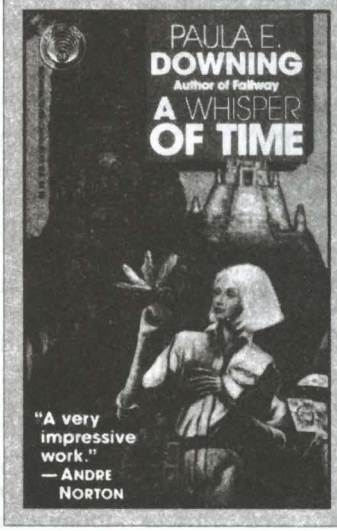

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machinery and we will attend to his case instantly."

I knew Happy Jack had successfully executed my order to have each guard supported by a group of trusted men. These were sworn to protect the guard with their lives and also to help him watch the machinery.

I had two burly convicts sent to guard the door of the Superintendent of the Mill. He stood in his office, pale and worried. In less than an hour, we were in complete control. More than a thousand prisoners stood rigidly at attention, while ever-vigilant our assistants moved about ready to cope with the slightest evidence of a breakdown in the plan or any attempt to counter-mutiny by some of the professional "stool pigeons," the most dangerous characters in prison, who prey upon fellow convicts.

I was again with Happy Jack in the rear of the mill. Instinctively glancing toward the position of the guard who was responsible for my dungeon career, I found him missing. Happy Jack told me that he had escaped with two others notorious for their cruelty, fleeing through the engine room and gaining the top of the wall by a rope the rifle guards had lowered. I was pleased to learn this, as their absence insured a more orderly mutiny. Had they remained, the temptation might have been too strong in the hearts of some of the oppressed. I felt no apprehension for the rest of the seventy-five freemen now under rigid control, because it was customary to assign the more level-headed guards to Jute Mill duty, where they were less protected than in the yard.

Already they were sighing with relief as the time passed without an overt act being committed, and in some sections they were standing about with groups of their former charges laughing and joking over the new turn of affairs.

THE COMMITEE TO go before the Warden and the Captain of the Yard had been selected. To avert suspicion, Happy Jack appointed me to one of them. With the Captain of the Jute Mill guard in the lead, we stepped out through the big doorway where he raised his hand as a signal that we might pass safely through the gate and into the protecting enclosure of the prison proper. Guards who completely manned the encircling wall dared not fire into the Mill lest the lives of the freemen be endangered. For the same reason, we were safe. How I dread to think of what might have happened had we been foolhardy enough to drive the guards out, instead of holding them prisoner.

The Warden was a senile man, trembling and palsied. I don't believe he had ever been inside the prison any further than the offices. He did not come to meet us in front the of the Captain's headquarters. The only other man present beside the Captain of the Yard was the Turnkey, an old experienced officer, cool-headed, courageous, the one man at San Quentin who could boast of the love of convicts and freemen alike.

"Are you boys the committee from the Mill?" asked the Captain of the Yard, glaring at us with loaded cane in hand.

Not uttering a word, we nodded our heads in unison.

"Who is spokesman?"

Feigning forgetfulness, he glowered impatiently at me when none replied on the instant. "You are one of the Folsom Transfers, eh?" His head moved slowly up and down.

"Yes, sir," I replied.

"And what may be your name and number?" He knew me only too well.

"I am convict 16,766, by name, Morrell," I said.

"Ah, you're Morrell? It seems to me I've heard of you before. Of course, you are the leader, uh?"

Divining the Captain's purpose of trying to single me out as a fitting target on whom to cast the blame for all the trouble and anything that might occur during the whole riot—what Happy Jack had hoped to avoid by making it appear that the leadership had been scattered among a hundred or more with no particular head—I determined to evade the trap.

"Leader? No, Captain," I replied. "The trouble was an old story long before my transfer from Folsom. They chose me as one of the committee, doubtless to have a mixed representation. But now that we are here, we had better get down to business."

He did not interrupt me and I continued. "Time is a precious factor. We five have been sent by the convicts to lay our their grievances before the officers. If we are not back in the Jute Mill in one hour, the lives of five guards will be sacrificed in reprisal."

"What is the complaint?" stammered the Warden, stepping to the door, his palsied trembling increased by the fear that an attempt might be made on his life.

One of the committee handed me a paper on which were written the conditions for compromise with which I was only too familiar.

The first was a demand that the Commissary Department be cleared of prison pets and that the Commissary General be removed at once. Others demanded investigation of the graft in purchasing supplies, the destruction of the old food, discharge of the Steward of the general mess, and the removal of the convict chef and the head baker, and their investigation for graft, the reassignment to the Jute Mill of all stool pigeons and prison pets holding positions as waiters in the general mess.

Not the least demand was the sixth, calling for a new Captain of the Bullpen and cell houses—and the removal of the Chaplain as a "parasitical, sniveling hypocrite, a grafter and traducer of hopes of unfortunate convicts for future reformation," and the substitution of some good public-spirited woman for the terrible, brutal Matron of the Female Department.

The seventh was a provision that no prisoner should be confined on bread and water any longer than ten days and that a mattress and two blankets must be supplied to anyone sentenced to the punishment dungeon—and the return of all personal property stolen from the convicts under the pretense of carrying out prison rules.

The conclusion contained a promise that honest effort by the Administration to comply with the demands would be met by a spirit of hearty cooperation on the part of the prisoners, who would make every effort to obey all rules, maintaining order and discipline throughout the institution to the end that San Quentin should be a model prison that would gain the sympathy of the people of the State and the world at large. In addition was the demand that the Warden or Captain return to the Mill with the committee, in person giving a solemn

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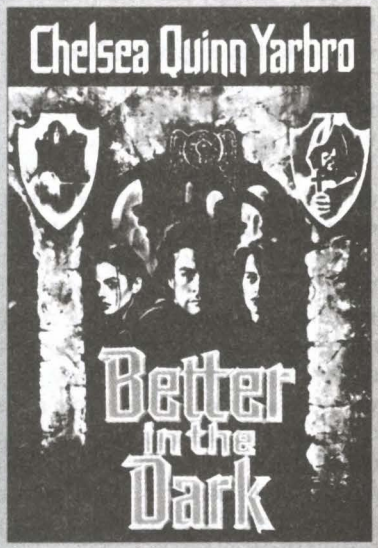

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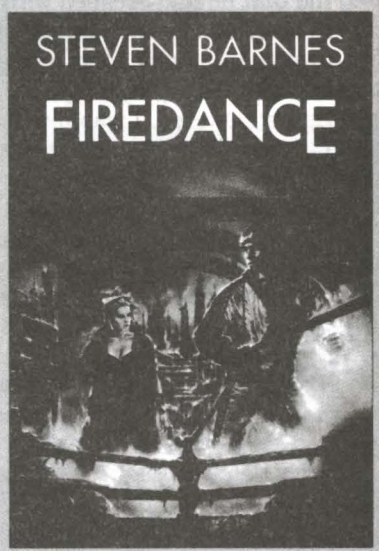

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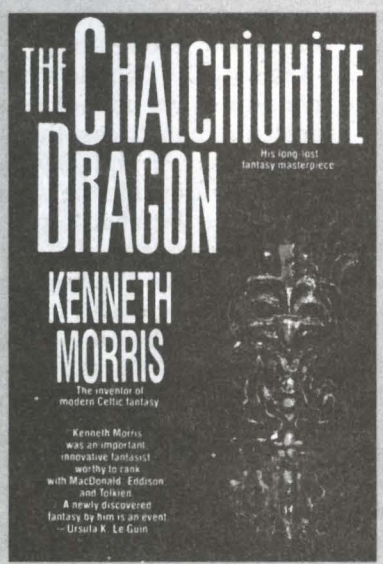

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promise to carry out all of the provisions faithfully.

When I had finished reading, the officials retired to the Captain's private office. We heard their voices distinctly. The Captain of the Yard was talking excitedly to the Warden, interrupted only by the arrival of the Commissary General and the Captain of the Guards, a swaggering braggart who delighted in giving orders to fire upon the convicts—a man thoroughly hated and despised.

Again and again, the recriminating words of the Captain of the Yard rang out: "By God, I won't do it! If I go down there and give the convicts my word, it must be kept. I will not be the goat. This is all your fault, anyhow," he shrieked, denouncing the weakness of the Warden. "I have warned of a day of reckoning, and the marvel is that it did not come long ago."

There was some interruption, then he continued. "You damned grafters would like to make me the goat, but my hands are clean and I don't propose to be placed in the door that way. Why don't you go down to the Mill, Warden, and you"—he evidently sneered at the Captain of the Guards—" or you, Commissary General?" His voice rasped on.

"No, you know damned well that you don't dare put your noses inside! Afraid you might be torn to pieces, and rightly so? You are a bunch of cowards! There are only two men who would dare confront those convicts—myself and the Turnkey. If I go, I must know where I stand beforehand. Are these demands to be granted and carried out?"

"Yes, yes! Make your promises and I will back you up, but for God's sake, Captain, go down and end it all," the Warden groaned feebly. "I will stand by you."

We could hear the roar of the mob in the Mill. The hour was up. Springing into the Turnkey's office, I grabbed the 'phone. Happy Jack answered. "What's the trouble?" I asked.

"We are losing control. This mob is going crazy. Belts are being cut, and if something doesn't happen quick, Hell will jar this Mill to its foundations. Don't lose any more time, Morrell!"

The Captain had entered the office with his customary catlike tread. "This is the Captain of the Yard," he shrieked into the mouthpiece, snatching the receiver from my hand. "Your committee is safe. They are returning to the Mill with me, and if there is one dollar's worth of machinery destroyed down there, by the Eternal God, I'll hang every one of the leaders of this mutiny."

He banged up the receiver and stalked into the yard, commanding us sharply to fall in line and lead the way.

III: MUTINY AND COUNTER MUTINY

AT THE JUTE MILL door we were met by an ear-splitting demoniacal roar, scarcely a human sound, inarticulate, menacing. Brave as he was, the Captain turned white and instinctively stepped back. He seemed to be living his whole life over again in the brief space of a few seconds. The Turnkey, a God fearing man, never blanched nor batted an eye. His cool demeanor amazed even us. He must have had a clear conscience.

All semblance of order that was maintained in the beginning was gone. The leaders had lost control. Breaking away, hundreds of striped creatures, howling and angry, surged toward us in the front of the Mill. Vainly the men who had taken charge brandished knives and shouted. They were lost in this mob of furious convicts. Sensing the danger, I mechanically shoved the Captain over to a table used for inspecting sacks. It was about five feet high and offered a good vantage point, commanding the entire human mass so densely packed in that section of the Mill.

Springing onto the table, I grasped the Captain's hand and swung him up beside me, then turning, faced the mob and shouted for order. Instantly, the twenty-four other leaders took up my command that they listen to the Captain who had come to talk.

"To hell with the Captain!" The voice was a signal sound of that destructive element to be found in every mob. It stirred them on to recklessness, and I shuddered for the Captain's safety. There were some who hungered for his life. This would mean the rope for me and perhaps many other innocent men. Something must be done.

Mechanically I clapped my hands, shouting for order.

Happy Jack and his brave supporters began moving among the rioters, striking blows and cracking heads. They were stool pigeons, ever the disturbing element, who were loathe to allow such a splendid opportunity for personal gain to pass. This time they had failed, hopelessly outnumbered. The noise died down.

I spoke calmly and without interruption as one of the committee of five, and then advised the Captain to speak.

As if addressing a sympathetic audience, he went over the whole situation, explaining how he had tried in vain to have things remedied, but now he stood before them as the directing authority to give his word these conditions would end at once. He again gave assurance that the spirit of this protest would bear good fruit and concluded by commanding that the convicts return to their work, maintaining order in the prison so that harm would come to no one.

One of the leaders jumped to the top of a loom. "Let's give three cheers for the Captain," he shouted.

A hearty, resounding roar indicated the good will of the convicts. It was the first cheer, loud and long. This was followed by a second, which to the great chagrin of all who desired order was lost in a series of catcalls and jeers. Again came that miserable bellow. "To hell with the Captain! He'll lie his contemptible soul into Hell and ring the change on himself in the next instant. Burn the Mill down! That's the way to bring our condition before the people."

The voice ceased as abruptly as it had started. Someone had taken this man in hand, but the damage was done and again the destructive ele-

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ment was gaining control. There was not a minute to lose, and jumping into the breech again my voice rang out commanding silence.

This time I made sure of painting a picture that even the most hardened might glimpse his danger, should the day's work end in bloodshed.

Once more came a challenge from the midst of the tightly packed mass. "Who the hell are you that we must listen. How do we know but you're a stool pigeon transferred from Folsom? Get down out of there and let some of the men we know speak for us."

Happy Jack's voice rose high above the buzz, hurling a string of imprecations at my unknown accuser.

"Our friend wonders who I am?" I shouted. "He lies when he says that he doesn't know me. He is a barking dog without a bite, anyhow. Now if that tough bully will only come forward and show his face, when this excitement is over I will make him east his words like the dirty yellow dog that he is."

By a happy thought, the mob had been turned into a merry, laughing body, almost childlike in its simplicity. They were won heart and soul, and three cheers loud and long followed.

Again I cut in. "All in favor of accepting the Captain's promise, raise your hands like men." It looked as if every hand in the Mill was held up high. The battle for law and order had been won. Millions of dollars worth of the State's machinery remained intact. Every man returned to his station. The Jute Mill was again in motion and San Quentin became once more as orderly as before. It was all over so far as we were concerned.

The siren blew announcing our midday meal. We were counted one by one as we filed out through the man-gate to the general mess. The meal was just a little worse than usual, but all were happy in the thought that this day would mark a new epoch. There was a noticeable air of self-assertiveness on every face. It usually accompanies a victory.

Those sitting at the first tables were finished almost before the end of the line had come in. They began to march out, amazed to learn that they were to go straight down the mess hall to the upper yard. This was customary only in the evening for general lockup. A word would have set the dining room aflame, but before that could occur the head end of the line already emerged into the open and mutually obeying, as human beings are so prone to at times of crisis, they responded to the lockup bell, automatically going through the routine without a murmur.

A blinding madness gripped the mutineers. They should have returned to the Jute Mill for work. Since they did not, each in his heart believed he had been tricked. It looked like a well-laid piece of treachery, and many were convinced that the Captain of the Yard had betrayed the confidence reposed in him.

By means of the jail murmur, message after message passed around from those occupying cells in the building facing the offices, one to the effect that there was a terrific commotion in the Captain's headquarters. He was exonerated. The other officials had double-crossed him, and the report was circulated that the Captain of the Yard had left through Liberty Gate in a terrible rage.

The mutiny had been concluded and San Quentin was quiet again. It was over so far as we convicts were concerned. However, to all appearances, a real mutiny was now being staged, an official one.

THE WALLS WERE heavily manned by rifle guards. Extras with clubs were detailed inside the prison. Convict trusties in spic-and-span uniforms were carrying messages around the institution. It became, as if by magic, a beehive of activity while we sullen prisoners looked on in silence, waiting for the outcome of the new turn in affairs.

"Kids' Alley," one hundred twenty cells on the ground floor, was cleared of its occupants. Convict roustabout gangs moved the furniture from them, carrying it to the front of the cell houses facing the offices, and by about four o'clock all was ready for the great weeding-out upheaval.

My cell was located in "Murderers' Row," where lived all the dangerous "lifetimers." I was one of the first to be divested of my clothes and dragged forth naked to a narrow cell in Kids' Alley, about four and a half feet wide, eight feet long, and seven high, made of solid stone. I had been marked as a leader, and one by one seven others were thrust in with me. Cramped and miserable, it seemed impossible that we could live.

All afternoon, the weeding-out continued while officers, blue-coated and heavily armed, flitted around through the buildings placing notes into the hands of stool pigeons who in turn passed them on to the despicable element known as prison rats and pets. In certain cells, immunity from torture was offered those who would join in the sinister plot to make the official mutiny a success, and by nine o'clock that evening, at a signal from headquarters, the order was given "to raise hell and keep it up."

Instantly, pandemonium broke loose, a weird bedlam, a mutiny staged for the outside world to hear about. What a strange contrast to our orderly protest in the morning! For the moment we eight crowded together in the tiny cell, forgot our misery, pain and slow suffocation—did not even see the unrolling of the large prison fire hose, so absorbed were we in the frenzied shrieking and clatter of the hired mob. It was drawn into Kids' Alley and the huge nozzle held against our door, while still we were unaware of our fate.

"Damn them, give them water, plenty of it," snarled a voice, and a great stream of icy water burst into the cell, striking the back wall with terrific force and spraying down upon our naked bodies so heavily that we were almost hurled to the floor.

We dodged, crowded, and finally stooped low to avoid being struck directly by the full force of the stream. It was strong enough to kill. Like a cloudburst it poured in. Our teeth chattered, cries went up to Heaven. Some would have fallen and drowned in the water which was now waist deep if the strong had not acted as a support.

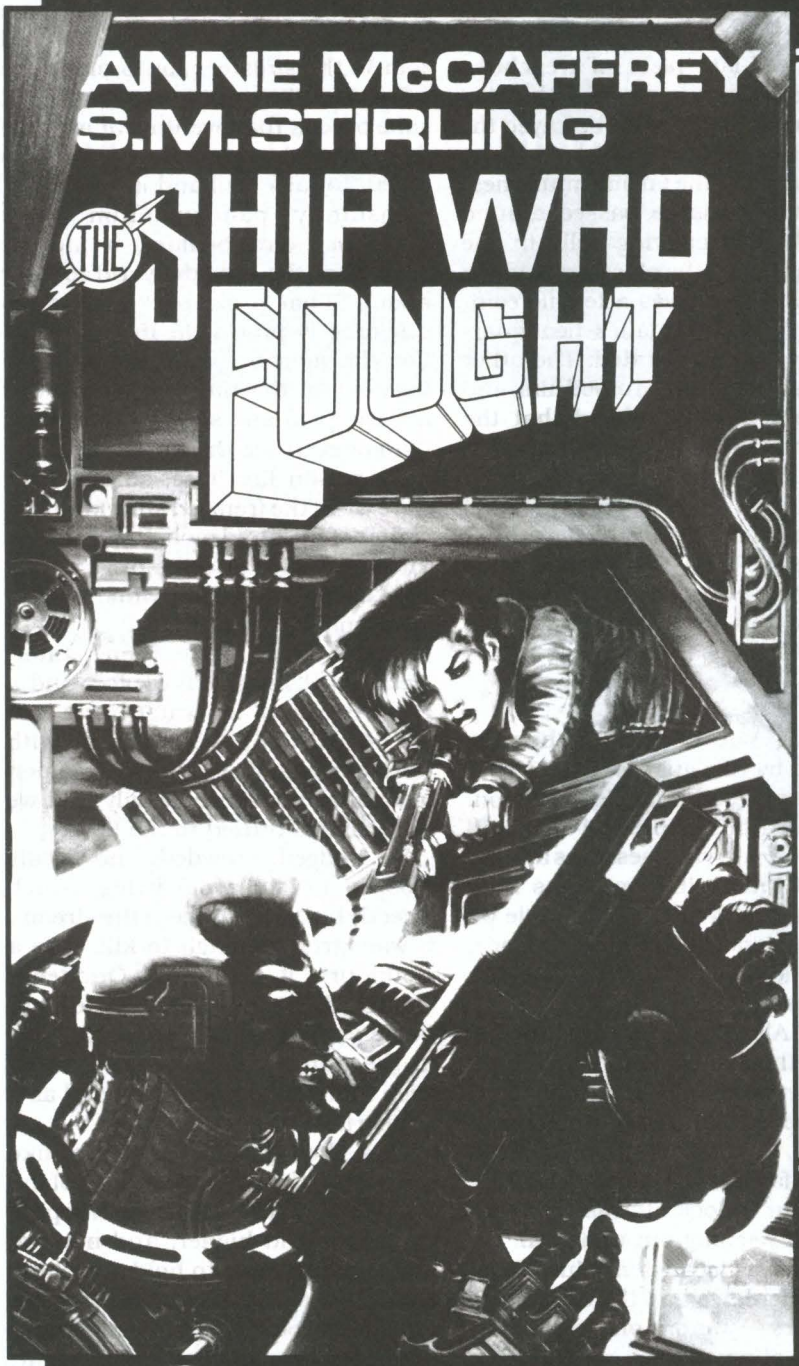
Were they going to drown us like rats within the narrow confines of the tanklike cell? The water was creeping up higher and higher, and now we had to stand erect to hold our chins above it. At last, they withdrew the nozzle and took it to the next cell and we stood there in the dead of night, straining every muscle to the utmost to keep from collapsing.

If I live a hundred years, I shall

HARDCOVER SCIENCE FICTION LEAD

☆ THE SHIP WHO FOUGHT ☆

ANNE McCAFFREY & S.M. STIRLING



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never forget the horrors of that night with the water trickling out but slowly under the bottom of the door, packed together like sardines, holding up the fainting and collapsed, listening to the groans and cries of agony that issued from every cell in Kids' Alley, and waiting hour after hour for the cold water to seep out. From shoulder-high it gradually receded until we were standing waist deep, then knee deep, and by ten o'clock the following morning, ankle deep. We had stood all night, and half-crazed, half-frozen, we crouched in miserable heaps upon the floor.

The howling din of the paid rioters had never subsided during the entire night. Word was passed around that reporters from the metropolitan press were arriving hourly to hear the noise from the only mutiny the world at large should know about, and to make the seriousness of the situation more impressive, several of the Board of Prison Directors had arrived and were holding an almost continuous session in the office of the Warden.

Repeatedly the reporters asked the Warden for an explanation of the trouble, for the causes behind the great uprising, and as often he would point his finger and ejaculate in pained alarm—for this Warden was a good actor—"Do you hear them now? Listen to that! What can you do with such brutes, who openly defy every law of God and man?"

The official mutiny sounds continued as if to give his words more force. "My case must be taken to the people. I can prove that I fought against the transfer of those evil brutes, and I know that the Governor will support my claim."

At last he reached the Governor by long distance 'phone. "Governor," he called, "San Quentin is in open mutiny. I need at least a regiment of soldiers to protect the prison. I won't be responsible for the consequences if you fail me now. The place has gone entirely mad. Those Folsom Transfers are at the bottom of the trouble, and they are already tearing the buildings down."

The people of the great State of California would never know of the peaceful protest against graft. The real cause of the mutiny was to be cloaked, and the convicts were to be depicted as inhuman monsters.

The first night of the riot had passed at San Quentin. The effect produced upon the representatives of the press had been good. Still the Warden was not satisfied. He wanted more to participate in the disturbance. The horrible opium traffic flourished throughout the prison at this time, and on the second night, prison rats and trusties passed to and fro through the cell tiers supplying irresponsible with the drug. The noise and clamor grew steadily worse. Sheriffs' posses from adjacent counties were hurriedly summoned and camped on the hillsides to guard the prison against a break. Outraged Society stood aghast. On the third day, many of the convicts were dope maddened, and goaded to action by the blue-coated assistants of the Warden, to their insane pandemonium they added destruction. Reporters were not permitted to interview any of the convicts of the prison proper, but only stool pigeons who had been primed with official stories to strengthen the Warden's plaint.

The San Quentin Mutiny lasted fourteen days. The hired rioters had burnt themselves out, and were in a stupor. Quiet prevailed. Kids' Alley had been filled and the overflow placed in dungeons. For thirteen long days and nights, we had waited to know the outcome, struggling against sickness, hunger, cold, and even death. On the fourteenth day, still naked, I was dragged from the horror chamber, given an old pair of trousers and a shirt, and—barefooted and bareheaded—marched before the Warden and a quorum of the State Board of Prison Commissioners.

"He is the ring-leader," shouted the Warden. "I have all the facts in my possession. He is the twenty-fifth man of the Folsom Transfer. Gentlemen of this Board, behold the brains of the riot. He started this trouble."

What did my protestations of innocence amount to against the word of a tyrant, a man utterly devoid of the first principles of common justice or decency, a man who would not hesitate to swear away the life of an innocent victim in order to vindicate his rottenly notorious mal-administration of the second largest prison on the North American Continent?

Though weak with loss of sleep and hunger, my poor shriveled body hardly able to stand erect, I feebly tried to defend myself against the cowardly accusations of the Warden, pleading that if given a chance, I could prove that my conduct throughout the whole affair was exemplary.

Then they silenced me. I was not permitted to plead in my own behalf, or even to produce witnesses.

"Solitary confinement, all privileges forfeited!" The words struck against me like a cannon ball. Had I not been a lifer, no doubt many years would have been added to my original sentence, as in the case of Happy Jack and the others who had so bravely sacrificed themselves to an orderly mutiny and the protection of the State's machinery.

After my release from solitary, I became the target for any stool pigeon who wished to curry favor with the officials. They were always ready to listen to stories about the twenty-fifth man of the Folsom Transfer—the man who had led the San Quentin Riot.

Henceforth, my life in prison was one long siege of torture. I was a marked man. ❑

Ed. Morrell was eventually freed from prison. He published his story in his book The Twenty-Fifth Man, from which this is taken. He became one of America's most well-known prison reformers.

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"...with the publication of *I Am a Barbarian*, a curious mystery emerged..."

Notes on Edgar Rice Burroughs

1. The Origin of Tarzan

EDGAR RICE BURROUGHS loved myth and legend. In part, his Martian stories were inspired by the Greek myths and Homer's *Odyssey*. The myth of Helen of Troy's birth—that she was born from an egg created by the union of Leda and Zeus, who had taken the form of a swan—inspired Burroughs' oviparous Martians. The dead sea bottoms of Barsoom are the ancient Mediterranean Sea after ages have past; its lost cities are Odysseus' sea-bound islands. The name of the last of his series heroes, Tangor, was derived from that of a Polynesian god. The myths of Hercules among the Amazons and the Pygmies influenced *Tarzan and the Ant Men*. And Tarzan himself was evidently inspired by a romance of the Charlemagne cycle, some 500 years old—the legend of Valentine and Orson.

"Valentine and Orson" first appeared in print in 1495, at Lyons. Valentine and Orson were twin sons of Bellisant, sister of King Pepin, born in a forest near Orleans. Orson was carried off and reared by a she-bear, who suckled him with her cubs. He grew up rough and uncouth, became the terror of France, and was called the Wild Man of the Forest. Valentine, however, was found in the woods by Pepin, and grew up as a courtier and knight. Ultimately, Orson was reclaimed by Valentine, overthrew the Green Knight, and married Fezon, the daughter of Duke Savory of Aquitaine.

The similarity of this tale to *Tarzan of the Apes* is striking. More striking, however, is its similarity to ERB's second novel—which immediately preceded *Tarzan—The Outlaw of Torn*.

The Outlaw of Torn has been largely ignored by Burroughs historians, even in their search for the origin of Tarzan. And yet, both novels share ideas, incidents, and themes.

One of twin sons of Henry III, Norman (born Richard, and renamed) was stolen as a child by Sir Jules de Vac, a master swordsman, embittered by his treatment by the king. The boy, raised to speak only French, to hate everything English, and to be a swordsman of unparalleled skill, was then unleashed on England as de Vac's revenge, and as the Outlaw of Torn, he became its scourge. Ultimately, his love for Bertrade de Montfort reunites him with his family, after the death of Jules de Vac.

In *Tarzan of the Apes*, the boys are not twins, but they share the same title. In *Tarzan*, Paul D'Arnot is not a villain, he is a friend—but he is French, and it is he who first teaches Tarzan to speak a human language, French. (In both stories, the heroes have an initial contact with English, then learn to speak French, and only then do they return to English.) In both books there is the curious irresolution of the problems of title. There are other vital similarities.

Burroughs frequently wrote "paired" stories, using the same essential plot, but "recasting" the characters. *Tarzan the Terrible* and *Tarzan and the Golden Lion*, for example, or *Tarzan, Lord of the Jungle* and *Tarzan and the Lost Empire*. *The Outlaw of Torn* and *Tarzan of the Apes* share this characteristic.

And when we add to this pairing the characteristics they both share with the legend of Valentine and Orson, each contributing separate aspects of the legend, the similarities go beyond ordinary coincidence.

It would appear that Burroughs, researching the historical novel his editor had suggested, came upon the legend—little known today, but popular as late as early Victorian times—and used aspects of it in *The Outlaw of Torn*, which takes place during approximately the same era. But in his subconscious an idea was born out of the story of Orson, one that fused Darwin's modern (and still controversial) theory of evolution with the stuff of legend.

As soon as *The Outlaw of Torn* was completed, then, Edgar Rice Burroughs turned to his new novel. Drawing from both science and religion, it melded the two conflicting conceptions of human life into a single figure—Tarzan of the Apes, whose mother was seemingly a Darwinian ape, but whose father was a nobleman, elevated above other creatures by the hand of God Himself. When he was done he had created the first universally known literary character of the twentieth century.

Tarzan, Lord of the Jungle and Orson, the Wild Man of the Forest, Kala and the she-bear, the noble heritage. Only chance, perhaps. But Tarzan and Norman and Orson, de Vac and D'Arnot, two twins, three noble heritages, and all the similarities that bind these three stories together—they suggest a common source, and further illuminate the remarkable mind of one of the century's most remarkable writers.

2. Who Was Normal Bean?

WHEN EDGAR RICE Burroughs died in 1950, he left behind a warehouse of records, receipts, correspondence, and workbooks, spanning virtually his entire life—and seemingly not a single mystery.

The public image of ERB was of an easy-going, extroverted, athletic man, without literary pretensions, who wrote only for money and never for anything more than entertainment. Burroughs himself fostered that image throughout his career.

Then in 1969, his realistic novel, *I Am a Barbarian*, was published for the first time. Forgotten in an office safe since it was written in 1941—and rejected by *Blue Book* magazine—it told the story of a barbarian, captured as a boy of ten by the Romans and given to the four-year-old Caligula, who grew to manhood as Caligula's personal slave, and who ultimately helped kill the mad emperor after he had destroyed the barbarian's marriage.

With the publication of the novel, a curious mystery emerged, one intensified by the publication of Irwin Porges' biography *Edgar Rice Burroughs: the Man Who Created Tarzan*—a mystery concealed in those word-games and complex symbols that so fascinated Burroughs throughout his career.

BURROUGHS' BOOKS abound in word-play. "Mars" is used in countless variations in the Barsoom series, a letter substituted here and there, but still carrying its subliminal message to the reader—T***ars*** Tarkas, Tardos ***Mors***, B***ars***oom, itself. Even John C***ar***ter hints at it. In the Pellucidar novels, David Innes explores the Inner World.

Some of the word-play is so perfectly conceived that it's almost invisible. "Carson Napier," the name of the hero of ERB's Venus novels, seems a straightforward name—a little unusual, but suitable for an adventure hero. But Carson Napier is John Carter's philosophic descendent (his metaphoric son), who attempted to reach Burroughs' ideal world of Mars *physically* by means of a spaceship (rather than through the form of astral projection that John Carter employed), only to go astray and fall into the murky mists of 1930s Venus. ERB's own life during this time was difficult and clouded, far different from the ideal world and life he'd originally envisioned, and with the Venus series, ERB created a compromise between the world of Tarzan of the Apes (which, however fanciful, is set in the physical world around us) and the metaphysical world of John Carter's Barsoom. And so he called his hero Carson Napier—***Car***(ter's) ***son ape-ier***.

Even more invisible is the origin of Tarzan's name. ERB explained the name as *tar-skin*, "white skin," in the language of the Great Apes. But in the beginning, ERB once said, he pronounced his hero's name as "Tarz'n," rather than the "Tar-*zan*" he later adopted. Tarz'n. Tars' son. Just as Carson Napier would later become John Carter's son, Tarzan of the Apes, Lord of the Jungle, was the metaphoric son of Tars Tarkas, Jeddak of Thark. And with the appearance of Tarzan of the Apes, Tars Tarkas—one of Burroughs' most popular characters—became a background figure in the Barsoomian series, seldom seen again on stage. (Like *The Outlaw of Torn*, *A Princess of Mars* also pairs with *Tarzan*—in *Princess*, John **Carter** goes to Mars and finds his love, Dejah Thoris, a captive of intelligent but beast-like creatures, the Green Men; in *Tarzan*, Jane **Porter** travels to an alien world, Africa, and finds her love. living among the Great Apes.)

THE CONCEALMENT OF images within the narrative's own words and the use of complex symbols were two of Burroughs' greatest strengths, permitting him during his most creative years to embody subtle ideas and emotions in seemingly simple storylines. Here, the Burroughs who reveals so little of himself directly to others is sometimes extraordinarily autobiographical.

"I have not the heart to write more, my son," Burroughs writes as Britannicus, the protagonist of *I Am a Barbarian*, in the novel's concluding paragraph. "What followed the assassination of Caius Caesar Caligula in the twenty-ninth year of his life and the fourth of his reign, you may read in your history books—probably greatly garbled, as is all history."

Curious.

In 1941, when *I Am a Barbarian* was written, Tarzan was twenty-nine years old, the age of Caligula at the time of his assassination.

Britannicus had become the slave of Caligula when the future emperor was four—what occurred four years after Tarzan's creation? On March 17, 1916, Burroughs began the first story in a wholly new cycle of Tarzan adventures, *The Jungle Tales of Tarzan*. This new cycle, distinctly different from the one preceding it (which had concluded with *Tarzan and the Jewels of Opar*) retold Tarzan's early life—and led to the death of Jane in the original magazine version of the next novel in the series, *Tarzan the Untamed*. In *I Am a Barbarian*, Caligula's forced seduction of Britannicus' wife had led to her suicide, and it was this that precipitated the barbarian's attack on the emperor.

Now, April 11, 1941, Burroughs interrupted a minor Venusian story—"The Wizard of Venus"—to commence *I Am a Barbarian*. This is almost exactly one month after his second wife left him, one month before *Tarzan of the Apes* was completed twenty-nine years before, and one month after the first story in *The Jungle Tales of Tarzan* was begun twenty-five years earlier.

Curious.

ACCORDING TO *I Am a Barbarian*, Britannicus was ten years old when he was enslaved. Caligula was four. So the barbarian boy was six at the time of Caligula's birth. What was Burroughs doing six years before the creation of Tarzan? What was he writing?

Burroughs' first novel, *A Princess of Mars*, was written in 1911, a year before *Tarzan of the Apes* was completed. It was typed on the backs of letterheads of the American Genealogical Society, of Chicago, whose address is that of a mysterious early

business of ERB's, Moss & Burroughs, Forwarding Agents, whose letterheads were also used for the manuscript.

However, an earlier significant long work by ERB has been found, "Minidoka 937th Earl of One Mile Series M. A Historical Fairy Tale." This, too, was written on the backs of the American Genealogical Society letterheads, as well as those of a firm ERB's brothers were associated with, the Yale Dredging Company of Minidoka, Idaho, and on photo bills from ERB's former business in Pocatello, Idaho.

In *Edgar Rice Burroughs*, Irwin Porges argues that the "Minidoka" manuscript was written during the years 1903 to 1905. He seems to reason that since Moss & Burroughs shared the same address as the American Genealogical Society, both companies were in existence at the same time. One of the Society's letterheads carries a stamped date, February 24, 1904, when ERB was known to be in Idaho. Porges assumes, then, that Moss & Burroughs existed prior to Burroughs departure for Idaho in 1903.

His reasoning here is weak. When ERB looked into his own family's past some years later, there was no evidence he was at all familiar with genealogical studies; and his name does not appear on the Society's letterhead. It is much more likely that Moss & Burroughs occupied an office formerly rented by the American Genealogical Society, and that quantities of disused letterheads (at least one stamped with a date) were found there. This is supported by city and telephone directories of the period. Earl C. Moss, Burroughs' partner, is listed as a mechanical engineer prior to 1904. During 1904 and 1905 he is described as a salesman. Then he is listed again as an engineer. This suggests that it was during the 1904-1905 period that Moss became a "forwarding agent." Burroughs returned to Chicago very late in 1904, and Moss & Burroughs could not have begun operation, then, until November or December of 1904, and most likely commenced in business the following year. In the margin of page 62 of the "Minidoka" manuscript there is a note by Burroughs, "lapse of about a year," clearly suggesting that it was begun—on the American Genealogical Society's discarded stationary—about 1905, and completed some time in 1906.

As it happens, 1906 is exactly six years before the creation of *Tarzan of the Apes*. And Britannicus was born six years before Caligula. If we assume that Caligula is playing the part of Tarzan in *I Am a Barbarian*—and it has long been known that Burroughs had grown desperately tired of the character, and may have conceived of the Ape-man as enslaving him—who is Britannicus? Who is the barbarian of the title, born six years earlier?

Normal Bean.

BURROUGHS WROTE two novels as "Normal Bean" before the first, *A Princess of Mars*, appeared in *All-Story* magazine—incorrectly attributed to "Norman Bean." The typographical error angered Burroughs. That odd pseudonym meant something to him, something he never explained directly. Verse under the name of Normal Bean had appeared in newspapers before *A Princess of Mars*, and as late as August, 1927 he used it again, in one of his own publications.

Clearly, if these speculations are accurate, Burroughs saw Normal Bean as a very different person than the author of Tarzan. In *I Am a Barbarian*, he writes, as Britannicus, "All my life I had a very good name of which I was quite proud, but Agrippina did not even inquire as to what it might be. No. After the custom of the Romans she gave me a brand new name as they do to all slaves."

Britannicus grew to like his "fine, full-sounding" new name, but he did not forget its origin, nor his life before slavery. Burroughs does not seem to have, either.

WHO WAS NORMAL Bean? He was the author of some light verse, two novels, *A Princess of Mars* and *The Outlaw of Torn*, and he may have been the author of "Minidoka 937th Earl of One Mile Series M. A Historical Fairy Tale." He may have been the "real" Edgar Rice Burroughs.

And if that's so, who did Normal Bean believe the author of Tarzan to be? Or, rather, who did he believe him to be from the *Jungle Tales of Tarzan* onward—for the young Caligula is described as a "pretty nice little kid, only a little spoiled"?

The themes of a "false Tarzan" (an unworthy character who pretends to be Tarzan or is mistaken for him), and a Tarzan who has lost his memory and identity, appear again and again throughout the series. Within the Tarzan books, the pretender is always exposed, and Tarzan always recovers his memory.

But in the world outside the books, in 1941, Burroughs seems to have decided that something had gone terribly wrong with his own life—something that had cost him one marriage and perhaps two. Something not easily set right. Something that had its origin twenty-five full years before. And so, in the novel he wrote in response, Britannicus killed Caligula, who had destroyed Britannicus' wife—as, perhaps, Burroughs felt the great success of Tarzan has destroyed his first marriage, and possibly his second, as well. And in that novel, he asserted once again who he really was. He said, "I am a barbarian." He said he was Normal Bean. ❑

—RICHARD KYLE

THE GODS OF MARS, REVISITED

MANAUS, Brazil—Indians who send their dead on their last voyage down the river in coffin canoes are part of the mysterious world of the Amazon, the vast region of Brazil which is still being explored. One of the exhibits in the Museum of Indians of the Amazon, run by the Salesiano order of nuns in Manaus, is a full-scale coffin canoe used by some of the river tribes in the tributaries which run into the upper Amazon system. In these areas, the river forms such a major part of the lives of the people, it is natural that it should be included in the death rites.

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—from a news feature of February 7, 1970 The Los Angeles Times

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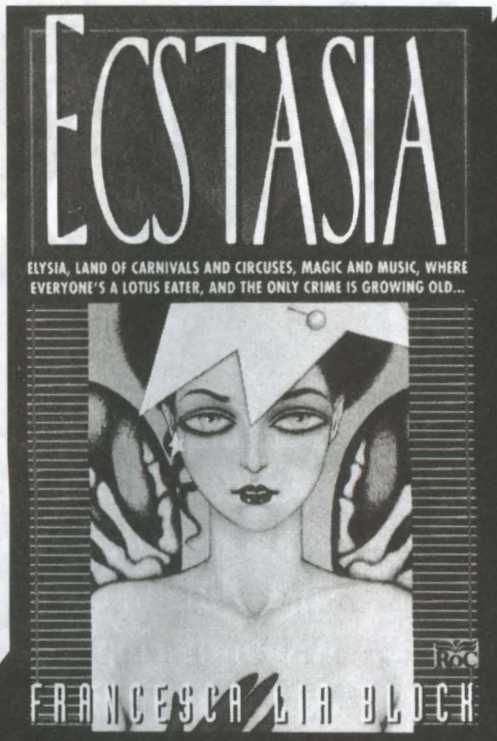

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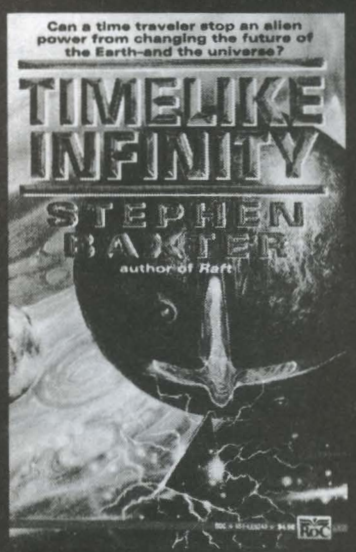

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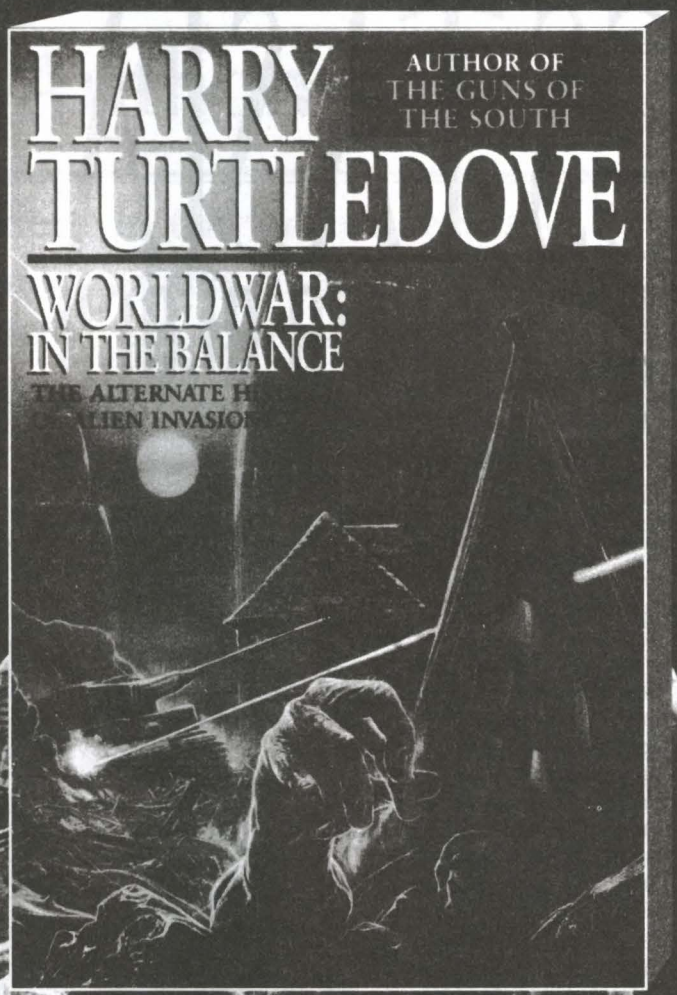

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