

# ***19<sup>th</sup> Year: A Memoir of 1972-1973***

***Chris Hables Gray***

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### Note on the December 2011 Publication

This account of my first trip alone, my first experiences hitchhiking, and my first time in Europe was written soon after returning to California. It covers most of my 19<sup>th</sup> year, starting a few months before my 19<sup>th</sup> birthday and ending a few months before my 20<sup>th</sup>: 1972-1973. It was edited by my mother (of all people), and myself. I have added some events that I wrote about at the time (in letters mainly) but that I didn't put in the original draft. Otherwise it has not been modified at all, except for numerous spelling and punctuation corrections and fixing a few errors of fact. It starts with the Prologue.

In some ways it is very embarrassing. There are certainly things in here I say and do that I wish I had not. I could claim that that person, the Chris of 1972, isn't me. It is true that all the cells of my body have changed at least five times since then, but no, it's me. A much younger me to be sure, but I remember myself; I recognize myself. My politics have grown more sophisticated but the ideals have not changed much. My personal philosophy of life has changed even less. I hope I have learned to treat people better, especially women. And many of the things I say here about folks I met traveling, in particular in Turkey and Morocco, strike me now as racist. But "I am who I am," as Mr. Popeye says, and I am still the guy who walked down to the 101 on ramp in Palo Alto, California, having never hitchhiked an inch in his life, and made this trip. It was the first of many.

I want to thank (blame?) two of my most brilliant students, Amandrea. One of them confessed to wanting to write a memoir of their 19<sup>th</sup> year and I replied, "You should, I did." And when I showed them this text, which I had not looked at in decades, they found it interesting and said I should publish it. They may now be sorry about that, but none-the-less, here it is for what it is worth. Thanks, Amanda and Andrea. Love and Rage, chg

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## Prologue:

When I was first in Europe I noticed there were quiet a few methodical diary keepers/note takers among my fellow travelers. In fact, almost everyone was attempting a systematic record, either subjective or objective, of their trip. Many openly admitted further literary ambitions. I looked down rather condescendingly on all this, knowing that it is a long way from wanting to write a book to actually writing it.

I've never enjoyed writing. Letters, poetry, prose—all of them eventually bored me terribly. I had never found the discipline or the time to rework something until I thought it was as good as I could make it. I was therefore extremely surprised when I found myself outside Vienna standing on the Autobahn with the rain and wind whipping a tightly held piece of paper to and fro in my hand while I scribbled some vaguely poetic lines. I had been singing them seconds before when I felt that I just *had* to write them down. This aberration continued (and does today) at various strange times but the results, being in the subjective world of poetry, are something generally afflicted only on my close friends, who I might add have been almost universally unimpressed.

Later on, in the Canaries, I felt an equally surprising desire to write about my experiences at the Republican Convention in Miami, but I found it impossible to communicate it through poetry. After much wasted effort on a short story I sat up and realized I wanted to put it all down factually—the whole trip. In fact, more than that, I wanted to put me, a 19-year-old conceited, confused, self-styled philosopher down in the frozen medium of prose, for I knew time would bring about a thousand changes and I would never really think or feel like I did then. I wanted to do a complete expose, or whatever, on the ideals, mores opinions, prejudices, and random useless thoughts of a young counter-culture Californian wandering around looking for some hope to invest into his future.

*Chris Hables Gray, Sacramento, California, August 1973*

Chapter 1: Jesus Fucking Christ Here I Am in Point of Rocks, Wyoming

The air is light and hot. California in the summer: blue sky, white concrete. Our apartment is dark and less warm than the outside. The living room is almost bare. There is a backpack near the door. My father made the pack when I was in Boy Scouts. It's a red Sierra pack –nylon-aluminum frame-parachute belt. An old cotton sleeping bag is tied to the bottom. Next to the pack there are some pieces of cardboard. One of them says SACRAMENTO.

I play Graham Nash and Neil Young on Alicia's cheap Sears stereo as she covertly studies me. I am packing my pack for the third time this afternoon. I look at Alicia and smile. Tears well up in her eyes. I feel both elation and heartache, but more elation.

I put on *Led Zeppelin IV* because I want to make love to "Stairway to Heaven". We look at each other. She is holding Trotsky, our gold kitten, in her lap. Her hair is the color of his fur. We will make love one last time since Irma has made me promise to wait until she gets off work before I leave. There can't be more than an hour left. I go over to Alicia and sit next to her. We kiss. She doesn't like to french, we don't. She is crying. She wants to go into the bedroom but since I want to be near the music we make love on the floor.

It is intense and sentimental at the same time. Very good in all. "I should break up more often," I decide.

I shower and slowly dress in front of her. I am tanned and slender. Still in shape from high school. Long blonde hair falls near my shoulders. Blue eyes with long lashes. Nothing special about the face. Very hairy legs with thick thighs, runner's thighs. I did middle distance in my senior year. Before that I was a sprinter. The long scar on my right knee marks the end of my sprinting career. I fell as I was practicing my starts my junior year. Six weeks in a cast and a year to recover.

Alicia is looking at me as I get dressed. Does she know I'm thinking of bygone 440's and the mile relay championships? I wonder if she likes my body. She always said she did. But she lied about so many other things. Who cares now? I'm proud of my body. It's young and strong and I trust it.

Irma comes back from her gardening job at Stanford. Even though we live right next to the Bayshore Freeway they both insist that I ride with them in Alicia's old Buick over the bridge to the northbound on ramp. By the time we get there they are both crying. I get out and hold them both. Irma first, then Alicia. I think I'll miss Irma more, she isn't a lover but she is a true and crazy friend.

I swing the pack to my back. It's comfortable enough but all the same

I'm glad I'm not going to do a lot of walking. The local pedestrians in East Palo Alto, all Black since it is Palo Alto's unincorporated ghetto, stare at the three of us. Irma, dark with her Chicana blood and summer gardening, is not so out of place, but Alicia and I are obviously interlopers. I try very hard to play the role of "Young Man" in the scene "Young Man sets out into the World." But I know I fail miserably. Because that's what I am--that's what it is. Why pretend? My life is a soap opera.

Crying, they drive over the bridge back to the apartment. I'm glad to be rid of them. I walk down to the "Freeway Entrance" sign, take off my pack, and get out the sign that says SACRAMENTO. I hold it out self-consciously. I laugh at myself, at the sign, at the dusty asphalt at my feet. I am surprised and amused at where life has brought me. I don't cry. I have already cried for weeks. I am done with crying. I am tired of the ruins of my old life. I am curious and content to find myself standing under an empty California sky planning to hitchhike to Europe and beyond...having never hitched anywhere before...just because my girl has fallen in love with someone else and I'm too afraid of the hurt to stay and think about it. So here I stand, so goddamn happy I feel guilty. I'm all alone and that means I'm free.

Twenty minutes go by. How long is it customary to wait? I only have the most general idea. But inevitably the hitchhiker naturally slips into a number of routines. One is studying the passing cars. There is an incredible diversity. I especially look for longhairs feeling I can convince them to stop by my counter-culture trappings. There isn't a hell of a lot of traffic. Half sitting on my pack I stare at empty highway. Freeway on ramps without cars are about the most deserted spots in civilization.

I hear a voice. Jumping up I knock over my pack and then fall on top of it. Staring down are two little girls in bathing suits. The one on my left looks at me expectantly, waiting for my next trick. When nothing is immediately forthcoming she starts to speak in a voice thick and slow as spilling honey.

"My Pa wants to give ya a ride, (her tone suggesting that her Pa is full of unusual desires).

"Huh?" I reply quickly.

"Ya'all going ta Sacramenta?"

"Uh huh."

"Well soze we, or almost, my Pa wantsta give ya a ride an he sent me an ma cousin to getya."

They gesture down the highway toward a large camper that has stopped maybe a hundred yards past me. More than a little nervously (in fact

I'm terrified) I awkwardly pick up my pack (nearly dislocating my shoulder) and stagger after the girls.

Like all rides it is basically unbelievable. Just the ride itself is a miracle of generosity and kindness. There are in all three little girls and Pa and Ma. Not more than a year since they moved out of Georgia to California and now spending their weekends in a nudist camp south of Sacramento.

In back we listen to Danny Osmond and Bobby Sherman. There is an extensive debate on their relative merits. I half listen to the giggles and the sighing as I sit happily on the camper floor amazed that hitchhiking really works.

Another ride takes me to East Sacramento and since it's only forty blocks to my parents' apartment, I decide to walk. Actually, I'm afraid to hitchhike because it might wear out. Walking will become my standard procedure whenever I get into a new city, even if I have a destination already. It's a good way to relax and begin to feel the city. You can look at the people and they can look at you. It gives you time to start deciding where you're going to sleep, what you're going to eat, and why the fuck you're there. In Sacramento I had no such dilemmas. I was going to sleep in my parents' spare room, I was going to eat what my mother cooked, and I was there to say good-bye. It sounds melodramatic, but for all 19-year-old longhaired broken-hearted hitchhikers, life is melodramatic.

I'm hot and tired when I get there. That's well and good. I shower and eat a gigantic meal. I am nervous and unable to sleep so I read into the early morning, *The New Centurions*. I wonder if I'll ever get around to being a cop.

The next day we go out shopping. My dad buys me a new pack to put on my old frame, since the old pack is in bad shape. The new pack is stronger and bright orange. I have my mother sew two patches on it. One is a purple patch that says LOVE. The other is a dove on a blue field with WORK FOR PEACE on it. I am a hippie and proud of it.

My parents are worried, but they trust me. I don't tell them the real reason I'm going, but only because I'm sure they can guess. I don't want to talk about it. We finalize the arrangements of my meeting with my older brother. I'm going to rendezvous with him in Washington D.C., then we will hitch to New York together and catch an Air Icelandic flight to Luxembourg.

I get up very early the third morning. Whenever I hitch out I make it my policy to always leave as early as possible. Sometimes bad luck, low will power, or loose ends keep me from the road until ten or eleven, but usually I start hitching by seven. Being more scared than I usually am when I start a trip, I get up at five-thirty and get my first ride (about a block from my

parent's apartment) by six. The ride is only from West Sacramento to East Sacramento, but it leaves me at a really good ramp. Within a few minutes another hitchhiker joins me. He's a darkly bearded, fatigue-jacketed veteran of two years on the road and one at sea as a merchant marine. He is sleepy and not talkative. In twenty minutes a bunch of young skin divers stop to take us to Lake Tahoe.

In a completely natural manner (as if we were all oblivious to the fact that it is a felony and we are all strangers) the skin divers pass a joint around. The other hitchhiker takes a long drag and then, holding his breath, proceeds to tell us about a storm he once rode out on the Atlantic. I politely decline the proffered joint. Not out of respect for the illegality of grass (I have no respect for the illegality of grass), but out of consideration, (probably exaggerated) for my body's purity. I tried grass for the first time a month before in San Diego and instead of getting high I'd gotten a terrible cough.

In the next month I will turn down countless offers of grass, hash and almost everything else. But the two things that strike me are the trust implied in committing a felony with a perfect stranger (even if a longhaired hitchhiker) and the complete lack of any pressure on me to smoke or any suspicion of me because I don't.

The merchant mariner is going on to the lake so I get off alone at the ramp where they leave Interstate 80. I start singing to myself. I often sing when I'm alone and hitching offers a lot of time to exercise my considerable lack of talent. After four songs a pick-up truck stops to take me to Reno. The driver is bronzed, shorthaired, calm and friendly. "A true westerner," I think. He says he's a truck salesman. As we enter Reno he warns me that it is absolutely illegal to hitch inside the city limits of Reno or the large eastern suburb of Sparks. Like most such laws it is to prevent a couple of rape-murders that have already occurred. I get off in western Reno and start to walk. After an hour (fortunately Reno isn't all that big) I get to the freeway ramp on the other side of town. It's tucked between the Reno and Sparks city boundaries. There are already several people there so I take my place in line. The first person to a ramp is given the spot nearest the approaching traffic. (This rule is usually kept in the United States, but it is often honored only in the breach in parts of Europe--especially when the competition is French or Italian and therefore entirely without scruples. The English, Germans, and Commonwealth hitchhikers are much more polite.)

Ahead of me is a couple with a large black toolbox, which I am convinced, holds tools. This strikes me as a little strange, but who am I to judge? Several hours later they open the lid and give the tools some water. This is even stranger. However, by now my mind is so baked I accept it as a

wonder of the road. An hour later they introduce me to their cats with whom they are hitching to Montana. I am mildly surprised. Ah, but that explains the water. I am not so slow normally. The sun has a lot to do with it, but so does the hitching. Hitching, if done in the right frame of mind, slows you down, smoothes you out, and opens your mind.

If clouds constitute flaws, the sky is flawless. The nearest clouds must be in San Francisco. I am hot and sleepy. My thoughts melt together before they are verbalized even to myself. Behind my eyes the warm colors flow as steadily as the traffic. A policeman comes to a stop right next to us. "This is it," I melodramatically announce to the sleeping cats. Instead of a mass arrest the officer is interested in a motorcycle thief. He gives us a description and asks us to keep a lookout for him. Every half hour or so the cop pulls up and leaning out his window he asks, "Have you seen him?"

"Not yet officer," we chorus in unison.

Now I don't know what the other will do if we see him but I for one would want to tell the police. I despise stealing from individuals (in the vernacular "ripping off a brother"). (Now the question of defrauding institutions is much more complex since in many cases I feel they abuse, exploit and manipulate us. By "us" I mean that much discussed and non-existent phenomena known as "the people".) Many young radical people practice complete non-co-operation with all the police but I feel a strong empathy and sympathy for cops. Indeed I hope to find the time, courage, and eyesight to try it for a while. I certainly haven't always been treated decently or legally by police, but I judge each officer individually and trust him until he proves otherwise. I would never report a victimless crime or a protest activity I felt was legitimate, but other than that I'm something of a fink. (Considering all my reservations, perhaps most police departments would be less than thrilled to have me.)

After about two more hours of slow death by heat prostration, I decide to accelerate the process by walking up on the freeway in an easterly direction until unconsciousness or a ride stops me. After two hours, with unconsciousness winning easily, a couple stops. They take me thirty-five miles into the desert and leave me five miles from anywhere, without water or hope, but already the beginnings of a really terrific sunburn.

There is a railing almost thirty yards long completely covered with written descriptions of the surrounding desolation, the utter hopelessness, and the insensitivity of automobile drivers, van drivers, and God (in that order). It is obviously a hitchhikers' Massada. Normally a hitcher doesn't think anyone owes him a ride (or at least I don't), but it is hard to keep wondering about the human qualities of those who don't stop. I'm convinced

that fear is the main reason most people don't give rides. Sometimes it's a physical fear, but more often it's a fear of people and letting the unknown into that very personal space formed by one's car.

I can tell this is not the best hitching spot in the world--not only by the fact that obviously several hundred other hitchers have been stranded here in the course of the last few years, often waiting several days, but also because the traffic is zipping by at eighty miles an hour with its eyes glued on Salt Lake City and points east, not on the dehydrated adventurers strung along the road like old leather beads.

After four hours of the greatest thirst I have ever felt and with the sun beginning to set, I give it up. What I give up is thinking rationally. I put on my pack and head east to Utah. I don't know what I expect to accomplish. After about a mile I notice a blur about a hundred yards ahead of me. As I get closer I decide it looks like a stopped car with its flashers on. Suspecting a mirage I stagger toward it and close on it much quicker than possible. It must be a mirage I decide. Too bad. The mirage stops a few feet from me. It's a red Mustang with Florida plates. Two longhairs get out and ask me where I'm going. I try to say "Utah" but my throat is too dry to make any sound other than a soft croak. I point vaguely to the east and then start tottering about in little circles. They grab me and remove my pack.

"Hey man, it's going to be okay."

"Jesus he is wasted."

"Look at his eyes--empty."

"Hey man, have some of this," one of them says as he hands me some warm Coke. I lean against the dusty car and sip it. It takes thirty minutes to re-pack the car so it will hold me and my pack. By then I'm able to verbally thank them rather incoherently and emotionally. Pleased and embarrassed, they trundle me into the back seat and take off.

"Do you want to hear some music?" the non-driver asks.

"Of course," I rasp.

He puts on "Stairway to Heaven" as the sun sets into California.

We talk a great deal. Nevada disgusts us. Slot machines in grocery stores. Drunk ancient ladies standing in the corners of truck stop cafés muttering and cursing themselves and their tormentors: the machines. Killing time we decide. Trying to hype their lives into some sort of consciousness. Legalized, consumerized sex and buying life with money. The American Dream. And all in a state, which is almost completely owned by the Federal Government--gunnery ranges, poison dumps, and nuclear test sites.

We drive all the way to Logan, Utah, which is fifty-odd miles north of

Salt Lake City and several hundred south of Yellowstone, which is where they are going. They leave me right at the Utah State campus where my younger brother, Dana, is studying some sort of weird mathematics called topology, under a National Science Foundation summer program.

Dana is good-looking, athletic, and crazy for pure science. We are very competitive and very close. I stay on a few days playing touch football, racket ball, and taking showers. The program ends four days after I get there so it's time to go. One of the other students there is driving back with his father to Wyoming and they offer me a ride. I say my good-byes to Dana and start off again.

Ted's father is an Episcopalian minister on an Indian reservation in northern Wyoming. He agrees with me that McGovern doesn't have much of a chance, and that Nixon is a very dangerous man. Ted's father predicts that Nixon is so power hungry that he'd even declare a state of emergency and seize complete power if it looks like McGovern might win. This strikes me as a little pessimistic. They let me off at Green River, Wyoming, and I soon get another short ride to an intersection call Point of Rocks where it starts to lightly rain.

By the name you might think Point of Rocks, a part of Wyoming's beautiful high plateau, is dominated by small rocky cliff and the boulder-strewn ridge that overlooks it. But no, it's dominated by the sky. Even though Montana has it on their license plates, Wyoming deserves the title Big Sky Country. There is a high ceiling on the masses of dark grey clouds that lay thick as a blanket overhead. The strong wind is punctuated by fat raindrops, which fall stolidly, unaffected by the wind. Each one makes its individual impact in the dust or on my shirt. I put out my thumb reluctantly, not wanting to be picked up. I know now that I can go anywhere in the world, that the one road I stand on is connected to every other road in the Americas and to every port and airport. With my sleeping bags, my full canteen, a roll of toilet paper, and my own body I am invulnerable. I spread my arms and I feel the whole network of roads all over the world: binding, holding, defining, being. I repeat the same litany over and over: "Jesus fucking Christ here I am in Point of Rocks, Wyoming."

As the tempo of the rain picks up I get higher and higher. The air rushes into my lungs. My skin is thick and my flesh is warm and comforting on my bones. The world is real and solid.

Although I definitely believe in free will and some of the basic claims of existentialism, I have come--through hitchhiking--to also believe in fate. Of course, this is verbally contradictory so fuck the word boxes. Sometimes words can only draw a poor mask for reality and sometimes they draw a

curtain across it. To stand here and catch a ride and meet someone that I'd have never met if I hadn't caught the ride before right when I did and hadn't not taken the ride before that, makes me feel a part of an inevitable cycle. To argue that one has just stumbled into one of the infinite channels of possibility is to ignore two things. First, the necessity of other people making other decisions, which brings them to the right time irregardless of your wishes. And second, there is the overwhelming subjective feeling of an inevitable outcome. It's as if all control has been removed from you. By its very nature hitchhiking is an act of supreme faith.

I hitch through whole states where it's illegal (Nevada, Wyoming, Colorado, Ohio). When in an illegal state, I tell myself that there are more good people than there are bad police so the odds are in my favor. If I'm busted, I'm busted. If it rains, it rains. If I wait eight hours, I wait eight hours. If I get picked up, it will be by beautiful people.

During the height of this "Peak Experiment" (as psychologists blandly label it), a pick-up truck stops and I come down to find I have a ride to Cheyenne. I like pick-ups because you just throw your stuff in the back and then climb in. No seats to bend around or back doors to open. The driver is a Chicano ironworker and so for two hundred miles we talk about Jim Plunkett, football in general, and Vietnam where he'd spent eighteen months killing people. Once in Cheyenne, he wishes me luck and lets me out at the big intersection between I80 and I25. Before I set my pack down I have another ride in a pick-up truck--this one all the way to Denver.

This ride is with a twenty-six-year-old New Mexican organic farmer who had participated in the Albuquerque street riots of the spring before. According to him, it was a military victory by the freaks and Chicanos against the cops. Being a political pacifist, I tell him that anything military is a defeat. So we argue revolution all the way and leave each other unconvinced. He has been completely radicalized by Vietnam where he spent a year and Chicago '68 where he'd spent three nights. He looks at me, his pale face surrounded by black hair, and says there is only one answer: "Kill them before they kill us."

We part absent-mindedly, each thinking about the other. Does he long for my optimism? I certainly the fear wisdom of his years.

I eat some cheese and urinate in some bushes. Then I half-heartedly decide to keep hitching even though it is getting dark. I don't have much else to do. I'm headed for Aspen, about a hundred miles west Denver, because the longhairs from Florida had told me that it was beautiful country full of beautiful people.

Within minutes a large Ford van stops, almost causing a twelve-car

pile-up and nearly flipping itself over in the bargain. It's full of young airmen tripping on mescaline. I ride with them for about six miles to get out of Denver. It's pitch black. They're going toward some lake or another out of my way. I thank them and after accepting their mumbled doped-up reply I jump out and they squeal away. Not being tired and being stupid I decide to keep on hitching. Again in a few minutes a car stops, a bright Pinto with a New York accent. It asks where I'm going. To my "Aspen", the car replies "me too."

Speaking for the car is Steve, a twenty-year-old who has made over ten thousand dollars a year tearing down buildings in the city of New York. He's headed to Aspen for a vacation and to relive some of his misspent youth. Or rather to misspend some more of it. Regaling me with more tales of sexual conquest than I have ever heard from the combined members of all the various football and track teams I've ever been on, he drives until about two and then gets a room in a motel. All they have is a double so I get to sleep inside. Next morning I'm in Aspen.

Once there I have nothing to do so I walk around and buy some food. I just look at people until it gets later than I think. At ten that night I start walking to a campground which is uphill about ten miles away from the center of town. I don't really care if I have to walk all night. I'm not tired and I'm more than a little bit lonely. But two guys from Texas take me most of the way and so, in complete darkness, I set up my little plastic tube tent and crawl off to sleep.

I wake up in time to see the sunrise and to meet my neighbor, a spacey writer with a camper truck. After four hits of Owsley acid a week for the last five years, he is very mellow and, apparently, sane enough. He keeps reading me descriptions of sunrises we are watching or the cloud formations that are right overhead. I don't find them all that enlightening, but by direct comparison I can tell that they are accurate enough. I spend two days reading various books I have with me. Then I return to Aspen to try and discover its great attraction.

It has been rather disappointing so far because it is basically full of people making the scene. "Plastic freaks," I call them or as a Frenchman I met put it, "artificial hippies." Everywhere the same boy-girl games I rejected in high school as too obvious, selfish, and dishonest, are being enthusiastically played. There are the same twin goals as well: sex and mutual admiration.

So I sit in the main park getting depressed and cynical as the day slowly dies.

During a game of hide-and-seek with two little kindergarten girls, I

meet a high school girl from San Diego's La Jolla High, which is right next to Mission Bay High (my alma mater). She's in Aspen with her family. Her father is attending some scientific conference. She invites me home to dinner. I clean all their trout, which we then eat.

Right after dinner I'm struck with an extreme case of the shits. Beating a hasty retreat, I go looking for an all-night toilet. I find a bar open until two so I loiter there apathetically flirting with a rather seedy drunk and enthusiastically using the bathroom. Around one in the morning my unfortunate condition tapers off, so to speak, and at two I find myself very sleepy and standing out in the cold. I go into the alley behind the bar and wrap myself in my ground cloth (being too lazy to undo my sleeping bag). After a fitful sleep I awake at false dawn (5:15). There is ice on my clothes and in my hair. This doesn't make me feel any warmer so I get up and walk out of town. At 5:30 I catch a ride to Denver with two talkative citizens of the counter-culture.

One is a photographer and the other is his guide. Every few minutes we stop and the photographer runs along beside the car taking pictures of the mountains, little flowers, old farms, etc...He is continually talking to his inanimate subjects, even telling them not to move, so I postulate that he had his start on models and only recently switched to nature. It is one of the best rides I've ever had. Since all of us are thinking in terms of capturing images on film, we end up really seeing everything we focus on. We work to see, and it is work to really see.

They leave me in the middle of Denver. It takes several rides to get to the eastern side. There, right at the edge of the Great Plains, I wait for several hours until a pick-up truck stops for me about sixty yards up the road.

I had started the morning wearing one of my favorite shirts, a real Pendleton that had been given to me by my father right before I'd left. As the day had gotten warmer I'd taken it off and stuffed it into the top of my pack. As always, I hoisted my pack and ran to the truck. Almost there I turn around to look back, I don't know why. As if in slow motion my Pendleton is rolling after me about forty-five yards away. The wind inflates the sleeves so that it seems to be waving to me, beseeching me not to go. Behind it the dull fields stretch to the smear that is Denver, and behind that the Rockies melt into the sky.

I watch for what seems like hours and then rather simply ask myself if I should be tied to any material things. "No," I answer, and looking back, but feeling no regret, I get in and we drive on east. My father will not be able to understand why I left a perfectly good shirt blowing in the Colorado wind,

and my brothers will regret that if I didn't want it, I didn't have the good sense to give it to them. My driver is an old man who gives me ten miles of complaints about his recently stolen wallet, but it doesn't bring me down, I just smile.

Standing back out on the road a few minutes later I feel just as high as ever. It is perfectly flat (if you find neatness perfect) for miles around, except for the sleek overpass and its complimentary diamond intersection spawned by the mating of Interstate 80 and some little farm road. Since hitching is illegal in all of Colorado and there is no ramp traffic anyway, I go to the east side of the intersection right out on the freeway and thrust my sign out at the empty acres of concrete and grass. "If the cops come, they come," I say, only to hear a siren and to see a Colorado State Highway Patrol cruiser heading south on the farm road with a wildly gesturing cop in it. "Well I have three minutes until he can turn around and come get me," I idiotically calculate. A minute later a car and trailer stop and inquire:

"Where ya all going?"

"Anywhere," I shout and I scramble in before I can get any reply. So I meet Pat of Alabama and he takes me to St. Louis.

## CHAPTER 2: Four More Years

During the long slow hours of Kansas we listen to a lot of radio. Before I'd left California I'd strongly considering attending the Republican Nominating Convention in Miami Beach to take part in the protest activities. The radio news about the renewed bombing and the VVAW frame-up (the Gainesville 13) tips the balance between my conscience and my fear. I decide to head south after St. Louis.

After two hot boring days, broken only by the visual horror known as Kansas City, I am let off in St. Louis. It's ten at night.

It takes me about half an hour to discover I am on the wrong side of the Merrimac River. The right side being the other side where my friend from Stanford, Bob Wolf, lives. I start walking and soon discover that the only plausible route is the freeway. I walk in the large median until I come to the river. As with all the American super-highways, no provision has been made for the lowly pedestrian or bicyclist. Before me sprawls a gigantic pair of bridges with four lanes going each way and a curb of eight inches. The rail is about thirty-six inches high.

"What the fuck," I say without thinking, and still without thinking I start walking across. It doesn't take me long to realize that this is not one of my wisest decisions. Every time a big semi comes along, which is unfortunately once a minute, I have to stop and lean over the river precariously balancing my backpack-laden body against the ridiculous rail. The trucks thunder within a foot of me but the worst thing is the tremendous blast of air.

Suicidally I refuse to give up and after an unknown length of time, drenched in sweat, I make it to the east bank. Several more hours of walking brings me to Bob's house. His mother feeds me about five sandwiches and I go to sleep waiting for Bob to come home from the pizza place where he works.

The week I spend in St. Louis passes in a thick haze, much like the weather. Bob and I play handball, go on a river trip in the Ozarks, and we call Alicia and Irma. I lay around a lot listening to excellent FM stations which plays "Stairway to Heaven" two or three times a day.

One night when Bob's mom is gone with his little brother and sister we start drinking wine out on the porch in the warm oppressively grieving night air. We talk about our problems and about other unimportant things, as friends are wont to do on quiet still evenings lubricated by a little wine. And of course I talk about Alicia. I still feel the same but I no longer trust her. I don't feel any bitterness only sadness. Even at this stage I know I am traveling first to get away from her, and all other considerations are

secondary. I am curious about Europe and even more curious about how I'm going to take it all, but basically I'm running away, not to.

Bob is slight and well knit. Dutch-blond hair flows besides fine features. He always cuts his hair upon returning to St. Louis so his old high school buddies won't tease him about it. He is straight A, pre-med, and worshipping at the idol of pure science. Everything has two sides to it (or even more) according to his view of the world. I guess I'm more simplistic. But we agree on many things: justice, a love of knowledge (but not on how to obtain it), handball, the stupidity of Stanford's coach.

The public promises of brutal police and lots of 'em down at Miami leads Bob to urge me to forget the whole thing. But I want to become totally involved in something greater than myself. I feel that if one thinks the war is as wrong as I do, and then they do nothing about it, they are a hypocrite and a liar.

Being extremely anti-communist I had initially supported the war until 1970. A confounding factor on my judgment is that I lived in Saigon from 1958 to 1960, while my father was working for Capitol Engineering Co., which was building highways for the Republic of South Vietnam. My father, who I respect very much, strongly supported the war up until late '72 (at which time he became neutral), and for a long time I bent my knowledge to convince myself he was right. In high school I had been the only knowledgeable pro-war activist during a series of teach-ins that a group of us, students and a teacher, had organized. Two of my best friends had started as pro-war but they had changed their minds under the force of the anti-war arguments. But I was too stubborn. By the end of the series I was alone except for the knee-jerk flag wavers who repelled me. I'd read enough books on guerilla warfare, and Vietnam in particular, to know we weren't winning, but I still thought it was worth winning and worth the terrible cost.

But it became harder and harder to ignore the lies coming from our government and the true nature of the Thieu regime. After Thieu's faked election of '71 and our invasions of Cambodia and Laos I finally went over to the other side. I used to just watch the demonstrations at Stanford in order to study the psychology of crowd manipulation and interaction, even after I had become anti-war, because I couldn't grasp the value of demonstrating.

I was also reluctant to demonstrate because it involved participating in an alliance with the Venceremos, one of the ubiquitous Marxist-Leninist vanguard parties in the Bay Area, this one an off shoot of the Revolutionary Union and very active on the Stanford campus. I wanted the war to stop, not for America to be destroyed.

Although I am not non-violent by nature, I have come to believe that

the root of all war is the underlying dependence on force in most human relationships, especially between nations and between a government and its people. The only way permanent change can come about is by changing the very assumptions people live under. In fact, changing their whole lives. I feel the purpose of demonstrations is to call attention to some immediate evil that cannot be allowed to continue. Since everyone should know about Vietnam already, by my simplistic standards, a demonstration was unnecessary.

But finally, after some new atrocity I can't even remember, I took part in a very heavy rally and march which climaxed with a large number of arrests, including my own rather messy abduction from the middle of El Camino Real. Rather ludicrously I was charged with three counts of assault with a deadly weapon on a peace officer (i.e. rock throwing). One of the rationalizations I had used to justify my participation in this demonstration was that I would do everything I could do to prevent any violence on either side. And that's what I was doing when I was tackled by a grinning Santa Clara County sheriff. My participation was basically motivated by my moral outrage combined with the frustration of suddenly realizing my complete political impotence.

My arrest was very interesting. About fifteen hundred Stanford students marched from the campus down to the El Camino Real, which is a major road running from San Jose to San Francisco. When we got to the intersection, a policeman was there directing traffic. He motioned for us to cross. We turned left and started walking to San Francisco. The police charged. Two hundred students were pinned against Stickney's restaurant. Many of us who were still loose wandered in the streets trying to block oncoming traffic. I almost got run over a few times by suburban housewives in curlers. No matter what, the groceries must get home.

I gave up on car dodging and started yelling for people not to throw rocks. Everyone started moving around me. A friend grabbed my shoulder and shouted, "Run, run, Chris!" I wasn't worried, no forty-year-old cop loaded down 200 pounds of armor and weapons of destruction was going to catch me. I was a track star. I turned to see a gigantic grin. Then I was on the ground. One officer was kneeling on my back while the other choked me. "Get up or I'll kill you," the one on my back said. I tried to stand but of course I couldn't.

"You fucking Commie longhairs," he said.

I was too amazed to be afraid. Was this an episode of "Mod Squad"? Such terrible lines. But the cops were acrid with fear. The revolution was coming and only they could stop it.

One kneeled on my back while the other tried to pull me up by my hair. The contradiction was resolved by my body. Then the first one got off me and they dragged me to my feet together. One of them had me in a wristlock and the other had my arm pinned behind my back. Another cop came running up and raised his stick so he could strike me in the face. "We've got him, we've got him," one of my cops said.

"Thanks," I said.

"You've had it," they told me.

"Good tackle man," I said to the one who was trying to break my wrist. The other cop, the one who now had me by the neck with his club agreed. "Boy you never knew what hit you."

They started dragging me to the paddy wagon. I wasn't resisting, they kept me off balance making it impossible for me to walk.

There had been very little rock throwing before my arrest. It increased markedly. I started yelling, "don't throw rocks," as the rocks came down around us. They bounced off the armored policemen but I was hit a number of times. The police loved this. "You're friends are stupid," one said. I couldn't disagree at that point.

When they dragged me up in front of the paddy wagon they told me I was being charged with assault with a deadly weapon on a police officer. I was greatly relieved, much to their surprise. Total fabrications. Still it was amazing to see how unconcerned with fairness they were.

They put on plastic handcuffs and tightened them until I started moaning. In a few minutes my hands were swollen and numb, but my wrists ached terribly. Until the cuffs were taken off an hour later I was in very severe pain. The worst pain I have ever experienced.

I was out by midnight. Alicia was there to pick me up. "Well is the war over now?" I asked. "What more could they want?" The cops who arrested me lie at my preliminary hearing but the one I was supposed to have assaulted tells the truth, so I beat the rap.

Bob and I go over all this ancient history. He points out that it was all pretty useless. I tell him that I think Miami will be a good demo because the VVAW (Vietnam Veterans Against the War) and the Yippies (Youth International Party), who are both non-violent, are the dominant, though certainly not the only, organizing groups. (Other groups include SDS, Attica Brigade, RU, People's Party, Young Socialists, Worker's Alliance, and many more). There is great publicity potential and I believe (to this day) that most Americans have never really taken a good look at their dirty little war.

Climbing on my soapbox, I point out that Nixon has violated the Constitution and even the most limited concepts of morality more times than

one would really like to think about. Johnson's actions were just as unconstitutional and immoral as Nixon's (maybe more so, but I doubt it), but Johnson wasn't doing it *now*. Nixon had run promising to end the war and he has killed more people, white, yellow and black, than Johnson. And things like the secret bombing infuriated me. Who was he trying to keep it a secret from? The Communists he was bombing or the American people? You get three guesses.

I know Nixon is a corrupt, self-righteous, prejudiced little man. I know about the Teamster-Nixon deals, I know about the Dairymen, and about J. Arnholt Smith in California. I know he was behind Watergate, but that most Americans will never know. I know about his feelings toward Blacks, longhairs, abortion, war resisters and people who didn't agree with him in general.

Bob says I'm going to get my head beat in for nothing. Sure Nixon is fucked but who is going to listen? But he tells me about the VVAW caravans that are going down to Miami. I decide to catch the Midwest one. It leaves tomorrow.

The St. Louis contingent is three vets and another hitchhiker. We all meet at a parking lot and one of the vet's friends, with a Volkswagen Bug, is coerced into driving us to Champaign, Illinois where we can catch up with the caravan. I shake Bob's hand and he shakes his head.

We have to lash backpacks to both fenders and the engine. With two packs and two duffel bags of food inside with us, we are crowded anyway. We sputter off as Bob watches dubiously.

About thirty miles after we'd started going sixty mph on the freeway, the vet sitting on the far right side in the front seat, who is hanging out the window so that there will be more room for the other five of us, gives a loud grunt and starts yelling for the driver to stop the car. In his hands he holds one of the backpacks, which had come loose. He has caught it completely by accident. We stop and tie everything down again and slowly make our way to the caravan staging area in a park outside Champaign.

There are about thirty cars pulled up in a ragged line. All of the cars are old. All of their springs are busted. All of the tires are bald. And all of them are full. Somehow I manage to squeeze into an old brown station wagon from Iowa with six other people and all their gear. And we head south.

The owner of the car is Mouse. He's borrowed it from his mother for one day. With him are two other Iowans and three Vietnam vets. Since we travel in caravan the going is slow.

No one is optimistic yet everyone is in pretty good spirits. Since

everyone has the deepest commitment (who else would travel through all of the South to do non-violent media battle with the Republicans right in the heart of silent repressive America--Dade County, Florida?) there is very little talk of politics. We all know why we're going; why talk about it?

We are driving through the green hills of Kentucky. I am straining to catch a hint of blue in the grass and I'm just about to declare it another American myth. In the lane passing us is a car with northern plates and two longhairs smoking a joint. Mouse sees this and rolls down his window. "Got a spare doobie?" (Doobie: word used in Iowa and other strange places to indicate a joint).

The guys in the other car nod and wave happily at us. We don't know what this means. Are they going to get us a joint? Are they going to bust us? Are they laughing at their strange dream? In fascination, at seventy miles an hour in the middle of Kentucky, we watch this guy take out his stash and meticulously roll a "bomber" (very large joint). Then he wraps it up in aluminum foil, and climbing halfway out the window, hands it to me as I lean halfway out of the station wagon. No one is surprised--just pleased. After all we're brothers and sisters.

Later on, the whole convoy stops for a rest and nude bath next to a large river in southern Tennessee. I'd always wondered about such a situation. Would everyone stare? Would I stare? Would I get an erection and disgrace myself? But the naturalness of everyone involved and my six days of dirt do wonders. The locals gather to watch the tardy bathers get dressed. Police are called.

Near us is a railroad siding where they are hitching cars and performing other acts of railroad manipulations. I have never flattened pennies or nickels so I decide to try it out. Each run over changes the coin. First we get a negroid Lincoln or Jefferson. Slowly, with each pass, they get more alien until finally they disappear.

Having gone through the whole cycle once, I decide to partially flatten a few to keep. I put them down on the track. As the cars roll past I leap forward to claim my flattened presidents. I am face to face with a pick-up truck. The driver floors it. The rear wheels have trouble catching in the gravel of the railroad embankment. They finally grab and the truck leaps forward. The front wheels hit the tracks and the truck bucks in the air like it's breasting a wave. I dive out of the way as it lands with a lurch right where I've been standing. I'm not mad or even surprised. I have seen so much hatred in the eyes of so many older people. Why? I don't know. My hair? My youth? My empathy for the dying?

Several days later, uneventful days except for a friendly water

moccasin at one campsite and thousands of friendly bugs in northern Florida, we pull into Miami Beach. It's August 20<sup>th</sup>.

Flamingo Park is a surrealist city. Those who claim that the counter-culture is as conformist in its own way as straight culture have never seen it at first hand. If we are accused of being uniformly different, uniformly creative, uniformly colorful, and uniformly alive I plead guilty. If we are accused of being uniform than it's a false charge.

Many groups, activities, or locations produce their own mood, their own energy. You can feel it in the air. Sometimes it's electric like a track team warming up, or it's as acrid and oppressive as a courtroom. The atmosphere at Flamingo is a bizarre mix--the sexual electricity of inevitable danger sparks through gentle clouds of dope and the thousands of quiet personal charities that characterize the better side of the movement.

The fears and limitations come out when the Nazi's occupy the sound stage. The word spreads quickly. A large crowd gathers. It's amused and annoyed. Many of the Jews start getting angry though. The death of the six million is as real to them as the dying in Vietnam. For some of us this just isn't the case. The leader of the Nazis, a short caricature of Hitler from the stray forelock and toothbrush mustache to the uncomfortable looking blackjacket boots, steps up to the microphone and starts to spit and sputter. The stilted paranoid slogans stream out in machinegun bursts. The crowd polarizes. Many people are now furious. They scream back equal amounts of hate. The sound to the stage is cut-off after about twenty minutes. Another sound system is set up and we start debating the course of action we should follow. There are seventeen Nazis and they won't leave the stage.

Some of us want to leave them alone. Eventually they'll leave for sure. Their ideas are nothing to be afraid of, and since there are only seventeen of them they are no physical threat. But a large segment of the crowd wants them removed. The VVAW says that they can remove them peacefully. A vote is held. The Nazis will be ejected.

Quickly the VVAW cordons off the stage and forms a passageway to the main gate. It reminds me of a bullfight. The Vets from the Midwest are chosen to do the actual evicting. I see my friends move on the stage. The Fuhrer has a bodyguard, a gigantic blond man with massive limbs. He resists. With a little difficulty he is immobilized and knocked unconscious. The Fuhrer resists as well, but he causes little trouble. A small vet from Chicago decks him and bloodies his nose. The rest leave sullenly but with no fighting.

The wounded Nazis are treated by VVAW medics, trained in Vietnam.

The crowd wanders off drained and depressed. Things have not started out well.

That night a number of bands play. Malo Santana, the brother of Carlos, plays with his group. He is good but an incredible chauvinist pig. The group after Malo is very political. They play a sort of opera with satires of well-known rock songs. "Street Fighting Man" becomes "Street Fighting Woman" for example.

The climax is a very acid rock number about My Lai called "The Calley Stomp." Everyone gets up and screams, "Kill, Kill, Kill." It's like a nightmare. Frustration so easily turns to hate. The concert ends with much the same mood as the eviction of the Nazis. An outsider would claim that both these incidents reflect a fundamental hypocrisy, I don't agree. Many people just cannot handle Nazis. They admit it's a weakness, but it is just too much to ask. The Nazis were in the way.

The concert is something else. Music is the most powerful drug I have ever seen in action. But to mimic violent behavior, and to scream out in favor of death and destruction, and even to feel its wild pulse in your temples, is a far different thing than actually performing a violent act. I view it as a harmless release. The real test will come in the next few days. Will there be violence then? Will there be violence from our side?

There is a big meeting the next day and amplified music is banned as distracting and detrimental to the organizational work to be done. People who want music are told to go to the rock festival being held up in New England.

At lunch I help distribute free food, which has been collected by a group called Green Power. I'm also assigned a security watch on one of the gates. The VVAW is handling all security. I meditate with the Hare Krishna people after lunch. Meditation isn't the right word since they chant to commune with God. It's very mellow and moving. I get very high doing it. Four hours later when it stops I come down. Subjectively it feels like only fifteen minutes have passed.

A few minutes later a security alert is called. There is a busload of Blacks from Detroit. They have shaved heads and they all wear suits. They obviously want to fight. They call themselves, hard as it may be to believe, "Negros for Nixon." (It came out in 1973 that they were funded by CREEP, the well-named Committee to Re-Elect the President.) Black VVAW members and other radical Blacks talk to them. They are dissuaded from trying to force an entry. They promise to come back. Very strange to see them parroting Nixon slogans, imperfectly learned, as they fidget about in the mud puddles at the entrance of the park trying to keep the polish on their

shoes from getting smeared or spoiled.

An elaborate plan is going to be used to shut down the Convention Hall the night of the nomination vote. Actually, all that is hoped for is that the starting time for the convention can be delayed for an hour or so. Presumably this will embarrass the Republicans and make the national TV audience at least take a moment to reflect that, "All is not right with America."

The plan calls for three types of demonstration activity. There will be dike building right next to the convention on an approved (by police) lot. Trucks will bring sand in and demonstrators opposed to getting arrested or breaking any laws can rearrange the sand symbolically building dikes (this is in reference to the American bombing of several of the Red River dikes in North Vietnam). Then there will be several sit-ins at the gates of the Convention Center so that the entrance of the delegates will be delayed. For the heavy roads there will be mobile action groups that will try to gain temporary control of certain key intersections in between the Convention Center and the delegates' hotels. Of course we all know that the police know every detail of this plan. Yet no one seriously discusses the possibility of police counter measures. So far the police have been very low key and almost friendly. But are they friendly enough to let us delay the starting of the Convention by three or four hours? Are they friendly enough to arrest a few thousand demonstrators so that we can make a media splash, or are they going to gas and beat us before we can even get near the Convention or the TV cameras?

The big event of the second day is a women's rally with a number of women speaking, including Jane Fonda. The radical portion of the women's movement is, unfortunately, controlled by lesbians. Lesbianism is fine with me, but it's part of gay liberation not women's liberation. Of course a lesbian can be oppressed as a woman and can try to change that, but not by advocating lesbianism and/or female chauvinism. This only alienates the vast majority of men and women who want to see the sexes treat each other equally, but not necessarily asexually. Besides, it scares most other men. Is this scare necessary?

The women seem a little paranoid. There is an anti-rape squad set up to continually patrol the park. Since there isn't even any stealing, I find it difficult to believe that rape is a real danger. The rape squad is imposing however: Big strong angry-looking women including a couple of judo and karate black belts. But turning women into beefy security guards isn't my idea of liberation of women. It is significant that the symbol used by the women at Flamingo is a picture of a Vietnamese woman with a rifle and

bayonet. I am in Miami to stop war, to try and turn people away from the glorification and use of violence. Yet many of the women leaders conceive of equality as an equal ability to kill and they view their whole aim as the random substitution of women into men's places.

As far as I'm concerned, any woman who wants my traditional position in society can have it. I am not impressed with the lot that has been prepared for me. That women want to be given the same odds in the corporate wars is understandable but shortsighted. The emptiness of the modern way of life only becomes apparent after you have it. Whether you call it post-industrial society, the consumer society, the American way of life, corporate capitalism, crass materialism, a rat race, or western civilization, it is all the same. Many people claim to find their lives satisfying, but it is very hard to pretend that there isn't a deep dissatisfaction, indeed a spiritual hunger, that pervades all the industrialized countries. And it is those who have made it, and especially the children of those who have made it, who are the most outspoken and articulate in their dissatisfaction. This is no coincidence. Material desires from survival needs, through comforts, to luxuries often seem to develop before spiritual desires.

People excluded from the system claim that it is unjust because they cannot partake of its fruits. The cultural radical says the system is not only unjust but fucked because it is designed to satisfy only material needs while ignoring everything else.

Perhaps in light of the present slight possibilities for extreme revolution and the existence of real injustices that are open to rectification it is a good thing to strive for total equality and the end of racism and sexism. But this is not a full revolution and we should not mistake it for one. The fruits haven't changed, just the way they are distributed. The goals haven't changed, just the rules for achieving them.

It always irks me to find the woman corporate executive glorified by the movement while the average corporate executive is certainly not perceived in the same light. And it is equally hypocritical to claim young Black males are the tip of revolution when they spend the majority of their income on consumer luxuries, when they are by and large sexist, and when they are often racist. Yes, there are good reasons for all of these attitudes, but that still doesn't make for a good revolution. Anger and hatred do not make a revolution; they make a new oppression. In their materialism, alienation, and sexism they are caricatures of white society at large, and at its worst. To go even further, many radicals see prisoners as revolutionaries. It is not my revolution. The struggle to see convicts treated justly and like human beings is very important. And it is apparent that prisoners are treated

so badly because of the racism and oppression that typifies our society. But just because prisoners are spectacular victims of all that is wrong with America does not mean that they know how to make a better world. In fact it might mean they don't.

Obviously I disagree philosophically with many of the accepted radical cannons (accepted by most radicals that is). While there is an incredible amount of disagreement, and indeed open animosity, in the movement most radicals would probably agree that I am wrong.

Everyone's ultimate goal is ostensibly the same: an idealistic society where rich human relationships are formed between equals whatever their color, sex, or relation to production, where humans live at peace with nature, and where life is built around a rewarding and challenging occupation and not some hateful job performed only for money, which is then used to purchase forgetfulness.

But most radicals see this idealistic society as coming about only after power has been seized by "us." And only after society has been reorganized in some way that will inevitably lead to utopia. The means will be quite different from the ends. In the dynamic, this is Marxian inevitability. It hasn't worked yet and there is a lot of evidence to suggest that it never will. Whenever "we" have gotten into power "we" have turned into "they."

The Revolution must first occur within and then it must be lived. In a very real sense the most revolutionary thing to do is change your life style; to live by your own values not those of the present system. Still there are a lot of fine people who think I'm crazy, counter-revolutionary, *and* absolutely wrong. Who knows what's right or what will happen? I have such a strong feeling on what the world should be. I have no hope that it will be like that in my lifetime and little hope that it ever will. I know I can make a good life for myself: good people, beautiful experiences, earning and keeping my self-respect. That's where I start. Whatever revolution I make will have to come after that. I have but one life. I'll marry the sun and stars before I marry the revolution. She seems a cold wife.

The women's march is very mellow. There are actually two marches. The first one is for women only. The second is to be for men only but many women join it as well, finding the separation not to their liking. On the way a radio reporter interviews a young man ahead of me.

Reporter: Did you know Jane Fonda is speaking at the Rally?

Young Man: Yes.

Reporter: What do you think of her?

Young Man: She's okay.

Reporter: Is that how you feel about all the leaders in the movement?

Young Man: The movement doesn't have leaders--only celebrities.

Every day is built around a march. The day I arrived there was a third world march. The day before that there had been a gay liberation march. The women's march comes on the 21<sup>st</sup>. As the end approaches, as the last futile days loom over us closer and closer, everything turns back to the one issue that started it all. The thing that had opened so many minds at such a cost: Vietnam. On the 22<sup>nd</sup> of August 1973, 600 Vietnam veterans and another 600 supporters march to President Nixon's hotel. President Nixon, who spent World War Two shuffling supplies in the Pacific, rationing gas in the U.S., getting rich off the black market, and planning his first congressional campaign. President Nixon who ran for president and won with his secret plan (still secret) to end the war. President Nixon under whose first administration more Americans died in Vietnam than under Johnson's or Kennedy's. President Nixon, the invader of Cambodia, of Laos, the builder of Vietnamese prisons, the secret bomber (and yet to come, the Christmas bomber of Hanoi).

The Viet vets carry their discharge papers and their medals to prove that they are real veterans, because once Agnew had claimed they were all fakes. He did that when at a demonstration in Washington D.C. almost a thousand turned in their decorations. They paint their scars bright red. Almost all the vets I get to know are grunts: combat soldiers. There are few fliers (helicopter mainly) and a stray swabbie or mechanic, but the vast majority were dog faces, foot sloggers, the ones who kill and die. It is not a coincidence. The regular army soldiers are basically in technical areas or are officers. It is the draftees that fight. And for those, regular or drafted, who don't end up on the front, Vietnam is a luxury duty station: high pay, cheap women, lots of drugs, and all the comforts of home.

In the bush they come face to face with the war. In the jungles of Vietnam they come face to face with America.

It is a silent march in loose ranks. No one says anything. There is plenty to think about. It is warm but very cloudy with some light rain. It is a long march and we pass a lot of people. No one says anything even slightly derogatory. There are three men in wheel chairs leading the march. Most people just stare curiously. Who are these strange green men? What do they want? Where are they going? But many also cry.

Of course at the hotel Nixon refuses to come out. Pete McClosky, my congressman, tries to help. The vets talk to him and he goes in. He comes out with the Nixon offer. The vets in wheelchairs can see some Nixon aides. He just delivers it and says it's up to us. Many of us want to sit-in right there and get busted. The men in chairs decide to take the offer. We walk home

empty and impotent.

There are sit-ins in front of the convention that night. It is not the big push but a start. The Republican platform is being debated and voted on inside.

I am willing to get arrested. About sixty of us are sitting in front of the gates. It's mainly vets and their friends. Every now and then some other demonstrators will straggle in from down the street. Apparently the police are beating people up that they catch on the side streets. Gradually most of the demonstrators seek shelter near the Convention where the presence of TV cameras and newsmen offer some safety.

Delegates start coming in. We decide not to block them. Many people are yelling. There is some spitting. We form a human chain to screen the delegates from the more angry demonstrators. A line is formed about eight yards from the Convention Center fence and it extends about sixty yards. The delegates funnel into the end and walk down to the gate. The police just watch from inside the fence.

This has the effect of putting us in between the entering delegates and four hundred demonstrators. We allow people to talk and walk with the delegates but we don't want them mobbed. People from the chain also take turns talking to the delegates. My chance comes and I am jazzed. This can make it all worthwhile. Here are the people who will actually vote. They must know what's going on. That's the only explanation for their continued support of the war and Richard Nixon.

My first delegates are a small group from the Midwest. Plump ladies dressed in fruity colors reminding me of tropical birds walk with large straining businessmen in blue and gray suits with bright pastel shirts and clashing ties. Their jowls quiver as they stride heavily down the corridor. Some of them wear too much makeup. I wonder if this is for the TV cameras inside. I feel so strange. I am easily 70 pounds lighter than any of them. I am tanned and dressed only in track shorts and tennis shoes. They move ponderously in a tight group like a school of whales while I run next to them trying to talk clearly and rationally.

“Doesn't it bother you that war has never been declared in Vietnam? More Americans have died there than in any other war except for the Civil War, World War I and World War II. It is Congress' duty to declare a war. You cannot force a war on the people without their consent. Don't you see what this is doing to America? We love America as it's supposed to be. Look at these men here protecting you. They've been there. They gave their blood and their friends to this dirty rotten war that has never been legal. 50,000 young Americans have been killed and a million...”

They slip inside. They never looked at me. They stare straight ahead.

I soon give up. They aren't listening. At the end of our protective line, where it slants into the fence right past the gate, a policeman calls to a vet standing a few feet from him on the other side of the fence. The vet turns and the policeman maces him right in the eyes. He's taken back to the compound. Since he didn't have time to close his eyes, even reflexively, he will be blind for at least a week. We move the line away from the fence.

I look up and see a large black limousine coming. It is not a good idea. It has a cabinet flag flying from the hood. By now the crowd is furious. Many have been maced or beaten. As the car pulls up into the crowd it is at first surrounded. It continues nosing its way toward the gate. People start pounding on it with their sticks and with their bare hands. It continues forward. It is armored and bullet proofed. People start rocking it back and forth. There doesn't seem to be any chance of turning it over. It sits wide on its tires and only rocks grudgingly, like a large ship on the open seas.

The car finally turns around slowly and we all relax knowing it's going to leave. It is now about ten yards off to my left and not quite through with its turn. The engine screams as the accelerator is jammed to the floor. The tires grab on the road with a screech and the car lurches forward. Everyone screams and runs. The car's right fender brushes my leg. Several people are hit, including the person whose hand I was holding. She lies on the pavement awkwardly, not moving. There is sticky blood all over the street. The car roars off.

An ambulance appears quickly to take off two of the injured. The rumor has it that one is dead. I am unable to find any information. The papers never report it.

The rest of the delegates trickle in behind our reconstructed line. They are as unimpressed with the story of the cabinet car as they are by Vietnam. We go home in the dark making sure to stay together. The police are out in force looking for stragglers. It seems that as the end of the demonstrations approach the police are being given a freer and freer hand. Tomorrow is the last day.

The big day dawns as warm and beautiful as all the others. I wander over to the fruit market near the beach and buy some yogurt, cheese, and fruit. The camp is awake by the time I get back. There is very little real organization. All information is dispensed and collected at the main gate by the information desk that is manned by volunteers. Now some of the movement celebrities might have information not known at large, or some of the groups like the SDS or the Zippies might know something everyone else doesn't, but I doubt it.

I go over to the information desk to get some information that they don't have. The woman there tells me to look through all the notes and announcements. While my back is turned she splits. People come up and start asking me questions. I answer them. I am now in charge of the information desk.

I have no idea of how it worked before so I decided to organize it. At first it is just lost and found, campsite location, and handing out leaflets on legal defense and tear gas protection. But soon people start coming in with reports of police activity. I don't take any one person's word. Most things are substantiated by several people at once. It doesn't look good. The police have blocked Flamingo Park off from the Convention Center by putting old buses bumper to bumper across most of the width of the island. Behind the buses are hoards of cops. Only along the slough and on the beach and Collins Avenue is the blockade not airtight. They apparently ran out of buses. All vans and cars with longhairs or young people are being searched and turned back on the causeways and bridges leading from Miami to the Convention area. We have been completely out maneuvered. There is practically no way to even reach the Convention site.

There is no one to tell all this to who can make any real decisions. People from the different groups start coming to me in the early afternoon. I send them wherever I think they can do the most good. A young man comes up to me and claims he is a Republican delegate from Georgia and that he wants to help. "You're a Republican?" I ask amazed.

"If you lived in Georgia you would be too," he snaps back. Apparently the Democrats there are even more corrupt than usual. He tells me that the delegates have been told to come in early so as to slip in before the demonstrations.

When this is confirmed by some friendly media people I tell everyone to spread the word. Soon the camp is up and ready to march. Trouble has nowhere to go. Some people come to me and if they're willing to swim the slough I send them off to do just that. (It is these people who stopped the few buses that did meet demonstrators).

David Dellinger, Abie Hoffman, and Alan Ginsberg come up to the desk and ask for the latest information. I give them my confusing reports and they are very kind and skeptical. Dellinger and a few others go to the sound stage and announce the early start of the Convention. I describe the blockades and the location of police concentrations. It is decided to have a march to some hotel to try and catch delegates there or something. I don't understand what's happening but nobody else does, except maybe the cops. A large number of people go tripping off behind Dellinger, Hoffman and a

blessed-out Ginsberg, clinking his finger symbols.

I continue sending people out. By five o'clock the camp is practically abandoned. There are just a few people getting ready to go out and some others who don't look like they're going anywhere at all. Some of my friends from the convoy are going out with water for tear gas victims. Despite the large number of older people in the area the police have started tear-gassing and they are increasing the use each hour.

Many of the vets have left for Gainesville, Florida where some brothers are being held for refusing to testify to a grand jury about a supposed plan to violently disrupt the Democratic Convention that nominated McGovern. Of course it's all a farce designed to distract the most together group at the Convention. Despite the fact that most of the vets see through it, it works all the same. More than half the vets leave before the Convention is over. The loyalties engendered by the shared experience of Vietnam are what make the VVAW such an effective organization, it also makes it vulnerable to tactics such as these.

People start coming back to the desk about an hour after the march leaves. Two young guys, obviously from Boston, come up breathless and bleeding about the face and hands. They say they had been at the front of the march. At first there were police lined up on one side of them. Then files of police moved in on the other side. The march continued for a few minutes until a column of police moved out right in front of the line of marchers and fired tear gas straight into the first ranks. They also threw something in glass containers and many people are cut. The police charge and that is all these guys see. They run like hell back to me.

More people come in to describe the attempts to run the police blockade on the beach and across the slough. Many people are now gravitating up toward Collins Avenue trying to find a way around the end of the bus barricade. The police are not content with waiting for us. They turn all of Collins Avenue into a battleground.

There is nothing else I can do at the camp. The SDS holds a bizarre meeting that ends up in a fistfight over the microphone. I help break it up and only get bad vibes in return. I figure all the good people are out in the streets. So I get my canteen and head out to help tear gas victims.

With me is a girl from New York who I've promised to hitch up north with, since she doesn't know how to get home. I still haven't decided if I'm going to get arrested. Or rather I haven't decided if I am going to make sure I get arrested. Sometimes the police quite arbitrarily take this sort of decision into their own hands. But today the police are trying hard to hold the number of arrests down to a minimum.

We go out with our water bottles to Collins Avenue. The police are using hit and hit tactics to keep it cleared. Actually it's hit and run. They hit and we run. The tear gas is bellowing back and forth in huge fog-like banks. Bands of demonstrators drift up toward the Convention area. When they get close flights of police cars, with their doors significantly ajar, screech into the intersections and vomit pale blue policemen out onto the asphalt. Then the tear gas starts blossoming like gigantic white flowers. Everyone runs like hell--shoppers, spectators, and protestors alike.

The local citizens, who are almost all retired New York Jews, are amazingly pro-demonstrators and anti-police. White haired and suntanned they sit on their porches with their fans and handkerchiefs and watch the riots. They hide us when the police charge.

“This Nixon, I never did trust him, such beady eyes, another Hitler.”

“The police are just like the Nazis, I know, I was in Germany.”

“Ach, it reminds me of Berlin.”

I find such comparisons more than a little frightening. I have never seriously worried about our actual liberties, at least not until tonight.

We return several times to the park for water. Once it is right after the police had made a tear gas attack on it. Of course, the police promised not to attack the park but what the heck, it is the last day. Besides tear gas the cops also use pepper gas and whatever is in the glass globes. This is my first introduction to these particular fruits of technology and I am quite impressed: packaged pain.

Around two in the morning we give it up and return to the park seeking sleep. But with nothing to do on the streets the police stage tear gas attacks on the park for their amusement. So there is no chance for sleep. The girl from New York and I lie next to each other and I kiss her a few times. She is young and boney and from a different world. At five we get up and decide to try hitching out. The 23<sup>rd</sup> of August was my birthday. Richard Nixon is now the Republican nominee for a second term and I am nineteen.

### CHAPTER 3: What the Fuck, I'll Go to Vienna

We head for the bridge that leads to the mainland. We get one ride out to the middle and soon a car pulls up. But it's not there to give us a ride. It's a local TV crew looking for some comments on the convention.

"Was it worth it?" leers a rough, plastic face with blinding teeth. I stammer some idiotic reply while I stare in shock at the microphone, which looks incredibly obscene. A beat up sedan pulls in and I announce, "We've got a ride" as I grab my pack. "What the fuck is all this?" asks our grizzled benefactor as I climb into the car under a hail of questions flung at me by the mannequin. "Bunch of shit," I tell the microphone. As we pull out into the bridge traffic I think of all the neat things I could've said. But they wouldn't have put them on the air anyway.

North of Miami about thirty miles we're picked up by an ex-Teamster official from Nashville, who had been fired when his boss opposed Fitzsimmons. He has a lot to say about the Teamsters in general and about the various deals between Nixon and the Teamsters in particular. I had heard some interesting things about Hoffa's pardon and the dropping of charges against his son for the misuse of Teamster pension funds. But our ride fills in the gaps with all the little bits and pieces by describing the infighting in the union between the liberal/radicals in one corner, the Hoffa people in another, and the Fitzsimmons crowd in a third. Nixon deals with both Hoffa and Fitzsimmons, as does the Mafia.

The most interesting things are the conditions of Hoffa's pardon (no running for union office--this was done for Fitzsimmons), the appointment of Fitzsimmons' wife to the National Art Advisory Board, and the dropping of a suit by the NLRB contesting Fitzsimmons' election. Of course what the Teamsters have done in return is public knowledge, like Fitzsimmons sitting on the wage/price control board after all the other unions had left.

The ex-Teamster takes us a few hundred miles north of Miami and leaves us at an excellent ramp.

As the sun fades into the ground haze a van stops and offers a ride to North Carolina. It is full of people from Flamingo Park. The owner and I take turns driving through the night and by four in the morning we are again standing by the road, hitching north. After a couple of chilly hours pacing up and down a pick-up stops. It is so full of people I figure it must be stopping for some other reason, but no, it's a ride to Washington D.C. There are already eight hitchers crammed in so we make it an even ten. It's damn cold even after the sun climbs above the surrounding forests.

I get off on the Potomac's east bank about four miles from the Capital. I immediately take a liking to the beautiful white buildings and the friendly

Black people. It seems like an interesting city so I go looking for a place to rent for a week or so. At the first cheap address I come to the local Blacks refuse to consider letting me stay.

“Bad people, junkies, live here.”

“It’s not safe boy--it ain’t nothing but a dump.”

So it is at the second and third addresses as well. I think I would sense some racism but all I feel is genuine concern. Someone offers me the hospitality of their home but since they’re Black I stupidly refuse out of shyness and fear. I walk from one side of Washington to the other and eventually end up at the Y, which costs me \$6.35 a night. (It is the most I have ever spent on a night’s sleep.)

The next day I decide to play tourist. It starts well enough. I go over to the Lincoln Memorial and flirt with some high school girls, but soon it becomes more difficult. At the Smithsonian I am thrown out for not having a shirt on. I suspect very strongly that there is no legitimate law against being shirtless there but I can’t prove it. The Capitol police threaten me with arrest for disturbing the peace so I chicken out. The head guard assures me that my father would be ashamed of me. I get his address and promise to have my father write. (My father, who is a member of the Smithsonian Society, does indeed write him to let him know that he’s no more approving of keeping American citizen out of their national museum for bureaucratic Puritanism than I am. There is no reply).

Every day I go down to the baroque old post office and look for letters from home or Alicia. There is always nothing. But all is not lost. In front of the P.O. there is a large curving fountain. Every day it is full of little Black kids swimming and racing. The first day I went there I still had my pack on, they were amazed.

“Hey man, what da ya keep in der?”

“All my stuff, my clothes, my food, my bed, my books.”

“Ya’ll moving somewhere?”

“I’m traveling. I’m going to Europe.”

“URUP?? WHY TA WANTA GO TA URUP?”

Despite their professed incredulity they look at me with some respect, especially when I reveal that I am from California and an admitted hippie. “Ah, the hippies ar awl gon.” So we swim together in the fountain and I judge their races, as it’s a little shallow for me. The Post Office is my favorite place in D.C.

After three nights at the Y I decide I can’t afford it anymore so I go freelance, hoping for some luck to save me. Around eight at night, as I wander around in Washington Square while it fills with drunks and derelicts,

I start to reconsider. I talk to a lot of the drunks and they unanimously warn me not to spend the night in the city. When one drunk who is still bleeding from a very recent mugging tells me this I decide to split. I take a bus out to Dulles International Airport and spend a very nice night there. Airports are always safe and often comfortable.

The next morning I decide to look for the Virginia farm that Alicia had once lived on. She had been very happy there (happier than she ever seemed with me, despite all her protestations to the contrary). I hitch to within twenty miles of it and then decide to hike the rest of the way. Besides it being a pleasant country road I have two more days to kill (what an unfortunate expression) until I'm due to meet my older brother Ken on the steps of the Senate. I have to turn down several rides in order to keep to my plan of hiking.

When night comes I hop a fence and sleep in a small copse of woods. I am miles from anyone. Since the early morning I haven't talked to anyone and for hours I haven't seen a soul. Alicia had told me that it would be dangerous for longhairs around here but I don't find that to be true. Everywhere you'll hear scare stories or dire predictions about the people, danger, weather, or police. I have found that only the weather is as bad as people say it will be. In fact, often it's worse.

As I lay in my sleeping bag and listen to the cows I ponder my motivation for even being there. My approach to relationships is probably too fanatical. I seek to acquire conscious understanding of the person. I want to read the books they love, hear the music they like, see the places they lived. Not that you can really know a person through such pedestrian data as this but it might help. Many people don't try to understand their friends and lovers on a conscious level. They don't seek to see the world through their eyes. What they get out of the relationship other than ego satisfaction and sex is beyond me. I am here in Virginia trying to feel what Alicia felt when she had come here right after high school, unhappy and afraid. My parents had just refused to give me legal permission to marry her and since I wasn't old enough to do it without their permission we were stymied. My parents were much in favor of us living together but Alicia couldn't handle it. I am trying to feel what she felt as she gradually fell out of love with me and into love with Virginia.

The next day I find the farm, decide that it's nice enough, and walk fifteen miles to a good road and hitch back to Dulles for another restful night. While bus and train stations are no longer hospitable to sleepy travelers, I've found that airports are not only kinder and cleaner but safer as well. The next day I go to Washington, turn down a ride to California, and

meet my brother two minutes before twelve. Still no letters since St. Louis and the isolation makes me feel bitter. I was starting to wonder if even Ken would come through--but he always has and he always does.

Ken is like that: very reliable, very competent. But sensitive and insecure as well. He's slither than Dana and I, pale where we are tan, sickly in contrast to our health. His long curly red-blond hair frames a cherubic, grinning face that's dominated by a wild red beard. Just a few quarters from college graduation (Drama, UCSB) he is the quintessential college dropout. Doesn't know where he's going and doesn't know why.

My parents worry a lot about him but they shouldn't. He's hardworking (when he has to be), intelligent, and...waiting. For what I don't know. When I decided to travel I called my parents. My dad said, "why not call your brother Ken, he's not doing anything." I did and he wasn't.

We decide to head straight for New York. I warn Ken that hitching takes patience and skill and that it will probably take two days to make New York, since we're leaving so late and we're two guys. We walk two blocks to get to some traffic that might have cars going to New York. The first one I wave my sign at stops and takes us straight to Kennedy airport. The driver is an ex-cabbie and he drives considerably out of his way to give us a look at The City. He delights in pointing out the whores. At Kennedy we get tickets for the next day to fly Air Icelandic, New York to Luxemburg (return) for \$169.

Kennedy isn't as nice to sleep in as Dulles. We call home and I call Alicia. She's jazzed that I saw her farm. I miss her terribly.

It is a long boring wait. The airport is not full of exciting attractions. But time passes.

The plane is 100% full. That's how Air Icelandic manages to charge so much less than everyone else. (Also they don't belong to the International Air Carriers Cartel.) They serve us quite an elaborate dinner. The stop over in Iceland is notable in that we leave the 90 degrees of New York smog and land in 40 degrees of Icelandic rain. Luxemburg is a brisk compromise, fair in the 60s. We touch down at two o'clock in the afternoon, Luxemburg time.

Ken and I really aren't too sure about what we want to do. We have no plans at all. After a rather perfunctory customs check we walk out into the European sunshine with a naïve sense of awe. Even though I've been in Southeast Asia that had been when I was much younger and it hadn't brought home to me the implications of the existence of other cultures. My prejudices have me convinced that under certain very superficial differences I am going to find all nationalities the same due to the innate human qualities that greatly outbalance "mere" socialization. I have other

preconceptions about geography and climate. Luxemburg, for example, is exactly as I'd imagined it--only more so: large forest, immaculate streets, rosy-cheeked handsome people, ramparts and battlements, and sleepy airport.

We have somehow drifted into common cause with a guy from Northern California named Greg and a Jewish girl from New York. Exactly how these instant alliances are formed is beyond me, even though I've been in hundreds. The motivation isn't that complex: fear. But the actual dynamics of formation are ephemeral. People ask each other questions and when someone offers any sort of an answer everyone does what he or she says. Since I'm big on answers, even when I don't know what I'm talking about, I've led a surprising assortment of people on a large numbers of confusing journeys.

So I say, "why not walk to town, it's only six miles or so." The other three quite surprisingly (for most people don't share my enthusiasm for walking or my hatred of spending) agree and off we go. The girl speaks a little French so it's not difficult to buy some food in the city and keep walking right through it. We get to the far side and try hitching. Rather arbitrarily we are headed for Amsterdam. It's very slow hitching so as it gets dark we go off the road a little ways and camp under a tree. We decide to hitch separately, Ken with the girl, as four people together is really quite impossible. Greg gets up earliest and starts hitching first. I soon arise as well and decide it is such a nice day I start walking. I have almost walked all the way out of the country by the time I'm picked up.

My first ride in Europe is a German soldier who takes me to Brussels. When I ask him how well he would fight if there is a war with the Soviets he replies, "Fight? I'm in the army because it's such a good job." When I ask him what's happened to German militarism, he points out that it died in the Second World War. "Now we'll buy the world."

The ride that takes me out of Brussels is a beautiful Danish model who was married to a race driver. In the States single beautiful girls don't usually pick up single guys, at least not in my experience. Although I speak no Danish, German, or French, and she speaks no English or Spanish, she somehow manages to tell me a long elaborate story about the infidelities of her husband and her "revenge."

Left off in Antwerp, I am soon picked up by a college professor and his daughter. And after that it's a Flemish fascist much interested in flying saucers and *Chariots of the Gods*. He take me into Holland and out to lunch. He tells me how Hitler wasn't such a bad man.

"What about the Jews?" I ask.

“For the Jews he wasn’t so good,” he allows reluctantly.

The last ride of the day leaves me outside Utrecht with a French couple, a black guy from Somalia and his Parisian girl friend. We try to hitch for several hours in the dark. Finally they give up and make camp. A few minutes later the Dutch police stop and tell me I’m hitching illegally, so I too go to sleep.

I get up while the grass is still crunchy with ice and quickly pack. Within minutes of climbing back up on to the road a Dushavo stops with a young mother and her very young daughter. The trust and friendliness inherent in stopping illegally at five-thirty on a Sunday morning to pick up a disheveled and obviously foreign hitchhiker in a misty Dutch meadow when you’ve only got your seven-year-old daughter in the car with you is, to my mind, incredible. It is also very typical of Holland. The generosity and open mindedness of the Dutch becomes more and more obvious with each one I meet.

The last ride into Amsterdam is in a GTO with sheepskin seat covers and a loud stereo radio. Most of the music is of the piped into stores variety but there is also a song by Melanie, which makes me quite homesick. There are very few real rock stations on the continent other than the American Military radio and Air Luxemburg. But the dominance of rock music among the young people is as complete as it is in the United States or Great Britain.

Like many people who pick up hitchhikers, the GTO driver takes me several kilometers out of his way right to the center of the city and the front of the train station.

Now the train station is an excellent place to start in any European city, because it is always in the center of town. There is information available and cheap lodgings near by. When I had been in Washington D.C., a guy I met gave me the address of a cheap student hotel called The Kabul.” My only plan was to look for Ken and Greg, but I assume I might very well have beaten them to Amsterdam. (Actually they’ve taken trains and have been here a day already.) I check the American Express, which is just a few blocks from the train station, and it is a veritable little bazaar with twenty to thirty people sitting or standing on the sidewalk holding cardboard signs offering rides to India, return tickets to San Francisco, and VW vans that have been in thirty countries, all for bargain rates. There is no note from Ken, however, so I head to the Kabul, which isn’t as cheap as I would like. It’s eight guilders, or about \$2.75. But the jet lag and the excitement of finally being “there” gets to me so I give in. Usually I’m extremely cost conscious (my friends say cheap/my enemies say neurotic) for what I consider several good reasons:

- 1) The less you spend the less you work.
- 2) I'm young and strong; I can spend my body instead of money.
- 3) You meet more people, see more of the country, and have more adventures.
- 4) There is always something better to spend money on: food, music, friends.

I have decided that the three main costs of living will be lodging, transportation, and food. But for my health and pleasure I decide to eat as well (if as simply) as possible. No fasting for pennies. Transportation will be hitching unless the hitching is impossible and the public transportation is very cheap. If the hitching is impossible and the public transportation isn't all that cheap, I will just keep hitching. Sleeping will mainly be crashing with new friends or camping.

But for this, my first night in a big European city, I decide to cop out. I change some money and buy some pommes frites (French fries) from a vendor and then about six Italian ice cream cones. You always eat more and better when you buy staples such as bread, cheese, yogurt, fruit, and milk instead of eating junk food from street stalls. But I am just too tired to make decisions of type and volume. I sleep in the male dormitory part of the Kabul. (Later I learn that the Kabul is obviously one of the more reputable student hotels in Amsterdam, in that it doesn't have a house dope dealer and the dorms are segregated by sex. One pays of these dubious amenities at the rate of five guilders a day more than the cheaper, earthier, sleep-ins.)

The next day I meet my brother and Greg and they tell me that the city government has opened Vondelpark for free camping in the summer. So if it's free it must be better. There's a baggage check-in, so we can leave our stuff in safety during the day.

The first night we spend there we share the park with more than a thousand other people. Each day there will be a decrease of roughly fifty percent until the last day we are there, which is the last day the park is open the crowd has dwindled to fifty or so hardy souls. This rapid depopulation is an accurate and dramatic reflection of the hordes of summer travelers drifting home to school in England, North America, and Germany.

We hadn't planned to spend any time in Amsterdam, but we quickly fall in love with the city. Greg and I buy some Lebanese red (hash that is) and smoke it every morning before wandering the streets buying yogurt, pastries, dried fish, and ice cream.

The only organized sightseeing we do is the Rijksmuseum, which has an incredible collection of Van Gogh's. Because of my affinity for Van Gogh, I have to judge it the best museum I've every seen. We also tour the

red light district extensively--looking but not touching. The girls sit in windows or stand on their front steps. I am surprised to see that some of the girls are very beautiful and others are extremely ugly. And yet the ugly ones get their share of custom. Perhaps the rates are different depending on the....offerings. I don't know. I am disinclined to do personal research.

After three years of refusing to smoke pot I slip naturally into it with little hesitation. Perhaps it is being in a new country with very cheap dope. Perhaps it is a reaction to Alicia's anti-dope attitude (which has since been completely reversed). Whatever, I try it and like it.

With the closing of the park, Ken and I decide to head over to Germany. Greg goes south to Paris.

It is cold and wet. We don't get out on the road until after twelve. I decide I'd like to head straight east instead of taking a major route northeast (Hamburg) or southeast (Aachen) I decide we'll aim for Munster because I like the name and I've never heard it before.

Our first ride is a quiet, generous Dutchman. He explains he's in the Dutch Army. It used to be that the Dutch armor trained in West Germany because there isn't room in Holland. But the Dutch used to have to rent the land they trained on. When the Germans raised the rent, the Dutch flew their reserve armor to Canada where land is cheaper. Now it is kept there and the reserves fly to Canada to train. Of course, if there's a war the tanks are on the wrong side of the Atlantic.

The first day of hitching only takes us as far as Arnhem, and we find ourselves on the doorstep of the youth hostel in a driving rainstorm. After much soul searching (my soul) we shell out \$6.25 for youth hostel cards (saving \$4 over what we would have paid in the U.S.) and another dollar for a room and breakfast. It turns out to be quite a good deal. It's a very cozy place and the breakfast is all you can eat of ham, cheese, and various breads. I still feel hostels are generally to be avoided whenever possible, but the cards to come in handy in several big cities (especially in the expensive Germanic countries) and there are a few good things to say about hostels: cheap, central, sometimes, showers, other travelers.

Unfortunately, many are run as amateur concentration camps. This often results in truly remarkable displays of Germanic order and efficiency. For example, in Heidelberg the youth hostel gates lock shut at ten p.m., German marching music wakes you at six a.m. There are two bed inspections and three forms to be completed before checking out is possible, which has to be before eight a.m., when the gates are locked again until five p.m.

We barely manage to hitch into Germany by dark of the next day, so we quietly slip into the forest by the road and set up camp. It is soon raining but we are warm and dry. The next morning we are cold and wet. I am in favor of waiting for the rain to stop but since Ken's allergies are bothering him, he wants to move on. We hitch into Munster.

In a remarkable feat of bad planning we are in Germany on a Sunday with no German money. We are let out at the Hauptbahnhof (train station) and then take turns exploring the town. It's a beautiful little city with a circular park all the way around the center, where the old walls used to be. At the train station we meet two young Mormon missionaries who argue philosophy with me for several hours. There is also a drunken contingent of the Texas Air National Guard staggering around trying to find more of that good dark German beer. They like Germany and find the Germans make great drinking companions. The Mormons are less pleased, especially by the "black" (i.e. Catholic) sections.

They tell me about their door-to-door missionary work, which often starts out with a leading question such as, "Belueben en Gott?" (Do you believe in God?) To which they once got the reply, "Nein, ish bin Catholic." (No, I'm a Catholic.)

They also tell us where the local sinful discotheque is and we plan to go there when it opens, in order to find a place to crash. The Mormons offer us lodging, but I want to avoid it if possible, tired as I am of pitting my atheism against Moroni.

The disco opens at nine. I start spreading our tale of woe. Someone tells someone who tells someone and soon we are walking home with a gymnasium (high school) student whose parents are out of town.

He feeds us meat and wine. Then in broken English he asks if we want some shit. I am rather taken aback until by his actions it becomes clear he isn't quite literal in his offer. In most of Europe the English word "shit," means hash or grass and sometimes all drugs. But never really shit. So we get stoned and listen to German and Dutch rock music.

Most European groups sing in English because it lyricizes better. When one realizes how thoroughly English and American rock dominate the youth of the world it becomes clear why so many young people speak some English. German tastes run to heavier, harder sounds at the expense of lyrics. Local German rock reflects this, I think, being hard, clear and simple. There is also a frenzied, even demonic element, which is really quite pervasive and must be heard to be understood. Examples which may be familiar to non-Europeans are the music of the Dutch group called Focus, or Grieg's "Hall of the Mountain King" rendered by electric guitars.

The better groups can be quite good technically, but they are trapped by the limited vocabulary and the tastes of most of their young audience. There is an underground of truly native folk/rock in Germany, Holland, and Scandinavia that is heavily political and sung in the native languages, despite the difficulties.

In Spain there is an almost complete reliance on Spanish as the main singing language since, of course, it is the native language and it is easily as adaptable to music as English. I've heard Spanish love songs of the Lennon Sister variety on radios not only all over Spain, but in Morocco, Greece, and Turkey as well. Buses often have piped-in music which gives you such surprises as heavy American jazz lulling Yugoslavian gypsies and soldiers to sleep, or the Beatles singing "Hey Jude" to busloads of dirty Turks and their goats.

There is a worldwide culture of young people, which is easiest to define in terms of music, drugs, and political presuppositions. But it also involves some shared philosophical assumptions. This culture by no means involves a majority of young people in any country, state, or province and only a majority in a few cities such as Boston, San Francisco, and Amsterdam. Most young people implicitly or explicitly accept the dominant ideas of their old native culture and just a few trappings of the new. In Spain you find longhaired, mod (expensive mod) male chauvinist, conservative teenyboppers who will join the Falange when their youth is wilted. But you also get a few Spanish freaks who could be in Berkeley with only a slight accent to distinguish them.

How far the culture (my culture) can spread is, of course, an unknown. It seems to be growing. Many people see it only as a phase in growing up and they point to the young radicals who became lawyers, or doctors, or engineers and they say, "See, they sold out." But the fallacy there is that it's not what you do but why, and how. Of course, for me personally some occupations are beyond the pale, such as insurance salesman, advertising, jr. executive in anything, military officer, etc....But any of these jobs could be held by....I search for a simple description...by one of us.

Two things are clear about the growth of the new culture. The majority of true members involve the brightest and most capable of our generation. There are some holdouts, but the majority of those who are in the natural creative, intellectual elite are rejecting the dying married couple of established Western religion and nationalism and moving beyond them. Secondly, the new values are "in." While there are many exceptions, most media hype reflects our values, Even Madison Avenue has co-opted many of our slogans word for word, much of our music, and even a few of our

prejudices. That it would take the form, and not the essence, is just to make money or to manipulate is something as predictable as it is disgusting. But perhaps as the people are taught to mimic and parrot our values they will come to share them as well. It could all well backfire.

Said values aren't easily verbalized but an attempt will be made. Actually, one should read *Greening of America* for what I fell is a generally accurate picture. It's significant that I reached the same conclusions as Reich did about our values before I read his book. That's one tiny bit of evidence for shared values. Rather than coherent explanation perhaps a list of key words, concepts, and clichés will be just as effective a form of communication. In no way is this exclusive or conclusive.

FOR: Love, non-violence, feminism, sexual freedom, honesty, appreciation and oneness with nature, organic food, gay liberation, internationalism, working with your hands, non-exploitive economics, situation ethics, white magic, free schools, trust, revolution, living simply, freedom, the law of karma, anarchy, socialism, co-operation, individualism.

AGAINST: Nationalism, role-playing, game playing, capitalism, money worship, competition, materialism, TV, politics, artificial flavor, imperialism, silent children, racism, pragmatism, sexism, ageism.

But what is really important is how you live your life not how you say you will.

We have to get up early so our host can make it to high school. After taking a bus to the autobahn we wait for four hours for a ride to Düsseldorf. I find a blue plastic flower while we wait and I tie it to my pack. There is something sad and yet optimistic about plastic flowers.

The German businessman who takes us to Düsseldorf is very big on the city and it's beer so we decide to sample both. He leaves us on the outskirts and we bus into the center. Once there we decide we might as well hit up the youth hostel since we have cards now. We walk across the Rhine (on a bridge) and find the hostel on the east bank in a gigantic hunting lodge. It is one of the more authoritarian ones.

Back in town with a bunch of other kids we drink some beer and then go to a few discos. German kids dance radical. The music turns into pure kinetic energy that is released in a fit of shaking. Of course many adults would say this is a description of all dancing by young people but that just isn't true. There is a great deal of internal logic in many dancers. Something else strikes me about the German kids I see in the discos--they don't look very happy. In fact they look miserable. If I didn't know better I'd say they were all on downers. A more relevant adjective to me, which covers all my

impressions from the blank eyes and tightly drawn lips to the frantic joyless dancing, is "damned."

I'm not having such a good time so I split back to the youth hostel barely beating the curfew. Ken stays out and ends up sleeping in an abandoned building. Germans I talk to rate Düsseldorf with Berlin, Heidelberg, and Munich as one of the best cities in the Federal Republic. Why, I don't know.

We set out hitching south, with the Stanford campus near Stuttgart as a general destination. About the second ride we get is a young Frenchman going to Paris. He offers to take us all the way there but we decline reluctantly. (That is the closest I get to Paris.) We trade stories about "plastic freaks" and "pseudo-hippies" and he gives us the address of a German friend of his in the small town of Boppard-on-the-Rhine, which is right on our route. We decide to stop there.

There is an unplanned walking tour through Bonn as a function of bad hitching. Then a twilight ride takes us to Koblenz. We wait several hours in icy cold but no one will stop for two rasty figures shivering in the dim light. I finally talk Ken into sleeping in the city park that is right next to the Rhine. We lay out our bags in what we hope is a secluded place and are out in minutes.

I wake up to the patter of hundreds of little feet as crowds of gym suited little boys run by the foot of our sleeping place. They barely noticed us. I go back to sleep but soon awaken to the hot breath of a gigantic German Shepard that is preparing to rip my throat out. His master soon comes up and to my exclamation of "grosse hunt" he happily explains in German that if he wants he can have the dog kill me but he won't because we are "comrades." "Comrades," I repeat several times enthusiastically and I throw in a few "zer gutt hunt"s to make the dog a comrade too. Secure in the knowledge that they could have killed me if only they wanted, they bid a fond farewell and happily trot off. I wake up Ken and tell him the story but he doesn't believe it. Since I am trying to forget it anyway I don't really push it. We hit the road and finally make it to Boppard.

After wandering around town until evening we go to the local disco and call our friend's friend. He quickly drives down from the little mountain village he lives in, somehow having gotten the impression that we are the police. When he finds out who we really are he is relieved and friendly. We stay with him for two days and learn a lot about small German communities. He's a teacher in a local gymnasium and is often under pressure because of his open friendship with his students, his politics too. We leave Boppard by talking a ferry on the Rhine to Mainz for three dollars. I meet a DOW

chemical engineer and we talk about the war. As far as he's concerned it is something that has to be done. He says he understands how us young people feel, but that we just don't understand the realities of life. As far as I'm concerned he doesn't comprehend the realities of death, the death in Vietnam and its utter uselessness. The castles on the river are pleasant but not spectacular.

We hitch easily into Heidelberg that afternoon and start looking for the Tinkstadie. The Tinkstadie is an amphitheatre built by Hitler on a hill overlooking the city. We'd heard about it in Düsseldorf from an American army brat. We're given directions and we precede to walk out of town and climb a gigantic hill. It takes nearly two hours. We get up there to find the old schloss (castle) and a pseudo-Greek Theatre. According to Ken, who knows about these things, it is an excellent amphitheatre with fine acoustics and flawless sight lines. According to me the lighting shacks are rain and wind proof even if the concrete floor is a little hard. The people of Heidelberg don't use the theatre (or so we are told several times) because of its Nazi origin. Indeed, the two pillars of the proscenium arch still have swastikas on them.

We camp for five days, most of them wet and cold. But almost every night GIs climb the hill in order to smoke hash and drink beer in peace. Often they bring their wives and we have nice quiet little parties. We tell ghost stories and scare each other shitless. Ken goes down to town to buy the supplies. We read a lot and sleep a lot and finally get dirty and bored. But it's good to stop, to not have to go anywhere or meet anyone. Sometimes you've got to stop and digest when you're traveling. When boredom triumphs we go down to the Heidelberg youth hostel. It's much more fascist than the theatre.

It is the worst hostel I know of as far as friendliness and freedom are concerned. But the shower is worth the trouble. Out in front we meet two guys from New York who have a little Hilman sedan that they want to sell. They are leaving in a few days to go back home. I offer them fifty dollars. They jump at it.

The method of our meeting is typical. Ken and I were walking past their car and they ask us about getting into the hostel. I tell them if they've already seen Dachau they might as well save their money and sleep in the car. They reply, "That's cool...Want to smoke some dope?"

The Hilman comes with an old Australian bush hat, which I prize more than the car (and which lasts a hell of a lot longer as well.) The next day we drive down to Luxemburg to send them off. We have to stop quite often to refill the radiator with water but we figure it's just a leak. Besides

we're much too stoned to really care. Other than the water problem the car runs just fine. Ken practices on the English steering while I pump the owners for information on avoiding insurance at the borders and on snowing foreign police in general.

After they leave we try to get back into Germany without paying insurance. The borders are tighter than we thought. Twice we're turned back so we go to sleep. The next morning I direct Ken across a pedestrian bridge. We almost make it but almost doesn't count.

After buying the idiot insurance we head to Stuttgart. We pick up seventeen hitchhikers. Not all at once, of course. The car runs out of water quicker and quicker each time we fill it. Finally, after having extreme overheating problems we stop at the side of the autobahn about fifty klicks (kilometers) from Stuttgart. With typical Teutonic efficiency the Germans have a whole patrol car system to help breakdowns. Within minutes one is at our side telling us that, "Ya" we can make it to Stuttgart. He doesn't mention that it will finish off the engine.

We grit our teeth and in a cloud of steam and smoke we manage to make the western suburbs. We try that night to find the Stanford campus but no one has heard of it. We sleep in the car. The next day we try to repair the engine. It's frozen. I get a lot of exercise pushing it up and down the grade we're parked on. Finally, I call the U.S. counsel and they tell me that Stanford-in-Germany is about thirty K east of the city in a village called Beaulsasbach. One more night in the car and then we take a commuter train there.

The actual campus is three K above the town on the top of an orchard covered hill known as Der Burg. It's empty because, with enviable good planning, we have arrived during the fall break. But we decide to hike up the hill anyway. Thus convincing many Germans that we are mad. It isn't an easy climb but it's lightened by the best, freshest apples I've ever eaten. Halfway up shots start erupting around us. With visions of stout red-faced farmers riddling us with salt we hit the dirt. Laying there we finally figure out that it's some sort of audio scarecrow. Talk about noise pollution.

We camp that night in a stone gazebo and the next day Ken goes back to the car while I am befriended by a student who has returned early from his break. John spent his vacation in Romania but had grown tired of being a cold miserable freak stared at by crowds of Romanians who wanted to buy his clothes.

The next week I pretend to camp in the gazebo since the management wants a buck a night from guests. Ken comes back a few days later with a death notice on the car, so we give it to John. To celebrate we go to a wine

festival. I get totally bombed and spend all the time counting the six Yugoslavians who are about as out of place as we are. After a week of showers, warm beds, and soccer games we hitch to Munich.

Munich is jammed with Oktoberfest crowds that I really would rather have avoided. Since we're expecting money and letters here we have no choice. The money I travel on is actually supposed to be have been my parent's share of my first year at Stanford. By working thirty hours a week during school I had paid my own way through. In a fit of poor planning Ken and I had decided we should only carry about \$350 at anytime and have installments sent to us. Actually, carrying \$1,000 in travelers checks would have saved money, time, and hassle. And it would have been just as safe. But I *had* faith in American Express. I get a letter from Alicia and we get several from our parents. Ken gets his money but mine is lost in transit. My mother sent them within seconds of each other. We stay on in Munich waiting on my money.

The first two nights we crash in the TV room of a German dormitory but we get caught. So we stay the next three nights in the youth hostel. Even though it's hard to find a place to stay in Munich (many of the big trash bins are even reserved) the hostel surprisingly has spaces. By now I am rabid to get to Greece. It is damn cold in the rest of Europe. Munich is a fine city but I want to see it when it isn't full of drunks. I don't bother much with the Oktoberfest because I can't take being drunk more than once a week. I had gotten plenty drunk at the wine fest near Stuttgart.

The best thing about our stay in Munich is two rock concerts: Steppenwolf and Steven Stills with Manassas. The concerts are very small (one to two thousand) and cheap as well, running just three dollars. Down things are the security (no smoking of anything) and the uptight crowd, too young and too German to dance, although the music cried for it.

The Oktoberfest closes every night at ten. No one believes it until it happens. One minute there are thousands of people drinking and the next they are gone. I still don't know how it's done. I cancel my money order (at the cost of four dollars even though it was American Express that lost it) and have my parents send it to Athens. Ken loans me some bucks and he sets off to Greece via Switzerland and Italy. He is actually following a nice redhead to Switzerland, Ellen I think. I'm happy to be alone again. We plan to meet in Athens. I am originally planning to hitch straight through to Greece but my third ride is going to Vienna so I say, "What the fuck, I'll go to Vienna."

## Chapter 4: Fief Hundrat Dinar

I get in around seven with no Austrian money so my ride gives me a train ticket to the city centre. On the train I meet a young Austrian who befriends my broken German and me. I am (once again) looking for the Stanford campus. In Munich I had met some kids from the Vienna campus, including one from my own dorm, Kim, a pretty dark-haired girl. Vienna has more liberal policies than the German campus and she invites me to be her sponsored guest, which means I can crash there.

The place is empty when I finally find it, since they are all still in Munich. So I sleep on a couch. They come back the next day and I get a little room. I spend four days there falling in love with the quiet stately city with its somber people. I find Kim, who I had thought to be something of a sosh (i.e. society type), to be intelligent and sensitive. But she has a boy friend so I don't even consider making a play for her (as if I know how to make such plays). Yet I am surprised. She is the first woman to stir my interest since I'd left Alicia.

One cold wet morning (as if all fall mornings in northern and central Europe weren't cold and wet) I ride the tram out to the autobahn. There is a bitter wind and terrible hitching so I stand on the ramp for a few hours and then drift down to the actual road. The cops chase me back up the ramp. Again I drift down. Again they send me up. This happens about twenty times in the course of the next two hours, so I finally give up and stand on the ramp figuring that eventually the police might really get annoyed. The slower, though less frequent, ramp traffic is really just as promising as the speeding cards down below.

Despite being incredibly cold, wet, and pessimistic about my chances of really leaving Vienna today, I am quite happy. Happy isn't really the right word (it isn't much of a word at all anymore, although once it really must have been something). I feel young. I feel invincible. Young as I am, I don't often feel that way. Life usually is quite a bitter/sweet experience for me. Slow and beautiful, painted in rich deep tragic colors that move the soul more than they lighten the heart. (What did I say about 19-year-old hitchhikers?)

I start making up songs and singing them to myself, all about hitching and being young and alone. In one of the most unexpected and powerful experiences in my short introspective life I am possessed by the uncontrollable need to write it all down. It is as real a need as sex, sleep, food, or shitting. Indeed, at this time it is paramount; it is all. So I stand in the wind, griping a piece of paper and writing as the huge fat raindrops start

falling; making dark circles on the paper and running the cheap blue ink into gentle swirls. I am transfixed for an hour and then, from nowhere, comes a sense of boredom and lethargy. I wearily pack my paper and pen away and stand in the now steady drizzle, quiet and not thinking. A car stops and I head south.

Since then I've had this need again and again at the most unexpected, indeed almost comical, times. It can only be assuaged by writing what I have to write. What it is, I guess, could loosely be called poetry. Usually I write at times of heavy stress and I guess it helps me work things out and see them from a different perspective. More than that, it crystallizes, or perhaps reminds me, of the tragic reality of life.

Although I'm optimistic by nature and seldom depressed, my over all view of existence is that of existentialism combined with a number of completely contradictory ideas. I feel (like most good existentialists) that the individual must give his life its meaning through his own choices because there are no meanings given to us by reality, no matter how surprisingly ordered that reality is. I am always well aware that man's inevitable destiny is death. Norse mythology speaks of the continual battle the good gods must fight against the forces of evil, although all the gods know that the conclusion is preordained, that when the END comes and all the good and noble warriors are called up from their graves to fight in the one last battle, in *Gotterdammerung*, the forces of darkness will inevitably triumph. Yet, this gives a special courage, even beauty, to the struggle. It is the gift of man.

Of course, many writers have pointed out the value of death biologically, Teilhard de Chardin is only one example, because it allows for evolution. But death offers more; it offers man tragedy. No, even more than that--it compels man to tragedy, and much as I fear and loathe death I can be thankful.

No one who has seen my poetry (not that I show it around a lot but a number of people have seen it) has ever been very impressed or anywhere near as moved as I am when I read it. But both the writing and re-reading of it gives me great pleasure.

Once I get the first ride it is moderately good hitching all the way to Simmerling, the north/south pass of the eastern Austrian Alps. It is roughly halfway between Vienna and Graz. Here I spend an hour in a light snow wondering how warm my sleeping bag is. Fortunately I get a ride out because my bag is far from adequate.

The last ride takes me to the door of the big new youth hostel in Graz, which is almost empty. It sports immaculate everything, even large feather

comforters. There are two guys from the Midwest who try and pawn off the girl they are traveling with but I politely decline. I meet a classical guitarist from Michigan who has just decided not to go all the way to be a concert performer but to teach instead.

I sit in the antiseptic cafeteria style lounge of the youth hostel and watch someone's life change as he gives up his dream, not because it is unrealizable, but because it is not all he thought it would be when he first dreamt it. People, in the form of his fiancée and his future students are now his important need. He is very quiet, as I am, as we mull over the young, fragile decision.

I know Yugoslavia is hard to hitch but I want to try anyway. As I catch a plethora of little rides down to the border, a Japanese guy on an overloaded bicycle keeps passing me. He says he is riding to Greece. That's a long way. At the border I try to score a long ride, at least as far as Belgrade. But all the cars, freak or Yugoslavian, are filled to the brim or seem rather unfriendly. One van of Australians proudly tell me they only pick up good-looking girl hitchers. Fucking male chauvinist pigs. So I take a ride to Maribar with some Austrian kids out for a day's drive.

I find a good place south of the town and hunker in for a hard hitch. One usually thinks when hitching, and often about the road. You might say the road is an artery pumping blood to you and of you. For you subsist on it and yet are of it. They all look alike, these roads. They should. They are all one--little bands of artificial rock and oil by-products, which create a whole world, filled with whining metal capsules.

From the shoulder of the autobahn it looks like everyone is warm and happy and destined for a home richly lined with concerned human faces. And I'm all alone. How plaintive and childish it sounds and how hard it really is. Is this building character or destroying it? Little pieces of myself are flecked all the way from San Francisco to Yugoslavia. What is coming in underneath?

Seven hours with no reaction from the drivers at all. Eventually you always get a ride but I'm longing for Greece with a terrible passion so I decide to see how much a bus will cost. I go back into town where I meet a young Croatian student. The bus to Zagreb is only three dollars so I decide to take it and check out the hitching from there. Even spending three dollars is hard for me.

The buses are faster than the trains in Yugoslavia. They are big, modern, and clean. Despite these advantages they are only as fast as the slowest road traffic. This traffic includes donkey carts, herds of sheep, tractors, and strolling peasants who stubbornly refuse to clear the road for

several hundred yards and then do so only grudgingly with many an angry glare at the shape of modern life as it passes them by (the bus that is). The young Croat and his friend, who is Serbian, quiz me about the United States and I ask them about Yugoslavia in return. They say that when Tito dies there will be a war between the Croats and Serbs. "How can this be? I ask. "You are best friends!" They look sadly at each other and then at me. "I can't understand," they agree. While they seem very friendly toward the U.S. they are much less favorably inclined toward the Soviet Union.

It is dark by the time we are into Zagreb so I decide to take the night train to Belgrade, which is only another four dollars. "Once you start spending money," I reflect guiltily, "you just can't stop."

I try three times to buy a railroad ticket in the telephone exchange and then once at the post office. Finally I find the train station by asking people on the street. I'm having trouble finding someone who speaks English so out of a perverse sense of my own frustration I ask an old man in Spanish. I'm stunned when he promptly rattles back the right directions.

At the station I have dinner with a young German Marxist. We argue the relative merits of violent and non-violent revolution. Then a Yugoslavian professor of psychology joins us but since he only speaks fair English as compared to his excellent German I am forced out of the conversation. Most Marxists aren't usually so impolite. The German is headed the other way, home to Berlin. He promises me that I'll love Greece and he fortifies me with some brandy. Then he's gone.

On the train I stake out an empty compartment and sit there enjoying the rush of adrenalin caused by my aloneness and the absolute weirdness of finding myself sitting here on a Yugoslavian train bound for Belgrade. "Belgrade!!!" Just the name is magic. I'm in Zagreb. It's all so hard to believe. Only NOW ever seems real. Yugoslavia is reality, all else is past or future and, therefore, it isn't.

I am looking at the people passing in the aisle when a beard and a backpack go by. "Hey freak," I yell and Grazziano Martini, an Italian who has lived in Canada, turns around. Breaking into a gigantic grin he invites me to join up with him and a Moroccan. They have a compartment down the way. The Moroccan is going to Belgrade and then to Spit so he can see the Dalmatian coast. Grazziano is heading to India via Greece.

We share despairing comments on the efficiency of the Yugoslavian transportation system. The train is unbelievably slow. It is two hours late in leaving and once it starts it travels at less than ten miles an hour. We conclude that this is either because the engine can't manage any better or the tracks can't take any more or a combination of both. We have been traveling

about three hours (or thirty miles) when the train finally (and inexplicably) starts speeding up with a great deal of noise and swaying. We settle down to catch some sleep.

The conductor appears--a tall fierce man with an even fiercer mustache. He takes our tickets and then demands: "Fief hundrat dinar." This we translate as a request for five dinar, which is roughly forty cents. We point to our tickets and refuse to pay. He starts shouting, "Bilete," which is ticket in Spanish and French too, I think. We decide he's confused. We, of course, still refuse to pay. Then he says something that sounds like "asciente" which we take to mean that the five dinar is for sitting down--so we stand up. He leaves. We congratulate ourselves.

Just as we are comfortable again (a word used loosely here as everyone who has ever tried sleeping the third class section of a Yugoslavian train can tell you) our conductor bursts back into the room shouting, "Fief hundrat dinar!!!" We shout back, "Nein, nyet, no!!!" He starts yelling about the "Politizi" and I reply in my abominable and limited German, "Das ist gutt, Politzi comenzi here," figuring he is bluffing. Again he retreats and again there is an orgy of self-congratulation.

We settle down yet again. We can't turn off the heater so it is very hot and impossible to lay on the floor. The Moroccan somehow gets one bench while Grazziano and I lay (a word again used loosely) on the other. Then, "Fief hundrat dinar." We are shocked but not dismayed. "Nien, nyet, no." The Conductor demands my passport. I'm confused. What powers does he have? After all this is a communist country. I don't relish the possibility of a stay, however short, in a dirty Yugoslavian jail. I say no. He insists. I say no. He insists. Grazziano says maybe I should give it to him. The Moroccan says that if I do I'm a fool. I give it to him. His face shines in triumph. His mustache rises everywhere dominating his face. Dancing as he ecstatically clutches my passport to his breast he demands it ransom, "Fief hundrat dinar!!! Fief hundrat dinar!!!" I refuse to pay. He stalks out.

By the time he returns (by now we figure it's inevitable), I've decided that my passport is worth forty cents so I reluctantly pay him. I reach for my passport. He leaps back. Pointing at Grazziano he thunders, "Fief hundrat dinar!" I'm furious. My German vocabulary instantly expands as I start screaming abuse at him and drive him from the compartment.

Returning yet again he demands his ransom and out of sympathy Grazziano pays. Again I reach for my passport and again he leaps back. This time to point at the Moroccan and he cries, "Fief hundrat dinar." It is clear to me that the Moroccan will never pay, especially not to get my passport back. At the Moroccan's refusal the conductor leaves but this time I follow him

screaming in mutilated German that the Moroccan, “Nicht ish mien Comrade...Gaban mis passport....Politzi comenzie here.... I vant Politizi!!!!” The conductor escapes me two cars down. I return to our compartment knowing that he will be back. After all there is still the Moroccan’s five dinar.

On his return he is apparently impressed by my gestures of disavowal toward the Moroccan so he gives me back my passport. Then turning on the Moroccan he utters the magic words, “Fief hundrat dinar” but without much conviction. The Moroccan refuses and we are left alone. We figure he might really have given up so we make our way back into fitful sleep.

But our conductor is made of sterner stuff. After building up his courage, and probably resting his voice, he returns with a series of warning blows on the door and his battle cry issuing once more from his mustache, “Fief hundrat dinar—fief hundrat dinar—fief hundrat dinar.” The Moroccan again refuses.

“Gebenze passport!” he screams (Give me passport.)

“Ich habe klein passport!” (I don’t have passport.)

“Gebenzi billete!” (Give me ticket.)

“Ich habe klein billete!” (I don’t have ticket.)

“Gebenzi gelt!” (Give me money.)

“Ich habe klein gelt!” the Moroccan screams back as an incredibly powerful (and indeed almost artistic) crescendo is reached. Cliché though it is, the silence is deafening. The conductor pulls the curtains shut. The Moroccan stands up clenching his fists. I open the curtains behind the conductor’s back. The conductor turns and shuts the curtains. Turning back to the Moroccan he cries out his death agony, “Fief hundrat dinar.” The Moroccan replies, “Klien passport, klien billete, klein gelt” (no passport, no ticket, no money). The conductor clenches his fist. I open the curtains. He turns scarlet, he turns around, he leaves.

What little that is left of the night is spent waiting for him to return. He doesn’t.

In Belgrade we congratulate the Moroccan on his fortitude. With a few wise words about keeping one’s passport always with you he splits for Spit. Grazziano and I walk out into the grey expanse of Belgrade to look for the local youth hostel. It’s a pleasant rainy walk. There are many beautiful women in Belgrade. The hostel is closed indefinitely, which is just as well as it’s an incredible dumb. Feeling no sense of loss whatever we decide to look at Belgrade today and take a night train to Skopje and make it to Greece as soon as possible from there.

Belgrade has a fine little museum with excellent sculptures and a great number of artifacts that reflect the changing history of the region: Pagan, Greek, Roman, Byzantine, Arab, Turkish, Austrian...and then it gets confusing. There is a chorus practicing religious chants right in the middle of the main gallery which somehow makes me feel timeless--the large almost empty hall, glass cases of shattered Greek statues and old Yugoslavian editions of Marx, while in the air thirty young communist voices sing about God in Latin.

Then we go to the international reading room where Grazziano falls asleep over an Italian paper and I fall asleep over my own favorite, *The Manchester Guardian*.

Returning to the station we meet a young Swede named Ingmar who is also headed to Greece. We form a trio. There are a number of young travelers from all over the world there: a Japanese boy and his Brazilian girl friend, a number of English, and some Germans. One of the Germans, actually an Austrian is five dinars short of having enough to pay his train fare to Vienna. (Yes, it's the same five dinar.) I give it to him and have him promise to buy Kim a box of candy and take it to her when he gets back to Vienna. I don't know why. It makes me feel freer from Alicia. I don't think she'll get the candy.

There is also a fantastically crazy Englishman who is flat broke having loaned all his money to a countryman who has just been robbed and has an eight-month pregnant wife. He is waiting for his money to be returned through his embassy. We all sit together talking and soon a gigantic crowd of impassive Yugoslavians dressed in sheep vests and smoking foul long stemmed pipes gathers silently around us. There must be several hundred of them studying us with quiet intensity. We make faces and do a little dance to amuse them but they don't move a muscle. Eventually we forget them because there is no feeling of hostility. It's as if they are watching a sunset or some other natural phenomena.

The train comes and the three of us get a compartment for ourselves. Soon we are joined by two gypsies, two Serbian peasants, and a businessman (factory manager really). It is a six-person compartment.

At first we are all rather uncomfortable but then Grazziano, Ingmar, and I get into a debate over the methodology of successful revolution. They are pro-violence and again I'm a pacifist. After a while the two gypsies start drinking. Soon they are quite drunk. One of them starts crying about losing his brother in World War II. (Or so we decide—hell if I know what our reasoning is.) The homemade peach brandy they are drinking begins to make the rounds in the little compartment. All of us are soon fast friends. I take

out my map and show them Italy and Sweden. We exchange addresses, which are totally illegible. We toast Yugoslavia. They toast America. We toast Tito. They toast Nixon. We all say “No, nyet, nyet gutt.” So they toast Sweden. This meets with our approval. We toast Tito again...and again...and again...

I pass out for about two hours. The last gypsy to leave wakes me and points at our packs warning me about thieves. He is my favorite Yugoslav because he has a habit of winking slyly while pointing to someone who is only marginally drunker than himself and then saying the only word we all know, “Snapps.”

I hold myself by the open window. I feel like shit. It is awhile before I notice Ingmar isn't there. Grazziano is dead on the floor. Not really dead but he might as well be. Soon he'll wish it as well, if he feels anything like I do. I go to the sink room and open the door on the unconscious Swede about twenty times before he wakes up. Coming back into our compartment he immediately goes to the window and throws up. Grazziano staggers to his feet as we pull into Skopje.

By now our desire to get to Greece, which we equate to warmth and sleep, has reached overpowering proportions. We stagger to the bus station and find a bus going quite near the border. It is leaving in a few hours. I have my first unfortunate introduction to a squatter toilet or “launching pad” as they are often fondly referred to. We wander around the market looking at horse harnesses, which Grazziano is thinking of buying one for his father. We talk him out of it.

We catch our bus. It is possible to fitfully sleep to the radio that incongruously plays Louis Armstrong and an occasional old Bing Crosby. It is still raining and half the seats on the bus have leaks over them. And at least a quarter of them have holes underneath, which allows the mud to splash up. Fortunately, the bus is nearly empty. Around four we hit the little town near the border and are told that said border is only about four miles away. My pack has been covered with mud while it was in the luggage compartment. I am past caring. We hike through a vineyard and consume large quantities of excellent grapes. Then we talk about the various fruits and vegetables that can be stolen all over Europe.

There is something very fine about walking across a border at sunset with everything you own on your back. With two tried and tested new friends it is ecstasy. As we climb the long sloping hill past the little Yugoslavian fort, the last rays of the sun break through the clouds and we look at each other, laughing with the sheer excess of our happiness, of our friendship, and of our youth.

## Chapter 5: New Leather Isn't Soft and Malleable and It Doesn't Look as Good

At the border we hitch a ride with a mixed group of Canadians and English. They take us into Thessalonika. After finding the hostel we collapse and sleep 15 hours. The next day we begin regular feasting on souflaki (lamb burgers in round pieces of bread), milk, and honey pastries. The girls of Thessalonika are incredibly flirtatious so we just wander around eating and building up our egos. Girls who are with guys wink and wiggle with no shame. Alone they act the same but close up they are non-committal and always end up retreating under a cloud of Greek giggles.

The Englishman from Belgrade shows up the next day. He has gotten tired of waiting and had snuck on a train coming down. Over dinner at the hostel I get into a debate with an SDS member from New York, which ends with him almost attacking me in order to prove the superiority of violence. The Englishman comes over and agrees that non-violence and spiritual change are the real way to make a revolution, instead of just a change of power distribution. It's the existence of power and power-type relationships that is bad. He hasn't eaten in two days. He gives blood twice in Thessalonika and gets something to eat. Then he goes to India with what money he has left--17 dollars.

Giving blood is the big thing for travelers in Thessalonika. Grazziano, Ingmar and I go too. I'm quite willing but the doctors take one look at me and decide I'm too ill. I'm actually healthy but almost fainting from fright. I've been cut up a few times and I don't mind bleeding then but giving blood in the sterile atmosphere of a hospital just shakes me up.

Ingmar goes off to Athens and Grazziano to Istanbul. I rest a few more days and then take the night train to Athens for three and a half dollars, which is the student rate.

I end up traveling with a group of crazy English, Canadians, and Americans from the Thessalonika hostel. There are two brothers from Idaho, a college drop out from Wisconsin, a Canadian girl and an English couple. The English guy is a military buff and we begin a mock commando unit with me as CO (Commanding Officer) and him as my S'rgnt Major. This continues the whole train trip. When we get to Athens I find myself making real decisions. So we march on the American Distress office.

A few blocks from it a small dark girl appears with a backpack from the subway and she directs us the rest of the way. We have sent the Idaho brothers out to scout so I now declare them lost in combat. She is Arlene from South Africa. Having been in Athens before she knows where the best hostel is. It's number three and she's going there. At the American Excess I

get my money and leave word for Ken. Actually I mail him a post card. To leave a message at American Theless costs fifty cents. To mail a letter to it costs ten. (But it does take four days for the post card to be delivered one block).

We go up to the proper bus stop for getting to Hostel Three. The bus we want in invariably jam packed by the time it pulls up. I'm all for walking but faced with a mutiny I decide to use strategy instead. First Arlene and Wisconsin push on a but to go ahead as pathfinders. Then two by two the rest of us follow in the next buses shouting battle cries and startling the Greeks. They make room.

The hostel is rundown and friendly. There is a little restaurant and a sunroof. I stay nigh on ten days. Ken comes after five as my friends there drift off to the islands one after another. Arlene and I visit a few of the special sights and I start feeling things that I haven't for a long time. (Six months may not be a long time to many people but it is to me.) But she has to go to Israel to live on a kibbutz since she is out of money. She is the most intelligent girl I've ever met, very political and honest. I'm not into taking addresses and I'm still too loyal to Alicia to follow her so....so it goes. As I watch her take the subway to Piraeus I realize I'm a fool.

I chant Hare Krishna on the roof of the hostel every evening at sunset just to get off. So real to be in Athens. Once Ken comes we both decide to split quickly for Crete. Ken has heard that there is a fantastic little town on the southern coast named Irapetra. With good planning we get to the ferry, the Sophia, early enough to get bunks. There are a couple of guys from the east coast in our cabin. We all get drunk on retsina, which makes gasoline taste good and turpentine seem smooth. The boat makes the crossing overnight. It is full of young freaks and drunk Greeks and vice versa.

October 15, 1972, Crete

Crete is not an island in the Mediterranean. Irapetra is not a small town on its southern coast. They are a part of my life. All of us who shared that time in Crete at the house by the sea value it strangely. We're still in contact, which in itself says something. But more than that we all wonder, "What made it work? Was it the people? The place? The traveling?"

And what is meant by "work"? There was a feeling about every day that these times were sufficient onto themselves and that they were the sweetest and best moments of our young lives--slipping always as we reach for them like the tiny glistening waves under the impartial yellow sun.

Time never moved and in an instant it was over.

The Sophia docks about nine in the morning disgorging her noisy confused cargo onto the streets of Heraklion. Since Ken and I know we want to go to Irapetra we go looking for the bus station, which, as it turns out, is right next to the docks. I want to walk to Irapetra over the mountains, only 30 odd miles, but Ken refuses. Then I try to get him to hitchhike and he points out that it is only two bucks to go by bus and he, for one, is going to pay it. Perhaps it's my hangover or just a general lack of will power but I give in with little struggle.

All sorts of freaks are running around asking questions. We are very generous with our limited second-hand information. Irapetra's location at the very southern coast greatly increases its popularity. Everyone is first looking for good weather. Duncan and Dave (my drinking companions from the Sophia) decide on Irapetra, as do six other freaks. The remainder make for Sitia, Agio Nicholas, or Aga Gallini.

I get on the bus and take a seat near the back next to the window. People start filling in. I'm saving the seat next to me for Ken but a small blonde Canadian girl asks me if it's taken and I say it isn't. (Sue insists I was very nervous/scared shitless in fact. Quite objectively I thought I was pretty calm, charming even, but who can say?) I am rather tired but she is exhausted having ridden trains down from London all of the previous five days. After I discover this I tell her she should sit by the window so she can lean on the bus and sleep; she insists she isn't sleepy and that she'll look at the scenery.

Five minutes after we start she is asleep. The roads of Crete are such that at every turn the bus driver honks his horn in order to warn oncoming traffic. Sue falls asleep on my shoulder to wake with a start every four or five minutes, depending on the frequency of the dangerous curves. Then she apologizes and I tell her it is all right to lean on me but if she doesn't want to why not take the window? She invariably replies, "Oh no, I'm rested now" and promptly falls asleep again. After playing this amusing but rather limited game awhile I start studying the landscape. I count the number of charred bus bodies in the canyons by the road. It is a distressingly high number.

When a bus comes from the other direction our bus pulls over to the right side of the road. Usually this gives us a very good view of some precipice or another. As long as we keep three wheels on the ground our driver is quite happy. "You no need four wheels," he explains.

Irapetra, like all the Cretan towns, rises from the ground as if it's actually made from the bones of the earth instead of just being built upon it. The colors are whites and light pastels. In the unusually lucid and white light

of the Mediterranean, with the blue sky and the blue sea, the utter rightness of it impresses me with an irresistible tranquility. The countryside is all browns and grays or dusty green fields of cucumbers and tomatoes.

The bus pulls up in front of a tiny souflaki stand and the even smaller bus station. We pour out looking around the town with mixed shock and relief. Waiting to board the bus is a friend of Dave's who immediately decides to stay on in Irapetra awhile. He leads us to "Young George's" on the eastern end of town. George has the second floor of a terra cotta building. The bottom floor is a grocery store and a bakery. There are beds for about 18 people and another 10 of us sleep on the floor. It is cheaper by half if you are a floor sleeper and there is still the use of the shower and the kitchen so I choose a nice place on the balcony.

Young George is an enigmatic figure. His rents are way below the rest of the town's, for which crime the tourist police tried to arrest him. That resulted in him punching a policeman in the nose. On the other hand, he is a very slick operator. Starting at zero he is already the richest man in town and still going. He worries about all of us young people. He helps us out when we are too drunk to walk home or too sick to get up. Still, he allows no privacy and when he's drunk he really hassles the women.

It is an international crash pad: Austrians, Germans, English, Australians, Canadians, Swedes, and Americans. We have a series of American vs. foreigner volleyball games until our ball is lost in the sea. Then we play soccer against the Greek kids. Because the Greeks loan us their best player and our opposition is nine and ten years old we manage to avoid complete routs, losing only by two or three goals each game.

The ocean is warm but the waves seldom are larger than four inches.

The weather is good the first ten days. In town there is a disco called, imaginatively enough, Disco 7. The alcohol prices are exorbitant but right next door there is a little bar manned by the slowest bartender in the world--- little old Papa who is at least 87. The ouzo and retsina are half the price of the disco's and the wine is even less. We go to Papa's and get drunk and then slip into Disco 7 to dance.

I've had many a memorable drunken conversation (most of them I've since forgotten) but some of the finest and saddest occurred at Papa's. The fourth day a large group of my friends decide to leave and go to Turkey. Ken decides to go with them and head to Israel. He seems to be following a very foxy nurse from Boston.

That night Duncan, Dave, and I get drunk together again. We discuss our first loves. We all agree first loves are the most powerful, and the most dangerous. Dave, who is 27, claims that you can never go back to her, the

past is dead. Duncan, at 24, says you can, but his first love is in the process of getting a divorce and his opinion is obviously influenced by his hope. I want to believe Duncan but Dave makes a lot of sense. Resuscitating illusions is a patently difficult, and perhaps useless, art.

The first half of my stay in Irapetra many Greeks of all ages came to Disco 7. The first part of the night was Greek line dancing (men with men, women with women) which I learned and loved. Then one night only the young men were there. "What's up?" I asked a Greek guy I knew. He led me outside and across the square to a café that had Irapetra's first TV. Most of the village was crammed into the small space watching a dubbed version of "The Real McCoys" in black and white. There was little Greek dancing at Disco 7 after that.

It is in the Disco 7 that I first see Kathi. There is something about the way she dances. I suffer the same dissonance I had over my attraction to Arlene. This is complicated by the fact that Kathi seems to already be involved. The thought of moving in on another guy I find totally unacceptable, probably because that's what had happened to me with Alicia. The "guy" here is Richard, a satanic looking Californian with an incredible cynical sense of humor. Kathi is a friend of Sue's. They had gone to nursing school together in Vancouver, BC.

Let me say something about Kathi. She is very fine. One day down at the beach while we are lying there reading I look closely at her. Her white rich Canadian skin is turning gently pink in patches ranging from her right shoulder blade to her left calf. And her curly brown hair is flecked with sweat and dark grainy Cretan sand. The individual curls are stretched languidly on top of each other as if to sun themselves. Her eyelashes and brows are now beyond brown and running into gold.

On the passport her eyes are described as "hazel." This is patently untrue. Her eyes are the color of the earth. They are flecked with the greens of the forest and the gold of the desert. I see the browns of my southern California hills and the yellows and grays of the boney Greek countryside. I have never been to Canada, but I have seen it in her eyes: rich, dark, rain-soaked greens and the red of north woods loam, the thousand browns of pine, beech, birch and all the evergreens. She says Canada is beautiful. I can believe it to look in her eyes. Silvertipped.

She moves like nothing else. Like no one else. Sort of a swagger as if she is holding hands with life and they are old friends. She says she walked the way she does because she cracked both kneecaps chasing a croquet ball. I find this explanation hard to accept, especially when I am watching her

walk with all those feminine bodily self-contradictions that are so incredibly sexual. Rather, I think she walks in time with the sea breeze.

Beneath the warm resilient skin soft as fur, lie layers of softnesses and hard places, folds and tunnels, towers and caves, hillocks and meadows. And even deeper still--memories, dreams--love. Memories of western shores and forest friends. Dreams I can't comprehend because they aren't mine. Love of life.

She is very strange, as I often tell her. Rational unconscious coquette. An elf with beguiling eyes and an innocent impish smile which is somehow infinitely sexual. As if she and Astarte, the earth mother, share a wonderful secret. They probably do. When she is stoned and/or drunk she looks like a little girl play-acting at being a druggie. But she is certainly no little girl. She is a woman. And she sees life for what it is and loves it because it is so wonderful.

I become the cooking partner of the Swedish couple, Michael and Ulva. A few days after everyone I hang regularly with has split on me a storm blows up from Africa and creates gigantic (for the Mediterranean) waves of four to five feet (the height of waves if half of what you see on their face when they are about to break). The sand is very loose and treacherous. The rip along the beach is by far the strongest I've ever felt. Michael and I go in to body surf. We go in about a hundred yards east of Ulva, who is watching us from the shore. Within minutes we're right in front of her, literally crawling on our bellies onto the beach in order to get out.

Except for some winter storm surf of over eight feet I once body surfed in San Diego with my little brother Dana, this is by far the most dangerous piece of ocean I've been in. I feel that crystalline pure exhilaration that comes from risking your life just to test your body and your nerve--in other words for no good reason at all. You're nothing in comparison to the ocean and yet you tease it, taunt it, and curse it until you're too exhausted to continue. Whenever I'm out in heavy surf I get the feeling that the waves start coming in bigger and faster/louder and stronger. The whole tempo of the contest rises to an insane climax and then, as you leave the water, the noise drops to a distant rumble...the waves turn into geometric shapes...and your body loosens and ceases to struggle. The muscles lie tired, content, and warm on clean hard bones.

When I finally come out I find that without the slightest discomfort my jockstrap has become full of more than a pound of sand. Amazing.

Michael and Ulva leave just a few days later, making me pretty much alone. I wonder if maybe I should have accepted their sweet invitation to join them in bed for a night. I start planning to hike up to the mountains to

fast for five days in complete solitude just to see what it will do to my head. But the night before I go to meet this guy who has part of the lease on the house outside the town. He wants to sell his part of the lease (actually his bed). It will come to 13 cents a day. When I learn that Kathi and Sue already live there I decide to postpone my mystical experience indefinitely.

That night at the discothèque I start talking with Sue and we dance and drink together. The next day I go up to the house looking for her. Instead I meet yet another Canadian nurse sitting on the rocks outside. This is Donella. She tells me that Sue, Kathi, her and another nurse, Jan, had all gone to school together. We talk about mental hospitals and the like. I have great difficulty separating fact from fiction, as Donella (known to her friends as “the irrelevant one”) has a bizarre sense of humor.

The next night I get incredibly drunk. So does Sue. We stagger back to the villa together. I don't really know what my feelings are toward her. I feel very strongly. It isn't hard to confuse agape for Eros, especially when I'm befuddled by alcohol and my theoretically dormant sex drive. To touch a warm, real woman does powerful things to non-existent sex drives. Sue tells me it isn't a good idea because sex might complicate our friendship. But at that moment it is an unconvincing argument so I don't stop. It all could be a dream except it isn't. I wake up the next day in bed with her.

There are four beds in the room. Kathi with Richard, Sue and me, Jan and a guy we call Montreal, and Donella alone. Donella wakes up and pointing out her uniqueness she starts to complain. Not seriously though. I had wondered how I should react. I now know. Reality is not worth hiding from.

In all the time I traveled I saw very few cases of what I would call promiscuous or exploitive sexual behavior. Of course, my definitions might differ from most people's. The level of honesty and the lack of self-deception in general among the young freaks traveling stands in marked contrast to university life or the beach life in California that I'm familiar with, not to mention the so-called adult world. People go to bed with people they really care about in order to find out just how much they care. Or it is done just for the mutual pleasure but without all the common deceptions by the participants that are for themselves or society at large.

My own views on sex are still as yet not entirely formulated except that I'm in favor. Its functions are pleasure and communication. Then I try to develop a morality out of this definition. Emotional involvement heightens the pleasure so much that it is not worth it to me to become physically involved with someone I'm not emotionally involved with as well. And

since, for me, sex often leads to emotional involvement, I'm selective for that reason as well. Sex creates commitment despite attempts to isolate it.

Before my crush on Alicia I had no illusions about being monogamous, but under the mind-warping power of first sexual love I became both fanatically loyal and possessive. By Crete my once fanatical jealousy has been burned out by its own vindication. Yet my loyalty still remains (fueled in large part by a desire to prove my own moral superiority). But I now start growing out of this simplistic coda and its pat answers. I begin working on two basic premises: honesty with myself and respect for other people's decisions.

Much to my surprise I've found that my growing up has usually involved a crisis that my old limited capabilities couldn't meet, leading to the development of new and better potentialities. This applies to physical and mental challenges both, the dynamic resulting in new skills and greater self-assurance. But the really surprising application of this is in the emotional sphere where I've found my ability to love and open myself up to hurt grow with each blow, with each betrayal. The times Alicia had lied to me had enabled me to love her with less jealousy and with more trust. Of course, this whole process has its limits. It's often a two steps forward one step back sort of thing. Real love leads you to trust. If you finally find that you really can't trust someone you don't stop loving them...but you do run like hell. Love someone else.

Of course, all my assumptions of progress are built on value judgments and weightings. When I love, with my happiness coming from another person's happiness, then I judge that a step forward. When human relationships are built on honesty and mutual pleasure that is a step up from the grim charades where people try to fulfill needs they aren't even aware they have by playing complicated and ritualistic games of love and hate.

Being with Sue destroys the remnants of my limiting sexual standard (Alicia forever). By mutual unspoken consent we never make love again. Although it is a little uncomfortable in the first few days (a pregnancy scare doesn't help) it soon wears off and we become closer and closer friends.

I move into the main part of the house with the nurses and Richard. Relations between Kathi and Richard quickly deteriorate. I must confess it doesn't prostrate me with grief. Kathi and I spend more and more time together. We go to the disco and dance almost every night. I only hope the music never ends.

Already living in the house are John of Harvard and Dick. They're recuperating from a trip to Afghanistan. Actually, they live in a little annex. Victor from London, Ontario, is a leftover from the last group in the house.

After Donella and Jan go back to Canada a few other people move in. There is Mary from Wisconsin, who claims to be a white witch. Most of the girls hate her. They think she's a phony. Since women easily fool me and I don't know her well I don't judge her. I can't help noticing that she does more than her share of the cooking and she's always generous with her stash. There are two girls from Saskatchewan and, for a while, two from Quebec as well.

Two weeks earlier I started growing a beard. I looks like it's going to be brown. That's surprising as my long hair is blonde and my older brother's beard is red. But then again, the hair on my legs is brown. My younger brother was growing a moustache when I left. I am afraid it really looked rusty. But I think it was coming in blonde. He's only just 17, that's a little young for a beard or even a moustache. My older brother started his beard when he was 19. It was our mother's idea. To hide his acne. If someone was to ask me why I'm growing a beard I'd have to admit I don't know. I've always wanted to, not because of any insecurity about my masculinity (not that it's all that secure), and not because it will make me sexier (I'm sure it won't). It's a rite of passage, a crude affirmation of my existence and as simplistic attempt at self-definition. Besides, I've nothing better to do with my face.

One night as I step into the disco I run head on into Duncan, fresh back from Istanbul. We hug and kiss each other. Duncan is from Vermont but we call him Duncan of the laugh. His smile alone is epidemic. So Duncan comes to live with us.

On November sixth two girls hitch in from Heraklion: Judy and Gail from South Africa. With them is Claude of Montreal. Of all the people living in the house (the Irapetra Zoo we call it) he is. At 31, the oldest. He's a PE teacher who has just finished a year in Zambezi. I am the youngest until Debbie and Ann come. They're from Georgia. They don't officially live in the Zoo but they often spend the night. Debbie is known as the Georgia Peach. Debbie is disliked by many of the other women in the house because of her rather incredible beauty and sex appeal. Girls are much more sexually competitive than males, whatever conventional wisdom claims.

One night in the disco I tell this Scottish guy who is bothering Judy to leave our table. Since he doesn't want to we get into a fight. Actually, Duncan and I have pledged to get him because he attacked one woman we knew back at Young George's and has bothered several others. The fight is rather inconclusive, except I do throw him onto a table. It is broken up and we avoid each other from then on. That night a couple of his Greek friends quite obviously follow me from the disco but John of Harvard, who plays

rugby, follows me as well. Apparently the odds aren't good enough for the Greeks to try anything.

Everyone is shocked or overjoyed to find that their little pacifist has gotten into a fight. I've never claimed I'm non-violent by nature...just by philosophy. "I love contact sports and look upon pain as a challenge to be mastered and a potent drug to action," I explain. They nod their heads. I've never gotten in fights because I'm very slow to anger but male chauvinism will do it faster than anything else. I don't know why—maybe I'm jealous.

One or two night after my abortive fight, Kathi and I go down to Disco 7 yet again. While we are sitting there drinking we watch a tall blonde guy with back-length hair and a soft white robe dancing effortlessly and totally. He is so into the music that I'm sure he's speeding. Kathi says she knows he's from California so I yell out, "Hey California!" He comes over and he isn't high and his name is Matt and anyone who loves music as much as he does must be an incredible person. So we invite him to the house and he comes the next day with his flipped out brother, Eric, Christine, and his guitar.

Eric is the strangest dude I've ever known. He used to be the acid supplier for all of Amsterdam. Once we're talking and I tell him he's the strangest person I've ever met and he starts telling me about the strangest people he's ever met. People who live in holes in the ground in back of junkyards and other people who walk naked through India. Then we start wondering about the strange people *they* know. Frightening.

Another night down at the disco (it's obvious where the time goes) I find myself sitting next to a couple from Pennsylvania: JB and Mary. I've never felt such an immediate and deep friendship as I do when I talk to them. JB and I fall into conversation about Kathi. JB already knows her. We watch her dance and he says that Kathi and I must be in love by the way we dance together.

"I'm in love all right but don't bet on her," I say.

"I can't believe she doesn't love you. You should see the way you two dance together," he insists.

I look at her and know it's not true. She's in love all right--with life.

I invite JB and Mary up to the house since we're going to have a fire tonight but JB says, "No, we'd really like to, but we want to go home and fuck."

Greece is ruled by a dictatorship of colonels, imposed with U.S. approval. Their symbol is a phoenix. There is a large neon phoenix in the center of town. One night John of Harvard and I start out talking politics and end up smashing it. It is not an unpopular move in Irapetra. Another night a

bunch of us were out at a restaurant on the edge of town. Except for our table it is full of Greeks, including a couple of the local police. A woman is singing, accompanied by a few musicians. In the middle of her set she pauses and then, looking straight at the police, she starts singing a Melina Mercouri song, banned by the junta. Everyone in the place swivels in their chairs and stares at the two cops, who become quite busy doing nothing. It turns into a concert of banned songs. The cops have to live there, after all.

Every Tuesday at the disco is Sangria night. You get all the Sangria you want for 30 drachmas. The night of the general election in the United States we declare Sangria night to be McGovern's victory party. We damn well know he'll lose so he deserves some sort of celebration. Besides, he could carry Irapetra for sure.

My ballot is in Athens. Despite several requests and six dollars in drachmas, American It'samess doesn't forwarded it. Richard's ballot had been sent by Cooks in Rome. He wrote a polite letter asking for it so he wouldn't be disenfranchised and they sent it right away--free.

McGovern would be happy to know that his victory party was one of the greatest I've ever been to. More than sixty young people from all over the world full of hope and bitterness singing, dancing, and drinking to the stupidity of the world. We all try very hard to convince ourselves that they (America? The old people? The masses?) can't hurt us because we're young, in love and alive (none of which they are). But we're pretending; they hurt us all the time.

Often, with the many guests we have at the Zoo, it is necessary for two people to share beds. At different times I share my bed with Kathi, Debbie, and Sue. But usually with Kathi. Because of how I feel about her it is inevitably that one night.... We had been very close physically and emotionally dancing. Kathi dances with me, not at me or even for me, and that is as important to me as it is rare. We walk home under millions of white stars. In bed I start caressing her and tell her how I feel. She promises never to hurt me (a promise people would be wiser never to make) and then a little later she asks me not to go on. I ask her way and she says, "It's not right for me." I tell her that all I want is for her to be happy. "I'm happy," she says. "Fine," say I.

The next day Matt, Eric, John, Dick, Kathi, and Sue set out to try and score some hash. I come down with a heavy cough (which I keep until Turkey). The only hash we had was some of Mary's and some 00 black Afghani John and Dick had brought back. When I'd smoke it I hadn't been able to handle it so I passed out and then woke up with the dry heaves, which lasted several hours. My first panic attack. Fear is what did it. I edge

into paranoia when I smoke too much or when my head isn't straight when I start. The Canadian nurses, more interested in the party than my panic calm me by their blasé attitude to my suffering.

Now I'm sitting in Duncan's office, Irapetra, Crete. Decorated in early rock, modern Mediterranean, and obnoxious fly. Duncan of the laugh must leave tomorrow. What can I say? We'll all leave someday. Old Dick (he's 19) comes drifting down the seashore and tells me that someday back home we will say, "Jesus Christ, that was fucking Paradise back there." And it is.

The quest for the red hash van hasn't returned. It is an incredibly soft waiting day. A grinning sun and a gently jabbering ocean that seems for once to have nothing to say. The rocks I sit on are alive with spiders, ant lions, earwigs, ants, and lazy walking flies. I'm surprised there aren't more birds.

This morning Richard was explaining Kent State and Jackson State to Judy of South Africa. Richard, a sophisticated cynic at 25, and Judy who bought me water last night as I lay sicker than I was. They talked about dying adolescent Americans as I coughed apathetically and thought about the flies.

One sangria night John, Kathi, Colleen, and I stole two bags of apples and some wood--the apples for applesauce and the wood for our Thanksgiving feast. It was John's idea, but I carried the apples. We were very clever. We peeled one bag of apples and converted it into applesauce and then buried the peelings on the beach. The other bag we left sitting next to the front door.

The days are pretty much the same. One by one we wake up, stagger outside, and lie in the sun. Perhaps Mary will go into town to talk to the old ladies who have the loom. Mary speaks no Greek; they speak no English. Maybe Victor will check the mail. Later people will come out from town: Matt to play guitar, his brother Eric to burn some more inside and out. People we don't know will swim coyly--half naked--among the rocks.

As it gets later and windier three or four people will start snorkeling, looking for all the world like incompetent plastic fish. By late afternoon everyone is waiting for a shower and is trying to decide where, on what, and just how badly, they are going to get wasted that night.

We might wander into town to watch the world go bad through the eyes of the *International Herald Tribune*: Trudeau loses, Thieu stalls, McGovern.... We make very clever and bitter jokes about it all and go to the little pastry shop to eat baklava and drink ice water. Then again we might see a movie: *Kamera*, a giant Japanese turtle with rocks in his ass. Gail does a great imitation. Or *Robin Hood*. After which we descend on bands of

strangers and draw swords. So do they. A mad fight in the village square and I am downed by an Australian girl and Richard. I spill my bag of onions (which I'm eating raw to cure my cough). Everyone goes wild—Greek gold. When we get back we sword Dick and John but they don't enjoy it, especially Dick, who is on the toilet. You have to have been there.

Dick just drifted down again to soak some of the leather bracelets he and John make, in the Mediterranean.

"It ages them," he explains to me.

"Why not let them get old on their own?" I ask.

"New leather isn't soft and malleable and it doesn't look as good."

He's right, I guess, but it makes me sad.

Sooner than expected, Richard, Matt, Eric, Christine and Duncan leave. They've gone, just like that. I met Richard just three weeks ago and Matt, Eric, and Christine just one sangria night ago—or was it two? It doesn't really matter. They are now part of me. They are now real. I love them. Their parting leaves a definite empty place deep in my being. I hugged and kissed them when they left. They were warm and real. I still haven't let go and I hope I never do. Right now life seems all too full of partings. I tell myself they are only excuses for reunions and even more friendships. But it hurts too much now to believe it.

All of us are so afraid, not of caring but of showing it. Because to care is to give on oneself and if someone has part of yourself they can hurt you so very easily. People climb up into funny Greek buses or raunchy Yugoslavian trains or sleek airliners and out of your life, taking trophy pieces of you with them. Or they wander with thumb or sign to Dutch autobahn, California on ramp, Greek street and they are swallowed. Or it's you who walk away from crying lovers and friends, anxious smiling parents, Midwestern havens, German crash pads, Greek hostels, leaving only emptiness as you head into a void, only to be filled with todays as the yesterdays are packed into tomorrows.

Uncle Hal, a Harvard friend of John's, and Brooke of Canada, known for his duck imitations of a dog and cat fight, start coming by a lot more. We begin planning our Thanksgiving feast, which will come just a few days before we all leave Crete. Kathi, Sue, Uncle Hal, Brook, and I are going to the Canaries after a side trip to Istanbul. Debbie and Ann are going with us to Turkey and then are going to Switzerland to ski.

John and Dick will head home. Two guys from the Midwest, Skip and Dave, who own a VW van called the Worm, spend time with us playing music. Skip on guitar and Dave on flute. They are fine, so very fine. They live up in the caves, which are a mile further east of us...up the coast.

We make arrangements for a leg of hog, which John will cook. One of the really valuable things he has learned at Harvard is how to stage a drunken feast. Dick will make sangria laced with ouzo. Gail will make potato salad, Claude will stuff zucchinis, and Uncle Hal will create crepes.

A day or two before the feast Dick starts the night sitting rather awkwardly on Kathi's bed and ends it, through processes unfathomable to me, making love with her. Later I ask her how it had come about and she says, "I wish you'd tell me."

It is a very long night. I cry and hope, if nothing else, at least that the noise might stop. But after about six hours of constant thinking and internal lamentations (long after the noise had stopped I hasten to add) I get around to asking myself why am I so upset? Since I respect Kathi enough to figure she knows what she wants, and I love her enough to hope she gets it, then the only one I am unhappy for is myself. Self-pity is a sterile affair. The pain of the loss is still there, as well as the bruised ego, but I realize my world is not destroyed. I must confess some pains don't die. I wonder if I will ever love someone as much as I did before that night.

Thanksgiving day breaks beautifully clear and sunny. Judy and I go into town to help JB and Uncle Hal get the pig. Once we get it, 35 kilos of leg and muscle (exactly parsed out with one perfect whack from the butcher), we don't quite know what to do with it. In JB's room there's an old baby carriage, so we get that and sneak it downstairs and out the door. Rather dubiously the butcher loads the leg in and off we go. We pick up a split ant Uncle Hal's hotel, which makes a great prong. We fill two plastic jugs with raw red wine and ouzo for Dick's punch and set off through town. Greeks come up to see what the little hippie baby looks like and then laugh at their own surprise.

The morning and early afternoon pass quickly as everyone divides their time equally between doing their cooking and sampling everyone else's, except the punch that Dick guards zealously. By mid-afternoon Dick's guard has become ineffective due to his own sampling and we are all (including the pig) cooked. Judy and I have obviously been thinking of each other. As darkness falls we kiss in the sand. JB becomes a pig brother by sharing pig with us. There's music and singing and drunken exploits. Claude fails to jump the fire and burns his feet. I am equally unsuccessful and fall in on my knees, but by knee hopping (don't ask me I don't know) out quickly I only lose a few leg hairs.

It is difficult to verbalize why I end up in bed with Judy. I don't feel much sexual need. I'm not in love. She is a very good friend and I feel it is the friendly thing to do. A lot of it is probably rebound from Kathi and Dick

coming together. At first I'm not very good in bed for that matter. It takes several days for me to begin looking forward to sex again. Since Alicia, I'd only been to bed with Sue and I had been way too drunk to savor it. Perhaps I connect sex with Alicia, whom I still miss but I am also starting to feel bitter about her.

I am supposed to leave for Heraklion Saturday but I put it off until Sunday. I watch everyone else leave. Sunday I try to hitch out but can't get a ride. Monday I take a bus. Rather quickly I have become attached enough to Judy to dread leaving her. She is planning on staying on in Crete several weeks before heading to England. I don't expect to see her again for five or six years. I always expect to see people I love again sometime, because not to assume it would be too painful.

I go to Heraklion to say good-bye to JB and Gail. JB is going to work in Switzerland and Gail is going to do a skiing trip there. I then double back to a little town outside the U.S. base where all of us who are left are crashing. I meet an airman named Jim who has spent a bad year in Nam. He is VVAW so we tell each other anti-war stories and give each other hope.

The last night in Crete passes with dreams of Vietnam. There is still a core of people from the Zoo. We pretend very hard that Irapetra is us. The magic dims but doesn't flicker out. It will never go completely out; it is so much a part of me.

## Chapter 6: OK, OK, OK, OK, OK, YOU GOD DAMN FUCKING BASTARD

Suzy stays on in Crete another ten days or so while John and Dick go with us to Athens where they catch a train to Luxemburg. In Athens I run into Ken, who has come back from Israel. He has been to Istanbul twice, but he says he'd like to go again--so the day John and Dick leave (the 2<sup>nd</sup> of December) off we go to Istanbul by air (\$20). To fly so cheaply you need a student card. We all have them except Kathi and Debbie, who buy illegal ones. Athens and Amsterdam are the two main European centers for student flights and therefore for illegal student cards.

Dick has been very sick with a fever/cough/diarrhea/nausea type of infection, which is usually what one gets while traveling. The rest of us start coming down with it in the next few days. Eventually Kathi, Brooke, Uncle Hal, and I have it. We get to Istanbul and Ken and I get cheap beds in a dormitory type of place called the Hotel Gungor or "Grungy." The rest spend twice as much for the privacy of rooms for three and two. My fever quickly climbs.

Kathi buys some ampicillin, which is a powerful antibiotic, and we all start taking it. It is two days until my fever breaks. Before it does, there are some interesting happenings, such as the time I rested in the little room the others had while they went to the Blue Mosque. A Turk broke in to rob the room. I moaned and rose to one elbow from the bed. He looks at me with surprise and then, smiling, says in English, "Oh, I'll be back."

I have been sleeping almost continuously for the duration of my fever. It finally breaks at two in the morning. I am unhappy because one thing about a fever-- it sure helps you to sleep. I sit up for a second and half crawl out of my soaking wet sleeping bag. I'm on the top bunk in a basement dormitory. It is loud with protesting water pipes and small scurrying noises. At least half the people in here are sick to one degree or another. In the next bed there are two young Japanese guy who I feel should be in a hospital. They probably have TB. The next morning one is dead.

The breaking of the fever at first leaves my mind restlessly sharp. It is as if a curtain has been lifted. Everything jumps into mental focus. After a few minutes I start to hear a loud mechanical screaming. It is joined by a whole spectrum of terrible noises, which seem like caricatures of human moans and shouts. At all times I am aware that these are audio (and soon visual) hallucinations but this actually increases my fear because of the seemingly concrete evidence for their real existence. I've never hallucinated before since I don't use psychedelics. I feel an uncontrollable urge (which I

somehow control, so make that a barely controllable urge) to join the sounds with screams of my own.

A few seconds after the audio hallucinations begin I have visual ones as well: distortions of space and color, geometric patterns superimposed on the oddly careening local geography. Although it makes less logical sense than the above descriptions, I also feel a strong desire, or need, or rather coercive force, to join these manifestations with those of my own by changing my physical being or perhaps my own sense of self. I feel like the world is insane and it is ludicrous for me to deal with it on a rational plane. Why not babble mindlessly and swing my arms over my head while I drool? WHY NOT? When I ask myself I can't find any reply. Underlying all of this is the worst fear and paranoia I have ever felt. I'm not near death but I am near dissolution.

There is a small corner of my mind still functioning as usual. I actually symbolize it by saying it is the back right-hand corner of my brain. It actually is the right-hand back corner of my brain.

I consciously order myself to breathe deeply and think about something pleasant: home, Kathi, or Judy. But each thought pattern becomes corrupted by the chaos of the rest of my mind; whenever I try to expand it outside my little safe corner the thoughts and pictures melt and stretch and bend and scream until they are like all the rest. I can't help wondering what will happen if I lose the corner.

This goes on for what might be twenty minutes or twenty hours. I don't really know; my mind is not capable of registering time. My head actually feels like it is shaking uncontrollably. By now I'm sitting completely up because it makes resistance easier. The noises and visions keep growing in intensity whether my ears are covered or not, whether my eyes are covered or not. I hit myself about the head and bite my hands and arms. There is a peak and then stillness.

I can now sense the madness on the corners and edges of my mind, trying to return. I might waken my brother who has the bunk below me... I might but I don't. I lay hyper and full of static energy trying not to think about what has happened and yet at the same time I am very tempted to recreate it in my mind or perhaps just let it loose again. But I am much too afraid to do so. After some interval I accidentally trigger another attack in all ways the same except possibly shorter, although why I should think so I cannot say. After this one ends or I end it or it hides somewhere or changes to something else, I get up and walk a little. Then I climb back into my bunk right above my brother and opposite the two fever ridden Japanese guys. I sit

up the rest of the night very meticulously not thinking about the present or the immediate past.

As early as possible I get up and go over to where the rest of the Irapetrians are. I try to mention some of what has happened to Kathi but I feel too melodramatic and uncomfortable about the whole thing. I decide repression is the best way to handle it. So I deflect a few questions from her and do my best to forget. (My repression is very successful on a conscious level as I barely think about it for three months. Perhaps on an unconscious level I have not done as well. I have had periods of great anxiety and/or a pervading sense of unreality at many times of stress since then. But never anything near as horrible.) Ken and I do decide to move from the dorm and get one of the cheap rooms near the nurses.

We begin shopping in earnest at the great Golden Bazaar, which is like a small businessman's department store with slightly more exotic departments. I try to sell some of my clothes but the prices offered are terrible. The aggressiveness and rudeness of the people is quite unbelievable but soon I'm competing with them on very score. I never out bargain a Turk but I out cuss and shove a few. Walking through the bazaar one invariably stumbles across small crowds surrounding a gesturing pair of ex-bargainers (one Turk, one freak). By ex I mean to indicate that they now hate each other too much to buy or sell from each other. That isn't exactly true. The freak will not make a deal for his hatred is a personal thing, but a Turk will always make a deal...that's his life.

Most Turks seem to have an excellent command of French, Spanish, and English obscenities as well as some of the more descriptive Italian gestures. I make us this obvious advantage of obtuse insults of a rarer nature: "I bet your mother's been subpoenaed," I leer or "Why don't you take extreme unction?" Which, since they are incomprehensible, are usually interpreted quite strongly. I also develop the technique of rapid escalation. When my opponent is just getting warmed up by making sly suggestions about Debbie or Annie or any girl (or guy) I am with, or even who is wandering nearby, I tell him to clean up his fucking dirty shit yard of a polluted mind and eat his ear out with his asshole and goodbye. A quick retreat often takes place under a barrage of belated references to my ancestry or my mother's ancestry but by this time I am safely away.

A bargaining tactic often used is the "trap." Either you go into a shop on your own power and find the entrance jammed with menacing looking Turks or you are siphoned in by what you think is the chance action of the crowd in the passages until the third or fourth time it happens which is when you realize it is no accident.

At first it is rather intimidating but as your anger grows so does your nerve. Soon one learns the proper escape techniques. Put your head down and shove your way out continually repeating the magic words of opening, “get out of my way you fucking bastards.”

Not that all the bargaining is so pointless and unsubtle. We meet nice people in silver rings, Meerschaum pipes, and Afghan coats. My major purpose is to buy a coat. This I accomplish at the cost of three days and twenty-five dollars. Actually American cash still holds some sort of mythic value for many foreigners so I use it for all my big purchases. The old dollar is strong enough to hold the attention of the average Turkish haberdasher so that by waving the money around I can get him to follow my hand with his eyes while he pretends he doesn't even want the American money. “Black market? There is no Black market in Turkey,” he insists. Then he sells me the coat for twenty-five American dollars while he'd been asking thirty in Turkish lira.

There are some very impressive sights in Turkey, most of which I miss. I do see the Topaki palace, which is the second most impressive building I've ever seen. But the best thing about Istanbul is the pudding shop. The freak hangout is right up the street from the Grungi. The chocolate pudding is the best in the world. And there you can buy water that is not only drinkable but also ice cold. It is perfectly indicative of Turkey that the six times I have one chocolate pudding and one bottle of water I pay six different prices--often to the same waiter.

Another revealing incident occurs one morning when Kathi is taking a shower. The shower is separated from the rest of the bathroom by a wall that is several feet short of the roof. While rinsing off she hears a slight sound up at the top of the wall. There she sees a Turk hanging by his hands and watching her. At first she's inclined to scream but then she gets mad and yells “fucking Turk” and he runs. Now every time you go in there, high on the wall, are two very distinct black hand prints.

One morning two hysterical American hippie girls come up to us crying for help. One of their friends has disappeared and they found her clothes hanging on a line outside some apartments. We get the police, who are nice enough, and go with them. The clothes were bought in the market, the girl is gone. Her friends cry, the police look sad. It is a beautiful morning and Istanbul looks incredible. But it is scary as shit.

To offset all these unpleasanties we smoke a lot of nice hash, which is a love offering to Debbie from some pusher she doesn't really like--but he sure has good stuff.

It comes time to leave Istanbul and return to Athens to meet Sue and catch the boat to Spain. Uncle Hal, Kathi, and Brooke fly. I feel sure I can save ten to fifteen dollars by taking land transportation. Ken is game to try, as are Debbie and Annie who don't want to return all the way to Athens anyway but rather cut over to Italy in mid-Greece and head up to Switzerland.

I look up on this little trip as a test of my traveling skills. There is very little hard information on getting to the Greek border, on crossing it, or on catching a Greek train. I know we have to walk across the border to save the seven-dollar transportation tax they hit you with when you use a train. But as to which border crossing or how to get there I have no idea. I am counting on quick intuitive decisions.

Our first leg is quite easy. We catch a bus to the main gate and from there we catch another bus to a large town near the Greek border. By easy I mean that the difficulty of communication, the incredibly crowded city bus, the rush to make sure we are all on the same bus and numerous other details, are all accepted as normal.

The second bus is quite nice but its progress is hindered by the fact that it slows down for every pedestrian we pass so an attempt can be made to talk him into taking the bus. If he decides he might as well, they bargain for the price. This often takes several minutes and it adds up.

The bus even has a radio, which plays the oddest combination of Eastern strings, Spanish love songs, modern rock, and American jazz. I sing along with the rock music and even the Spanish that I can pick up. The Turks in front of me turn around, lean out of their seats, and stare at me in amazement or disapproval. I lean way out of my seat and stare right back saying, "man look at those Turkeys" in a hushed, reverent voice. Then I join the Beatles in "Hey Jude." Normally I'm not such a smartass but it just seems like self-defense in Turkey.

We soon get to this semi-large town about eight miles from the border. I begin asking people how we can get to a smaller town right on the border with a railroad station. A Turkish army officer helps us as best he can, which is finding us some transportation. It's a horse buggy. Debbie and Annie are quite keen on horses so there is little choice. Off we go, klippity clop, klippity clo-clo clop (one horse limps). It gets darker and darker. Darkness is the enemy of the traveler on the move. Stores shut down, you can't change money, buses don't run, and trains cut down on service. It gets cold and dangerous...and dark.

We come to a little town and then to a gigantic (for such a little town) old railroad station that looks like it has come straight out of Doctor

Zhivago. “Ah this is fine,” I think. “Sure looks quiet,” someone says in a Southern accent. It could be Ken since he’s picking one up from Debbie and Annie. Could be the driver for that matter. A closer inspection reveals that the main door is on one hinge. I get out and going inside I find a large dog sleeping in the cavernous waiting room, which is festooned with cobwebs from top to bottom. “This doesn’t look good,” I decide. The dog wakes up and bolts out a side door.

I go through to the back and find that the railroad tracks are covered with grass and weeds. It isn’t a very busy station.

I call the others and we start a systematic search. Way down at the end of one wing I find a lighted, heated room. I go in. In back, behind a huge desk, which is under his huge black jackboots, sits a gigantic fat Turk in a military uniform smoking a cigar. I try English, Spanish, broken German, and frantic gestures, but he just sits there eyeing me impassively. Then Debbie comes in and he sits right up and things start to happen.

Turks of various sizes appear in all the doors trailing Ken and Ann. We stage a hectic conference with the only communication being my virtually non-existent German and Debbie and Ann’s train imitations, which meet with great critical success.

Finally a mini-bus appears which takes us to the border. The crossing is very congenial. The Turks show us their fountain pen with a picture of a dog making love to a woman. We all agree it’s just the best thing we’ve ever seen. Then we walk about a mile on a gravel path in utter darkness (except for the beautiful stars) to the Greek border. It is one of the nicest walks I’ve ever taken.

The Greeks are friendly but more concerned with their television, which has “The Wild Kingdom” on it, than they are with us. They tell us we can get a taxi to Alexandropoulos where we can catch the night train to Athens. We wander to the deserted town square and then literally mob the first car we see which luckily is the town taxi. Off we go. After a few more hassles over money and stuff we catch our train.

We say goodbye to Debbie and Annie around one in the afternoon and get into Athens by five. We find our friends and with them is Judy, who has gotten a gift from her uncle of fifty pounds, which means she doesn’t have to work in England. I am happy to see her. She is such a charming, intelligent, calm woman. We take up where we’d left off. Ken decides to go to England, then home. We part again.

The next day we find Sue and the day after that, December 9<sup>th</sup>, we catch our cheap (\$35) boat to Barcelona. By riding the train Ken and I saved ten dollars. But much more importantly we had an adventure. Granted a

small and sometimes boring adventure but an adventure nevertheless. Just for that walk on the Turkish/Greek border I would do it again.

We expected a scow and we aren't disappointed. The boat hunches at the edge of the docks like a sick dog as it wallows disgustedly in the scummy harbor swells. Inside, the third class is wall-to-wall bunks, sweating bulkheads, and rusty decks. The dormitories are segregated by sex. Judy is prone to seasickness so she takes Dramamine the whole trip. This means she is very mellow and cuddly all the time she's awake, which is not often. I'm pale, light headed and slightly feverish. I sit around a lot. It's my first boat trip and I'm pleased to find that I don't get seasick.

The six of us (Judy, Kathi, Brooke, Sue, Hal, and myself) start experiencing a great deal of friction. Judy, Brooke and I are very frugal. The others aren't. But it goes beyond money. All of us are tired from Turkey and we are suffering from a gigantic post-Crete letdown. Relations become more and more strained. I am often royally pissed off at everyone except Judy. I realize it's a function of the time and place so I don't allow it to affect my long-term determination to have Kathi and Sue as close friends forever. (Later I learn from Kathi that she had thought that our friendship might have died during this time. A friendship shouldn't be a fragile thing.)

Friendship is both emotional and rational. If I feel strongly about someone, and respect him or her, then I'll go a long way to preserve that friendship. I'll expend the effort to communicate and extend myself to those I want as my true friends. While it now has some bad connotations, the phrase "cultivate friendship" is a wise admonition.

But for a time we are barely on speaking terms. The trip is facilitated by a few surprises such as movies every other night and decent showers. There are also two stops – Naples and Marseilles.

We hit Naples in the early morning. Like good tourists we rush out to Pompeii. Unlike good tourists we climb a high tower overlooking the town and smoke some dope. It is a very fine place, clean from the first winter rains. One of the few tourist attractions that really is all it's supposed to be. It takes you back two thousand years.

Pizza and ice cream for lunch and dinner. The boat doesn't pull out until twelve midnight so when I see a bunch of American sailors from a LST (Landing Ship Tank) playing football, I realize this is a golden opportunity. Soon there is a game going on under the dock lights. The empty docks and empty night ring with the football sounds. Dark Naples muffled by the hills. Hippies from Canada, France, Australia, and California on stage under the hissing lights playing a game with sailors from Georgia, Kentucky, Puerto

Rico, the Philippines, and Iowa. The game is called on account of a U.S. Navy disaster drill.

Marseilles isn't quite so exciting. Judy, Brooke, and I don't go into the city. We just have some soup at a wharf-side café and wander the dock area looking at the election posters. The Communist ones are hard to get over. I keep trying to picture them in America. Marseilles has a Communist mayor.

During the trip we make friends with an Egyptian on his way home to Amsterdam. I smoke hash mixed with tobacco with him. He had fought as a commando in the wars with Israel, but bears no anger. War makes him sad. He wishes Egypt and Israel could be friends. I promise to visit him if I can.

After five days at sea we set anchor in Barcelona. It is a confident, almost angry, city. I find my Spanish is much better than I ever could have hoped. Four years of bad classroom performance results in almost complete communication, although the grins of the Spanish I speak with are probably not purely appreciative.

We want to get to the Canaries to get a place to live in time for Christmas. Judy and I find a pension. Then we go out looking for information on the boats to the Canaries. The last one before Christmas has left the day before. I assume this means all the more time in Barcelona. I am soon to learn differently. After five days on a boat, still weak from Turkey, and interested in Barcelona, I am in no mood to travel. Judy and I do all the various negotiations in Spanish so it is quite ironic that we are the only dissenting votes on the proposition that we rush on down the coast to Valencia to catch up with the boat. We have to abandon our pension, which is already paid for, in order to catch the all night train.

Uncle Hal makes the mistake of trying to appeal to my sense of adventure, as if riding a train all night is an adventure. Having ridden trains all night already four times and being destined I'm sure to do it many more times in the future I don't find it all that much of an adventure. I tell him so explicitly.

So we ride the train all night. This means many things: little sleep, a foul tasting mouth, a cotton head, an aching neck, a slowly turning stomach, and a sticky feeling all over. We get to Valencia to learn that the boat is in Alicante – down the coast.

We call the train station and find out that we can't make it in time. "That's it," I say with more than a small measure of relief.

Little do I know, Kathi, who is quite a determined young woman, asks, "What about the buses?"

"Buses?" I say.

We take a bus. We barely manage to catch the bus, we barely manage to buy tickets for the boat barely cashing enough money, and we barely make it to the boat. All of which comes down on me as Judy burns out through exhaustion. (Up to then she had been doing most of the speaking.) I have my revenge by ordering everyone around and refusing to tell them what's happening or even if we have a chance of making it.

Make it we do, staggering aboard after two days of continuous messing around with only minutes to spare. During the last three days I haven't slept more than five hours altogether. Brooke, Hal and I are given a cabin with a bunk. Although lacking movies, it is a much nicer boat. This is important because as soon as we pass the straits of Gibraltar the sea begins acting up. Soon everyone is taking Dramamine like candy, except for me.

I go out on the deck to stand in the spray and watch the sea. Its gunmetal gray, flecked with white powder and shot through with fumaroles of milky turquoise. The sky is blank white except near the top where it's thinner and there are some worn apathetic blues showing through. After all, the sky is just a backdrop.

The sea is everywhere.

Pulsating like a giant heart, rushing to meet itself exploding in the mating. Waves are clumsy lovers behind fine mist curtains flavored with salt. Ecstatic whitecaps leaving latticework in their wakes as they summersault into themselves and out of existence. Each swell unique and identical. Each one different, yet all of them merely a continuation of a million years of tossing and turning by restless oceans. Always breathing, choking, sometimes spitting/coughing but underneath always the same: icy oneness, salty volume, green, blue, black – there. The slow and steady rhythms of life. But the water is not alive. It is wet and cold and tireless. Each square inch is textured and in constant motion. And it seems everywhere. And it is everywhere. On all sides stretching to the horizon. A billion mad blue and green and grey and white dancers, dancing the same wild dance.

Beautiful as it is, I at first feel very, very homesick. I recommend homesickness over seasickness, but not by much. Mainly I miss Alicia. Her last letter has told me all about her new cat and various other sundry details of existence. It hurts. Whenever two people are in love one inevitably loves more than the other. There is no such thing as equal love.

I feel I have been on the wrong end of the stick with Alicia. I am determined not to be hurt so badly again. It is much less a conscious decision than it sounds. Losing Kathi before I even had her strongly reinforces this

feeling. Better to look for less than permanent types of happiness day by day.

During the several hours I stand out on deck singing love songs and watching the porpoises play with the sea I gradually decide that Alicia certainly isn't such a good thing for me, seeing as she's nearly broken me twice and has driven me thousands of miles from home.

By the time I'm through I'm missing my parents more than Alicia. Now Alicia is an almost intellectual curiosity both in respect to her actions and to my previous utter devotion to her. I look at the whole affair as rather incredible and an unbelievable aberration, which serves to remind me that I often don't know what the hell I'm doing. I silently thank my parents for forbidding our marriage. I silently thank Alicia for throwing me out and teaching me so quickly about so much. The thing I have feared most was becoming a cynic out of the whole affair. Now I realize that is exactly what has happened and I cynically accept it. Oceans are very empty, I decide as I stand on the wet deck of the Trans-Mediterranean cruise ship heading for some arid little islands in the Atlantic.

On board we meet a German couple: Connie and Didi. They become quite good friends. They are self-confident, questioning, loose, and independent.

The fourth day we stop for a few hours at the desert island of Lanzarote. It's raining so the island is just one big piece of mud. We don't find it appealing. Since Brooke has a friend on the Southern tip of Gran Canaria, the largest island, in a little town named Arquiniquin, we decide to go there.

Las Palmas, the main city of all the Canary Islands and of Gran Canaria, is a party scene watered down with cheap liquor and expensive everything else. It's full of people and tourists. By a miracle Judy and I find three spots in a pension so that Hal, Sue and Judy can stay there for the first night while the rest of us go down to Arquiniquin to scout it out. It's two dollars and four hours by bus.

The Canaries are not quite what we are looking for. We are looking for another Crete with a better beach. Instead we find a Miami with a worse beach. The Canaries are the principal haven for Scandinavian, German, and English middle class tourists fleeing the European winter. In Maspalomas, which is quite near Arquiniquin, there are more high rises than I've ever seen anywhere else. Added to the rain and the exhaustion this is quite a disappointment. Kathi starts thinking of going home.

In the back of all our minds is the hope that we can re-create whatever it was that was so wonderful in Crete. A noble, if foolhardy, wish,

Arquiniqun is a dirty little fishing village. I like it. Kathi is repelled. Lodging is impossible to find so we wander out to the canes. Just east of town, across the riverbed, is a bamboo cane field where there are a number of freaks (mainly English) living in tents and bamboo huts. There are two empty huts. I decide to move into one despite there being rats. But Stewart (Brooke's friend) shows up and we end up sleeping on his floor.

Kathi and I get drunk and repair our friendship. I tell her I was surprised about her and Dick. She says, "So was I."

The others come out the next day. Judy and I move into one of the huts together. Uncle Hal spends one night out in the cane but he can't stand the little crawly things. In fact he can't even stand the big crawly things.

Within a few days Kathi, Brooke, and Hal decide they will leave after Christmas. With Sue they move into a tacky, if expensive, apartment in what I view as a determined attempt by them to spend all their money before they leave. Professed motivations are for comfort and comparative luxury to round off their trip. Stew soon moves out of his place and wanders around nights.

I fix up our hut, the weather turns sunny, and Judy buys a pot and frying pan for cooking. A few more people move in and a nice quiet community develops out in the canes. It is mainly English and South African guys who go drinking every night. Their favorite places are the 7-Up bar (so called because it is dominated by a big 7-Up sign, and Rosalita's, where the bartender is a nine-year old girl.

Kathi and Hal make arrangements to leave on the 28<sup>th</sup>. We have a big Christmas feast with everyone cooking something special. Judy cooks fish, Sue cooks chicken, and I invent Eggnog using milk, eggs, custard, and enough rum to hide any discrepancies.

The next morning we open presents. The presents themselves are indicative of our closeness and our poverty.

Brooke receives two bottles of ketchup, a chess set, a jar of baby foods, two toy ducks, and a rain check for a hamburger.

Hal receives a bottle of crème de cocoa, a seven-inch cigar, a blow up Santa Claus, and a plastic pin ball game.

Judy is given a used sweater, a candy pacifier, two glass penguins from Istanbul, a toy dwarf, and three Spanish cookbooks. Suzy gets a toy dog, a lighter, bubble gum, and underwear.

Suzy gets a toy dog, a lighter, bubble gum, and underwear.

Kathi also gets some underwear, a toy nurse kit, baby powder, some perfume, and an embroidery set.

Stew is blessed with gin, champagne, and a leather bracelet.

Claire, Stew's girlfriend, is given champagne, cheese, candies, and a leather bracelet.

And I am given a hair brush (now lost in Boston), three little candles (burnt long ago), a headband (used to patch some pants), two books (traded in Morocco), and a variety of foods like sweet pickles and peanut butter (consumed in the Sahara desert).

Christmas is more than a little marred by America's present to North Vietnam. I call my parents and my dad tells me something of the bombing. Maybe he is upset or maybe it's just a bad connection, but it sounds like he is crying. I have never heard him cry. He loves Vietnam. I come very close to burning my draft card. I don't because I decide America isn't worth going to jail for. The hours I sit there crying for the Christmas dead in Hanoi and staring at my draft card mark the watershed of my nationalism. I still am a concerned and active citizen but I no longer believe that the United States is anything special. It's an old republic tottering on the brink of dictatorship. It does have a certain beautiful fiction about its basic principles and a very surprising technical efficiency which combined with great natural resources has produced a great deal of material wealth. But America has also murdered literally millions of people and it has oppressed scores of countries. This is a debt she can never clear.

It is a bittersweet time. The next day, Boxing Day, is Kathi's birthday. I give her a little silver heart I'd made in high school and some poems about her. I still love her, which she well knows. If she feels it isn't best for her than that's it. After all it is her life and she didn't ask me to fall in love with her.

Hal and Kathi leave the next day while I whistle Carol King's song "Far Away." Brooke, who is now waiting around for his money, spends most of the time wandering around with Stew. Sue gets a room in a pension at a dollar a day.

Except for a few visits into Las Palmas for mail and a few trips to the campsite where there is a good beach, we don't go anywhere. Connie and Didi stay a few days in a nearby hut and then they go back to Lanzarote, which they insist is much nicer when it isn't raining. We get to know some of the people. There is a nice English couple (half Indonesian and half American) and a crazy couple that claims California as a home although they are both New Yorkers.

The rats bother me more and more. One almost runs straight into the hut. So I rat proof it and keep a pile of rocks near the door. Rats are incredibly unpleasant creatures, always grinning at something. Scuttling,

crawling, infecting, gnawing, biting. Fuck 'em! Tough targets even under a strong moon.

When I first got to the Canaries I got my first letter from Irma. It made a deep impression and did a lot towards making me cut my trip short at a year. It really brings a lot of things into focus. Here it is.

December 6, 1972

Ok ok ok ok ok you goddamn fucking bastard!!! I'm alive. Are you satisfied? This letter has started in a very wrong way. I didn't want it to start that way but such is life, you know. That phrase was contagious. Such is life. I say it all the time now. Your letter sounds like you're trying to convince yourself that you are having an ok time. Why can't you get over Alicia? I'm not feuding with her. I don't like Larry, when he started to move in he scolded me like my mom so I moved out. I never even write to the people I love let alone go see them. Besides, what can I talk to them about? You? I'm sorry. I didn't mean that. I really miss you Chris. God I've lived so much since you've left. And I've changed very very very much. By the way I'm getting a 4.0 this quarter. Doesn't sound like me right? I'm in like with a gringo. But at least he has dark hair. He has the bluest eyes next to yours of course. And he's a Catholic and I have come to realize that that is very important to me. So please don't cuss me out ok?? There is only one hitch. Rob doesn't know I'm alive. How is that for a platonic relationship???? God this is a rotten letter. You sound so far away. It is almost like you have to force yourself to sound like yourself in the letter. It made me feel very sad when I got it but very happy too God this is mushy how can I say without sounding yucky? I am not feuding with bob. He ignores me – I ignore him – what could be better?? Jay's over me – I am over Jay – what could be better? I am looking better than ever. No I don't mean to sound vain but that is the truth. I hope my picture can get to you. Earth isn't it. Too bad it doesn't look like me. You can throw darts at it. Listen you idiot if anything happens to you I'll never forgive you. Just remember that. Can you see me married? Not on your life. I would have to give up too much. Now should I try to tell you all that has happened to me this quarter? Are you prepared??? Are you interested???? Bob, Jeff, Dave, John and Joe- - oh I forgot Jonathon – what an ass – and his friend Mike the jock. The men in my life. But all of that is forgotten. I am now working at the placement center 15 hours a week. Not bad. I am also carrying 22 units next quarter. I canvassed against 22 and am helping picket stores that do not carry union lettuce. Viva la raza. Actually I am becoming quite militant but actually less and less human. I can't feel anything anymore. Not the way I used to from way deep down inside of me. I feel unreal. Like I am not really me. I just exist and look back to when I was alive. But don't get me wrong. I am not depressed and have the same feelings as I did before but I just don't feel them the way I used to. It's like I was really innocent and experiencing those things for the first time and now they have lost their luster and dream-like aspect. I guess I am just facing reality. Is that what they mean by growing up?

Josie just said she's glad her feet are big – what can I say? Does your return look near? Joe \*\*\*, frosh, Exeter 72, Iowa father owns ranch, cattle, yellow Volvo (do you approve?) is taking me to the winery day after tomorrow. I am doing an independent research paper on the Calxico's farm worker clinic which is a sister clinic of the one at Delano. I went there and to La Paz where Caesar lives. You know, you were right. He is the next thing to Gandhi that we have. Off the serious subjects. I'm not like that am I??

Chris, don't forget me please. I mean the way I was. I think you are the only person who ever knew me completely as I was then. I can't believe only one year has passed. I almost fell in love with this Chicano from East L.A. Juan. Blew my mind one day that I needed someone because one of my friends from high school had just died. She broke down or something and he helped me reach reality or get out of it I don't know which. We came to the conclusion that this was really hell and that there was no heaven and that god was up there laughing his head off because we really thought there was a

better place. We had a power failure that night while we were talking and in complete darkness I for the first time in my LIFE actually communicated with another human being and he blew my mind. He also fell in love with me and still is but I can't and won't get involved with any man for a long time. I can't. I've got to let wounds heal. I don't want Jay. My pride is hurt and my defenses are still up. Give me time. I am sort of using Rob as an unreachable point. He attracts me but I don't know what I would do if he ever glanced my way. Men are not what I need right now. I need to find myself and I think I am getting there. Joe is in love with me I think but he understands and is not pushing which is good or I wouldn't have anything to do with him. God do I hate to write. I want to talk to you. When the hell are you coming back? What do you do. You mean you are not saving your virginity for me. My god don't you know that women marry men who are pure and unblemished and in contact. And from your letter you certainly are not. I do not understand Alicia. Larry moved in almost on schedule why?? Has she no respect or feeling – no I don't mean that. I think it is because she was so close to me this summer and knows me or rather knew me then because I have changed so much. I wish I could start again from the night I met you and you picked me up. Maybe I wouldn't have lost myself then. Or is it that I have found myself.

I don't think I will hear from you before the 24<sup>th</sup> so please try to have a nice Christmas Day and if you pass it just like any other day don't tell me. When are you coming back? I don't know why I keep asking. What would I do if you were here? Talk your ears off that is what. Chris Hables Gray please take care. I hope this letter gets to you somehow. I miss you and please don't think this is a bad letter it is me and if you don't like it you won't like Irma \*\*\*\*. Please write. I promise to write back as soon as I get another letter from you. Will you love me tomorrow? Is this a lasting treasure? Or just a moments pleasure? Don't drink don't smoke don't fuck. See feel love love love love and love more and love me.

What's to say? It's hard enough to be human without also having to be a feminist Chicana Catholic nineteen-year-old in the Amerika of the 1970's.

Someone comes out to the campsite while I am watching the ocean and chanting "Hare Krishna, Hare Rama." They say that the war is over. We don't get a *International Herald Tribune* until they are three or four days old so I buy a Spanish paper and translate it completely--An American surrender. There is no way we couldn't have gotten such terms two years ago. Concrete American promises and easily violated Communist ones. (Which, of course, will be violated despite the clumsy bribe of foreign aid, which Congress will never approve anyway.) Some of the points are particularly funny, such as the weapons replacement provisions and the number of observers. We apparently bombed Hanoi on Christmas to get those 200 extra observers. We easily killed that many people doing it.

We Americans throw a surrender party. We even have music thanks to a German UNICCF dentist's tape deck. It is a fine party after a beautiful sunset. To bad the war goes on.

The daily routine is slow. We go to bed early and at least I get up late. Judy is an early riser. We read, sew, cook, eat, sleep, sun, talk, shop and

repeat the above again and again. I have never lived such a lazy existence. I write some poetry and a lot of letters.

I tell myself day after day how tired I am from the traveling. Soon I'm utterly exhausted. At one time I had been convinced that Sue would be an impossible traveling companion due to her love of comfort. But over this period my respect for her depends considerably. We start planning our trip to Morocco via the Spanish Sahara. She becomes friends with a couple from Mass., Chuck and Chris. They join our party as does Skip, who shows up late one night from Greece.

Judy and I have a good sexual relationship. Yet, it bothers me that we aren't more straightforward. We never talk about it. We never discuss what is best or what times are best. Neither of us refuses the other unless it is really necessary because of her period, and then she does so very guiltily as if she has somehow let me down. Sex is such a strange thing. It warps the mind and shatters good judgment. It is difficult to articulate the waves of feeling that sweep through me when I see a proud beautiful woman. (I always think of women when I think of sex.)

Judy is a good lover. Demanding at times, acquiescing at others, insistent but never pushy, happy and unashamed. Alicia had hated frenching so I find it unenjoyable. Judy doesn't appreciate this but she understands.

Whenever I've been with a woman I've always, to some degree or another, been attracted to other women. It is an unfortunate reality that sexual relationships always go through an evolution. Wild abandon and engrossment evolves into comfortability and affection. It is still satisfying and probably more rewarding, but it isn't the same as the beginning. The first times people make love together are incredible adventures. The young crave adventure.

While living with Judy I'm attracted to a number of other women. But I don't and won't do anything about it. I live by a strong moral code. One shouldn't hurt someone else for your own unneeded pleasure. Still, the swaying body making its way through the cane or the sharp mind and pink tongue seen through the camp fire's flicker leave me a little restless in my hut at night as I huddle close to Judy.

Arguinequin is not very green; but it does have a serenity and beauty all of its own. I spend literally hours just sitting outside listening to the ocean and Skip's flute. I feel the sun on my face. I hear the flute gasping and silver. I smell the ocean. I feel the wind crawling up my back and over my shoulder to look down into my heart. But I don't hear it beat; my heart is not restless now. It is the sun and the flute and all the rest that calms me so. When I have everywhere to go and seemingly so little time. As if I must run

to keep up with life. Which, as I know, just isn't so. Life will wait for me. Or at least it will not venture too far ahead if I tarry awhile on a useless, sunny, isle.

But as time goes on my anxiety over leaving grows. We are pinned down as I wait for money to be mailed from California. We go into Las Palmas and get our boat tickets for Auen, the capital of the Spanish Sahara, for the 31<sup>st</sup> of January. Then we start quizzing people about Morocco.

My main concern is for my hair, which is very important to me for a variety of silly reasons. It's shoulder-length, light and blond. I find it very beautiful even though all my friends say I would be wiser to be proud of my eyelashes. My main accomplishment as a high school president was the erosion of the hair cut requirements for athletes. One of my greatest pleasures is running and feeling my hair bouncing on my shoulders. Its symbolic importance to me is still great, although I well realize that long hair is only an indication of a failure to cut it and nothing else. Besides, it hides my jug-handled ears.

Trying to get into Morocco from Spain often involves getting one's hair cut, but not if you come in from the south. In fact, Morocco doesn't even know when you come in from the South. This suits me fine.

The last night in the cane is a long one. I have an attack of the nerves: uncontrollable shaking, diarrhea, paranoia, free-floating anxiety, FEAR-FEAR-FEAR. It passes (along with everything I have eaten in the last week) by morning--leaving me confused, tired and old. I am afraid of traveling. I'm afraid of moving, period. I tell myself, "What the fuck!" and, taking a deep breath, we leave for Las Palmas hitching half the way. We wander into Las Palmas one last day--nice big plastic city that it is, and then go down to the docks to catch our boat.

## Chapter 7: KAUS-KAUS, FUCKIE-FUCKIE

The boat is no more than ninety feet long. The passengers are all either freaks or young draftees for the Spanish Legion. There are about a hundred of each category. Everyone in our group pays an extra buck to have bunks. The main hold, where we are, is awash with slightly brackish water. There is a rough sea but more for psychological reasons than anything else I soon begin feeling markedly nauseous. Judy is dozing on her Dramamine like a panda bear so I have one and manage to join her.

The break of night (why just say break of day?) finds us drifting about three quarters of a mile off a sandy Africa beach. We are surrounded by the most motley collection of rusted hulks I can possibly imagine. The West African coastal fleet I'm told. There are two gigantic piers visible on shore. We stand on deck and try to guess which one we will dock at. A small boat soon appears, fighting the waves to get to us. One-step forward two steps back. From sighting it takes the better part of thirty minutes to pull up to us. "Must be the pilot," we agree.

It is an unpleasant revelation when the crew starts pushing frightened freaks to the end of the boat and motioning for us to climb down the hanging cargo nets to the bouncing skiff. Then they start throwing our backpacks over the side. A cardinal rule: never get separated from your pack. So the owners start clambering over the side and jumping into the skiff. It only holds twenty or so people so it soon fills and pulls off leaving the rest of us wondering just how long we'll be waiting to go ashore (and if we really want to). We watch the little skiff disappear in and out of the swells. After awhile someone sees another one coming out to us. It's hard to say if we are pleased by this added element of efficiency.

Another hour and our turn comes up. It goes relatively smoothly except Susie refuses to give up her purse so a sailor snatches it from her and throws it ahead. We have the added excitement of having four surfers (three from L.A. and one from Australia) go in our boat. They insist, with fanatical love that only a surfer can have for his board, that they will hand down their boards. Which they do with élan but not efficiency.

Once loaded considerably beyond our apparent capacity (leaving one or two inches freeboard) we putt-putt away at a slow crawl. During the long gentle roller coaster ride towards the beach some of us sing while others throw-up.

As we approach the beach we notice there isn't any working pier or dock of any sort, just a few buildings and open beach. We begin speculating on how we are going to land. This speculation takes on alarming overtones as we rush on the beach at full speed apparently planning to run aground.

Then a miracle happens. As the slope of the beach rises so does our boat. At first imperfectly but soon we are speeding along entirely on dry land. I lean over the side to see the big wheels of the amphibious Duck. We break into spontaneous cheering. Once parked in front of the customs building the border guards keep us up in the Duck until they have collected our passports. Then we jump down and admire our weird boat.

There are various rumors about closed borders and a lack of transport to these closed borders circulating. The only hard information is that the bus for the town is to leave at twelve forty-five. So everyone repairs to a very grungy café, obviously reconstructed from a Bogart movie, complete with porno pictures, empty bottles, lounging Spanish Legionnaires and various insects investigating the many different spilled liquids on the floor and the tables. There is a large fan slowly revolving on the ceiling. The veteran Legionnaires look out on the dusty square where the recruits who have come over with us are picked up by a squad of weathered sergeants, who quickly line them up and march them off.

A few freaks get taxis to town. Later we meet them in the middle of the desert, which they have reached at ten times the cost in order to save two hours. The established route is usually the cheapest unless you know for sure of a better alternative, like the railroads between Athens and Istanbul being cheaper than the plane, but the plane being so much easier. Taxis are certainly not a cheap means of going several hundred miles into the Sahara desert.

The bus takes us into the sandy city of Auen. Right where the bus stops sits a mini bus which makes runs to the Moroccan border for a hundred pesetas a person (two dollars). The driver lives off the freaks slipping into Morocco. Fourteen of us cram into the little bus and we are soon in camel country.

The drive to the boarder is punctuated by four stops at little military posts. Numerous colorful stamps are put on our transit visas at these posts. At one of them it takes thirty minutes to wake up the commander (there are only two soldiers-- the one asleep is the commander and his trooper is afraid to wake him up). The border guards are distinguishable by a uniform lack of uniform uniforms and a strong tendency towards very bad teeth.

The last guard is the friendliest and the one with the worst teeth. He guards from a little white mud fort with two little domes and a tiny arched gate. A picturesque Spanish flag flies brightly against the pale blue sky. The border is visible about a mile away. Right on the boarder is Ta, three tin huts and fifteen cardboard ones. It is only inhabited during the smuggling season. Moroccan trucks come down from Tan-Tan full of fruit which they then

barter for such smuggle able items as radio batteries and shampoo. The tin huts are the physical plant of “the hippie hotel” which offers floors space for just five dirham a night (35cents).

Ta has no water whatsoever and the toilet facilities are in the same condition. To quote an old Moroccan proverb “The desert is your bathroom.” There are a number of so called stores which sell Coke, tinned peaches, chocolate, tinned fish, cheese, and bread that is baked in an old U.S. Army tent which stands (used loosely here) about a half mile away from the rest of the huts for some unknown reason. The bread has sand in it; not just a few pieces of grit or a sprinkling of small grains but lots of it--sand. It gives the bread a decidedly unusual texture. We eat it of course. If chickens and Arabs can eat sand so can we.

Usually the wait in Ta is only one or two days but we hit right after there has been a particularly big smuggle. So we are told that the trucks won't come for four days. Judy and I are in no hurry. We have plenty of pesetas, which we can loan to friends. However, many of the other people are unprepared. They lack food or cash of any kind and the nearest American Express is three hundred miles north, in Agadir. I still have my sweet pickle relish from Christmas. There are about thirty-five freaks here, mainly Canadians and Americans with an odd Finn, Dutch, Britt, or German. The hut we are in is of less than sound construction. It's ten by twenty feet with four tiny rhombus windows (singing panels). Dirt floor of course, anything else would be inconceivable. The first few hours there we meet a freaky Canadian who just tried to get into the Spanish Sahara but has been turned back because he is carrying a couple of kilos of kief. He's gone native. He tells us we can trade alcohol for kief. We happen to have buttered rum, which is a parting gift from Tony, the Canarian (NOT Spanish!) who ran a store in Arguineguin--so we promptly trade it for some flower tops. I am stoned for the next four days, as is everyone else except Judy. Judy, poor Judy, doesn't smoke due to asthma. I want to say that the days pass quickly or that they pass slowly but actually neither is true. There is only one long sigh that is Ta. But many different things happen in the course of that sigh.

There are trips to the Spanish fort for water and trips to the little stores for food. There is talking and singing and card games and mostly talking or just thinking. A hell of a lot of thinking. We sew and write and sleep and curse the Arabs. One day they cook a pregnant camel and some of us eat the boiled fetus with them.

The Arabs are the big hassle. Morocco's fine except for the Moroccans. I consider myself very unprejudiced, or at least I did until I traveled. Both Turkey and Morocco really brought me down. They're what I

call prostitute cultures living off of tourism and tourists. Of course, I spent a lot of time around Istanbul and Marrakesh, which would be the worst places to find any real culture. But even out in the pure desert the Arabs are incredibly rude, obscene, and loathsome. They stand for hours at the window and drift in through the door foot by foot like sand until before you know it there are ten or twenty standing right over you-- starring.

I have been stared at in Yugoslavia, everywhere I've been in fact, at least since I started growing my hair so long, but the vibrations were completely different: friendly-curious as opposed to dull resentment. The Arabs also have a sort of litany that they repeat constantly: "kaus-kaus" (aka couscous, a starch dish as variable as paella or spaghetti, depends on what is added), "kief-kief" ("same-same" literally, its hard to say what they mean by it--it is what we call dope too) and fuckie-fuckie. The last is usually directed toward the girls with an invitation to have kaus-kaus.

We drive them off but they come back totally unconvinced. Simple perhaps, but very unchildlike in their patience and docility. These are smugglers so perhaps they aren't representative of the average Berber. But even Arabs I meet from Algeria don't think much of the Moroccan Arab, and several European travelers who know both say that there is a real difference. The Moroccan, they claim, has had his culture destroyed by the close contact with the West and still has replaced it with nothing.

After three days there a single truck pulls in and offers to take riders for 15 dirham. We know that ten dirham is the regular price. About twenty people take the chance and they disappear in literally minutes. We are in no hurry and I personally am a little too stoned to get it together as fast as necessary. Besides the trucks the next day are going to be cheaper--and hopefully not as crowded.

There is no sunrise the next day. Instead there's a sandstorm. I'd never expected it to be so bad. To leave your eyes uncovered for a second is to invite excruciating pain. In fact any part of the body left exposed is soon sandblasted into dull red agony. Much to my pleasure I notice that the Arabs are incapable of dealing with the sandstorm any better than we are. They curse incessantly and on average fall down even more than us. I guess their normal (and quite reasonable) approach to a sandstorm is to sit it out but since today is smuggling day they are prevented from following such a sound policy. I go out and negotiate a ride for ten dirham; free food, one day guaranteed transit time, and a party in Tan-Tan when we get there. So begins one of the most unpleasant experiences in my life, not because of the great physical discomfort afforded by an open truck in a Saharan sandstorm going over open country but rather because I have just come face to face with the

most shameless and prolific pack of liars I never could have imagined. It still shocks me when I realize how often, shamelessly, and even uselessly we are lied to in the short span of two days.

To begin with we are told we will leave at twelve; then at one; then at two. At two-thirty the empty truck pulls up outside our tin hotel and we get in. There are nine of us: Judy, Sue, Skip, Chuck, Christine, me, Steve and Bill from Canada, and Michael from Switzerland. The truck drives about thirty yards to a big tent where we are told we will get lunch. We get out and go in somewhat weary of leaving our packs out in the truck. "Don't worry," they say, "the truck isn't going anywhere." We keep watching the truck anyway. In between glances the truck disappears. An hour later (still no lunch of course) it reappears with our packs stacked on top of a large number of radio batteries in cardboard boxes. We get into the truck and off we go north, cheering and singing.

After about a mile and a half we stop. The Arabs climb out and start throwing the batteries on the ground. I tell them we'll help if they let us ride for free--they say okay. (All conversations are in Spanish but simple Spanish, no confusion.) We unload the truck and drive back to Ta. On the way we pick up some empty wooden crates. Then we go to the police tent. They won't clear us. Obviously the border police think we have more than empty crates to take back to Morocco. Our drivers are shocked by the difficulty, shocked. Somebody hasn't been paid off.

Two hours of screaming and driving back and fourth between our tin hotel, the army tent, and the cop tent results in one last screaming fit when the cop who can't be bought finally folds his arms and looks the other way as we drive off into the desert, only to stop and load the batteries up again. There are five Arabs with us. One obviously retarded, one a tow truck owner, and three others. They promise that we will stop at midnight and we will all sleep in a hut for free.

Three Arabs sit in the cab while the other two stand on the running boards on either side. Whenever we get into a confusing tangle of tracks, the whole place criss-crossed like it's a southern California dune buggy Mecca, the two Arab hanger-ons jump off and much in the manner of bloodhounds they trot up and down the various choices smelling them out. A decision is made and off we go, as often as not only to soon stop and double back and go the other way.

We go on into the night smoking kief and talking about how much we hate the Moroccans. It becomes bitter cold as it only can in the desert. We sit in a circle with Judy's blanket over all our legs for warmth, thus forming our

legs into an incredible tangle. Michael shares a bar of Swiss chocolate with all of us. It is the single most generous act I have ever seen.

When the sun sets the two trackers come back and elbow their way in next to Steve and Sue. We are very crowded as it is with the batteries, our packs, and all those empty crates.

Our legs become a greater and greater tangle. When one of us gets a cramp it becomes a lengthy and confusing process to allow a shift for relief. Perhaps the kief helps confuse matters but I'm convinced it's all that keeps me from attacking one or more of the Arabs, especially the retarded one who keeps saying "fuckie-fuckie" to the girls and making obscene gestures.

When the Arabs join us the retarded one immediately puts his head on Sue's lap. She punches him and he sits up. She hits him several more times and Steve, all six-foot-three of him, also hits him once. Still he barely remains tolerable.

We finally stop (at two in the morning) in front of little hut in the middle of nowhere--all there is nowhere. Our trucker assures us that we will spend the night here. We're given our free meal: two feet in diameter of couscous for fourteen people. The Arabs immediately start shoveling it down with their hands. One can imagine how dirty their hands are by now. I have a very strong stomach and have eaten native food in Turkey, Morocco, and Mexico, not to mention the rest of Europe, and parts of Asia, with no ill effects (except for the shits of course) but this is too much. I find a spoon and take three bites. The third bite is at least half sand. That is all I can handle. Five minutes later (just fifteen minutes after he'd told me we would spend the night there) our trucker announces our departure. I am angry but everyone else calms me down and hustles me off. I can't handle lying as well as most people; it shocks and repels me.

Two hours later we stop at another hut where they want a dirham to let us sleep inside. I tell them to fuck it and go out to the truck to join Bill. Judy soon comes out too. Sue refuses to pay and sleeps inside anyway. I have never been so miserable. As Uncle Hal would say, my "level of conformability" has hit near zero. Half my body falls asleep, something I find distinctly unpleasant and usually remedy. In fact so much of me has never gone to sleep before. I just ignore it. It is all the sleep I get. Incredibly cold. Judy is quite uncomfortable as well.

Fortunately we only stay there three hours, until seven, and then off we go again. The sandstorm is dying off in heavy gusts of wind. (Later we learn that this storm has shut down the Las Palmas airport and has paralyzed both the Canaries and southern Morocco.) We are red-eyed zombies with cardboard hair and rough upper lips.

We drive until about eleven when we come to a river. There is a dirt road across it, which seems to be vaguely under repair or construction. There are about fifteen trucks there and five sleepy workmen rearranging the dirt. Our trucker says that we'll have to wait two days for the water to go down. (We can see it's a damn muddy bridge.) However, he says there is an alternative. Pointing across to the other side he indicates a small open dump truck. It will take us into Tan-Tan for just five dirham. He himself will have to pay. Of course, we can wait for two days for the wind to go down and the bridge to dry if we want. I'm the only one who gives waiting a second thought, which is about two thoughts to many.

So we trudge across the muddy bridge cursing and getting absolutely as muddy as possible without falling down. The surfers are also there--they start across after us. There's a lot of trouble with their boards and backpacks both so Steve and I slide back to help them, arriving just in time to have a guy from L.A. fall at our feet. It strikes me as funny to see surfers fall down in the mud with their boards in the middle of the Sahara desert.

At the truck our old driver collects the money. It is five for westerners, three for Arabs, and the goats get on free. There are twenty-eight of us jammed into a quarter ton dump truck. I didn't even know they made them so small. Two goats too.

Around four that afternoon we finally pull into Tan-Tan. It is just a semi break from the surrounding sand. The streets are sand, the yards are sand, the campground is walled up sand. But it is quite picturesque anyway all stacked up on top of itself, pastel boxes with graceful palm trees painted over a troubled gray sky.

The campground is shut down since it has no water. We stay there for free, sleeping on the floor of the bathrooms, which are half-filled with sand. We wash up in the drip of some leaky water tank. On Bill and Steve's stove Judy cooks up some vegetables I buy in town.

I like Tan-Tan rather much but we decide to go on up to Goulamine on the second bus the next day. Moving always moving. The sun sets freeing a thousand stars while Skip plays his flute softly and I hold Judy as close to me as I can. At least we're warm now.

I'm undecided on revealing myself to Moroccan authorities about my hair. Come morning Steve, Michael, and Bill, get stamped in, so an hour before the bus is due to leave I change my mind and go off with Chuck and Skip to the military commander who has to sign our passports. He isn't at the customs building so they take our passports to military headquarters. There they tell us to wait but we decide we should keep an eye on our passports. We form a little parade through town right up to the fort's gate.

There a guard stops us. We get quite an impressive stamp/signature combo and then return to the bus station. (Judy never does get stamped in so when we leave Morocco a month later they tell her that she can never come back. She says she doesn't want to thank you.)

As soon as possible everyone boards the bus in order to get seats while I watch our packs and later help load them. This is our common bus start strategy, which always works. Train strategy is more difficult involving a pack laden mad rush, which is less dependable. But it is the only possibility short of paying twice as much for first class. Chuck, Christine, Sue, Judy, and I get off in Goulamine figuring it will be awhile before we'll be in Southern Morocco again. The others go north.

Goulamine has green but it's still a funky little mud city. We find floor space in a big room for one dirham each and showers for the same. I want very much to buy some trade beads (also called variously Moroccan, stone, glass, Goulamine, Venetian, or Mauritanian beads). Their origin is obviously debatable. The Arabs claim everything from "they are Moroccan made" to "they occur naturally." Moroccans will say anything it seems. The best information is that they were made in Venice for trading purposes around the end of nineteenth century and then traded in West Africa where there are still some beads left. These beads are trucked to Morocco for the freak market. I'd never seen them in the U.S., although they're on sale in San Francisco and other freak centers. They are systematically multicolored glass beads of great beauty and strange construction. I've always been something of a collector from stamps and toy army men to antique bottles and passport stamps. I fell hard for these beads in Greece when I saw one around the neck of Debbie, the Georgia Peach, and I'm still addicted.

So we're seeking some contact to buy the beads. Within an hour of arriving in the town I meet a fourteen-year-old Arab boy who, in broken French and Spanish, assures me that his uncle has many beads. After dropping our stuff off, Judy, Skip, and I go with him. It's a tortuous confusing walk to the other side of town. We're met at the door by a tall handsome Arab with a pure white beard and piercing blue eyes. He wears a spotless gray robe and turban. In very clear Spanish he invites us in and offers us tea. His daughter, very beautiful despite the ring through her nose, comes in and on a little burner sets some water to boiling. Then several gigantic baskets of beads are brought in. Our mouths drop open. They are beyond belief. We peruse the beads and sound him out the price. We want to hand pick ours so the price will be higher. When the water reaches a boil he performs a complicated ritual involving pouring, re-pouring, breaking various leaves, tasting and counter tasting, and so on. Finally it meets his

approval. It is the best tea I have ever tasted (after all the trouble it better be), Moroccan mint tea.

We thank our host (here after referred to as Patron which is what all the Arabs call him) and tell him we'll return the next day with friends so that we can buy in larger quantities, which means at a lower price. His dignity and honor show us a part of Morocco hard to find among smugglers and tourist touts.

In the restaurant underneath our rooms we meet Sue, Chuck, and Christine and have some tagine, an excellent stew with a great deal of meat in it. Whose meat I don't know, and I don't ask.

Some other freaks from Ta who had taken the single bus are there. They have had a much worse time than us. The truck broke an axle after twelve hours. They sat for two days before being towed into a little village where repairs were possible. Between the twenty of them they had three onions and an orange. After repairing the truck the mechanic offered to let them sleep in his tent. After two days of sleeping in an open truck in a sandstorm this was a much-appreciated offer. But their driver said, "No we must go on." So they piled in and rode about two miles to a spot where they could still see the lights of the tent and then the driver told them they would stop there for the night. The Arab mind is unfathomable. When they finally got to Tan-Tan a day after us (four days in the truck) they refused to pay the driver.

With these freaks there's a half Spanish half Moroccan ex-policeman/smuggler by the name of Matarak. Judy and I start rapping to him in Spanish. Imperceptibly he becomes our guide. He gives us excellent advice and never deceives us. All for the sake of talking a little Spanish it seems, for he doesn't take any money. And being perceived as Spanish, for he considers the Europeans better than the Arabs and likes to think of himself as a Spaniard.

I bring up beads again. He says his mistress (not wife) has some to sell. I reply that we'd like to look at them so off we go. It's another confusing route but not the same one we had taken earlier. Who should answer the door but the Patron. With much graciousness we all pretend to not be surprised then we troop in to look at the same beads. A Moroccan will always claim some sort of relation to his contact. The Patron is the only big supplier at the time in Goulamine so everyone refers us to him. Judging from his other actions I'd say his only motivation was friendship. We promise the Patron we will return the next day. Which we do with all the money we have. Very few people stop to shop in Goulamine on their way north because there is no way to cash a traveler's check. We had carried a larger

amount of cash than normal in order to be on the safe side. I must admit it was Judy's idea.

The long arduous negotiations over price are also laid on Judy's lap rather by default. I am so incoherent over the beads and being stoned doesn't make me any better a bargainer. We sit on a reed mat in a low pastel room around the big wicker dishes of multicolored beads. We smoke Mabaker's kief and drink the Patron's daughter's mint tea.

Meanwhile Judy has reached the hardest part of the negotiations. The price has been set but she now has to negotiate the exchange rates for the four different currencies we are going to use. The Patron has extreme difficulty following some of the math necessary for conversion. Matarak proves invaluable at this juncture. After about thirty minutes there's a breakthrough.

Once this is done Judy gets to pick beads too. Together we pick one and a half kilos. Sue and Skip pick a quarter kilo each. After we are finished we step outside to discover seven hours have passed. Judy and I now own 244 beads. They cost us fifty dollars or four pounds, 1300 pesetas, fifteen dollars, and three dirham. We are so tired of beads by now that we put them away until Marrakesh. Later we go out shopping with Matarak looking for gifts and capes for Judy and I. I don't find a cape but we get some other stuff as well. In Morocco there are many good things to buy but almost all (including beads we later find out) are cheaper in Marrakesh or Fez. Clothes, leather goods, beads, amber, jewelry, and tourist trash are all cheap and they aren't always incredibly shoddy. There is more to buy in Morocco than in Turkey and at less cost. For some reason a Moroccan does not compare to a Turk for tenacious and obscure bargaining.

The next morning we bid Matarak good-bye and grab the bus to Agadir. Agadir reminds me a lot of Saigon: wide clean streets, low square pale stores, palm trees and Spanish sword plants--all very French Colonial. Agadir owes most of its beauty to the 1956 earthquake that destroyed the whole town. The same kind of ambivalent debt the Germans owe the RAF and USAF.

Sue, Chuck, Christine, and Skip get an apartment; Judy and I trudge off to the luxury campground. We are the smallest, nastiest, tent there so we choose a spot near a homely little pup tent with an Englishman in it. Actually there are very few tents of any type since most of the campers have trailers, vans, or motor homes--many of them extremely elaborate. The camp is a very nice place with showers, laundry basins, and an encircling ten-foot wall we look on very approvingly.

This is the first time I've set up my seemore tent, a staple of the High Sierra camping I did as a Boy Scout. It's a large hollow tube made of plastic that you string rope through to make into a serviceable shelter. Judy barely conceals her doubts about its usefulness. When it's set up she is very pleasantly surprised and I beam with pride.

We get to know our English neighbor of about thirty-five years. He's waiting for his wife and daughter to return from a trip to the interior. He is so incredibly charming sipping his Pernod every evening and warning against the dangers of dehydration in the dessert. We trade books and stories.

Wherever you are, from a German youth hostel to the Moroccan desert, you find people desperate to trade books. Extremely high proportions of vagabonding people are avid readers. In eleven months of traveling and living I read over 100 books ranging from Kaufman's *Nietzsche* to a cheap western thriller. I started with six books and for several months I had more than eighteen jammed into my backpack before I started giving them away. The general level is high with an emphasis on novels. There's a sprinkling of non-fiction as well, many Russian and English classics. Hemingway is very common in Spain. *Greening of America* and the *Drifters* are perhaps the two most common books in circulation.

I read my first Evelyn Waugh in Morocco as well as Huxley's *Devils of Loudun* and several others. Some books I can't even give away so I leave them surreptitiously on other people's front mats. We stay in Agadir three days resting up in comparative luxury and good weather. Then early (5:30) one morning we cop the bus to Marrakesh.

It's pleasant enough ride heightened by incredible and untrue rumors about a gigantic rock festival in Marrakesh. I'm quite paranoid in Essourara, which has a very bad reputation for freaks. The story is that the police chief is an alcoholic brother-in-law of the King. I know for a fact that mass head shaving has occurred there twice. But there is no trouble. (Apparently a week after we passed through there was a big round up which ended in a dangerous confrontation between captive freaks and submachine gun toting cops.)

Marrakesh is a frantic change from what we are used to. The bus disgorges us right in the middle of the Medina. Within seconds some old man is claiming to be our guide in sign language. He follows us until we pretend to follow him, then he leads us off. We stop and he keeps going.

We're in a tiny crowded ally, which is jammed with freaks and Arabs. By asking at the traditional freak hotels like the France and the Agadir we eventually find a nice dirty little place called, ironically, the Essuarara, with

seeping plaster walls, a not unbearably foul toilet, and a beautifully mosaiced courtyard. Chuck and Christine move into one room while the other four of us take another. Within minutes the house dealer comes by to see if we could use anything. Sue goes to check out his stash.

I have to admit that Sue bought much more hash than I. I bought stuff a couple of times but nothing like my share. She carried stuff across borders in her shoe (and other hiding places) so that she never lacked dope anywhere. The universal availability of marijuana in the States and hash in Europe is incredible. From Kansas to Yugoslavia there is always a chance to score. For some reason there is little grass in Europe. It's all turned into hash before it leaves Afghanistan, Turkey, Lebanon, or Morocco. Perhaps this is because in the States we grow a lot of our own stuff, while in Europe it's almost all smuggled in from the four countries mentioned above. Hash is easier to smuggle than grass, its got more high per gram but perhaps there is no logical explanation. A lot of Americans and Canadians get a hankering for a good ol' joint more for old times sake than anything else. You get kids in Greece mailing black Afghani home to Vancouver while other kids in Georgia send Colombian weed to friends in Rome. A couple of friends of mine were grabbed at the Rome American Express but they hid the grass in the carabinieri's car so they came clean. But what a risk.

The penalties are such a pain in most of Europe that I won't take any chances other than smoking. Borders, mailing, and dealing (and selling) abroad are beyond my limits. I can't help strongly suspecting that our government really has no interest in helping people busted on drugs. In fact, in all likelihood they encourage heavy penalties. It's interesting that Morocco (which gets a lot of U.S. assistance, especially military aid) sometimes turns away only American long hairs while letting Canadian and English freaks right in. In many countries (Greece, Turkey, Spain) we do have a great deal of leverage with the reactionary governments if we choose to exercise it. Actually there aren't that many busts but one is too many when it almost invariably ends up in a five to twenty year rap that sticks and is served in some ancient prison.

There are two beds in our room. Judy and I share one and Sue assumes she'll be chastely sharing the other with Skip. Bundling is what it was called in colonial times. But Skip proves decidedly shy. This takes a great deal of kidding to overcome. The hard cold floor is another powerful argument. The mattresses are very weak in the center inevitably bringing bedmates together. This can be pleasant to cuddlers like Judy and I, but quite embarrassing to Skip. Sue is amused and vaguely insulted at his fear of even touching her. Eventually it wears off and he becomes quite the bed hog. I

invariably compare this little drama and our mild surprise at Skip's shyness, to the confusion and misinterpretations this would have lead to if it involved straight people.

In Crete we had many of the same type of sleeping arrangements. Travelers of different sexes often formed such intimate but asexual alliance. In Greece a Greek-American girl from Boston, who was sharing a bed (but nothing else) with a Welch transcendentalist, tried to explain this to her Greek landlord. He was incredulous. "Greek boys could not control themselves--who could expect them too?" When asked why Western boys could and when faced with this suggestion that it might be the overriding male chauvinism of southern European males, he replied that no, it wasn't male chauvinism, southern Europeans are just more highly sexed. The reason for this is the climate. He ignored the existence of a similar climate in such countries as South Africa, Australia, and the southern United States. I think it's the culture myself. A girl is either a sex object or a wife/mother object. A wife/mother object is just an old sex object that isn't sexy anymore. Her place is taken by a mistress. Any deception by either sex is not only condoned but encouraged since everyone understands you either want to catch a husband or you want to have some sex (if you are a male) no matter what it takes. Generally you give up something highly prized (virginity, freedom) to gain something else (husband, sex).

We are a ten-minute walk from the main Bazaar so we go over to take look. Bazaar is the right word. It is not as modern as the linoleum and glass Istanbul variety but in other respects it is very similar with but a few exceptions: no western suits on the shopkeepers and a lot more beggars. Right at the entrance is a permanent fixture we dub the beggars chorus. It consists of six to twelve beggars lined up in two or more rows (amputees and dwarfs in the front) chanting a recognizable song with melody and harmony. Judy and I don't give to anyone while Sue is continuously distributing tiny coins of negligible value. Between these two poles everyone else follows an erratic pattern of paying the more tenacious, disgusting, or entertaining beggars on what is obviously a purely subjective scale.

I don't plan on buying anything for the first few days--just look around. But the shopkeepers are insistent on getting you to quote a price on whatever you seem to be glancing at. In one shop while looking at some colorful capes, which I like but feel I might not wear, I mumble "twenty dirham" to the shopkeeper's sticky nagging. He hits back with 150. This is ridiculous. (I think 20 dirham is ridiculously low but actually it's about two dirham high.) As I idly wander through the shop repeating twenty dirham the price falls precipitously until, as I stand ready to leave, I find the cape thrust

on me as he says “All right twenty-two dirham.” This is getting too close so I say “eighteen.” The shopkeeper is furious (lowering prices by a buyer is just not done) and launches into a tirade about Jews. This is an exciting twist coming in an Arab country so I draw him out a little. Christine hearing this comes storming in and dresses him down for being a prejudiced ignorant bigot. He stands speechless while she trounces out. I hesitate a moment, being rather stunned myself, and then with a “Shalom” I split.

After seeing a few more rows of shops we decide to go back and eat. Apparently he has calmed down for when we pass by he comes running out with the cape shouting, “okay Jew boy eighteen.” I don’t want the cape at all now. “Fifteen,” I reply. He runs after me pointing me out to all the other shopkeepers and screaming anti-Semitic abuse. I decide a Moroccan, unlike a Turk, can be annoyed almost as much as they can be annoying.

We were going to meet JB in Marrakesh, instead we get a cable from him. Finally getting to Morocco after having been turned away at Tangiers, he has a bad experience involving extortion and heavy vibes, so he just decides to forget it. I get sick after three days in Marrakesh: heavy diarrhea, fever, nausea, and extreme weakness. I’m in bed a few days and start a slow recovery. On my first walk to the Bazaar during convalescing the most incredible chance meeting occurs. To preface it I should point out that in high school, while radical both philosophically and morally, I was semi-conservative politically: supporting the war and personally opposed to the drugs, alcohol, etc., while advocating their legalization. I was a well fed, tanned, clean-shaven, cleanly dressed, southern Californian with neck length sun bleached blonde hair.

Now I’m a pale, gaunt, bearded, stoned, ex-accused felon with a ragged embroidered sheepskin jacket, a broken down bush hat heavily embroidered, wearing embroidered corduroy paratrooper pants hanging over a pair of totally destroyed Adidas track shoes with numerous leather patches half glued-on, topped off with long blonde dirty hair about my shoulder blades.

Wandering the bazaar with Sue I see a friend of mine from high school. A rather straight handsome guy named Jim Koubeck. He had run cross-country and some long distance in track and I respected his seldom-tested ability. We shared a very close friend in Kim Downs who was the anchorman on the mile relay, which meant so much to me in high school (undefeated league champions--fourth in San Diego County). I was by far the slowest man but I was on it in any case.) I hesitate at first because I can’t remember which name to call him by. In junior high he had changed his name and once had threatened to beat me up if I didn’t start using his new

name after a few months of failing to give up on the old one. Snapping my fingers I say, "Hienk...ah Koubeck!!!" At first Jim doesn't recognize me. (I'm surprised he ever does.) But once the shock wears off we keep recreating it by the un-believability of it all. He's on a cruise college ship that has taken a field trip for one day to Marrakesh. Most of his classmates are rich, straight and completely exploited by the Arabs. But Jim, having earned his own money (auto mechanic), spends it a lot wiser.

I invite him to our hotel so we can go over old friends and times. After a little more shopping I began to feel very weak so I totter back to our room and promptly collapse on the bed. After sleeping feverishly for a few hours Jim comes. There's a lot of news about mutual friends in high school. There had been a veritable epidemic of enlistments as many of our young male friends started looking for something more than a poor-paying boring job. And of course there was a whole bushel of marriages. (All marriage news at this time but by my return to San Diego, four months later, there were already a number of divorces filed. Once Orson Wong, a friend of mine, was invited to a wedding that he couldn't attend because he had work. "Well hey man aren't you going to go to the wedding?" asked Willie the knee-boarder. "Nah I'll go to the divorce.")

Everyone else goes out to a milkshake bar to have a shake and listen to some music. The places everyone goes in Marrakesh are the two milkshakes bars that play rock music. The shakes aren't all that good but to our homesick taste buds they are well worth the four dirham.

Every city has its freak hangouts. Besides the milkshake bars there is the yellow railing café for yogurt and a restaurant overlooking the Medina. The veteran Moroccan hands buy a cup of tea and nurse it for four or five hours as they watch the Medina seethe and boil. In Istanbul there's the Pudding Shop. In Athens it's the park and Syntagma square right across from the American Express. In Madrid, Puerto Del Sol. In London it's Earl's Court or Trafalgar Square or Piccadilly Circus. In Belgrade what few freaks there are wander down to the train station to see who's passing through. In Amsterdam--Dam Square, Florence--the plaza outside the Uffizi gallery.

But back to Morocco. Judy takes my canteen and brings me back two chocolate mint milkshakes. Jim had to catch the five in the morning bus to Casablanca. He gets up and we all mumble good-bye and promptly go back to sleep.

The odds of such a meeting seem quite incredible until you realize that all of us travel in the same general grooves. Still it shakes one up (pleasantly) when you meet people you knew in Agadir later in Oxford, or people you knew in Crete you meet in Agadir, or someone you vaguely

knew in San Diego comes up to you in Amsterdam. All of these meetings occurred-much to everyone's surprise. A good friend of ours (Pinkey) was in Florence trying to remember Italian art history and wishing for her old high school teacher when he walked up with a whole high school class from her old school in Ottawa.

Judy is an early to bed early to rise addict, more out of her physiology than any personal philosophy. Sue, on the other hand, stays up to all hours then insists on sleeping till eleven or twelve. Skip leaned toward Sue's hours and so do I. Poor Judy tries very hard to be understanding but she gets very pouty and petulant as the hours drift by in a cloud of hash smoke and delightful, if completely meaningless, conversation. It's a continual hassle but never a real problem. It is rather impressive (to me anyway) how some very different people could live and travel together, and yet suffer from relatively little friction. Of course, we're together by choice, not chance, but the decision is not necessarily on criteria ensuring intimate compatibility. After all, members of the old culture seldom lived with their friends for any extended period of time. But I have lived with or crashed at, or suffered with, almost every real friend I have.

It is in Marrakesh that we are all brought face to face with the American balance of payment problem. One morning wild rumors circulate about the exchange rate for the dollar. It has dropped some 40%. The Canadians have many a good laugh but the next day Trudeau frees the Canadian dollar and it falls as hard as ours. In a few days both the dollars regain about 25% of the loss. From then on already confusing calculations about when and how much money to cash are complicated by speculations about the floating dollar rate, and sometimes closed banks.

I would advise anyone taking more than 500 dollars to carry German Marks. They usually gain in value over time. (You can even get Mark traveler checks.) In a few years the Yen might be negotiated almost everywhere because of swelling tides of Japanese tourist.

The sudden jump in economic curiosity is quite touching and real as countless stoned freaks wave smoking hash pipe and declare, "Like this economics stuff is really important." My own knowledge is limited by the disbelief in the science as such. An Econ 1 course, the *Time* magazine sections, and a few classics such as Marx and Adam Smith have not convinced me that the economists know what's going on. The stock market acts like a group of frightened children. Each time the Economy does something no one thought it could do they rush out and tinker with the old systems basically by making them vaguer and more predictably useless, or someone will invent a new approach which doesn't explain anything except

perhaps the surprise. Not that anyone predicts any surprises. If they were predicted they wouldn't be surprises.

By the by I'm a socialist. That happened rather suddenly at Stanford when I took Econ 1 from a radical professor whose text was by the non-Marxist socialist Heilbroner. I was a very disenchanting Libertarian at the time. Libertarianism is fine if you're born rich or you enjoy working in some profitable field, but from a dishwasher's perspective it is less than beautiful.

My nature is to seek a coherent rational and avid pragmatism. Pragmatism may help you get there but then you won't know why you came. Besides it doesn't really work. It's created the quasi-private monopolistic system we have today, which may turn out all the colored toilet paper we can want but it doesn't do a hell of a lot for the poor or contribute much to the higher needs of man.

Libertarianism was at least simple. I was quite a hypocritical Libertarian, favoring socialized medicine and large public works. I have a profound dislike for communism, which is really just another religion. I found *Das Kapital* as unsupported, contradictory, and creatively defended as the *Bible*. The communists I have met have ranged from bullies to very wonderful people but all are close-minded fanatics. So I shied away from socialism fearing the communist swamp.

When I read Heilbroner's books I tried to discredit what I read but it all held together quite nicely and I found myself in complete agreement where I knew something about the specific issue, such as the uselessness of GNP as a measure of people's happiness or really much of anything.

Being but a neophyte I'm open to change, but certain aspects of my economic views are limited by my personal conception of Ethics, Life's purpose (or lack of it), etc. I find socialism most compatible with my rather electric humanism but there's a lot to be said for primitive anarchism.

On a more primitive level of economics I became an extremely adept bargainer. Having some conception of the acceptable prices is extremely useful but getting there is half the fun. I have a number of things to buy, gifts, things for Kathi and Hal who had thrust money on me the night before leaving the Canaries, and things I wanted for myself. When I walk into the shop to buy Kathi's jalava I tell the owner I'll pay 20 dirham.

"150," he replies.

"Don't kid me I'm no tourist," I snap back.

"130," he offers.

"I have been in Marrakesh three months."

"70."

I don't have time to waste."

“60.”

“Do you think the shop next door is...?”

“40.”

“Here is your twenty dirham,” as I exit with the jalava.

“25?”

“Shalom.”

The Arabs are furious but what can they do? 20 dirham is 20 dirham, and the local price.

Sue is a master. When I finally find a cape I like we do a theatrical scene of twenty minutes, I debate with her on whether or not to buy the cape and then discuss raising the money by not eating for two days. Then we stage a pocket-by-pocket search, as a finale Sue ransacks her purse for any loose change. We get it for 22 dirham and leave a couple of rather bemused shopkeepers in our wake.

Shopping with Judy and Sue is a pain. The Arab men are continually grabbing the girls under one pretext or another. Sue claims it doesn't bother her but Judy loathes it and hits several of the more obnoxious Arabs. I try to be threatening and protective but I never see anything. The Arab lecher's hand is faster than the stoned hippie's bloodshot eye. Finally, late one night as we're shopping deep within bazaar land, Sue is accosted in a shop with several Arab men; I hear a loud yelp and then a crash. Sue huffs out madder than a wet hen. (I know it's a cliché and Sue will never forgive me but it is incredibly apt.) “That bastard,” she explains, “I hit him with my purse.” Since her purse is 1½ by 1 foot and made of heavy leather I figured we are probably way ahead in the game. I'm nervous, because still weak from being sick I can't imagine I'll be any good in a fight. But the Moroccans, to their credit, think the whole thing is hilarious and so we leave unmolested.

One last incident is very unpleasant. One night at a milk shake bar a small Arab of about 15 sits next to us and immediately starts chatting up (making a pass at) Susie. Since Christine is with Chuck and Judy is with me he figures she is fair game. In a singsong accented montage of hip slang from the sixties he asks for her first about music and then how much she likes sex.

There is something repelling about a 15 year old greasy Arab punk asking a friend of mine “You dig sex huh honey??” I ask Sue if she wants me to have him go and she says no and then tries to ignore him. The vibes are very bad. Finally his friends are leaving so he wants to shake our hands before he splits. I won't shake his hand; he isn't any friend of mine. When Judy doesn't shake it either he spits on the table in front of us. Chuck grabs him by the throat and almost throws him off the balcony. He leaves spewing

a mixed bag of English, French, and Arabic curses and threats. There are no recriminations (somewhat to my disappointment) but it does make for a suspenseful walk home at two a.m. There are thousands of such precociously vile children in Istanbul and Marrakesh.

Judy and I are anxious to leave Marrakesh and get to Spain where Rob, an Australian she'd met in Athens, lived within sight of Gibraltar. I, of course, insist on first trying to hitch out. We get up at seven and catch a bus into the new city. Then we walk about a mile down the road to Casablanca figuring a hitch there, and then to Tangiers, would be easier than straight north to Fez, a little traveled route.

It's a pleasant sunny day and we're quite happy just talking and playing little games. After a couple of hours the local grammar school lets out one of its shifts and a swarm of seven to ten-year olds wash around us, quite friendly, if a little shy. One little girl talks to Judy in broken French.

Two hours later when there is another surge of kids, they take a dislike to us and form a large menacing crowd. Perhaps not menacing since I tower over them, but large (30 to 40). They become quite free with their hands so we start asking them to step back. Finally they get bored and move off. As they leave they have a few feeble stones at us. We give no response at all and that seems to be that.

A little later a car stops but it's going more west than north so we don't take it. The next crowd of kids commence rock throwing as soon as they approach us. Perhaps they heard of this neat game from their friends in the earlier class. It's an extremely ineffectual bombardment. A passing Arab chases them off once and apologized to us but they soon reappear. There are perhaps 15 or 20 throwers and another 150 spectators. About the throwing percentage at a student riot. Perhaps it's some kind of constant. They form an arc around us. We sit talking with an occasional rock landing ten to twenty yards away from us. If they get to close Judy or I stand up and they instantly withdraw. Every ten minutes or so I sortie out shouting "Sid fallak" which means, I was told, "shove off." It was recommended by a Dutch guy I met in Tan-Tan and he promised that it was effective. But it's ignored completely. I probably mispronounce it.

The situation however slowly degenerates along with my sense of humor. Finally a rock hits me in the leg. I see the little guy who threw it and I set off after him. He is already maybe 40 yards away and running hard, but of course being almost three times as old and twice as fast I quickly close the range. With many a terrified over the shoulder glance he starts weaving in and out of the local traffic. After a long hundred-yard dash I catch him grabbing his shoulder I turn him around and say, "You're it."

Completely exhausted from the unusual exercise and shocked by the realization that if he had been slower or I faster I might have actually hit the little bastard when I caught him. I stagger back to Judy. She is impressed by how quickly I'd overtaken him but I contemplate my low estate. Once a high school track star now reduced to running down eight-year-old Arabs. We've been hitching seven hours with one car stopped so far. For three and a half bucks we can ride all the way to Spain. Why sit there as targets? We retreat to the old section of town for one last night in Marrakesh.

Getting up at the infernal hour of 4:30 we catch the 5:00 bus to Casablanca. It's an uneventful ride heightened mainly by dreams of solid food, music, and new books. I feel pretty weak. We have to wait eight hours in Casablanca where we meet a wonderful collection of international freaks bent on leaving Morocco just as fast as possible. There's an Australian girl, a Scotsman, a Los Angelino, and four Canadians. The bus for Ceuta leaves at 11:30 that night so once we board it we fall into lethargy. It is a typical all night ride in a bus filled with smelly freaks, smelly Arabs and smellier cigarette smoke.

By the border us freaks are the only ones left, which suits us fine. The border is no hassle except for the problems Judy has for not getting stamped in Tan-Tan, an attempted kiss by one border guard who befriends her beaurocratically. She fends him off and we're free of Morocco.

## Chapter 8: We Aren't Cursed With Infinite Solitude

Ceuta at 5:30 is pretty slow. It is a beautiful little town, which probably needs exploring. Most people just pass straight through which is what we do. Money changing, ferry ticket buying, bathroom finding, food obtaining, and we make the morning ferry.

It is a pleasant cruise across to Algeceris but it becomes very frightening. Sue has decided to bring a great deal of hash into Franco's Spain. She wraps her stash in foil and puts some up her cunt and some up her ass but she has so much that she has one big cube that doesn't fit. She decides to carry it until right before the customs check in Spain and then pop it in her mouth. We cruise across the straits right up to Spain. She pops the cube in her mouth. Then the ferry stops. We sit there for an hour. Sue chews gum and so, inevitably, the foil around the hash starts to come apart. We try and get her to stop chewing but she can't. Soon flecks of hash start appearing in her teeth. We tell her not to smile. But she is soon so stoned she has to smile. So we kiss her. She chews her gum more, the hash dissolves more, there are more flakes in her teeth so we kiss her more. We end up very stoned, almost as stoned as her. When we finally get to the customs, our packs are thoroughly searched.

The others we are with find digs but Judy and I are heading up the beach to Estapona where Rob lives. We eat dinner together at the most incredibly greasy little diner I've ever had the misfortune to visit. Then off to Rob's. We find Rob's apartment but no one is there. Then a distinguished looking English gentleman shows up and assuring us Rob is in the bar he takes us in tow. Right to the bar where we find Rob waiting for the postman who, since he stops at all the bars between Algeceris and Malaga, doesn't always run to schedule.

Rob proves a most magnificent host. We talk, read, listen to music, sun incessantly and eat incredibly well. In the afternoon we go up to the bar and wait for the mail. I have several periods of extreme disorientation, which begins with a powerful need to scratch the inside of my skull. Not scratch so much as bring pressure against it. When I was in junior high school I had once developed a nervous tic, which caused me to continually raise the pressure in my ears. I finally stopped doing it but it wasn't easy. All this pressure business is only the beginning of the usual useless fear and nausea. (These were the last "attacks" of this nature I've had, as I've learned somehow how to continuously deflect them. But I've never suffered so severely from physical and emotional exhaustion again either.)

Sue comes after four days. A few days later we set out to see the rest of Spain. It's decided we'll check out Seville, and then Madrid. I want us to try the hitching--me alone and Judy and Sue together.

I help an Australian family fix their VW van so they give me a ride to Malaga but it's no go from there. I try to get a bus but it's full, I take the train. I meet a young Argentinean, Nestor, and we talk for hours. I am a worse than mediocre Spanish student but I find we can discuss the complex political problems of South America easily, if in the simplest terms.

I don't get into Granada until ten o'clock. Nestor gives me a ride in his cab to the post office where I am supposed to meet Judy and Sue or at least get a note from them. At first the post office guards tell me that there is no note. Then one asks if my name is Chris when I reply in the affirmative he goes searching through the waste paper basket and retrieves, in several pieces, directions to a nearby pension. I put them together and go off. On the doorstep I find Judy and Sue again. It's shocking to realize how much I've missed them, especially Judy. I thought I'd been guarding my feelings carefully but that is no easy chore if left only to the conscious mind. My unconscious has, unfortunately, strong fears about taking another big chance, another grand passion. These barriers are at the very center of my being. My outer breastworks are conscious and although their construction dates from the same source they are more easily seized.

Bullshit aside I am washed with relief and great tenderness. The next day we visit the Alhambra. Much more impressive than the Acropolis or anything architectural in Florence. We decide to junk the hitching, as the trains are so cheap. Besides, Judy and Sue have had a lot of male chauvinist hassles. We go to Seville so Judy can make a telephone connection with her ex-boyfriend, Fred, in South Africa.

Fred has woken up several months after Judy's departure to realize he loves her. By now he has lost her through the uncommunicativeness of his letters and the repression of his emotions. His desperation leads to bitterness so it's all rather hard on Judes who cares for him a great deal but worries that they might be basically incompatible. The telephone call never comes off in Seville. It's a fantastic place anyway. I love Spain very much for the beauty of its towns and the grace of its way of life. Everyone moves and acts with great personal dignity. Perhaps it would be a pain to live there but it certainly deserves a long visit.

After several days in Seville we take an all night train to Madrid. We are moving too fast but travel has certain pressures of its own. The excitement and the illusive sense of progress that comes from moving on, grows stronger, not weaker, as you wind your way home.

All of us (and in fact almost everyone who I knew traveling) are very interested in getting mail. It's a strong desire to suppress, even if you want to. I can go a month or so but then I just have to know. Next trip I'll do better (maybe) but letters are such a seemingly real token of someone's affection or interest. Our mail is in Madrid.

A typical all night train trip lightened by a French Canadian woman's detailed story of her young athletic nephews lingering death from cancer. Getting somewhere at five thirty or so in the morning seems to be an inevitable and unfortunate aspect of vagabonding. Yet it's better than getting there in the middle of the night. We stagger towards the Puerto Del Sol and make a delightful discovery at a café on our own way: Madrid's hot chocolate. Magnifico--so soothing. The Spanish café con leche is superb as well. A truly civilized drink so unlike American coffee. I try to avoid coffee when possible but it's hard to turn it down in Spain.

With a surprising amount of hassle we find a nice little pension very near everything. Then we hurriedly split for the Post Office. A number of letters are there for me: my faithful parents, JB, and Alicia. Alicia's letter is very interesting. My feelings towards her are confused and I'm trying to work them out. The letter reeks of vague hints and unspoken possibilities. She's still living with Larry (as she has been from the first week I left but she first admits it in this letter)... Satisfactory, if not complete bliss. When I'd first left I tried to get her to come with me. No luck. But she used to imply she might join me later. As she collects more and more cats I begin to discount the possibility. I'd loved her completely and only, up until Athens when I got to know Arlene. That came to naught but my love for Kathi destroyed any monogamous illusions I had. Over the long run it is Judy that has changed me most. So easy to live with. No ego games, no screaming fights. Just good times and good communication. Perhaps a lot of this improvement is due to my own growing; indeed I had grown a lot just in my time with Alicia. But basically I think it's Judy. She points out that she's five years older than Alicia, which makes a hell of a lot of difference. She doesn't emphasize it, but she is five years older than me as well.

Young girls may be easy to light on fire but they are easy to get burnt on as well. Most women (but not all--always exceptions such as Arlene) who have really been mellowed out and are easy to get on with without bruising are at least in their middle twenties. Older than that I don't know. After five years difference they're a little too old for me. I'm not a gigolo after all. Of course, age is no guarantee but a lot of young dangerous girls will grow into fantastic lovers, not only in the physical but in the true sense of the word. Of course some women are bad news forever.

Alicia asks if I'm with anyone or care for anyone I'm with. When I'd first split she had said she wanted to know where my head was at but no unnecessarily details about my love life. I'd tried to be candid about my head and discreet about Judy. But if she wants to know... I write that we'd been traveling together... and that she is easy to live with... and I feel I love her but I'm not going to do any settling down for a long time and I lived in California and Judy lives in Cape Town.

To jump ahead of the story a little my next letter from Alicia is a breezy guide to her cat kingdom combined with advice to me about not going on a "head trip" or not being "mellow." The message is obvious. Judy burnt her. Whether it was a surprise or not is hard to say, although I wouldn't be surprised if it was. I had been fanatically monogamous when with her, fueled by my jealousy and romantic temperament. My strange unhealthy love had died a slow death but now that it's dead, it's gone. From the age of ten to the age of eighteen I had advocated abolishing marriage and much experimentation before the final pair bond. I guess in the end I'm still monogamous, especially to one woman at a time, and in a belief (should I say weary hope?) that eventually one life-mate will be found. I only entertained romantic illusions of the "only one for me" variety during my Alicia days. I had Alicia on a pedestal and when I finally took her down I was washed by a wave of incredible bitterness.

During our various heavy crises I had always forgiven her both verbally and in my heart. But perhaps I'd just deeply repressed a lot of my resentment. Now all the pain comes back and I wonder why I had ever bothered to go through it. Back in California I had cried until my stomach ached and then cried even more because I thought I might very well kill myself (I was extremely afraid of dying). Rather ludicrous logically, but so very real. What for? For empty promises broken and re-broken? So I decide to just wait until I get back to P.A., see what she's like in real life, and do what feels right.

On the other side of the coin Judy calls Fred and gives him the good bye. He asks for writing privileges, which she grants. (This was an excellent decision since they are now friends. As are Fred and I for that matter.) It is good to be past this phone call. It had run Judy through a whole range of crying fits, nausea, diarrhea, anxiety, and grand climax--an impressive burping exhibition lasting several days. After the call she calms down again.

Madrid is another fine city. I must admit that only the El Greco's move me in the Prado. If you've seen one bloody saint then you've seen most of the paintings there. I'm stunned by Goya as well, especially his more cynical (i.e. macabre) paintings. We spend most of our time in the

capital of Spain doing chores like shopping, eating, telephoning, etc... which in the long run gives a truer sense of the city than touring the tourist attractions. One night on returning late after watching a soccer game in the restaurant over where we ate dinner we find our pension locked. When we explain our problem to some loitering teenagers they immediately start clapping rhythmically. At first we think that it's a put on, but they convince us that it's really the way to summon the street porter with a master key. Musically they are quite good so we just listen to them for ten minutes. As the porter appears in the distance someone who lives on the lower floor comes home and grudgingly lets us in. Finally we tire of Madrid.

Once again Judy and I will try and hitch while Sue takes the train to Barcelona. On the morning of the twelfth Judy and I shuffle out to the beginning of the auto route, which runs through Zaragoza to Barcelona. We are there three hours without anything happening when we meet a young Black guy from New York. There are hardly any Blacks traveling around and what few there are come from French or British colonies, or from the mother countries themselves. There are a number of obvious reasons young American Blacks don't travel: lack of money, lack of information about how easy it is, and the perhaps false assumption that the rest of the world is as inevitably hostile to them as the U.S. The black GI's in Germany speak of the discrimination there but at one time they were treated better than the whites. The story is their rowdiness and chip on the shoulder attitude quickly alienated the German people. I don't know if that is the entire truth but I've heard it from GI's of every color, as well as Germans who ranged from obviously racist to extremely radical. The Black GI's don't take home good stories.

It is my own belief that as soon as the American Black population succeeds materially they will become the center, or at least the mainstay, of reactionary political power in the U.S. A look at the ethnics (Irish, Polish, etc.) climb to equality shows the same pattern. Where once they were mistreated minority's they are now the heart of the Wallace block.

Since the Blacks will be the last major group to reach real material prosperity, of the over abundant American variety, they will have no one to try and club off the bottom rung of the ladder. But there will be someone trying to knock it all over--the counter culture or its off shoots, and perhaps there the Blacks will find their enemy.

It would be a mistake to think that the three minorities of Indian, Black, and Chicano, will inevitably stay on the same side of our fence. For what most of them want is just their fair share of the apple pie, not a whole different meal. Those radicalized by their struggle and the resultant

oppression, and those with more insight, will share the desire for a whole new life style. But the radical minority today will be a radical minority tomorrow.

At Stanford Irma did a little study showing the majority of new Chicano students want to pass into the white world unnoticed. They want to deal with it on its terms. There is still the activist minority but they spend a lot of time involved in Chicano culture.

To wander further off the subject, which ostensibly is hitching out of Barcelona, I'd like to now alienate most of my Black and Chicano friends. Why should they want to re-establish or preserve their cultures? Of course, there are interesting things in their heritage, such as music, food, and language. But at another level, that of the really crucial concepts, I don't see much that's really worth saving.

While the American Black may claim to look back on his tribal heritage, odds are he has no idea what tribe he came from. They could have been fierce cannibals or a matriarchal group of peaceful root eaters. So collectively the Black can only look back to his slave days where you find shattered family structure, and a powerful, if hidden, hatred for the whites. Of course radical Blacks are building their pride not on this old culture or any old culture but on their own. The inaccurate claims bother me though. As does the new culture: clothes, status, and being cool.

The Chicanos face a greater problem in that their culture is still very strong in many small towns and in the barrios of the American southwest. It is Catholic, patriarchal, conservative, racist, (against blacks, Filipinos, Puerto Ricans) and materialistic. The many clashes between young Chicanos and their Mexican-American parents show the great gulfs between the modern freedoms and the old ways. At Stanford when a bunch of Chicanas formed the Chicana Collective the Chicano boys they usually interacted with were quite upset. Within Mecha there is continual friction between liberated women and macho male activists.

Just as woman's lib is incompatible with "white American" culture, it is incompatible to Chicano and Indian cultures as well. In fact, much more so. In the matriarchal Black ghetto it comes face to face with the growing pride of male Blacks, and so even there it looks like there's a contradiction between Black pride and woman's equality. I will talk about woman's lib, which is extremely important to me, further on at some equally irrelevant point.

Perhaps it is my mixed heritage (Irish, English, Scottish, French, German, Spanish, Catalan, Austrian, Hungarian, Polish, Czechoslovakian, Jewish, and Californian Indian.) that leaves me so unmoved by appeals to

the past. I am a western man with a love of rationalism and individuality. I have tried to wed this to intuitive wisdom (emotive wisdom?) and deep social responsibility, which have been sub currents in Western civilization, but major concepts in the East. The old cultures of every stripe are built in various forms of mentally accepted repressions, male/female, young/old, racist, rich/poor, and a whole spectrum of lies, taboos, and conventional wisdom. I can't believe any of it. I want something new and consistent and I'll make it myself if necessary.

Well we rap to this Black dude about the relative merits of New York and California. He is into the country and hates the "City." "To many horse (heroin) addicts." He'd seen California and found it "Okay" but not his bag. A very mellow dude. He tries hitching a little and then catches a bus. I am struck with a powerful longing to go back to the U.S. where such people abound. Or so I remember. The memory is a false and colorful thread in a labyrinth.

About a half hour later a Canadian couple comes up and asks us about the luck. For the Spanish soldiers it's great. We've seen over twenty disappear into Fiats already. For us, not so good. Judy and I immediately like David and Pinky. Very good vibes---but deep down I almost don't want to get to know them. Already I'm thinking of the parting with Judy and Sue and I remember every painful separation of my trip from the moment I left Palo Alto. So many people I'd really wanted to know swept away by the currents of time and place. My optimistic belief that I will inevitably see those I care about again has grown weaker under the continual pounding of a thousand good-byes.

We talk a little and then hitch separately. No address exchange. Finally after having been there seven hours Judy and I decide to take the train and keep Sue company. Wishing David and Pinky luck we split for downtown Madrid and the subway out to the train station.

As far as combining adequate efficiency with extremely cheap rates the Madrid subway system is the best I've seen. Barcelona's is just as cheap but much less extensive. The German ones are extremely clean and efficient but much more dear. And London's is incredible in both scope and price, both large. A subway system shouldn't necessarily make money or even break even. Roads don't show a profit.

We catch the train and eventually find Sue. In the compartment with us are three nice American guys, one from Wisconsin and two from L.A. They are Eurorail cardholders all so they suffer from that common malady--railroad O.D. They have ridden trains every night for the last week, visiting various cities during the day. You must spend at least several days in a city

to get even a rudimentary feeling of it's special charm (if any) and to make all those little discoveries, like the best souflaki stand (in Thessalonika right over the youth hostel, in Athens near the flea market) or pomes frites (in Amsterdam one block up from the train station towards Dam square). I would never recommend a Eurorail pass. It inflicts its limitations on your trip. There is always the pressure to move-move-move. Why spend money to stay in a hostel or why go through the hassle of finding a place to crash, when you can always sleep on the train? If you call that sleep.

We know Barcelona from having been there before for a day. Actually Judy has been all through Spain at the beginning of her trip but her sense of direction is worse than poor and as there is some friction generated at first by my demands for directional information she can't supply we all decide to pretend that none of us had ever been to any of these places before.

We find a pension without too much difficulty and crash out.

At the Barcelona American Distress the depth of bureaucratic doublethink are revealed to me in all its splendor. To use the mail services you must either be an American Express customer or pay a charge of ten cents (5 pesetas). Sue has used all her checks up in Southern Spain and had written to England (where she left her reserve) asking for her friend to forward some more. When she goes to pick them up, American Express demands the five pesetas, as she can't prove that she is a customer. I ask if she can have a refund once she shows the checks. No way. Once they've got even 5 pesetas they'll never let it go. I stalk out and have boycotted American Express ever since. I recommend Cook's or Barclay's. Excellent courteous service. American Express is a good financial investment. Their profit margin is phenomenal, verging on the criminal.

Barcelona is one of my favorite cities. It is more cosmopolitan than Madrid and seems younger. The Ramblas, which is the major street/mall leading up from the docks into the heart of the city, is incredible in its powerful sense of self. A street where things happen--such as gun battles between Israeli and Arab spies.

The most impressive single building I've ever seen is Gaudi's still unfinished cathedral "La Sacrada Familia." It is unearthly. The only terrestrial architecture it resembles are the dribble sand castles of childhood. But on such a scale as the comparison is almost useless. Work continues on it intermittingly having already lasted more than a hundred years. I hope it's finished in my lifetime.

Barcelona is surprisingly cold. We spend some time trying to find a van ride to Italy. The hitching in France is supposed to be the worst in Europe. There is a young American with a big English bus that he's been

driving through France, Holland, Spain and Switzerland in something of a regular route. He's not interested in taking home a lot of money but rather in paying for his own trip. Some owners of buses or vans are incredible rip offs. The less said about such low lifes the better.

Two days before we are supposed to leave we are down at the port authority building looking for the bus (the Blue Goose) when Steve, Phil, and Frank (From Ta and the Salam truck ride) literally run right by us. Phil is late for his boat to Ibiza. We didn't get a chance to say much to Phil but we spend some good time with Steve, and Frank before we leave. They had hitched the coast route up Spain through Malaga, Alicante, Valencia, to Barcelona. Apparently it's much better hitching then the interior, there being more traffic.

The Blue Goose is headed to Switzerland so we plan to get off at Avignon. It's a French town half way through the Cote' de Azure. Then we'll hitch (or walk) the rest of the way. Sue is going to look for a hitching partner to take the train. The day before departure we see David and Pinkey for five minutes boarding a big Mercedes van which we have rejected due to the owner's ethics. They are headed for Greece via Italy. The van will only take them to Avignon as well. They had gotten a ride to Zaragoza an hour after we had left and had made Barcelona the next day. This brought home to me the reason for our hitching failures in Greece, Morocco, and Spain. We had given up. You'll always get a ride--eventually. One guy I met had hitched the Sahara desert. He'd waited at on oasis four days when he finally saw a truck coming. He had time to strike his tent and pack up before it got to him. It didn't even slow down. Three days later the next truck stopped.

Of course in the southern countries it's debatable if the hassle is worth the bit of money you save or the people you meet because the trains are so cheap and you meet people on the trains. But in France there is no question. It is too expensive any other way. It's get a ride or learn French and settle down.

We sleep that night on the bus and the next morning we get off on the proper road with Sue and her newly found hitching partner. Judy and I win first spot with a coin flip. It's several hours before we get a short ride to the other side of the town where there's a better place to hitch. Several more hours before an elderly couple take us some eight kilometers. And several more hours before some dirty old man takes us another 15. A few hours later he picks us up again and drives us some 15 more. This time I sit in the front seat instead of Judy.

After a full days hitching we have barely covered 40 kilometers. I'm not that disappointed. In fact, I'm not disappointed at all. We slip into some

woods and make camp. The next day is extremely windy. We walk to a roadside café and there try our luck. We later learn that we are square in the path of the Mistrial, which is not the warm zephyr Judy remembers from her geography but is an ice-cold gale. We developed a strategy to cope with it. I stand on a little ledge of this gazebo like wooden box and peer over the top for a car. When one is sighted (there isn't all that much traffic) Judy goes out and hitches. About four cars stop for Judy alone but speed off at the sight of me. Finally a nice businessman in a Mercedes, being either nicer than the rest or less honest, takes us both some 25 K's. We don't wait long before a dirty dark little Dushavo stops, smoking and spitting. It barely manages to get going again. The driver, a young med student, invites us home for lunch. We leave the paved road and precede over a tortuous dirt track to his isolated house. There his wife, who is also studying medicine, greets us warmly. They had a newborn baby and we spend hours talking about their lifestyle and life in general. There's a feast of potatoes a la bacon, cheese, bread, and wine. They confess that they hardly ever go in to the university except for exams. They have a good friend who is an excellent note taker. They are also rather anti-French, finding their countrymen, conservative, egotistical, and unfriendly.

Every French person I met hitching is extremely warm and kind. But the people on the streets are rude and cold, as are service people like, waiters, clerks, etc. In France perhaps one in five hundred cars will pick you up. In Germany the ratio is maybe one in sixty and in the U.S. about one in thirty. (Measured at an optimum hitching spot- room to stop, slow traffic, etc.)

The extreme differences in hitching by country are quite remarkable. Italy is excellent, yet I can't even guess at why they are so different from their French and Spanish cousins. Austria has a very bad reputation (although I've never had trouble there) yet Germany is generally considered to be the best on the continent, along with Holland.

After lunch Pierre drives us to the main road. We hitch for about an hour without any inspiration. A nearby collapsing abandoned farmhouse beckons us off the road. We make our bed on a gigantic mound of straw. I wander into a nearby village and spend the last of our paltry francs on food. Once out of the Mistrial the weather is flawless: sunny and cool. We eat well on cheese, bread, tinned fish and chocolate. There is no hurry. Italy isn't going anywhere. It's a fine night and a soft clear sunrise.

To go with the slow hitching I decide to work on darning the fraying edges of my Moroccan cape. This changes our luck. Minutes after starting a van stops and takes us almost to Cannes. The driver is with his small son. I

wrestle the little tiger for at least an hour leaving him the victor. The next ride is a short one with an elderly couple who go through a great deal of trouble to fit us in. They leave us on a pleasant tree lined stretch of road. I start making plans for camping out. There isn't too much traffic except for a number of semis (road trains they call them in Europe), which are ripping by at one hundred K per hour. The third or fourth one Judy hitches throws on all its breaks and stops in a cloud of dust half a K down the road. I didn't believe it. We run to it anyway and have a ride to Cannes.

The driver kindly drives right through downtown Cannes to show us the flowers. The Cote de Azure is one big avenue--very bad to hitch--so we spend a few bucks and bus to the border. We walk into Italy as the sun sets.

The rocky Italian Riviera is easily more spectacular than the French. A mile into Italy we step off the road and camp on a small promontory overlooking the Mediterranean far below. The moon shines on the peaceful waters and the small Italian city lying below decorates the coastline, a muted string of Christmas lights. To the west we can see the lights of the French coast drawing a line between Europe and Africa.

The next morning, after some confusion over roads, we catch a truck all the way to Genoa. At Genoa we make the mistake of hitching the wrong road. We stand three hours at a tollbooth entrance in a small ravine. It's thick with visible diesel exhaust. We turn down countless rides to Milan. Finally Judy becomes dizzy and weak from the fumes and we retreat to downtown Genoa for new plans. She wants to take a train straight to Florence. I come up with the compromise plan of heading down the coast to a little city and then hitching on the next day after a night in a pension. Judy by now is rabid for a bath and is feeling better once she is in the relatively clean air, so she agrees. We catch a train to Rapello because it's near Portifino, of which Judy had heard good things, although what and from who she can't remember.

Rapello is a very quiet little city. We find a luxurious place for two and a half dollars each. After cleaning up we wander the city. I gorge myself on the excellent Italian ice cream. There is an international reading room where I catch up on world news. The truism that one only really appreciates physical luxuries after their denial deserves repeating.

The next day we get a ride with a maniacal driver for about ten k. He leaves us in the middle of the Autostrada, right in front of a tunnel. Parenthetically the Italians are obviously tunnel happy. Instead of moving a mountain like we do in the U.S. they bore through it. My father has assured me that moving the mountain is actually usually cheaper.

It's a terrible place to hitch, illegal, poor visibility, speeding cars. Figuring there must be an on ramp on the other side of the tunnel we walk

through it. It's interesting to see that every emergency stopping place has had its fire extinguisher stolen. The other side is no better. No ramp traffic. Judy stubbornly perseveres while I nap in the warm Italian sun. Miraculously a car stops.

It's a tiny Fiat 500 driven by a Greek exile who lives in Pisa. How the two of us fit in with our packs I'll never really know. Judy always crams in back while I sit up front, discouraging lechery. We talk politics. He tells of the shooting of seven students right in Syntagma Square. He wants us to go with him to Pisa but we're afraid Sue might be worried so we decline.

Our last ride into Florence comes from an uncommunicative employee of Shell oil who does point with pleasant irony to a big black cloud on the horizon and explains that's the reason he is going to Florence. It's an oil storage tank on fire. We bus in from the suburbs to the youth hostel, which does not require a card. Sue is already there.

After the obligatory mail run we come back and find her. Her hitching partner had not only been weak-willed but incompetent and rude as well. Suzy impresses me much with her traveling skill and the logical approach she had taken to his shortcomings. Basically she got them to Florence then bid him adieu with a thank you. I never get any mail in Florence but we run into David and Pinkey at the post office and eat dinner with them and exchange addresses. I liked them as much as I feared I would.

The Uffizi gallery is an extreme disappointment, except for the Botticelli's. But Michelangelo's David makes up for it. It's worth the trip alone. Sue is hot to see Rome and Venice so we bid her good-bye and make plans to meet her in London in a number of weeks. David and Pinkey plan to hitch Yugoslavia to Greece.

After four days in Florence Judy and I take a bus to the northern on ramp and set our sights for Innsbruck, where Michael and Ulva are working. We get a late start due to a bus strike. We don't get to the ramp until 11:30. The first car that stops can only take one so we send a Japanese guy, who is hitching behind us, off in it. Then a car stops for two Dutch girls heading to Amsterdam. Finally (after only an hour) a station wagon pulls up and off we go. The driver, an incredibly fascinating Dutchman of over seventy years, has lived in Morocco, Paris, Hungary, Spain, Germany, Holland, and now Italy. When he lets us off a big semi with "Wien" (Vienna) written on the side passes us.

We get several slow rides and each time we leapfrog past that truck. We know after our third ride that this time he will stop, just by looking at the driver's eyes. By standing out on the highway and hitching him three times we have developed a rapport that we know he cannot ignore. He comes, he

stops, we run. His destination is Nuremburg. We have a ride all the way to Innsbruck, over three hundred miles;

In the truck communication isn't as clear as it had been on the road. He speaks only German and Judy's Afrikaans has trouble getting through his dialect. But we get on well and it makes for a pleasant slow climb up to the Brenner Pass. Since there has been a major wreck on the Italian side of the boarder it's slower than usual. It's amazing that the main road between Italy and Germany is only one lane each way for many miles. I figure there are three thousand cars and trucks in the jam caused by the wreck. At the pass there is some snow, which is significant in that Judy hasn't seen snow since she was two-years-old. She tromps around in it with a beatific smile, delighting in its crunch. We get to Innsbruck at three in the morning. We bid farewell to the driver. After scaling a small embankment overlooking the road we set up camp right in a patch of snow because everything else is mud or cliff. I'm cold but indifferent. Judy is warm and cozy. That morning I go to where Ulva works. She is very surprised to see me, as the postcard warning of our arrival doesn't come until the next day. She takes us home to an old house perched on a hillside overlooking the city. They rent it with a bunch of Austrian students from a mean old miser who hates Americans.

Judy and I take what ends up being a 25-mile hike. Our goals are the twin villages of Mutters and Natters, which attract us because of their names. Judy gets to crunch in literally acres of snow, acquiring a fine sense of fulfillment and very wet feet. We get to Natters around three. It is a pristine village perfect in the clear cool darkness of the overcast sky. As we walk through it I hear a creaking noise. The village is completely quiet and deserted except for the protesting sounds of hemp against wood. As I look up the gigantic church bells clapper touches the side of the bell with a gentle moan. I watch entranced as the clapper cleanly swings down and strikes the other side with a beautiful full-bodied explosion of sound. The siege has ended, Christ has risen, a new king has been born, a pair of young lovers are married, a pair of young marrieds become lovers-- everything is in that bell. And nothing. Sound. Glorious sound thick in the air like fog. Sound rushing to embrace the hills and rushing back again. Alive.

We get to know several of Michael and Ulva's friends, especially an Austrian named Heli who has been to the U.S. He claims he is very unGerman and then he tells me he has been in exactly 27 different states and 142 different cities. He's an accurate reservoir of all sorts of numbers and percentages.

I'm keen to hear some rock music in Munich so when I find that Traffic will be playing there we decide to go. Michael and Ulva make plans

to meet us at the Hauf Bau house and then go to the concert too. We decide to leave the next day. One ride takes us all the way there: a handsome German and his Canadian airline stewardess lover. They drop us off at the city center in a driving rain. We look all over for someplace cheap to stay. On giving up we find a very luxurious gigantic room with four beds and eiderdown comforters for only four dollars each. A wise investment since it starts snowing the next day. Another thrill for Judy who has never seen snow falling. It's beautiful when you stop to see it or see it again for the first time through someone else's pleasure.

I go out to Dachau the next day. It doesn't cost anything to get into the concentration camp. You can buy a little pamphlet at the beginning to explain it. But it does point out that the prisoners planted the poplar trees that are now dying all over the place. I always thought poplar trees lived longer than thirty something odd years.

I walked out here from the little industrial town of Dachau asking people the way. Everyone knows. It's not a long walk at all. Go down to the autobahn, turn left, it's right past the soccer field.

I overhear an American mother is with her six year old daughter.

"Here's a picture of the Jews being arrested dear."

"This is where they lived."

"This is where they were shot."

The little girl seems quite white and her mouth is open as if her jaw has come loose.

There are other Americans taking pictures of each other with the SS barracks in the background. It was sunny in Munich but it's not sunny here. I wonder if it ever is.

There are signs all over the camp in five languages: German, English, Italian, French, and Russian.

Most say "Please Do Not Write on the Walls."

Usually nobody does except in the gas chamber that was never used and in the crematoriums. In one oven someone has written "All my people are here."

"Es wird Gebton Nicht an Die wande Zu Scriben"

(Please do not write on the walls)

"Prisoners were hung from here"

"Priere de ne pas ecrire sur le mur"

(Please do not write on the walls)

"Camp whipping post"

"Si Prega Di non scrivere sui muri"

(Please Do No Write on the Walls)

“Camp execution ground”

[Russian Writing]

(Please Do Not Write on the Walls)

“Electrified Wire”

(Please Do Not Write on the Walls)

When I leave the camp I go door to door in the nearby neighborhoods, confronting the Germans living there. Many admit they lived there during the war but, “We did not know.” What, they could not see? They could not smell? I am in a fog of anger for hours.

I also visit Munich’s modern art gallery, enjoyable because there’s an essay on the artistic theme of each room. Personally I strongly feel that a painting or piece of sculpture should make its own comment with out the necessity of background knowledge. In fact I want to be moved not informed. Art, I believe, is communication but the communication of a whole gamut of subjective experience beyond verbal limits. My taste is reasonably broad, encompassing David, Cezanne, Renoir, Monet, Toulouse Lautrec, Van Gogh, Goya, El Greco, and Andrew Wythe. In sculpture it includes Cellini, Michelangelo, Moore and my favorite, Rodin. I can’t find anything in most really abstract works and only a certain few pop pieces do anything to me. Picasso leaves me cold. Modern art, like much of modern poetry, has become an elitist intellectual game for a closed circle of connoisseurs and critics. If you are going to play such a game it’s only fair you let the public in on the rules, which is what they do in Munich. It may seem like it’s asking a lot of art that it should be moving and deeply gratifying at the same time that it should communicate immediately and yet have secrets that are only revealed in reflection. It should be a long tapestry to be unrolled. Beautiful from the beginning but more and more intricate. It may be difficult but it is possible. Look at Van Gogh, just look at him. Why spend your time looking at anything less?

That night, after Dachau and the art museum, we watch the snow in the twilight as we make love. Funny I should mention this time specifically. We make love almost every night. Sometimes it is very physical, very exciting...and sometimes it’s rich, tender, a pure act of love. This snowy night in Munich is such a night. A night when it almost seems possible to believe that we aren’t cursed with infinite solitude...that we aren’t *really* alone.

## Chapter 9: He Asks Me Where I've Been

The night before the Traffic concert we go to a discothèque in Swabbing and for the ridiculously low price of eight marks we get three beers and a chance to see a well-known German group called Embryo. My opinions on German music are given earlier. The demeanor of the crowd is still the most vivid memory: Zombies.

The Traffic concert is better. We go in David and Pinkey shout to us from a pair of seats over looking the door. They have given up on Yugoslavia in a driving rainstorm and are now planning on going back to Ottawa to save for another try. A good concert but it only "Bogey Wild" at the end. The others don't enjoy it as much as I do. Music is my soul's blood.

Strange to stand there in the cold German air with two couples from distant countries. Looking in their eyes and trying to memorize their features, their smiles, and their voices as they mumble good-byes.

Judy has a German friend outside of Stuttgart (a little town called Dormegan) who she had put up in Cape Town when he had visited there as an exchange student-- Hans, an architecture student extremely close to his degree. The hitching is prime and we are in the vicinity of Stuttgart by two o'clock. We overshoot the proper get off point due to my stubborn belief in the accuracy of German maps. On back tracking we again get mixed up and are lucky to find his house by darkness. A most generous host. We feast for two days on fresh milk and bratwurst and then decide to push on to Connie and Dedi, who live between Köln and Düsseldorf.

It's a hard hitch up to Dormegan involving a number of rides but we handle it well. At the right time we get a big break. When stranded on the wrong side of Rhine a woman who is washing her car offers to drive us right to the bridge. (We have to walk over.) A typical day of hitching, of seven rides five go out of their way to help us.

Getting to Dormegan we worry that Connie and Dedi might not be there, we've given them no advance notice. Their house is shockingly solid and respectable. Not exactly what we've expected. They're home and, even more fortunately, they're happy to see us.

We eat incredible quantities of food, more by accident apparently than anything else. One night an Italian guest worker from Dedi's plant comes over and cooks an immense quantity of spaghetti and roast rabbit for us and a number of young Germans who work there as well. They are all union militants and we talk politics and overeat way into the night. On top of that we spent the days, which are cold and wet, listening to music, reading, and eating various cakes, leftovers, lunches, brunches, dinners, snacks, etc...

I have lost my blue Düsseldorf flower in Italy. This bothers me a little. One morning Dedi tells us about a parade in town. It's the second annual flower parade staged by the local merchants. Despite its obviously commercial rationale, a parade is a parade. It takes place in a hailstorm, which only heightens everyone's sense of drama. The first floats toss flowers to the crowd and the later ones toss everything from beach balls to chocolate money.

As it progresses, people's lust for flowers grows greater and greater, until we're stripping the floats of all the best blossoms in a highly dramatic fashion. Dedi, in a 1930's black coat, with his wild beard and wilder hair glistening with hailstones under the reflected glow of his sparkling blue eyes, makes an immortal picture of a flower thief. It's surprising that the Germans are so undisciplined but anything is possible with Germans. Among the captured flowers is the blue plastic one that graces my pack today.

Fearing obesity and overstaying our welcome we head for Amsterdam on the ninth. I always try to leave friends I stay with when it seems they still haven't wearied of me. Succinctly, before my novelty wears off. Of course, this means I'm never staying in one place for very long. Due to the autobahn tangle created by the heavily industrial Rhineland we have a tiresome and confusing journey. At one point the police chased us off the autobahn near Aachen. We are way down an on ramp for an hour or so when I spot a Dushavo parked up on the autobahn. It's a good five minutes walk from there so I can't believe it has stopped for us. But after several minutes I say "Shit we'd might as well try." and slinging our packs on our shoulders we stagger up there. It's a ride all the way to Utrecht, which means we'll make Amsterdam that night. As soon as we climb in the car an unmarked German police car with a pop up "Politz" sign on the back, pulls us over and hits the guy with a ticket. We manage to get him to let us pay half. He is a Dutch chemist who works for an insecticide company but is anxiously trying to get into a university teaching spot. He grows all his own vegetables because he fears the effects of pest control on commercial produce. That disquiets me. When younger he had gone to Saudi Arabia with a biological method to control locusts. He thinks very highly of the Saudis and is surprised to hear our less than complimentary feelings about Moroccans. We tentatively decide that the religion/culture, which is pretty well shattered in Istanbul and Marrakesh, might be the cause of the difference.

When we get out at Utrecht we meet two different people (actually a couple and a guy) who epitomize the importance of one's approach to hitching. Of course, the fact that they are hitching puts them head over

shoulders above the rest of humanity, but even among hitchers there is a world of difference. The young German couple heading up to Amsterdam has no sign, although we are at a confusing intersection. They don't stand for cars. They're cold (no jackets), depressed (after one hour), and unhappy (then why hitch?). Since they're ahead of us we loan them our sign and do everything we can to get a ride for them. Finally, they get a ride much to everyone's relief.

The other hitcher is from New Zealand. He's headed the other way. Judy and I are laying in the grass waiting for the two Germans to be snatched up when he comes walking by.

Judy guesses Canada because of his tall rugged look and sturdy style of dress. I guess Australian because of the above but he also has a knapsack and a roll instead of a frame pack.

When he says "Ello" I chortle, "Ahhh I was right!" But Judy, who is better at colonial accents, corrects me. There is an instant and easy rapport. He looks at my Afghan coat and says, "Been to Turkey I see."

"And you?" I ask.

"Yes, but I didn't buy a coat."

"Morocco too," adds Judy who is wearing my cape.

"Yes it's nice there," he replies.

"Where are you going?" He wonders quietly.

"England then home," I answer

He asks Judy, who has a strange accent being of Zambian upbringing, "Where's home for you... America?"

"No South Africa."

"Yes, my boat stopped in Cape Town."

"How are you getting back?"

"Overland to Australia – should take three months."

"But the passes are closed now?"

"I'll winter in Greece then go in the spring."

We tell him glowing tales of Greece and he promises me that I'll like England. "They're so English" he explains with the perplexed grin of one who still doesn't know why it makes such a difference but knows it certainly does. He asks for directions to his own on ramp and I explain it to him. I'm extremely competent, in at least as regards the various possible placements of on ramps, because my father at one time was a highway engineer. He bids cheerio and I say good-bye and Judy says cheers.

We get into Amsterdam soon after that and find a cheap dormitory style crash pad. I pick up Alicia's nasty letter and three hundred dollars, which is my assurance that the English will let me in. We wander the streets

and meet some nice people and make our plane reservation for the 15<sup>th</sup> of May. We visit the Egyptian we met on the boat and his Dutch wife feeds us as if she were from the Middle East. I decide I love Egyptian food, but only half as much as she serves us. After two days and three nights I am very full and rather cold. We set out for Ostend and the Dover Ferry in still another rainstorm.

Despite the rain, occasional snow, and the very poor manners of a number of competing hitchers, we have a pleasant enough time--for we are going to England where at least they speak a reasonable approximation of our language, where the people are friendly, and where my intellectual roots are deepest. England is the place I most want to see. To make it even sweeter Judy has relatives and friends sprinkled liberally in such choice locations as Windsor, Oxford, and near Dover, while Ken has a girl who lives in the heart of London. I'm a little perturbed by news in Amsterdam that Ken has suddenly departed for home, that he wants to marry Elsie, that she has four children, and that the father had molested two of them. There is little I can do until I get to London but wonder at all this. The very word "London" wakes memories of Shakespeare, Shaw, Orwell, The Beatles, Stones, Arthur Koestler--a whole gamut of passions.

In Ostend we meet an Oxford student who hitched to Rumania and Yugoslavia during his term break. A classic Englishman (although he is Irish by birth). We have to take the night ferry so a close, if temporary, alliance of a number of diverse freaks is formed. The Oxford student, a German girl still in gymnasium, a Spanish boy hoping to get a job in Liverpool, and Judy and I. We seize a section of deck chairs and try to catch some sleep.

Colin (Oxford) wakes me up in the morning about a half hour before our theoretical docking time and pointing to the coastline that looms before us he announces "That is not England," as if someone is trying to sell him a cheap continental copy. At first I think he's attempting a little fun but his continual aggrieved insistence that "England has white cliffs," finally convinces me.

On a perfectly calm night the ferry has somehow gotten lost on a trip it makes twice a day. We are staring at France. Finding out the Captain and crew are French the English unanimously accept this as sufficient explanation. "Typical French performance," intones one mustachioed businessman. Considering that they will now all be late to London on a Monday morning when they have taken an uncomfortable night journey just to get there on time anyway, the English are remarkably unperturbed.

We finally get to England in late morning and the cliffs are indeed white. I show immigration my return ticket from Luxembourg and they give

me a six-month visa. Colin takes the Spanish boy to hitch with out of London and Judy and I set out to try and hitch to Eastbourne.

We are bone weary and soon give up the pretence and take a bus. Her Aunt and Uncle give us an extremely warm reception and separate rooms. Gilbert, her uncle, is another perfect Englishman. Keen on soccer, one night a week at the pub, wise and yet too restrained to be but a little cynical. Judy's Aunt is neat, friendly, and realistic. Much too intelligent and energetic to be a housewife, which is exactly what she is. What a waste. Their son Michael, who hopes to go to Oxford, is in Paris on an Easter programme studying French. For the first time in almost a year I feel domestically at home. Gilbert (who had sports on the tele while Judy and Margaret bustle about cooking or cleaning, exchanging family gossip and opinions) knows it's a male chauvinist set up but it's great just the same.

At this point we are planning to go to Cornwall, Wales, Scotland in our one short month so we have to hurry on. Since hitching through, and into, London is hard, and around it is impossible, and since we were going to Windsor after a flying visit to Elsie in London so I can size the situation up, we take a bus. We plan to return to Eastbourne before re-crossing the channel and heading to Luxembourg. The flying visit to Elsie proves confusing. She invites us to come stay with her after going to Cornwall, which scores her adequate marks as a freak, but rightly or wrongly, there had been no question of that in my mind. The place she lives in is a dump. There's a heroin addict crashing there that Maureen, her sister, salvaged from Piccadilly Circus. His name is Alan, and he is actually an extremely intelligent and likeable chap, although addicted since age 11 (13 years). There's another Alan living there as well: Welsh by appearance. He hardly speaks at all and does most all the domestic chores as well as waiting on others. I think it's his form of rent payment. Elsie is striking in appearance, and obviously very shrewd. She seems to have the whole relationship with Ken in a more realistic perspective than he does. She seems to have his interest in heart as much as, if not more than, her own. In short she fools me completely.

We visit a friend of Judy's on the outskirts of London named Sue Faulkner. An attractive, very intelligent girl, she seems to be going to waste. At least she enjoys her work, which is of a technical nature doing with chemistry some how. She drives us out to Windsor since PJ and his wife Charter are friends of hers as well.

PJ is a small bundle of verbose kinetic knowledge. He works for Aspero, England's main aspirin company. Because of a quasi-scientific experiment, which is supposed to prove Aspero doesn't harm your stomach,

he is off alcohol for a month. This is a heavy burden. He compensates by offering us every intoxicant imaginable and then re-offering it. If he has to suffer no one else is going to. His own research is on bismuth. It's used as a fluoroscope preparation. He immediately quizzed Judy and I on what we might know. As far as I'm concerned it's nothing. But his open-minded quest for information in the most unlikely quarters strikes me as a very admirable quality. My old Greek cough returns with a vengeance so I'm only interested in sleeping, because then I can ignore it. We lounge around in Windsor feasting as usual and barely make it over to Windsor castle. If it seems that every time we visit someone I say that we were feasting perhaps it's because it's the only time our meals have meat (other than some loathsome spread), are hot, and are less than half bread.

Our last night there is Charter's birthday. We have steak fondue which qualifies as one of the finest meals I've had. We leave the morning of the 19<sup>th</sup>. It's cold and blustery.

Now the hitching in England is supposed to be without compare. The cars will always pick you up but the lorries (trucks) get you first. So we are told. I have heard this so many times that I trouble believing how bad it is. It takes us six hours to get thirty K. Only one ride. We are near Sandhurst when we finally give up and start looking for a place to stay. We go to the larger town of Guilford by train and get a bed and breakfast. We decided to be frivolous and spend the 12 pounds for four nights, buy some books, and settle down. We cut Cornwall, Wales, and Scotland, and settle for London and Oxford, which is undoubtedly a wise choice. It takes time to do any place justice.

It's the Easter weekend so most people are heading further out from London. We are in a separate house from the owners so, with the general absence of other guests, we have a place to ourselves. There's a tele, a bath, and lots of "banned in South Africa" books Judy has brought to send illegally home. Also a few math texts, but I don't read those.

We are both very uneasy about going home. For me California and my friends have lost almost all semblance of reality. Everyone real seems to be traveling and transient, packing and moving are such dominant features of our lives. Continually new places and Judy are my only constants. My mail has finally ceased to be important. Many of my closest friends haven't written, which is understandable, but it further contributes to the emptiness of it all. Although we often talked of physical comforts we miss, foods we long for, what we'd do when... It doesn't seem nearly as attractive in England as it had in the Sahara Desert. When you're apart from someone, even a very good friend, you say, "He was a fantastic runner," or "She

walked like a sex goddess,” though they are still alive. I find myself saying, “California was incredible” or “the beaches in San Diego were flawless.”

Only the present within my perception is real. I also worry about the future. Traveling can be very satisfactory. Intuition, luck and logic are all important in making successful decisions. The continual parade of new faces, places, and countries gives you a very real, but perhaps misleading, sense of progress. Of course it’s progress or growing in the sense of mountains of experience and countless new perspectives that should help one live and accomplish one’s goal. But it’s a means not an end. Traveling as an end is inevitably sterile. I’ve met the people who do nothing but drift from one corner of the world to another. Never using what they’ve learned, not learning any more at all. They never go someplace but rather always away from the last place.

Traveling also fills up your life. I’m not lethargic but I spend a lot of time reading, or writing, or just thinking. When traveling you have to make time for these things. Of course working a boring job absorbs time too, with much less in return. Usually only money maybe exercise, a few pleasant social interactions. But I don’t think working is all so wonderful.

To try again to explain it (so far I feel I’ve been running around this elephant, which is the “sense” I’m trying to deliver up, hitting at the dirt around it and saying “See? See?”): Traveling is exciting. Every day something special happens. Something dangerous or moving, extremely funny or painful. You meet wonderful or loathsome people. You see beautiful vistas or disgusting pits. A normal life passes imperceptibly with most days softening and running into the others. But when you travel everything is sharp and clear. It’s all there. You live each moment. You can remember each day.

I wonder about what I’ll find in California to keep me content. I’m not content traveling when I have time to think about it. There is so much I want to do to make a better world. I seldom think about it and when I do I point out to myself that I am maturing, and learning, and becoming competent and capable of more self-reliance. After all I’m not yet twenty. (Still not twenty when I wrote this first – still not twenty-one but it all comes closer.) There is no reason to panic.

There are many things that call me home. The systematic learning of Stanford instead of hoping to trade for good books. A chance to play touch football and soccer regularly. A ready access to music. The stability and time to write, to learn yoga and karate, to work in counter-culture institutions such as Free Clinics, farms, co-ops, new politics. To see my

friends to see how they have grown and what they have discovered that I might use.

Judy makes me very happy and I dread our separation yet I want a chance to put it into perspective. I want to live with other women (several in particular) feeling that each one can offer a special happiness and perhaps a special pain.

I'm confused as usual.

Judy has more to worry her. She's older-- though not old-- and time is always on one's back. She feels she must leave South Africa, which means giving up her family and friends. She has her teaching, both a vocation and occupation, but that is but one of life's many needs. It seems we should be rather nervous and unhappy with all these things running through our minds but no-- it's all repressed-- working away to some conclusion. Guilford is a very mellow time.

We take a bus into London and crash at Elsie's for four days. It's like leading a double life. We go out and see the London sights and return to a filthy little room with two heroin addicts. As soon as I get there Elsie admits that her and heroin Alan are getting it on and asks me, "Shouldn't we tell Ken?"

With extreme sadness over the inevitability of it all, I realize the sooner he knows the sooner the pain will end. Deja vu. We call Sacramento and he keeps telling Elsie he can't understand her... as if there is a bad phone connection. So I tell him. At first he refuses to believe it. Then he admits he isn't surprised. Before he completely breaks apart he tells me to send his stuff home. When I start to track down Ken's possessions I should have become suspicious. Elsie says he'd put them in a bus locker and she as the key somewhere but she can't remember where. This strikes me as an incredibly stupid thing for him to do. His decision to visit home was obviously sudden so perhaps he wasn't thinking well. I judge Elsie to be rather like Alicia, though less intelligent. In need of someone to give her love, at the cost of earlier promises to other people. Then rationalizing her actions by making it some sort of tragic but inevitable triangle of grand passion. Elsie claims never to have made any promises to Ken.

Where's all his stuff I want to know? During the rest of the time in England I'm given the runaround. Finally, when I really have to leave I come to the apartment (for now Judes and I have a B and B in Earl's court) determined to get the key. Well lo and behold Elsie is presumably in a hospital with appendicitis. How convenient (though perhaps true). I search the apartment to no avail and leave with promises that they'll mail the stuff.

Since I have no communication with Ken I don't know that he has never put his stuff in any locker, that Elsie is an extremely unstable personality who has, for example, attacked him twice, and that she is a compulsive liar and often supports herself through confidence games worked with her sister.

I have developed a much different picture. I think she's kind since she keeps such immaculate care of Alan's heroin paraphernalia. I figure here as a drug oriented confused girl-- going nowhere with little speed and no regret. In this I guess I'm right but I miss her cunning. Judy, who is an accurate observer, is as completely fooled as I am.

Once I have simplistically and incorrectly pigeonholed Elsie I spend a lot of time trying to figure out Alan. My judgment toward Elsie is flawed by a desire to be fair to my brother (and give him some credit) and by her being a chick. I've been fooled by chicks before; I just hope I know of all the times. With the optimism of youth I'll pretend that I can measure people up anyway.

Alan grew up around Notting Hill, which is the heavy heroin part of London. He has been an addict since age eleven. He has been in prison three times, twice going off heroin cold turkey, which he hadn't really enjoyed, and once being led into a methadone maintenance program. He thinks methadone gives him just as real (if different) a high as smack. He doesn't feel this holds with less experienced addicts. He says that of his 15 closest mates in elementary school ;(they all had become heroin addicts together) 13 are now dead: pneumonia, O.D., and violence. He admits addicts commit most violence in London. The other addict staying with us is the survivor of the 15.

Heroin is hard to obtain because the approved government quantities are much too small for Alan or his friend. Alan claims to be tapering off and headed for non-addiction, mainly by the fact that he 's managed to go most weeks on three or four hits of heroin. Once it had been two or three fixes a day. However, he needs some sort of high every day. Marijuana or hash are useless for this. They barely affect him. During our stay he employs two heroin substitutes: Methadone and crushed Ritalin pills strained and then injected into a vein (while not a needle freak he undoubtedly benefits by the ritualistic injection which he can associate with a heroin fix.) As for the actual effect of the Ritalin, which is a blood pressure controller, I can't imagine. He does make it through the day without withdrawal.

After the Ritalin runs out and there is no available heroin or methadone he suffers extreme nausea and weakness. So, walking with me down near Victoria Station he suddenly picks up a brick and smashes a

window in a shop. Reaching in he steals a bottle of Scotch, tells me to run, and scampers back to the flat with me close behind. There, he downs most of it straight (I have a sip or two) and passes the night unconscious. For him alcohol is a viable substitute for heroin if necessary. It is interesting how he completely fails to confirm so much of my academic and second hand information on heroin addicts.

He is (or was) intelligent and thoughtful. He is curious about what I think of England and we agree that the people are wonderful but unambitious. Perhaps unambitious isn't the right way to put it. They have no hunger for knowledge or zest for life. Of course, there are brilliant exceptions but we both wonder why so few English kids travel when they're so close to Europe and have ties to places as diverse as India, the U.S., Canada, South Africa, New Zealand, and Australia. All of these countries (except India) produce more vagabond than England, as do Germany, Holland, and Scandinavia. This is true both numerically and proportionally.

The young in England are extremely peer conscious, which leads to the heavy fashion scene and the trendiness of the musical tastes. There is all too much of this in the U.S. with the hit parade and so on. In England the degree is much greater. Accepting the obvious differences English youth culture is very similar to American Black culture. There is the whole emphasis on style, clothes, cool, making the scene, being on top of the latest. Among the young there is a jadedness and a boredom that is almost frightening. What happens (or will happen) to it as the younger generation ages is a puzzle to, for I find the older people happy, secure, content to a high degree. They display the same general low levels of education and zest of the younger people but without the frustrated searches for amusing occupations. There is always the tele and the tabloids.

The Intellectuals of England seem even more cut off from the mass of the people than in the United States, if this can be believed. The extremely low quality of nine out of ten newspapers is just one sign of this: Sensationalism. Perhaps the older people find their distractions vicariously? I blame it on the class system, which still operates largely through a rating of accents. The early streaming of children into higher and technical education is also a big problem. The percentage of English students going on to University is low compared with the U.S. The States leads the world in the attempt to really educate a whole people. We are obviously far from that maybe impossible goal. Yet it is one of my basic reasons for optimism. Studies have shown that educated people are less racist, less authoritarian, and that they vote more often and more liberally.

The potential vitality of England can be seen in Bertrand Russell and the Beatles, as diverse and wonderful as they both are. Their affect on the people of England is much less than their effect on me. The heirs to the Beatles in English music are a succession of publicity creations with hardly anything near their depth and creative potential. Without a doubt England is more pleasant than the U.S. (or any where else I've been). It is mainly the people who are so incredibly warm, yet reserved, self-assured yet respectful. If this is due to the other patterns of English culture I so disapprove of, perhaps it is a fair exchange. The English are a truly civilized, tired, people.

We wander widely on various excursions and chores. I visit the Imperial War Museum, which is so, so, English. We walk countless miles looking for friends. We find Sue the first time in London wandering Trafalgar Square. She is wearing her jalava, of course. We go to a few pubs with her and then take a bus to Oxford.

Judy has a good friend who is a doctor at St. Mary's hospital and also a graduate student at St. John's College. We get in rather late so we take a Bed and Breakfast. The next day Judy calls Gwynne (the doctor) and he has us come over. He arranges to have us crash right in the temporary staff quarters. This involves getting up before eight and a few other minor deceptions. All in all it's extremely comfortable. Then out we go to an excellent pub where we have a fine meal. Such a pub, all old wood and weathered stone. The placard swinging in the breeze/the Austin Martins pulled up in the muddy grass in front.

Gwynne is the first doctor I've ever known on more of a personal than professional level. I must say I'm impressed. His razor sharp mind and advanced powers of observation make him seem quite Sherlockian to a layman such as myself. This applies to his medicine. In some fields he's quite close-minded, especially as concerns ESP in psychology and radicalism in politics. But then most people are close-minded about such things. As a doctor though both in diagnosis and the applied psychology of patient manipulation, he is remarkable.

It is probably not a coincidence that all of Judy's friends we meet in England are impressive both personally and in their fields. This is both a reflection on Judy and an indication of the brain drain suffered in England's ex-colonies.

Another friend of hers is a demographer at Oxford. During the course of the inevitable discussion of what might happen if the government in South Africa became more repressive, I ask him if he'll ever go back. His family is rather political, with at least one cousin in exile. He replies, "Only if I have to."

“What would determine you had to,” I ask.

“If things get bad enough.”

We looked up Colin and go to a number of lectures with him, three in history, one in psychology. He points out that two to three fifths of the lectures that are scheduled are never completed, due to a lack of attendance. I can see why. Two lectures are excellent, one mediocre, and one terrible. He says that’s the normal distribution. This is worse than Stanford, which I would say is 70% excellent, 20% mediocre, and 10% terrible. Another major flaw in the Oxford system is the specialization. History majors are generally only in history courses, etc. The great strength is, of course, the tutor. One of which each student has. But if your tutor is no good? Bad show I guess.

Some of the colleges, such as St. John’s, are rolling in money and others aren’t. Judy and I eat at both the rich and poor. The food is adequate but not special. I’m told that the dinners are better (we went only to lunches). It’s rather funny to have a suited, old, bald waiter serving you ground sirloin and chips.

Most of the time we pretend we’re hospital people and eat in their cafeteria, which is cheap and adequate. We even invite Colin there to join us. Perhaps that’s what makes us suspicious. Under the grueling stare of the cashier I claim I’m a gate porter. She lets us go but all three of us can’t get out of their fast enough. Since it’s near time to go back to London it’s no great loss.

The town of Oxford is very much like Palo Alto or Cambridge, Mass. Many extemporaneous projects and happenings. The first day of May is celebrated all day by the English freaks, climaxing with an eight-hour rock concert near the river. Street theatre, crafts, electronic music and radical literature—the Elizabethan and modern blend extremely well in Oxford.

Judy’s Uncle and Aunt from South Africa are in England. They came out to Oxford to see where their son (one of many) had gone to college, (Magdalene I believe). Jack is a construction contractor and his wife was a doctor who is now stricken by Parkinson’s. Judy is named after her. It is a miracle what love and duty can do.

They take us back to London and there we find Gail. Gail has been raising hell all over Europe. She had almost married a Yugoslavian. Same old Gail. We visit Judy’s grandmother and a few more plays. There’s a beautiful walk in Hyde Park and a pub with Gail. Then it’s time to head to Eastbourne.

The last few days in England are as warm and pleasant metaphorically as the rest. We visit Michael’s school. All boys and still required uniform wear. Due to the new floors all the students have to wear tennis shoes. I have

never seen such a disreputable collection of footgear in my life. The irony of the flawless uniforms topping off some incredibly tattered canvas dirt traps is lost on the school administration. We sit in on a math class. Judy is highly critical. The mast is so charming I decide not to be objective.

We drive out to the little village where Margaret and Gilbert were married. One road in. No cars, except for the Parson's. Such a cliché of the peaceful village I'm speechless. Clichés are always built on a reality but you never expect to meet one so bluntly.

We look down off the white cliffs and headed back for a last night in England. Margaret drives us to the train station and, after a variety of connections, we catch the mid-morning ferry. Another gentle crossing and then we hitch all the way to Ghent where we make our next to last camp at the edge of a cow pasture.

By four the next afternoon we're in Luxemburg. Two days early. We pick up some mail. John of Harvard invites me to Boston and Uncle Hal says he expects me to get hold of him as well. We walk out toward the airport and in a small quiet pinewood overlooking the railroad, right under the airport's flight path, I set up the seemore tent. I buy some food. We settle in to say good-bye.

We are miserable/happy. It is, of course, a terrible thing to say good-bye to someone you love, but it makes you feel and cherish that love all the more sharply. At night she recites "Winnie the Pooh" to me. She knows it all by heart. I try to memorize every inch of her body, every gesture, every expression, every tone of her dulcet voice.

Those last days in Europe, as with most of my days traveling, are underlined with that nervous line of energy, the adrenalin high. It is the unknown that challenges and tempts and threatens more than anything else. It is the unknown that you seek to uncover while traveling. And now to go back to all that was once so familiar will be a great leap into darkness. It must have changed as much as I have. I am curious. I am afraid.

And the incredible bittersweet ache of leaving a love? I can think of nothing but clichés but once they must have been fresh and alive. Bittersweet. Time stood still. Heartache. Waves of tenderness. All so damnably real and now incompetently jammed into little word boxes and clumsily crucified on a piece of paper four months after their reality. My plane leaves first. We say good-bye. I barely manage to keep from crying. She doesn't.

It's a long boring flight greatly relieved by the Canadian couple who sit next to me. They have ridden little motorbikes all over Europe and the

Middleast. I am jealous and intrigued. A possibility for Africa? I'll look into it I decide.

We land at Kennedy in the early evening, due to Icelandic's excellent planning, so I'm doomed to spend the night there. The immigration man is young and mellow. He almost makes me feel like I'm glad to be back. He asks me where I've been.

### Postscript 2011

I had a nice hitch to San Diego, the second of ten hitches I eventually made across North America. I did leave my passport (in a wonderful pouch Judy embroidered) in a car on my next to last ride and never saw them again. I made it to Dana's graduation, and I met with Alicia and we forgave each other. We are friends today. I spent the summer pulling on the green chain in a sawmill in White Sulfur Springs, Montana and then went back to Stanford. Irma and I stayed friends for years, but when we graduated we drifted apart. I wonder how she is doing now. I visited John of Harvard once, JB (who became an AP reporter) and Mary in Pittsburg several times. Once, as I hitched in late at night, I heard JB broadcasting live from the HQ of Gulf Oil, just bombed by the Weather Underground. "That's my friend," I told the people who had given me a ride. They seemed dubious. I visited Sue (in Vancouver) and Kathi (in northern BC) a number of times but Kathi and I never became lovers and eventually we lost touch. Judy married Fred and had some wonderful children. She lives in New Zealand now and a few years ago we reconnected by email. I'd love to see her again.

England is no longer my favorite country in Europe, Spain is. I have returned there many times. I have been back to Turkey three times and am beginning to understand that extraordinary place. I'd love to live there. Over the years I have had two fine sons, many different careers, and some wonderful love affairs (some not so wonderful as well, of course). I have traveled and lived in many countries, been to many protests, been arrested and/or beaten by police dozens of times, and had many other adventures. But there is nothing like the first time, and embarrassing (even mortifying) as some parts of this story are, I am glad I wrote this down way back when. I had forgotten so much. Now I just hope it is another 25 years before I have to read it again! -- chg