

# RINGOLEVIO

# THREE

*For Matthew "Peanut" Johnson*

THE DIGGER ARCHIVES  
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A  
DECLARATION  
FROM THE  
Poor oppressed People  
OF  
ENGLAND,  
DIRECTED  
To all that call themselves, or are called  
Lords of Manors,  
through this NATION;  
That have begun to cut, or that through  
fear and covetousness, do intend to cut down  
the Woods and Trees that grow upon the  
Commons and Waite Land.



Printed in the Year, 1649.

*Monmouth p. 747*

*913*

PEOPLE'S ARCHIVES  
RADICAL HISTORY

*For when you're alone  
When you're alone like he was alone  
You're either or neither  
I tell you again it dont apply  
Death or life or life or death  
Death is life and life is death  
I gotta use words when I talk to you  
But if you understand or if you dont  
That's nothing to me and nothing to you  
We all gotta do what we gotta do*

T. S. Eliot, *Sweeney Agonistes*

**I**t was the last Sunday in November of 1965 and his twenty-first birthday when Kenny Wisdom landed at Idlewild airport, which had been renamed John Fitzgerald Kennedy.

A lot of things had changed. Kenny's parents had moved to a different section of Brooklyn a few years back. He took the crumpled letter they had written him about their change of address from his pocket and dialed their new phone number from a booth at the airport. He didn't yell "Surprise!" when his mother answered, he just asked her what was for dinner because he said he would be home in half an hour. He hung up before she could express her astonishment.

He caught a cab for Brooklyn which took him on the Belt Parkway past the fishing boats returning to Canarsie from their early morning trawl, the red-tiled roof of the Lundy Brothers' huge seafood restaurant in Sheepshead Bay, and the parachute jump in Coney Island and . . . "What's that?"

"Whadda ya mean, 'Wat's dat?' " said the cabby. "Dat's de bridge. De longest suspended bridge in de woild, de Verrazano, dat's all! Where you been?"

When they arrived Kenny paid the fare and stood for a moment looking at the six-story, gray, sixty-unit building with the name "The Royal Poinciana" cut into the cement above the front entrance when the building was constructed prior to World War One.

He went inside and checked out the mailboxes for the right apartment number, took the elevator up to the proper floor and rang the doorbell. He heard the joyful commotion even before it exploded-open the door, and pulled him in and spilled all over him. His mother was hugging and kissing his head, his sister wrapped her arms around his waist, and his father was shaking his left hand with both of his.

His mother began crying with happiness. Her hair had turned gray with streaks of white and she had gained a little weight since she had the operation she wrote him about. His sister was also laughing-crying. She was a teen-ager — tall, blond, shy and pale from anemia. His father was smiling broadly with honest embarrassment. He had suffered a cardiac thrombosis a while ago but he was over it now, and his hair was still thick and jet-black, and his shoulders and back were as straight and erect as they always had been.

Kenny sort of felt like a stranger but he knew he was home with

his family and it was good. Good to be back where they could see each other in the flesh instead of through letters and photographs. His sister hardly knew her brother any other way, and his parents remembered their son as a boy they watched grow up in words on pieces of paper. Now they saw that their boy-son-brother was indeed a man. He looked at them and saw the adolescence he had spent as a twenty-two-year-old in Europe on their faces, which had grown older in the way that people age in Brooklyn.

After Kenny phoned them from the airport that Sunday afternoon, his mother and sister had dressed back into the clothes they had worn to church that morning and his father had put on a clean sports shirt to greet their world-traveling son, the film director — who arrived with unshined, scuffed shoes, dirty, wrinkled trousers and sweater, torn coat, and a two-day beard. “Don’t you have any luggage?” was the first question he was asked after the Happy Birthdays and Welcome Homes.

“There was a baggage mix-up, it seems, at the London airport and half the passengers on my flight lost their bags in the shuffle, including me. But the BOAC people said they’d notify us on Monday or Tuesday when they found out where our stuff ended up. It’s probably all in Tunisia by now or some other remote godforsaken place.”

While Kenny took the first real shower he had since he left his pad in Rome and changed into different clothes, which still fit and had been mothball-stored in a dresser by his parents in a bedroom which they said was his “own room,” his mother was on the phone notifying all the relatives and friends of the family that the prodigal had returned and they should all come over. And come over they did. As soon as Kenny finished eating a pot-roast dinner with his father the doorbell started ringing, and aunts and uncles, first cousins and second, by blood and by proxy, all sorts of people he hadn’t seen in six, seven years, and some little children he’d never seen before, crowded into the kitchen and living room of the five-room, eighty-five-dollar-a-month apartment, and Kenny was as glad to see them as they said they were to see him.

When the initial greetings were finished, the booze was broken out and someone asked Kenny if he wanted ice and he said yes because he hadn’t had any for a very long time, and everyone relaxed into a party mood. He told them pleasant stories about Italy and the Center of Experimental Cinematography in Rome and the films he made, and how he went to Dublin and grass-rooted it with

the people there to find out what it meant to be Irish and whether he had any distant relatives still around. He gave up trying to locate them after a while and accepted an offer from the Granada television network in London to assistant-direct some documentary shorts, which he did for half a year until they discovered he wasn't an Irish citizen but an American and took his work permit away. So he decided it was time to come back home anyway and he did.

An aunt mentioned something about his being a citizen of the world, which prompted Kenny to tell them about a small town in Italy called Rocca Sinibalda which had a big castle constructed in the shape of an eagle with its wings spread in flight. The castle was purchased by a woman from Washington, D.C., whose family had made millions selling brassieres. She turned the spacious castle into a series of studios where artists could live and work for free. The woman also became the town's benefactress and she changed the jail into a hospital and bought farm machinery for the people and made sure that everyone was well fed and housed. One day she had someone hoist a flag with a blue circle on a white background up the pole on the castle's tower and she proclaimed that the people of Rocca Sinibalda were now citizens of the world and the town itself was going to secede from the nation of Italy. The people of the town were confused at first, but when they were informed that secession from Italy meant they wouldn't be bothered by paying taxes any longer, and also that they would no longer be subject to Italian law or authority, they immediately became citizens of the world and enthusiastic advocates of secession.

It went on like that until Kenny had polished off a fifth of Seagram's Canadian whiskey and was smashed, and everyone else had to go because tomorrow was Monday which meant getting up early for work or school. They all said "Goodnight" and "Nice to have you back" and "See you again soon, maybe next weekend" and "Take care of yourself" and left without asking him about what he intended to do now that he was home. Even his parents didn't question him that way, and he could see they were proud of him simply for his presence and for having returned home. They were happy to have their son, and his sister her older brother, and he was too.

When he regained consciousness late the following morning, he had a difficult time remembering where he was, because he feared that if he opened his eyes to the daylight he might be permanently blinded or suffer a brain hemorrhage in his splitting head, which was already reeling from an alcoholic concussion. He deliberated for

a time and finally figured out he was home. He cupped his hands over his eyes and made his way to the bathroom where he delicately sprinkled water on his fractured face and washed the ashtray from his mouth with toothpaste and some Listerine which he almost swallowed because the rye whiskey shakes had taken over his spastic reflexes.

He was still dressed in the clothes he wore the night before, except for his shoes which someone had thoughtfully removed. He shuffled slowly to the kitchen in a trance, aware only of the painful effort it took to move. He made some instant coffee and sat down at the table, trying to focus his bloodshot eyes on a note braced between the salt and pepper shakers which was signed, "Mom." It wasn't until he was drinking his second cup of coffee that he could read it. His mother wrote that she had gotten a job in the personnel department of some company because, with his sister grown up, there was really nothing to keep her occupied around the house. And there was plenty of food in the fridge and his sister would be home from school around four thirty and she and his father would get back at about six that evening, "Love, Mom."

Kenny had three more cups of coffee and walked around the apartment. It was a comfortable place with green wallpaper in the carpeted foyer, which doubled as a dining room, and reupholstered furniture in the yellow and brown living room, with thick green drapes over the windows. His parents' bedroom was all white with a crucifix tacked to the wall, overlooking a woven, white, woolen bedspread. The French doors that had separated it from the living room had been removed, his mother told him, because they were warped and wouldn't close properly, and anyway, without them the living room had a more open feeling. His sister's room was also painted white and the three-quarter bed, like the rest of the furniture in her room, was new and made of light-colored wood. The furniture in his "own room" was also new and manufactured with the same wood by the same company in the same style. There was a desk, a dresser, a single bed and a row of waist-high bookcases along one of the blue walls. There was a red nagahide armchair below a reading lamp which gave the room the finishing touch of a study. The room had been designed for a young boy to do his high school homework in, or write his university term papers. Besides his sister's furniture, "his" was the only new furniture in the apartment, and it was obvious his parents bought it with the hope that their son would have returned a long time ago to continue his education — a fantasy the

study-styled room encouraged, even though the blue linoleum floor had only been worn by his mother's entering the empty room over the years to hang her wash on the clotheslines outside the windows.

Inside the closet, hanging on a wooden rack in long, zippered plastic bags, were the suits and clothes he had worn when he was a student at the private preparatory school on Park Avenue. Even the cordovan shoes were there, on the floor with trees in them. Rum-maging around in the closet, he noticed something that was ironically funny. On the left, behind an old Eisenhower jacket, was an ancient wall safe that was built into the closet when the building was constructed as a fashionable residence at the turn of the century. Kenny couldn't help but laugh, and he was curious to see if anyone had left anything in it. He got a small crowbar from the tool chest in the kitchen and easily pried open the door of the antique box. There was only a letter inside which was written in German, and as far as Kenny could make out, it was about love. There was also a small photo of a very distinguished gray-bearded man with a high collar in the envelope with the letter. Kenny was disappointed because he expected something more extravagant. He put them back into the box and banged-jammed the door shut on someone's fading lonely-heart memory.

He was still hangover-tired and he sat down in the armchair and thought about it for a moment: about how his family had more money since he left them with one less mouth to feed and his mother had gone to work; about how they spent their money to make a nice home for themselves and give him and his sister their own rooms; about the disappointment they must have felt all the years his room remained empty, except for an occasional guest staying the night or his cousin Paul, whose family's nearby apartment was too small for him to have any privacy and whose books were on top of the desk. Paul at least used the room as it was intended to be used. He also thought about what he was going to tell his parents when they eventually asked him what were his plans for the future. He would really have to think about the answer to that one.

For the next couple of days Kenny stayed around the house reintroducing himself to New York's television, daily newspapers, and AM and FM radio stations. He was impressed more by the quantity of the media barrage being pumped into the homes throughout the city for the entertainment of its residents and by the incredible amount of things advertised for sale, than he was by the quality.



DOUGLAS PERRY

Everything from the six o'clock newscasts to the FM midnight-to-dawn, musical-interlude interviews, to the search-for-tomorrow soap operas at noon, was nothing short of hypnotic. He concluded that if you had enough beer and pretzels and a radio and TV you could barricade yourself inside a room for a week and just sit and listen and watch and switch stations. Whether you wanted to or not, you would learn what they wished you to know about so-and-so and such-and-such in a way that left little for you to decide except what station and from whom you wanted to hear it. The content was always inoffensively the same — only the styles of delivery and the images of the performers varied slightly.

By that Wednesday, Kenny had enough of home entertainment and he took the subway over to Manhattan to see for himself what the voices on the airwaves were trying to tell him about the city streets. He got off at a stop in Greenwich Village and stood on the corner of Eighth Street and Broadway for a moment to get his bearings.

"Kenny! How you been, man?" wanted to know a very long-curly-haired guy wearing a floppy brown car coat which hung below his knees and made him look shorter than he was. He was standing in front of him with his hand outstretched waiting to shake Kenny's. Kenny didn't recognize him for the hair but shook his hand anyway and said he was fine and "Okay, I give up. Who are you?"

"Billy. Billy Landout from Brooklyn. Remember?"

"Billy! I'll be a son of a bitch! My mother wrote 'n told me that you were away at some college studying to be an engineer. What happened?"

"Nothing happened. I graduated last summer with a degree in engineering and just decided I didn't want to be an engineer for a while, that's all."

"Well, are you in a play or something?"

"What do you mean, in a play?"

"I mean your hair and everything."

"No, man. I just felt like a change, and besides the chicks like to run their fingers through my curly locks and make believe I'm Donovan or somebody but I'm just me, man. Just me."

"Are you still living in Brooklyn?"

"No, I got a pad in the East Village."

"The East Village? Where's that?"

"Oh, that's just a name some real-estate dudes gave to the Lower East Side to promote it as sort of a new bohemia, an extension of

Greenwich Village. Come on, walk over with me and I'll show you around, and you can buy me a beer and tell me what you've been doing with yourself."

"Listen, tell me something."

"What?"

"How'd you recognize me after all these years?"

"Your freckles, how else?"

"Fuck you, too!"

The sky darkened with gray clouds hovering as they walked across Third Avenue into the wind. Billy mentioned that the Lower East Side had originally been marshland, which is what the word Bowery meant if you spelled it *bouwerie*. A group of panhandlers were huddled against the cold on the corner outside the Gem Spa candy store, and Kenny was confused for a moment by their juvenile, well-fed, cherubic faces, until Billy explained that it was just a new game the kids from the other boroughs played in Manhattan. On Saint Mark's Place just before First Avenue they passed a building where, according to Billy, Trotsky, and two of his comrades had edited a political journal during the months prior to the Russian workers' struggle for power in 1917. They crossed one of the city's largest and least-known parks at Tompkins Square, continuing along Avenue B to Tenth Street and the Annex.

The bar had a late afternoon crowd of mostly Jewish chicks, and black guys dressed like aesthetes and coming on like noble savages. Kenny bought a pair of Ballantine ales and carried them over to a table where Billy had piled a couple handfuls of peanuts. They drank ale and shelled peanuts for a few hours and talked about themselves and the news. Kenny ran down a précis of his more than five years in Europe. Billy talked about what was happening on the Lower East Side of Manhattan. About how it had evolved from the violent battleground for opposing ideas of immigrant peoples to the frontier of adventure for the East Coast of America's aggressively searching youth who kept time to Kerouac's *On the Road* beat, but settled for a more stationary scene here, and let their hair grow long. About how people who wrote in newspapers for a living had categorized the place as a "new Bohemia" and the young who came there "Hippies." About the low rents; the Kerista free love cultists who set up a floating sexual kibbutz which daily congregated in various pads; the cafés, bars, clubs, theaters, galleries, magazines, papers, films that were springing out from underground throughout

the area; the young people who were dropping out of their generation like flies and pushing further toward a vision which was out of sight. About acid and how it just might be one of the keys to the locks on the door of that empty room filled with nothing, nowhere.

After nursing beers at the Five Spot while listening to Charles Mingus and crashing the rest of the night on a floor-mattress in Billy's walk-up apartment on Avenue C, the next morning Kenny dropped two 300-microgram capsules of this LSD drug he had only heard about. Billy had taken it several times and was by far the best person for Kenny to trip with, since he never took himself too seriously and knew how to calmly chart a course during a psychedelic experience. He suggested that Kenny take 600 mics rather than the usual 300 because it would insure a total high. A lesser dosage would probably allow Kenny to resist the possibilities of the drug and chalk the trip up as simply another kick, thereby negating or blocking the chance for him to glimpse into the blindspot of his consciousness. Billy took just one 300 cap because he had been there before and it didn't take him much to get there again.

Within an hour Kenny was zonked. Inanimate objects and irrelevancies melt-twisted free of importance and drip-faded into the waterfall of pretension. Remembered images invoked from the past exploded into a kaleidoscopic burst of day-glo spirochetes wistfully dancing in a chaotic, nostalgic, timeless cascade of moment, like a drowning man's thoughts. Everything moved at the speed of light, with yesterday's light gleaming in one direction and tomorrow's in another. He saw that what was and will be — only is. There was a glimmer inside the privacy of his being, and he immediately understood that if he became anxious or panicky, he'd miss the clear light of his own death which is part of life. Then everything that was supposed to happen happened, until he was flashed-out-spaced. It seemed like he was going to stay that way forever and just when he started to feel that enough's enough, it was over and he began to come down. His kidneys ached.

Now that the psychedelic storm was over, Kenny's thoughts settled into a calm. He knew that most people were simply in trouble with themselves because they feared who they were. He dug that no matter how much he begged to know whether he might be the hero of his own life or its victim, he would be unable to discover his destiny. He understood that everything always happens and that his

needs were just his needs and didn't reflect some universal principle. That there were some things even more important than being alive and one of them was being alive the way you want to be alive.

He walked over to the sink, picked up a nearly empty bottle of Cott orange soda and finished it. He studied the empty for a moment and ran his thumb across the "Deposit" impressed in raised glass. He slammed the bottle against the porcelain, and the glass shattered into the sink. The noise startled Billy and he came into the small kitchen to see what it was. He saw Kenny standing over by the sink. There was a funny, intense look on his face which made Billy a bit apprehensive.

*Kenny:* Why was that bottle worth five cents?

*Billy:* Because it was a re-usable commodity.

*Kenny:* Why wasn't it worth a dollar?

*Billy:* It didn't have enough value . . .

*Kenny:* Magic.

*Billy:* Magic?

*Kenny:* The magic of property. Inanimate objects have no intrinsic value except what they can do for you, but in our culture they're invested with all sorts of magical properties, and cops protect that magic by making sure property has to be paid for — the unimaginative flunkies. Everything revolves around profit and private property. Those are the premises. I just questioned the logic by destroying the magic.

The seriousness in Kenny's face broke and he began to laugh. Billy relaxed and smiled too, wondering what brought on that dissertation. They went outside and over to Tompkins Square Park with Kenny concluding that it was good to be wacked out on acid because it made it difficult to be reasonable, and that way you could see right through things while looking incomprehensible and mad and you could make statements that were frightening and true.

It was cold and there were very few people in the park. They each bought a pint of warming red wine and walked the streets looking at the faces of the people and the curious activities in which they were involved. After a while the wine was finished, and Kenny decided to return to Brooklyn before it all got boring. He told Billy he would see him in a day or two and went over to the Eighth Street subway station.

There was a girl standing on the platform who looked vaguely familiar. They stared at each other for a moment, and when the train pulled in they entered the same car and sat down together.

Her name was Lucille Collins, and he had gone to grammar school with her and hung around with her brother. "Don't you remember?" she asked Kenny. He remembered and he also recalled he hadn't liked her very much or her brother either but he forgot why. The acid was still making it difficult to consider anything other than absurdity, and he answered her questions with a slight flipness he felt they required — especially when she said her brother was in Vietnam and asked Kenny what he was going to do about the army now that he was back in the country.

He replied that he wasn't going to do anything about the army and added that the next time she wrote to her brother she should advise him to "watch his ass because no matter how good his wages are, those little yellow people have been in the business of war for a long time and they don't consider it employment but rather a co-op in which they all own shares." She got a little snotty after that and countered with a remark about how the draft was going to get him, like it or not. Kenny laughed and blurted out that they didn't even know he existed because he had never registered.

Lucille Collins said something like, "Don't bet on it!" before getting off the train at her stop. The following afternoon Kenny Wisdom remembered why he had never liked her when they were kids: she was a snitch. He remembered this as soon as he answered the bell and the two men at the door, who identified themselves as FBI agents, presented him with two possible choices: he could go into the U.S. Army or to a federal penitentiary. Needless to say, this blew Kenny's mind and he kept protesting the fact.

"This can't be happening! Man, I just got here!"

But the agents simply suggested that the brevity of his return home was his own blues and three days later, on Monday, December 6th, Wisdom was inducted into the army and bussed to CoB, 6th Tng Bn, 2nd Tng Bde, USAATC, Fort Gordon, Georgia.

It was only in boot camp that Kenny finally knew, through the haze of his amazement, that he was actually in the service. He also knew he had no intention of remaining. He wasn't about to try some dumb faggot routine, however, or pull a cornball lunacy stunt to get an immediate discharge. No, there was a war on and they would lock you in the stockade before they would let you out if you tried something stupid to fake a Section Eight. He remembered all the stories he heard when he was a kid about all the guys who ended up in Leavenworth after trying to cop out on the so-called police action in Korea. Now, with Vietnam on the stove, they were nab-

bing the same stiff who were giving the same scams a whirl, making vain attempts to receive a medical discharge. Kenny was going to play it smart and smooth his way into a reverse, arriving at the psychological point where they would pay him to leave. There was no other way except walking AWOL, and so he decided to be stone-cold-blooded about it until he regained his freedom.

Kenny kept himself cooled out by smoking reefer in the barrack's boiler room with a few black dudes from Philadelphia whenever he got a chance, which was frequently. In fact, he spent so many of his off-duty hours hanging out with his black buddies that the group of pink-faced appleknockers from upstate New York who talked about becoming suburban Kiwanians formed the opinion that Kenny was probably a "moulonjam" himself. They even suggested that his freckles were proof of his being a mulatto. Of course no one ever expressed these insights to Kenny himself, but he picked up on the vibes and would joke while high with the brothers about all the suckers in their squads who were terrified that someday they would find their women fucking a nigger in the backseat of the family Ford.

Kenny coasted through the eight weeks of training at Fort Gordon, and angered the chumps who wanted to make good in the army and bewildered his goof-off, hipster friends by being classified a high achiever. He scored a top rating on the written I.Q. tests, placed second in the physical fitness trials, and won a trophy as the best rifleman in the company. With these laurels in his file, he applied for officer candidate school and signed up for the Airborne before returning to New York for his two weeks' leave, glad that everything had worked out as straight as he planned.

Billy laughed himself silly when he saw Kenny in uniform, saying he was sorry about his predicament but it was hilarious just the same. They spent some time together in that city and Kenny explained his good soldier scheme to him and confided that it was really easy because most of the schmucks who got duped into the service were losers from the get go, anyway. "The way I got it figured, the army will cut me loose with an honorable discharge before Easter."

Kenny had only been home a few days when his orders arrived. He was to report to Fort Ord, California, within a week, to begin advanced infantry training, a prelude to OCS. He liked the idea of going to California and he remembered a girl who lived in San Francisco, a model he met in Rome. She had written him a letter

which had been forwarded halfway around the world before finally arriving in Georgia, enclosed in an envelope from his mother. He had copied her phone number from the letter into his little book, and now he called and told her to change the sheets because he would be there early the following evening.

The next day on the plane, he felt good about his move to the West Coast and more than confident that his time in the service was nearly over. The flight took about five hours, and he phoned Rhea from the airport. She was waiting for him when the coach pulled into the air terminal in downtown San Francisco.

Kenny hadn't seen Rhea for two years, and then he had only known her for a couple of months. But when he saw her standing on the sidewalk — all slender, firm, tall and beautiful with her chestnut hair full like a mane — he gave her a long-lost-lover embrace and the kind of kiss he felt the woman who was going to remove the celibate state which he had endured since returning to America, deserved. She was glad to see him, too. He left his duffel bag in the trunk of her car, and they had something to eat in a Chinese restaurant before retiring to her North Beach apartment. There they made love in a hard, solid, tender, active expression of life, until they felt it beautiful to stop and sleep in each other's arms — no longer anxious about being alone.

They spent the week together and it went by much too fast. Kenny liked the North Beach section of the city and he only left it to watch the sun set from the beach over the Pacific Ocean. He'd heard a lot about the area from the poets who had been turning him on with their books for years now. The Co-Existence Bagel Shop was gone, but the bars were still there, as was the only tangible evidence of the San Francisco Beat Renaissance during the late fifties — the City Lights bookstore. It remained open till two every morning with Ferlinghetti and his partner Shig competing against the topless clip joints along Broadway for a piece of the street action, and simply by its presence, giving notice to whomever it may concern in the tourist crowd that there were other poets in America besides Robert Frost who had miles to go before they slept.

City Lights published a series of paperbacks called Pocket Poetry and Kenny bought one entitled *Gasoline* by Gregory Corso, and several others which he took with him on the two-hour bus ride to Fort Ord. His processing began when he arrived that Wednesday and was completed by midafternoon Friday. The unit he was assigned to wouldn't be made up till the following Monday, so he was

given a weekend pass. He phoned Rhea and she suggested they spend the two days with friends of hers who had a house in Carmel. They did, and it was West-Coast-wonderful with horseback riding along the beach and into the surf at dawn each morning, and Bordeaux-and-steak suppers outdoors each evening. It was March but the sun was warm and boot camp had put Kenny into such great, high-keyed, physical shape that his vigor matched that of the sea. The beauty of nature in that area reminded him of the wilderness he had enjoyed in the Italian Alps. He hadn't felt so good in years, and now more than ever he knew he wanted to live for a while in northern California. "But first things first," he said to himself, thinking about the army.

When he returned to his barracks, he saw a notice on the bulletin board saying that the company had been formed and training was to begin in the morning. Bright and early it did, with a march out to a firing range where they sighted their rifles. Kenny liked to march. The cadence relaxed him and allowed him to think. He decided that the best time to pull anything was right away, in these first few days before they got to know him. He had brought half a dozen Dexamyls with him from New York and carried them in his pocket, intending to use them whenever the moment came to heighten whatever contradiction he would cause.

The right moment came two days later on another firing range. Kenny realized this while sitting in the bleachers and listening to an instructor rap about what not to do when firing a bazooka. The sergeant explained that the most important thing to worry about was not the shell itself, but the exhaust of the explosion caused by firing it. The concussion that burst from the rear of the bazooka was known as the back-blast, and he demonstrated its action on an empty orange crate. He knelt and another sergeant loaded the bazooka with a blank shell, telling the training class to keep their eyes on the crate, which he lined up with the tail end of the weapon. Then he tapped the instructor on the head and there was a loud, rumbled crack-sound, and the wooden crate disappeared into a puff of dust as the blank shell leaped across the field and curved down into the open turret of a tank target, eighty yards away.

It was very impressive and Kenny dropped the six Dexamyls with a gulp from his canteen in preparation for what he knew was going to happen. The instructor again cautioned the class to be aware of the back-blast and told them they would be firing two rounds from the weapon, using that same tank as their target. The first round

would be a dud, but the second contained a phosphorous explosive. Kenny decided to wait until his platoon was on the line to fire their live round, before making his move.

By the time he finished firing the blank round, the amphetamine was coming on, and he began to have an overwhelming sense of well-being. He already knew what he was going to do and waited for his platoon to be called forward, while his mind raced time and went nowhere. He sneaked a cigarette and sat in the bleachers, watching the blue-white phosphorous explode in bursts around the tank. It was like a fireworks display, and he wondered what it would be like at nighttime in battle. He remembered all the films he had seen about war. How the realism was always muffled to keep it from becoming unpleasant for the audience, and how they would leave the theaters going, "Tsk! Tsk! War is hell," but remark also that some men were able to measure their manhood by the sword, like Audie Murphy. Like George Armstrong Custer.

His platoon moved to the firing line and he knelt next to the weapon. Everything was going *Ziiinnnggg! Ziiinnnggg!* as the instructor ordered the gunners over the loudspeaker to raise the weapons into position and the loaders to ready the shells. The weapons were loaded, and as soon as this was acknowledged with a tap on his head, and while everyone else was sighting their aim on the target, Kenny stood up with the loaded bazooka resting on his shoulder. He just stood straight up while his firing partner made like an ostrich and covered his head with his arms. A closet-queen corporal standing nearby alerted everybody by screaming with terror and running away. The loudspeaker began shouting, "*Hold your fire! Hold your fire! No one move! No one move!*" But when the other trainees turned and saw Kenny standing and pointing his bazooka all around, they panicked. Some of them laid down their weapons and split, while others carried them and ran.

The confusion was frightening. With noncoms diving for cover and trainees running all over the place with primed bazookas in their hands and the loudspeaker pleading with everyone to "*Stop! Stop!*" and calling for the "*Captain! Captain!*" If someone had fired his weapon it would have caused a chain reaction, and they all would have gone off. It was scary but Kenny wasn't particularly concerned. He even considered walking back to the barracks but the bazooka was too heavy. *Ziiinnnggg! Ziiinnnggg!*

The loudspeaker yelled and finally wheedled him to, "*Please, Wisdom, lay the weapon on the ground, that's an order!*" while a

second lieutenant crawled on his belly over to Kenny's blind side. There was no way the lieutenant could secure the bazooka in a struggle without causing danger to himself and the others, so he thought he would use some lame, junior-college logic to beg Kenny to be reasonable. Kenny didn't see the lieutenant sneaking up alongside him, and when he begged his first "Please!" into his left ear, Kenny jumped in surprise. The lieutenant froze, wetting his pants while everyone else cringed and hid their eyes. Even the captain began to weep and mumble something about his seventeen years in the service.

After a moment Kenny resumed his calm and looked all around surveying the scene. Two sergeants ran up to the lieutenant and one of them tore the officer's .45 out of its holster, cocked a round into the chamber, placed the barrel next to Wisdom's temple, and was about to blow it open when Kenny abruptly sat down, cradling the weapon in his lap. He studied it briefly, then looked up at the startled sergeant clutching the pistol and asked, "How do you unload a bazooka?"

The sergeant handed the lieutenant back his .45 and squatted down beside Wisdom. "Here, I'll show you," he said and took the bazooka. He walked about ten yards away, and the loudspeaker sighed, "*All clear! All clear! Return to your firing positions! Return to your firing positions!*" and cajoled the trainees carefully back to their posts on the line, where they discharged their weapons at the target downfield and then returned to their seats in the bleachers.

The lieutenant pointed his pistol at Wisdom while both sergeants held him firmly between them. The black sergeant kept asking him why he wanted to go and do such a goddamn fool thing, but Kenny wasn't listening. He was looking at the chubby figure running awkwardly toward him from the far side of the training area. The rest of the trainees were watching, too, as their company commander huffed and puffed his fat-assed way past them with his belly bouncing in front of him like Jell-O. He was going full-tilt, and Kenny could see that his face was flushed red. As he came nearer, he cocked his right hand, and about two feet away he threw the punch at Kenny, leaping into the air like a baby elephant. The two noncoms eased themselves to one side, and the captain, widely missing Kenny's head, slammed into the lieutenant. The collision sent both of them to the ground with a groan and caused the .45 to fire a round into the sand, sending everyone ducking for cover again.

The captain struggled to get up, his face changing through the

colors of the American flag. The lieutenant leaned over to help him and invoked, "*Put that fucking pistol away!*" Pointing toward Wisdom the captain screamed, "*Take that son of a bitch back to company headquarters! And if he gives you any trouble, ram your feet up his ass!*" As the captain was trying to overcome the difficulty that a bloated panda faces in regaining his footing, Kenny was tied to a fixture inside an armored personnel carrier and driven back to his company area.

After the first sergeant was briefed, Kenny was led into his office at headquarters. The topkick was an old soldier right out of the movies. The veins in his face were broken from whiskey, and his neck was thick-red with wrinkles. His enlistment had begun in Asia back in '44 when he served in Burma against the Japanese, and now it was ending while an undeclared war was being waged in that same part of the world. He didn't want to hear any bullshit, he just wanted to know whether the private standing in front of him was trying to punk out of that war, or was truly bat-shit.

Kenny's brain was completely jangled with tension, and when the first sergeant asked him for his full name and service number, he flipped out and started to scream hysterically. The shrillness of his tantrum forced everyone to cover their ears and the first sergeant yelled for his men to "*Get him outta here! Now!*" Kenny screamed all the way to the hospital. He only stopped after a doctor ordered him strapped in a bed and locked in a private room.

The doctor reviewed Wisdom's file and later reported to the captain that the young man's previous high performance record as a soldier convinced him that he went bananas at the bazooka training area because of some severe strain and he recommended his immediate transfer. The next morning Kenny was wrapped in a strait-jacket, strapped into an ambulance, and driven north to the Letterman General Hospital at the Presidio military base in San Francisco.

The neuropsychiatric building was a separate annex of the hospital. It had been constructed at the turn of the century by the government to house inmates who became criminally insane while imprisoned at the federal penitentiary on Alcatraz. When the foot-thick, steel-plated, front door opened, and Kenny saw the three-hundred-pound black orderly standing inside, grinning — the name WASHINGTON on a plate pinned to his uniform — he moaned. They sat him on a bench in the receiving room, and he wondered what sort of fun and games were in store for him and how long it would

take before he would be disqualified as a pawn and get released from the war team. He had been wide awake for the last thirty hours, but now the speed was wearing itself out of his system and he felt tired and shaky. They removed the straitjacket and he stretched out and relaxed. He longed for a bed and some sleep, but he had to wait while his papers were sorted by the staff sergeant in charge and his transfer orders processed.

When that was over, Washington, the buffalo nurse, brought him upstairs to be interviewed by a psychiatrist named Kruze, who questioned Kenny briefly and studied him for a moment until he felt satisfied that he was fairly sober and safely subdued. He told Washington he could leave them alone.

They talked for about forty minutes and it was a congenial conversation. At one point Kenny even admitted that, yes, he wanted out of the army as soon as possible. Dr. Kruze was sympathetic and offered to arrange for his honorable discharge from the service, but said it would take a few weeks to be effected and asked, "Do you think you'll need any medication?"

"I don't know, doctor. Why?"

"Well, you're going to be here for a while and there's very little to do. Most of the patients are pretty sick and a tranquilizer will help relieve any anxiety which may occur during your stay."

"Sure. Whatever you say, Doctor."

"All right, I'll prescribe a fifty-milligram Thorazine in the morning, one in the evening, and a chloral hydrate for sleep."

"Fine."

"What about work? It says here in your file that you have cinematographic experience. They have a fair-sized film unit and photo lab on this base. I think one of the patients works over there now. Should I see if they can use you? It'd be good to have something to do for a few hours a day, to break up the monotony of just sitting around here and waiting."

"Okay, Doctor."

"Good, I'll talk to them about it. Now, there's no bed available downstairs in the sign-out-patient ward, and there won't be until after the weekend. So you'll have to stay locked up in the control ward here on the second floor till Monday, when they'll move you below, where you can go and come as you please. I'll call Washington to get you set. Is there anything you want to know?"

"Yes, Doctor. What about visitors?"

"Do you have family in San Francisco?"

“No, just a friend.”

“Oh. Well, until Monday you’ll only be able to visit in the reception room during the day. However, when you’re moved downstairs there’ll be no restrictions other than the usual requirements that you remain on the base and return to the ward before lights out.”

“Thank you, Doctor.”

“Be seeing you.”

The control ward had eighty beds in four rows — two rows along the walls and two down the middle of the floor. It was a cramped, barren, austere place with everything colored white or drab green. The patients all wore dark blue pajamas and shuffled around instead of walking. They were either temporarily lobotomized from electric shock treatments or too phenothiazined to lift their feet. There was no conversation. Just what was left of people sitting on beds in dumbfounded silence or talking to themselves with vacant stares. There was also a lot of openmouthed dribbling.

The patients in the control unit ate in a mess hall which could have been designed by the Marquis de Sade. It was the basement of the building: a dark, high-ceilinged, concrete dungeon with a stainless-steel steam table and long metal benches attached to several long metal dining tables bolted to the cement floor. There were no windows, and the lighting was purposely bad so no one could see anyone else’s eyes without it being obvious.

There were a dozen girls and a handful of women. The girls were young dependents of career soldiers, and pretty in that raw, simple way girls are when they’re vulnerable and fragile. The women, on the other hand, were old and tired. They were either in the army or the wives of men who were, and they had reached their own rock bottoms without any intention of bouncing back. The girls and boys and men and women sat together at the tables during mealtime but there was seldom any contact made. Nothing was said to anyone, and even the food was left practically untouched. Sometimes, someone would laugh or cry but only to themselves.

Kenny was nearly overwhelmed by the sadness of it all. The sadness of seeing so many young people with their minds broken — knowing that none of them were faking. He wondered whether they could tell that he was . . . and how long it would be before he wasn’t. He had been locked inside the ward for three days and had conformed his appearance to its style of madness, remaining silent and shoveling himself around. How long would it take before the role

he was playing ate its way into his being and enveloped him — before he actually became what he only appeared to be?

He was glad, very glad, when they moved him downstairs to the other unit. There, he was allowed to sign himself out and roam around the Presidio base and eat his meals at the mess hall in the main building of the hospital. Rhea visited often, bringing him civilian clothes and books from City Lights. Kenny used these books to defend himself against the self-recrimination and guilt which some of the patients in his unit continually displayed, convincing themselves that they were to blame for their illness. Visions of God were also big, and the group therapy sessions struck Kenny as merely self-indulgent self-pity. These guys weren't very sick, they were just flake-outs who liked to think they were ill because it satisfied their masochism. When their wailings became persistent and loud enough to upset him, Kenny would retaliate by reading aloud poetry from the *Antonin Artaud Anthology*.

God does not exist, he withdraws, gets the fuck on out and leaves the cops to keep an eye on things. He separates from himself 3 cops divided into 3. Okay, but why not 4 or 2 or 1 or zero or nothing at all? And from where did these 3 incorrigibly filthy accomplices of the father, the son, the holy ghost (the father, mother, son), come to equal 1 and not 3?

HANGING FROM THE  
INNER CADAVER

and 2) *palelark puuuling*  
*larglark cawwling*

3) *tuban tit tarting*  
with the head of  
the head ogling you

4) *homonculus frontal*  
*punch*  
*from the pinch whoring you*

rocking to the stinking boss  
this arrogant capitalist  
from limbo  
swimming toward the stickisome trinity  
of fathermother with kiddy sex  
to empty the body whole,  
wholly of its vitality  
and put in its place . . . who?

he who was made by Being and Nothing-  
ness,  
the way one puts a baby to make peepee.

AND THEN THEY ALL GOT  
THE FUCK OUT OF THERE

I tell myself that there's scum and crud abroad and god's sucked Lenin's  
ass: and that's the way it's always been,  
and it isn't worth talking about anymore,  
it doesn't matter, it's just another fucking bill to pay.

Kenny didn't read out loud any of Artaud's words on electric shock in deference to the truly sick patients in the ward who belonged upstairs. There was no room for them up there because the unit was already overcrowded with casualties from Vietnam — young guys who were plucked from their farms and small towns and big city tenements all over the country and shipped to the other side of the planet, to a foreign culture where the people only thought of them with hate or in terms of money. Men high on drugs for the first time and memories of fat-backed America, torn by helicopters from some behind-the-lines recreation, and thrown into the mouth of fury, maybe to be hit in the back by a bullet that comes from nowhere, surely to become paranoid and inhuman. Men who shot down women and babies because they were terrified, and who later collapsed with overwhelming guilt — their minds blown by the horror of what they'd done.

Some of these men ended up in neuropsychiatric wards, some more in VA hospitals with their limbs lost and their minds teetering on the brink, others in prisons for fragging officers who ordered them about, and still others, paradoxically, didn't live to regret it. Only the glory boys escaped, but home wasn't the same for them either.

Kenny was quickly sick of looking at the splintered results of his country's insidious scheming in Indo-China. Boredom set in and he was fired from his work therapy at the photo lab for using the equipment and chemicals to process almost 5000 eight-by-ten prints of a snapshot of his own face taken by one of the other patients. He went AWOL frequently and spent those nights with Rhea. Dope was all over the base and he mixed it with booze. His response to the junior officers who wanted to punish him with Article 15 fines, was always the same — he said he was crazy.

He was anxious to be discharged and live in the city. He wanted to get involved with theater. He read about the San Francisco Mime Troupe in the newspaper and thought about working with them. They were a radical company who had developed their theater arts into a medium for revealing the lies on which the U.S. Government based most of its foreign and domestic policies. Since Kenny's political awareness had grown into a need for action, he wanted to become a part of that. He knew, however, that most radical groups had a built-in, self-destructive energy that was dangerous not only to their ability to perform, but to the individual as well. They were always too quick to identify themselves with progressive such-and-such and insurgent so-and-so, and always signing their names to whatever was resisting, defiant of, or agin the government. Kenny didn't think that was too smart. Set yourself up in clear view, and someone is bound to set you down. The one thing he learned, especially during the time he spent in prisons, was how not to satisfy anyone's curiosity. Jails are built to feed the curiosity of the guards and the voyeurism of other inmates. There are few solid doors, and the lights are always on. A prisoner quickly teaches himself to hide his feelings and whatever he's into from everyone, mostly because he knows it's dangerous to reveal anything, but sometimes for no other reason than to spite a prying system and its lackies.

This had become second nature to Wisdom, and because it had, he decided to change his identity before hitting the streets of the counterculture. He thought about it for a while. The longhairs were all changing their names to more romantic-sounding, rough 'n ready, American tags — like William Bonney, Mitzi Gaynor and John Wesley Harding. He wanted to reflect his Irishness and rebellious ancestry. He hit on the name of Robert Emmet but felt it was too corny. However, he liked the sound of Emmet. He played around with it for a time, linking it to various others, until he finally chose to translate his grandfather's name from the Gaelic Ó Gruágain to Grogan. He added another *t* to Emmet and he had it. Emmett Grogan — double sixes, boxcars and a good, solid, Irish name for someone classified a schizophrenic by the Defense Department.

He had been at the neuropsychiatric ward nearly four weeks when his papers were finally processed and he was mustered out of the service. He was happy it was over and even happier when the army made a considerable mistake in the amount of back pay and travel allowances owed to him by giving him seven hundred dollars,

three times his due. He celebrated with Rhea that night in North Beach and lived with her while trying to find a place of his own. She was a little confused at first by his new name but began calling him Emmett after a while, like everyone else he got to know.

A cultural alternative was being tried out in America by some young people who adopted their cause with evangelical fervor in the face of the secular establishment. They were a generation utterly separated from their parents by the unbreachable gap of acid. San Francisco's Haight-Ashbury district was the focal point for most of them. Unlike New York's East Village, it was empty when the long-hairs began arriving in search of a community. The predominately black neighborhood was sparsely peopled with Filipinos, Japanese, Russians, Czechs, Scandinavians, Armenians, Greeks, Germans and Irish before it became the city's "West Beach," or new bohemian quarter. Old-timers and newcomers were attracted by the low rents of the houses, but that soon changed. The old, wooden, Victorian homes were quickly divided into flats by brokers looking for fast money, and who preferred renting to faggots because they were thought to always improve the places they lived in. The shopkeepers were purported to be the pulse of the neighborhood's development. They left their shopwindow lights on all night to brighten up the area, and the straights simply considered them brave eccentrics on the side of virtue.

Emmett rented an unfurnished studio apartment in a huge, wooden building owned and divided by an art dealer. The rent was only fifty dollars a month and the place was in the Fillmore district on Fell Street, below the borderline separating that black ghetto from the Haight-Ashbury love ghetto. He painted the room a soft, mustard yellow and built a bed and a long, thin worktable out of lumber he copped from a construction site. He only used the communal kitchen down the hall for coffee or to store beer in the fridge. He ate regularly at a barbecue-and-booze parlor on the corner.

He signed up for unemployment as soon as he was discharged, and when he went down to pick up his first thirty-five-dollar check, he walked over a few blocks to the Mime Troupe. His hair had filled out from the boot-camp crew cut but it was by no means long, and he was wearing a green sports jacket, slacks and a turtleneck. He seemed to attract a bit of attention and even disturb a few people when he entered the office. One of those he put on edge was the company's founder-director, R. G. Davis, who asked him what he wanted, and also, "Are you a police officer?" After Emmett smiled

No, he wasn't, and carefully introduced himself by his new name and recent medical discharge, he was given a form to fill out and told to arrange for an audition with a middle-aged insurance salesman, one of the most talented comedians on anyone's stage, Joe Bellan.

Emmett rehearsed a monologue from an eighteenth-century Goldoni play for two days and returned to audition at the troupe. His performance was strong but his style was too tight for the broad, open manner of acting demanded by commedia dell'arte. He was told he needed to work hard if he wanted to develop his skills, and was invited to learn what he could in a mime class conducted for members of the troupe early every afternoon by Davis.

Now, mime isn't the pantomime of Marcel Marceau. Although it incorporates the same physical movements as pantomime, it is neither silent nor restricted from using props to dramatize a dialogue. On the contrary, it uses everything from loud buffoonery to slapstick travesty to perform dramas in which scenes imitated from life are exaggerated and broadened to make obvious what is usually subtle. Ronnie Davis had studied with Etienne Decroux in Paris during his early twenties and Emmett could only compare his mimic action to that of Jean-Louis Barrault whom he saw perform the role of Battiste in the film version of the nineteenth-century play, *Children of Paradise*. He was good, very good.

The season began and Emmett played small, baker-candlestick-maker roles on the weekends, while continuing to develop as a mime in workouts during the week. The plays were performed outdoors on a portable stage the troupe would set up on the grass of the parks around the city. The performances were free with only a hat being passed around afterward. There were no government subsidies or foundation grants but every moment — from the preshow, warm-up songs like "Avanti Popolo" to the tits-'n-ass-costumed deliveries of the actresses — was professional. The performers were paid five dollars for each show when the money was available, which was seldom, after the resignation of the troupe's business manager. His name was Bill Graham and he left the company to follow up an idea he got at a benefit party thrown for the Mime Troupe. He leased a hall for dancing, hired the same groups who had played at the party, and charged people admission to get in. It was simple and an immediate hit. Within weeks the Jewish war hero had a booming successful operation going at the Fillmore auditorium and the purists all over the Bay Area felt they were being burned by his

shorthaired attitude towards business. They began calling him the antichrist of the underground and a cultural rip-off artist. Graham reacted in turn by raising his middle finger and inviting them all to "sit on this and rotate!" He was one of few public figures on the scene not to give credence to the bullshitters.

Rhea was working full time at her career, traveling to Los Angeles for modeling gigs, and Emmett saw her less and less. Instead, he hung out in the Haight, where he maintained a diet of hallucinogens and developed a heavy crush for teenyboppettes, falling in love with every young, runaway girl he met. All these relationships were always beautiful. He would get high with a soft teen miss turned flower-lovely, and they would ball with their knuckles and knees, the ends of their hair, the tips of their fingers, and insides of their eyes. There was very little talk involved in these wonderful dialogues. The young always feel more poignantly without words.

Billy Landout traveled into town from New York during that first week in August when the former Eagle Scout, Charles Whitman, demonstrated his easy familiarity with guns by climbing to the top of the University of Texas' observation tower in Austin and opening fire on campus strollers for ninety minutes, killing sixteen, wounding thirty-one, and being shot to death himself by a cop to become the U.S. title holder for a single-handed, mass-murder rampage. Two days later, a flash-talking Brooklyn-Broadway hipster was killed by an overdose in his Hollywood Hills house overlooking the Sunset Strip. Lenny Bruce was suicided by society. His death-blow had actually been dealt years before he was found stretched out naked on his bathroom floor with that curious, serene expression on his face. New York City District Attorney Frank Hogan, fulfilling his role as one of society's most insipid henchmen, ordered his office staff to turn the spiv-dressed comedian into a fat, mad, abject figure. Vincent Cuccia, one of his assistant district attorneys who tried the case, repented to Bruce's lawyer, Martin Garbus, in Garbus's book *Ready For The Defense*: "I feel terrible about Bruce. . . . I watched him gradually fall apart. It's the only thing I did in Hogan's office that I'm really ashamed of. We all knew what we were doing. We used the law to kill him." To no one's great surprise.

Billy arrived shortly after the comic was put into the ground by stand-up, old-timer Milton Berle. He moved in with a girl friend who was a student at the Experimental College of San Francisco State. He also joined the Mime Troupe, working as a technician on

the weekly outdoor productions and studying mime with Ronnie Davis. Billy and Emmett would get together and talk about the evolving phenomenon in the Haight-Ashbury, until the wee hours of nearly every morning. Other members of the troupe would sometimes take part in these discussions, particularly Coyote and the Hun. Coyote described himself in a book as having grown up with very smart, wealthy parents in Englewood, New Jersey. He was a very imaginative but fat child who only learned to like his body after having graduated from Grinnell College and then dropping out of graduate school and beginning to work at the Mime Troupe, studying with Davis. At twenty-five, he was no longer fat, but was tall and handsome. He had an affinity toward Zen discipline and a scholarly, intelligent mind, due in part to the emphasis his family put on education. He was performing the lead role of Pantalone, an eighteenth-century Jewish-Italian shylock in the current *commedia dell'arte* production. He played the part well.

The Hun got his name because some believed he was his own horde, while others felt he looked like a Mongolian Iago. He also profiled himself in that same book. Born in New York City in 1937, he spent his adolescence as a car-hiker in the potpourri city of Miami which, he would point out, was only built in 1927 and represented the Pow! Pow! naked power of the South. He was a child genius with an I.Q. of 160 and a Quiz Kid, but in high school he hung around with "fourteen-fifteen-year-old hillbilly boys that used to stand in Levi's and boots, with thunderbird belts and kind of like denim or, y'know, a shirt with whaddaya-call-it, a Western shirt, pearl buttons on the things, drunk, drunk, and going like this and looking like Montgomery Clift in that flick he made with Arthur Miller's script and lookin' like that, y'know, with brass knuckles." He picked up a political orientation from his father, an H. G. Wells *Outline of History* libertarian, who thought the Russians were good people. He went to the University of Florida on a work scholarship, got a degree, concentrating in literature, and after getting over the New York blues-life mystique, drifted to San Francisco to meet the older members of the beat generation. He joined the Mime Troupe as a writer-director and was in the process of directing a one-act play about police harassment and brutality called *Search and Seizure*, which he wrote from the actors' improvisations.

These discussions that Billy, Emmett, and the others had, dealt with the freedom being assumed by young people in Haight-Ashbury and throughout the world. They agreed that the ultimate goal

of the Haight community seemed to be freedom and a chance to do your thing, but they felt one could only be free by drawing the line and living outside the profit, private property, and power premises of Western culture because, as Coyote remarked, "The idea of changing anything from within has been exploded long ago."

"Hope was the shot" for the Hun, and he believed along with everyone else that the foundation of a civilization was growing, being built, on young people who were really very wishful: forms of a civilization coming after the deal went down. The deal being roughly the same as in the Soviet Union in 1917, with the young going for hard kicks as a way out, and paying heavy dues because "you can't have the beauty of being a hard liver without payin' those dues. You're not gonna do it. You try it, you're not gonna do it."

Emmett wondered whether anything viable was going to come out of all of it: whether the powerless might for once obtain enough power to make some sort of relevant change in society. He immediately dismissed as ridiculous the notion that everything would be all right when everyone turned on to acid. It was noted that LSD was used during World War Two to solve naval tactical maneuvers, and they concluded that although the drug might facilitate understanding, or the process of doing something, it offered no moral direction or imperatives.

In quick time, Emmett and Billy decided to get things real by challenging the street people with the conclusions they arrived at during these sessions. They mimeographed their thoughts, using a different color paper for each set of leaflets, which soon became known as the "Digger Papers." The name "Diggers" had been tossed forward by another member of the troupe who read about the seventeenth-century group in a British history book and felt that Emmett, Billy and their ideas about freedom resembled those of Gerrard Winstanley, William Everard and their one hundred supporters. These men began to cultivate the common parkland they appropriated in 1649 around Saint George's Hill in Surrey, to feed themselves as a protest against the astonishingly high food prices and to give the surplus to other poor. Cromwell and his Roundheads answered the cries of the food merchants and local farmers, who wanted the land themselves, by using the army to suppress that small, hardy, radical band of agrarian reformers who intended "No other matter herein, but to observe the Law of righteous action, endeavoring to shut out of the Creation, the cursed thing, called

Particular propriety, which is the cause of all wars, blood-shed, crime, and enslaving Laws, that hold the people under miserie.”

It was stone idealism — something neither Billy nor Emmett had tried before but felt was needed to shake up the street’s rite of purification: a purification of the young people which began with their depurification on the streets. Every few days, after dark, Emmett would sneak into the SDS office next to the Mime Troupe’s studio with Billy, and they would mimeograph their handbills on the students’ Gestetner without anyone knowing. Late afternoon of the following day, Emmett would walk on one side of Haight Street, and Billy down the other, giving them out.

The Digger Papers were also a reaction against the pansyness of the S.F. *Oracle* underground newspaper, and the way it catered to the new, hip, moneyed class by refusing to reveal the overall grime of Haight-Ashbury reality. Essentially, however, the Papers were an attempt to antagonize the street people into an awareness of the absolute bullshit implicit in the psychedelic transcendentalism promoted by the self-proclaimed, media-fabricated shamans who espoused the tune-in, turn-on, drop-out, jerk-off ideology of Leary and Alpert. The first paper successfully antagonized the acid community with its mocking refrain: “Time to forget because flowers are beautiful and the sun’s not yellow, it’s chicken!”

Another and probably the most famous Digger Paper was a response to statements by self-appointed spokesmen, and to notices placed in shopwindows by the Haight Independent Proprietor (HIP) merchants association, which advised the people to invite policemen to share a meal with them — to build up better community relations with the force. It said:

*Take a Cop to Dinner Cop a Dinner to Take a Cop Dinner Cop a Take*

*Mr. Answer Man*

*what is*

*a weapon*

*worse*

*ten times*

*worse,*

*than the*

*Hydrogen*

*Bomb?*

*Why a cunt*

*which is*

*ten times*

*larger*

*than the largest*

*cock*

*extant,*

*Mickey.*

*Degoutante,*

*said Mickey*

*kissing cops.*

*to hedge the bet.*

Take a cop to dinner.

Racketeers take cops to dinner with payoffs.

Pimps take cops to dinner with free tricks.

Dealers take cops to dinner with free highs.

Business takes cops to dinner with graft.

Unions and Corporations take cops to dinner with post-retirement jobs.

Schools and Professional Clubs take cops to dinner with free tickets to athletic events and social affairs.

The Catholic Church takes cops to dinner by exempting them from religious duties.

The Justice Department takes cops to dinner with laws giving them the right to do almost anything.

The Defense Department takes cops to dinner by releasing them from all military obligations.

Establishment newspapers take cops to dinner by propagating the image of the friendly, uncorrupt, neighborhood policeman.

Places of entertainment take cops to dinner with free booze and admission to shows.

Merchants take cops to dinner with discounts and gifts.

Neighborhood Committees and Social Organizations take cops to dinner with free discussions offering discriminating insights into hipsterism, black militancy and the drug culture.

Cops take cops to dinner by granting each other immunity to prosecution for misdemeanors and anything else they can get away with.

Cops take themselves to dinner by inciting riots.

*And so, if you own anything or you don't, take a cop to dinner this week and feed his power to judge, prosecute and brutalize the streets of your city.*

*n.b. Gourmet George Metesky would remind everyone not to make the same mistake as Arnold Schuster who served the right course at the wrong time.*

the diggers.

These Papers, which only cost \$1.50 per thousand, more than aroused the so-called leadership class of the Haight-Ashbury, and they tried to find out who the Diggers were. They were answered with telegrams: REGARDING INQUIRIES CONCERNED WITH THE IDENTITY AND WHEREABOUTS OF THE DIGGERS; HAPPY TO REPORT THE DIGGERS ARE NOT THAT. Emmett and Billy wanted to maintain their anonymity in the hope of achieving the kind of autonomy Gregory Corso

talks about in his poem, "Power." They sought to dramatize that power of autonomy by performing Corso's only play, *Standing on a Street Corner*, before the morning, lunch, and evening rush-hour crowd of Montgomery Street office workers, without letting on that the performance was a staged event — the point being to lead the white-collars into believing they were witnessing an actuality which thrice repeated itself. However, something happened that made the one-act play seem relatively unimportant, and it never got beyond rehearsal.

Mid-Tuesday afternoon in that last week of September, a sixteen-year-old kid named Johnson was shot three times dead in the back by a fifty-one-year-old, pot-bellied cop named Johnson, who was only a few feet away from him on "the Hill" overlooking Palau Street in Hunter's Point. The boy was black, the cop was white and said, "I did everything I could to avoid doing what I did. I'm sure sorry."

His apology didn't satisfy the black community, which had emerged during World War Two when the white trickle to the outer cities became a tide and the myth of suburbia was built. The black population of San Francisco swelled from four thousand to eighty thousand. They came to work in the war industries, and after the war was over they were deposited in an outer-city slum instead of an inner-city ghetto. Hunter's Point was their outer city. It's a peninsula, and when the insurrection erupted a few hours after the boy had been killed running away from a car, which wasn't reported stolen until the next day, the cops effectively cut off the peninsula from the mainland by blocking off the linking span at Third Street for ten blocks.

As soon as black tempers began to flare, and the young ones started to run through the streets, looting and setting fires, Mayor John Shelly declared that a state of emergency existed in the Bay-view-Hunter's Point Area and proclaimed a curfew from 8 P.M. to 6 A.M. He also announced that he wasn't going to permit a repetition of what had occurred "in that other city south of here," and he telephoned Governor Edmund Brown, who was on tour campaigning against Ronald Reagan for reelection in Imperial County, and asked him to order out the national guard.

Many of the two thousand troops were veterans of Watts, and most of them were stashed in a makeshift outpost at Kezar Stadium when they arrived in the city. Police Chief Thomas Cahill ordered the entire S.F. police force, on duty together for the first time since

V.J. Day in 1945, to try and restore some semblance of imposed order. They wore helmets and carried shotguns against the rock-and-bottle-throwing blacks who were massed around the E.O.C.'s Bayview Community Center, which had been the S.F. Opera House before the earthquake.

It was Indian summer weather and the mass media gave hourly reports of the temperature readings; City Supervisor Terry Francois begged his "black brothers" to cool it; Assemblyman Willie Brown demanded the dismissal of the cop and more jobs for black men; at the request of both Governor Brown and Mayor Shelly, the S.F. Giants-Atlanta Braves baseball game was televised to the home audience with a special tape-recorded feature of Willie Mays appealing to his people to remain inside and "root for your team."

The heatwave continued with record breaking ninety-five-to-one-hundred-degree temperatures, and the violent outbreak spread to the Western Addition, inner-city areas of Fillmore and Haight-Ashbury. Several unfounded reports of sniper attacks were radioed to the authorities, and the national guard was ordered into the streets with M-1's and rapid-firing Browning automatic rifles. The cops began shooting at the kids and laid down a thunderous barrage of fire into the Bayview Community Center, riddling the place with bullets. There was a photo in the next morning's *Chronicle* of a black man cakewalking in front of the police line cordoning off Third Street, shouting, "*Shoot me! I'm not armed! Shoot me!*" They did.

SNCC, SDS, and the Progressive Labor Party organized a demonstration of less than forty University of California students against the presence of the national guard. They marched with picket signs outside the Mission Street Armory, demanding that the troops "Get Out of Vietnam and San Francisco!" and "Go Home!" A few of them surrounded three military trucks in the street behind the armory and shouted, "No soldiers are going to leave this place tonight!" before they were rousted by the cops.

Emmett was up in the Haight-Ashbury when middle-aged, self-asserting radical Paul Jacobs and his attorney-wife, Ruth, led seventy-odd SDS and Community for New Politics members in a demonstration up Haight Street, with signs proclaiming their solidarity with the "Psychedelic Community." The white, radical-liberals of the Bay Area had quickly turned to the equally white people of the Haight-Ashbury after they had been told to go fuck themselves by the blacks with whom they sympathized. But the longhairs weren't hav-

ing any either, and there were shouts of “*Go back to school where you belong!*” and lots of outside-agitator jokes hurled at the condescending Berkeley crowd as they submitted to peaceful arrest.

Billy showed up, just as a car full of Students for a Democratic Society pulled down the street with a bullhorn blaring out instructions to “Stay on the Avenue of Psychedelics after the curfew hour and confront the fascist police!” The HIP merchants countered with signs in their fog-lighted shop windows advising, “For your own safety and for your own good, stay home and off the streets!” Emmett and Billy disagreed with the SDS and HIP, because both used the curfew for their own petty interests. They decided simply to ignore the curfew and do or not do whatever they wanted. They put up a few scribbled posters to notify the street of their alternative to foolhardy confrontation and cowardly acquiescence.

A short time later, Emmett spotted a number of the Leary-oriented leaders from the psychedelic *Oracle* staff, standing under the marquee of the Straight Theater near the top of Haight Street. One of them was a chubby thirty-year-old named Michael with a penchant for white cotton clothes that invited comparison with yesteryear prophets. He was also the Mickey put down in Norman Mailer’s poem that was liberated into the “Take a Cop to Dinner” leaflet, and he was actually tearing down a poster — a poster Emmett had just fastened to the lamppost in front of the theater.

“*What the fuck do you think you’re doing! Huh!*” Emmett yelled, as he came up from behind and spun him around. He was about to paste him one in the face, but Billy caught him because the area was full of heat whose attention he was already attracting by shouting, “*Well, what the fuck do you think you’re doing with our sign?!*”

“Take it easy, Emmett. We didn’t mean anything. We just have a different way of dealing with the police, that’s all. Why don’t you come over to the office with us and we’ll talk about it, okay?”

“No, there’s nothing ‘okay’ about it! We already know your ingenious plan! You’re gonna love ’em to death with fancy suppers ’n suffocate ’em with smoke from burning incense! Well, we got our own way, see! Like standin’ on a street corner waiting for no one, if you want, ’n defendin’ your right to do it or anything else! That curfew’s for you! So, you better hurry home before the nasty policemen give you all a spankin’! ’N leave our signs alone!”

“Emmett, why do you have to be so hostile? We’re —”

“Oh, get outta my face, willya! *Just Get Outta My Face!*”

Afterwards, Emmett and Billy went down to Fillmore Street for some barbecue. While they were ordering, the twenty-block area of Fillmore was sealed off from Fulton to Geary streets. They took their paper plates of food with them and stood outside the eatery, watching the surreality of the paramilitary operation unfold on the sidewalks where children had been playing only moments before. They got caught up in a crowd of black people who were trying to get back to their homes, and it felt strange being white but nobody said anything.

Some kids started throwing bricks from the vacant lot at an official car that was passing, and suddenly someone hollered, "*Lock 'n load!*" Fifty cops immediately dropped to their knees and jacked shells containing pea-sized charges of buckshot into the chambers of their riot guns. Everyone scattered in hysteria, as a sergeant called, "Bag that kid in the red sweater!" The kid was pinched and thrown into a squad car.

The crowd re-formed with everyone muttering about the insanity of fifty loaded shotguns on a city street. Their faces were all flushed with anger and the heat — the heat that made the tar on the streets soft and sticky and the apartments too hot to stay in. It took most of those people over two frustrating hours to get back to their own places, only to spill back out onto the street again until 3 or 4 A.M.

Billy returned with Emmett to his room and they were hassled by cops and soldiers all the way. By the time they arrived, they were pissed off and bent on vengeance. They made a brace of Molotov cocktails with a couple of half-filled bottles of turpentine and went up to the building's roof. Down below passed personnel carriers with armed national guardsmen patrolling Fell Street. Both of them knew that if they dropped the fire bombs onto a truck, they wouldn't be immediately suspect, because they were white. They also realized that it would touch off a murderous, repressive onslaught by the soldiers, in which black people would suffer a far more devastating and wholesale oppression than they did already. They looked at each other and quietly decided it wasn't their play to make. They hid the rag-wicked bottles in a corner of the roof, and drank up the rest of the beer in the icebox downstairs.

The insurrection simmered down and the newspapers claimed that it was caused by the "cancer of discrimination," and they gave notice that President Johnson had ordered an investigation into the severe unemployment of black San Franciscans. The president of the Chamber of Commerce, Cyril Magnin, immediately announced

an urgent crash plan to provide some two thousand quick jobs for the minority-race unemployed, and Congressman Phillip Burton claimed that one thousand jobs would be made available in the city's post office during the Christmas rush. Judges Elton Lawless and Joseph G. Kennedy declared a "San Francisco riots amnesty" and freed three hundred adult prisoners, ninety of whom were white and had been arrested in the national guard curfew protests and were bruised and shaken when released because they'd been knocked about by the black inmates of the jail. The House Un-American Activities Committee launched an inquiry to probe the "riots" for subversive elements, and sought the support of moderate civil rights groups like the NAACP and the Urban League "to purge black action groups of subversion." The Artists' Political Action Committee of the Artists' Liberation Front paraded in front of city hall with a black coffin labeled "Another 16 Year Old." Connie's Haight Street restaurant, along with the Socialist Workers Party-Young Socialist Alliance, laid two large, bright, yellow wreaths on the dirt of the rubbish-strewn hillside where Matthew "Peanut" Johnson had been shot dead, as a poignant memorial — "In Brutal Memory of Black Justice."

Then it was all over and the riot headlines were pushed off the front pages by a sensational exposé of a former Kentucky governor's grandson named Augustus Owsley Stanley III, as the "LSD Millionaire," and by the "LSD Fugitive's Strange Story" concerning Ken Kesey's totally unstrange return trip to San Francisco while everyone had been preoccupied during the insurrection. After having fled the city ten months before to escape a pot bust, he came back from Mexico, he said, "as a fugitive, and as salt in J. Edgar Hoover's wounds," and also to help with a "graduation ceremony." He confused everyone with his change of heart about LSD and angered some former friends by wanting to convene seventy-five hundred people for an "acid test commencement" on Halloween, to show the way to a new style of communal interchange. At the same time, he wanted to deemphasize chemical turn-ons by graduating acidheads out of LSD. All it finally amounted to, after the hoopla died down, was a by-invitation-only, private party held in a warehouse with a lot of booze and plenty of group analysis. For weeks the press had everyone hyped about what a Slam! Bang! party-bash it was going to be, but it turned out to be something less than a whimper. "*Spargere voces in vulgum ambiguas,*" someone said a long time ago in the prologue of the past.

As the weather and black people continued to cool out, the press kept up its graphic coverage of the hippies. In fact, the word hippie was itself a fabrication of the mass media, and in order to do it justice, there was a flood of newsprint devoted to the subject of hipsterism, ranging from stories about the "Beatnik-Anarchist Provos" in Holland, to profiles of various Haight Street characters like Super-Spade, a twenty-five-year-old, leather-clad, black grass dealer, who wore a button proclaiming himself "Faster than a speeding mind." The media launched such a concentrated, focused assault on the Haight-Ashbury that it soon became the most over-exposed neighborhood in the country. Only Washington, D.C., and other seats of government have been more closely covered by journalists.

The Mime Troupe's outdoor season in the parks ended, and the company accepted a few indoor bookings around the Bay Area. Emmett and Billy performed together nightly in a comedy-farce called *In-Put, Out-Put*, a one-act written and directed by the Hun about the basic absurdity of computer programming. The performances ran for a week at a Berkeley coffeehouse and died the way live theater always dies when it upsets or embarrasses audiences. Emmett's unemployment checks stopped shortly afterwards and he was broke, which was no big thing because everybody was. Neither he nor Billy could see what was so hip about it, however, or what was soulful about panhandling. Since being fleeced was the daily condition of most Haight people, the two of them resolved not only to relieve their individual strapped conditions, but to try also to aid some part of the larger down-and-out community. After all, that's what they were talking about and demanding in the Digger Papers: collective social consciousness and community action.

Billy and Emmett wanted to pull some sort of score which would benefit others besides themselves — some job that would provide a take big enough to share. Plain money wasn't the answer because greed would probably never permit a sizable cash haul to be properly divided among the people and besides, no one would learn anything about collective interaction from it. What was needed that they could buy with a sackful of stolen money?

"Bread!" exclaimed Emmett. He got Billy to drive his '55 Ford station wagon to the San Francisco Produce Market on the outskirts of the city. The sun had only been up for half an hour when they pulled through the chain-link front gate and drove into the lot, past the loading platforms stacked high with crates of fresh fruit and

vegetables. One of Emmett's uncles used to truck wholesale produce from the West Side marketplace in Greenwich Village to some small supermarkets around Brooklyn, and at age ten or eleven Emmett had helped him quite a few times when his uncle's regular helper was sick. He learned his way around produce during those brief assists and stole meat from the same markets to pay for his junk habit. Now he attracted a lot of attention because of his very long hair, but Emmett's fluent Italian compensated for that. He spoke with the immigrants who ran the wholesale stalls lining both sides of the market. At first most of them were suspicious, but they became friendly after he handed them a line, and within an hour the Ford wagon was packed tight with crates of food. There were tomatoes, turnips, green beans, cauliflower, Brussels sprouts, onions, eggplant, squash, potatoes, lettuce, yams, apples and oranges. From a particularly generous Italian named Paddy, who managed the only poultry plant in the market, they got fifty pounds of chicken and turkey parts. That was all there was to it.

Driving back to town, they discussed different ways of distributing the food. The problem was that the street people, who really needed it, had no place or means to cook it.

"We can get it cooked. We'll make a stew."

"What do we use to cook with? What'll be big enough?"

"Cans."

"Cans? Garbage Cans?"

"No, milk cans. They're sterilized 'n durable 'n you can handle 'em easy."

So they snatched a pair of twenty-gallon milk cans from a dairy plant in the Mission district and transported everything back to Emmett's place. It was around 8 A.M., when they began boiling down the fowl to make a stock for the stew. They worked hard for hours preparing the vegetables, Emmett working as hard that first morning as he was going to daily for over a year. He worked harder than most blue-collar folks work for a living—something Emmett had done only occasionally to the probable chagrin of the ghost of his late grandfather whose union cards he still carried in his pocket. They talked while they worked and decided to give away the stew in the Fell Street Panhandle of Golden Gate Park at 4 P.M. that afternoon. While Emmett ladled the inches of grease away from the surface of the stock and continued to ready the greens, Billy went downtown to mimeograph and hand out several hundred leaflets notifying the Haight community about

FREE FOOD            GOOD HOT STEW  
RIPE TOMATOES        FRESH FRUIT  
BRING A BOWL AND SPOON TO  
THE PANHANDLE AT ASHBURY STREET  
4 PM   4 PM   4 PM   4 PM   4 PM  
FREE FOOD *EVERYDAY* FREE FOOD  
IT'S FREE BECAUSE IT'S YOURS!  
the diggers.

They added the greens and potatoes to the stock only minutes prior to leaving, otherwise they would have lost their solidity in the boiling hot soup and melted into a mush, instead of becoming a stew. It was just before 4 P.M. when the two of them drove over to the Panhandle and set the hot milk cans on the grass with the boxes of tomatoes and cartons of fruit. There were already fifty people waiting and another fifty-odd showed up immediately, some of them carrying their bowls tied to their belts. The number of people increased to a stationary two hundred, as the Free Food continued through the week in the Panhandle, every afternoon at four. The bowls dangling from the waistbands took on an immediately recognizable significance.

The word quickly spread and soon such underground papers as the Berkeley *Barb* were nibbling around, trying to scoop a story on who was behind the Free Food event. They only ended up running into an anonymous wall, and finally were discouraged enough to simply chalk it all up to that "mystery-shrouded Haight-Ashbury group, the Diggers." The hipsters who knew Emmett and Billy searched them out in the cold fog and found them sitting on the grass among the young newcomers to the Haight and the old-timers from skid row, gobbling up the soup du jour. The Hun remarked that it was a great idea. "Try to keep it going for another week, if you can, and you'll really get your point across. Just another week. Terrific!" The straight New Lefties came around and turned a little green with envy that they hadn't thought of the food angle as an organizing principle themselves. If they had, they would have done it only as a one-shot for the publicity. The liberals, hip and square, would watch the hungry crowd being fed and grope around, looking for someone to offer a donation to. Conservatives would ask why everyone didn't get a job.

Emmett and Billy knew that Free Food everyday in the park was a popular act, but they didn't intend it solely as a symbol. No, they were hungry and so were a lot of others, and they were going to keep

the Free Food going every day, in spite of everything and for nothing. When donors would offer notes of vicarious approval, they'd take the bills, strike a match, and burn them to the amusement of those eating. The young kids squatting in the Panhandle were hungry and afraid all right, but they were on their own for the first time for no matter how long, and they wanted no material support from members of their parents' world. The burning of the ten- and twenty-dollar bills typified, more than anything else, what they felt and what the Diggers believed.

A half-dozen young women, a few of whom were dropouts from Antioch College, shared a large pad together on Clayton Street and volunteered to take over the cooking indefinitely. Two other members of the Mime Troupe, Butcher Brooks and Slim Minnaux, undertook the everyday delivery of the prepared food to the 4 P.M. Panhandle feed. This left Emmett to make the early morning round of pickups at the Produce Market, the Farmers Market and the Ukranian Bakery. On his way back to Clayton Street every A.M., he would try to steal some beef for the stew. They didn't have access to any freezer storage space, so he could snatch only a side of beef at most from a meat packing plant, or from one of the trucks making deliveries, and take it back for the group to butcher themselves. He tried hustling a head butcher at the Allen Meat Company for a daily box of scraps and bones for soup stock, but he only got himself whacked on the head with the flat side of a cleaver — and no meat. Of course, he could have hijacked a whole trailer full of meat and fenced the goods, but that would have only been a one-shot deal, and the importance of Free Food was its steady continuance everyday at the same time for as long as it was needed.

Billy hustled some dough and Emmett rented a six-car garage on Page Street that was filled with empty window frames. He was joined by some young dudes from the 4 P.M. feed, who helped him nail the window frames all over the wooden front of the garage and clean up the inside. Simolean Gary had come down from Redwood looking for parts for his motorcycle; John-John had roamed out from Brooklyn, riding the rails, sleeping in freight cars; Motorcycle Richie had also wandered from Manhattan, driving out on a hot Harley-Davidson. John-John was Leo Gorcey personified, and if he had been born during the thirties, he would have undoubtedly been one of the Dead End Kids in the movies and he knew that. The combination of the three of them was enough to keep life from ever getting boring. They stenciled a sign below the roofline and opened

the doors to the street within a few days. The place was called the Free Frame of Reference and it was the first free store.

Emmett didn't bother to make clear to the community something which was very important. He didn't bother because he didn't want to at the time. That something was that the Free Food was not begun to prolong the economic usefulness of day-old bread or vegetables or bad cuts of meat, and the free stores were not set up to prolong the economic usefulness of secondhand clothes and other items. Only a fraction of the goods used or accepted were secondhand and they were made available and displayed to effect a Salvation-Goodwill-salvage cover to conceal the fact that the rest of the stuff was new and fresh and had been stolen. People who tried to deposit their refuse at the Free Frame of Reference were told to go and recycle their garbage someplace else. And when the stiffs wanted to speak with whoever was in charge of the operation they were told, "You're in charge! You wanna see someone in charge? You be in charge!" This was done not only to dramatize the concept of assuming freedom, but also to prevent the cops from vamping and busting someone for being in possession or receipt of stolen property. For the same reason, the leases for these places were always signed by some drifter passing through town and not by Emmett or Billy or anyone else. No one ever accepted responsibility for anything.

Butcher Brooks was a photographer and he had a battered VW bus painted a bright yellow, with a slogan written on the outside panel in orange Day-Glo, "The Road of Excess Leads to the Palace of Wisdom!" He had been working as a Digger for about a month, and his bus became known around the streets as the yellow submarine, often carrying the Digger women — Natural Suzanne, Fyllis, Cindy Small, Bobsie, NanaNina — in the back with the prepared food. The crowd would see the yellow submarine coming down Ashbury Street and they would mill around near the curb in the park. Brooks sometimes felt the people were taking the Free Food too much for granted so, instead of parking and unloading, he often teased them by continually passing, until he sparked them into some sort of action, like waylaying the bus when it became delayed in traffic, removing the ignition keys, and seizing the cooked food. He also made them work for it by sealing the milk cans tight, banging the lids firmly shut with a hammer. It would take some time for several guys in the park to tug the jammed cover free of the blister-hot can and ladle out the stew. This Free Food theater evolved to a point where Billy constructed a giant, thirteen-foot square Frame of

Reference from four two-by-fours bolted together, and Emmett painted it a golden orange. The frame would be set up between two large oak trees in the Panhandle every day before 4 P.M. When the Free Food arrived, it would be placed on one side of the frame and the hungry would be made to walk through it to get at the stew and whatever else was being shared on the other side, changing their frame of reference as they did.

The Hun was anxious to get involved in the theater aspect of the Diggers' activity and he proposed an event for Halloween. The hero of Kerouac's *On the Road*, Neil Cassady, was driving the Kesey-Prankster bus around the Panhandle that afternoon, holding a lively conversation with the traffic. The bus was a regular school bus that had been Rorschached with almost every color of paint, and had a sign above the windshield spelling "Further," instead of "Bread" or "Meat." Emmett wondered briefly if there was an analogy to the Russian Black Marias that were painted various happy colors and labeled "Bread" or "Meat" to camouflage them from their citizens. That evening, while Ken Kesey furthered his pranksterism with a diploma from his own graduation, Emmett and Billy carried the two-by-four Frame of Reference up to the corners of Haight and Ashbury, where they stood it against a lamppost. Sculptor La Mortadella showed up with a pair of his nine-foot puppets, which he'd made for a Mime Troupe presentation, and the Hun, Slim Minnaux, and Butcher Brooks. Dozens of three-inch-square yellow wooden frames made by the Digger women were given out to the gathered curious, who hung them around their necks like medallions. A puppet show was improvised on the corner about the in's and out's of being on either side of the Frame of Reference. Billy and Brooks held the frame steady, as the other four paired off to handle the gangly puppets — one maneuvering the hands, the other holding the stilt and performing the voice. Each puppet remained on the opposite side of the frame from the other, but both changed sides frequently, commenting on the differences between them.

A crowd of five hundred formed, blocking the sidewalk and traffic, and were quickly followed by the cops, who ordered everyone to "break it up! And move along!" No one moved, so for some reason the cops turned and addressed the puppets instead of the puppeteers, and warned them they were violating the law by causing a public nuisance and obstructing traffic and further informed them they would be arrested if they didn't cease and desist. This

dialogue between the coppers and the puppets tickled the people silly, and continued until reinforcements arrived and the puppets were busted along with their maker and the puppeteers. The cops had a difficult time placing the dolls in custody because of their size. In fact, they were almost too large to fit into the paddy wagon, but were somehow squeezed inside after much effort.

Brooks got enthusiastically fanciful and tried to incite the crowd to "*free the prisoners!*" They began to rock the patrol wagon, and for a moment it seemed about to go over, but the people retreated when Brooks was popped and thrown in with his comrades. The cops drove the wagon away to the park police station, leaving Billy to dismantle the frame and carry it back to the Free Frame of Reference on Page Street with John-John, Gary and Richie. The rest of the Diggers, mostly women, scattered to raise bail money from the community.

At the station house, Captain Keily tongue-lashed Butcher but didn't charge him for attempting to incite a riot. Both puppets stood against a side wall, and cops entering and leaving the station would make startled comments like, "Will ya look how fuckin' big they are! Jesus, if one of 'em fell on somebody, it'd probably kill the son of a bitch! Why the hell does somebody make something so fuckin' big in the first place? They gotta want to hurt people! Look at how big those fuckers are!"

All five puppet showmen were charged with violating penal code 370, creating a public nuisance and were booked and locked up together in the same back cell. Emmett, like the rest, felt it was a "fun bust," the only time being arrested has ever been a fun thing in his life. It was fun when you consider that arrest was the moment he feared most during his career as a thief. This bust was just a goof — a misdemeanor punishable by a small fine, a reprimand and/or a couple of days in the city jail, not by a term behind bars in some penitentiary.

None of the Haight Independent Proprietors, or HIP merchants, as they were called, came across with even a portion of the \$625 needed to bail them out. But, after being transferred downtown to the city prison's misdemeanor tank in the Hall of Justice building, they were able to sweet-talk the head of VISTA's O.R. Project and get themselves released without bail on their own recognizance. They did this by proving to him through a series of telephone calls to the Mime Troupe and a signed affidavit from Ronnie Davis that they all lived in and had roots in San Francisco.



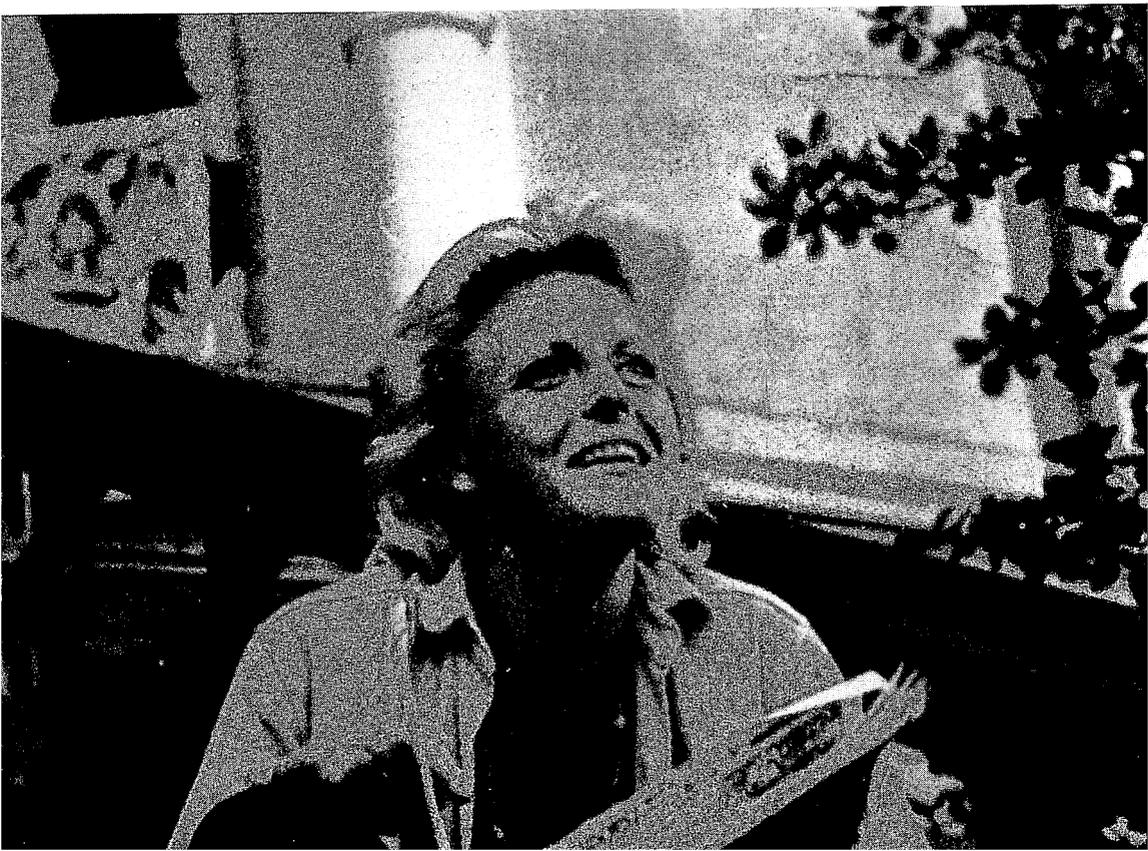
The case went before Municipal Court Judge Elton C. Lawless within forty-eight hours — on Emmett's 22nd birthday. His honor reluctantly dismissed the case before anything got started, at the urging of Deputy District Attorney Arthur Schaffer, who said, "Further investigation indicates that the charges of creating a public nuisance should be dismissed in the interests of justice." The further investigation he mentioned was some cocktail conversation he had with the defendants before eating lunch with them. This penal code 370, which they were charged with violating, had been chosen by the park station cops as the main weapon in their declared war of harassment against the Haight Street people, and the puppet quintet was happy to be cut loose. They were in a good mood when they walked out of Lawless's courtroom, and their loudness attracted Bob Cambell, a newspaper photographer who was assigned to cover the municipal court building, which was quiet with the inactivity of a dull afternoon. He got the story from the deputy D.A. and asked the five defendants if they would stand on the outside steps for a photo. They did without thinking anything of it.

The next morning, Emmett walked down his block for a newspaper and a cup of coffee. On the corner there was a sealed container that unlatched a *Chronicle* when it was fed a dime. He dropped his ten cents into the slot, opened the lid, and what he saw made him lift out two copies instead of one. On the front page was a five-by-seven picture of him and the others, outside the court building after their release the day before. The photo was headlined, "In the Clear" and captioned with their names and a brief synopsis of who they were and what had gone down. He was referred to as an actor, but thankfully there was no mention of the Diggers or even the Mime Troupe. The photo captured each of them striking a pose: La Mortadella was shown with his pinky and forefinger raised in the sign of the cornuto or the cuckold; Slim Minnaux was leaping with arms-stretched, fists-clenched ecstasy; the Hun had his thumb jammed up into an imaginary asshole, and his face was pinched like someone who just smelled a load of shit; Butcher Brooks was dressed in someone else's style and leaning forward in a stiff, fraternity stance, Emmett, still wearing his army boots, with a scarf knotted around his neck, an IRA cap flopping on his head, and a cigarette loosely hanging from the corner of his smile, was one step upstage from his pals, staring out at the reader from above the middle finger and index finger of his right hand, raised in the sign of a backwards









V which to the English and Irish means "Up Your Ass!" and is the equivalent of the American, lone, uplifted, middle finger.

The photo seemed as big as life to Emmett, and he wondered if it meant any trouble. He didn't like too many people knowing about him, and now half the city was probably going to know all their names before the day was out. He finished his coffee and then thumbed a ride up Haight Street to Clayton. As he was walking up the hill to the house where the stew was being fixed and the station wagon was parked, several people called out to him by name and flashed him a V-sign. He stopped a few of them and explained that they had it all wrong. "You've got to turn your hand around 'n flash it backwards. Like giving someone the finger. See . . ." and he showed them. But there were too many to bother about and by the time he went over to the Panhandle at 4 P.M. for something to eat, everyone was waving the V-sign to him and to one another, saying things like, "Peace, brother." "When are you going to run for mayor, Emmett?" It was depressing. There he was, on the front page of the town's only morning newspaper, telling everyone to shove it all up their ass, and they thought he was just imitating Winston Churchill or something. "Fuck it!" He decided there was no way to make the hippies hip to it, and besides he had better things to do.

The *Chronicle* photo also had another effect: it clued in photographers who covered the Haight-Ashbury that the Diggers were newsworthy, and fed the Hun's enthusiasm toward media takeover and newsmaking. Emmett asked several hip, freelance photographers — and warned some straight, establishment cameramen — to refrain from taking his picture because it would interfere with his work and ultimately impair their health. The Hun was charged up and laid plans for the disruption and possible takeover of a radio station in San Jose and another in Berkeley, both of which had invited the Diggers to appear for an interview and telephone discussion with the listening audience. Meanwhile, the pick-up, preparation and distribution of Free Food was left to Emmett, Billy and the women, with everyone else opting out for the more exciting and adventurous game of guerrilla theater.

Emmett hustled some twenty turkeys from Paddy at the Produce Market, got them cooked in ovens all over the Haight community in the morning, and shared them with the people who gathered at the Free Frame of Reference on Page Street at 4 P.M. that Thanksgiving afternoon, 1966. He also went on radio with the Hun, Coyote and the others, but was careful not to say anything. He just remained

closemouthed and listened to the rap they laid down about what was happening in the Haight-Ashbury, and how the material affluence of America was permitting many of the young people to live off of society's surplus and enabling them to use wampum items that were already made, or that they created themselves instead of money. These points were further discussed in a meeting a few nights later at the Page Street Free Frame and developed into a theatrical event to "celebrate the death and rebirth of the Haight-Ashbury and the death of money."

To the stone disapproval of R. G. Davis, who felt his company was being co-opted by the Diggers and their street activities, most members of the Mime Troupe organized the celebration for that Saturday afternoon and Emmett invited the Frisco Hell's Angels to take part. Two hundred car mirrors were removed from wrecks in the junkyard and a thousand penny whistles, candles, incense sticks and several hundred lilies were collected, and two reams of two-foot wide posters were printed with the word NOW! blocked in six-inch-high, red letters on a white background.

The event began with the NOW! posters being silently handed to everyone on Haight Street, while members of the Mime Troupe, having split into Group 1 and Group 2, walked parallel up and down on both sides of the street, chanting. First, Group 1 would go, "Ooooo!" Then Group 2, "Aaahhh!" Group 1, "Ssshhh!" Group 2, "Be cool!" Back and forth like that, over and over, louder and louder. At the same time, the penny whistles were distributed through the swelling crowd, and they used them to join in, blowing up an eerie, high-register shrill. Young girls dressed in white-sheet togas gave everyone a flower, and the car mirrors were passed around to reflect the light from the sunny side to the shaded side of the block. The smell of burning incense was everywhere, as the people surged onto the blacktop, blocking traffic. A muni-bus driver got out of his coach and danced in the street with a girl, and his passengers disembarked to mix in the fun. The Frisco Angels rode their chopped 74s along the white line between the stalled, bumper-to-bumper cars. They rumble-roared past the crowd in a procession with NOW! banners flapping from their sissy-bars. Hairy Henry was up front with Fyllis standing on his buddy seat, wailing, "Frrreeeee!"

Soon there were three or four thousand assembled, and the noise of celebration rose to a jubilant crescendo, as the sound of a mantra began: "The streets belong to the people! The streets belong to the people!" The beat went on as the tactical police force bunched up

on a side street toward the top of the Haight. They were summoned by Captain Kiely because the people had neither applied for nor been given a permit for their gathering, therefore it was unlawful and had to be stopped. But how do you try to stop four thousand people from partying? They didn't, and the beat set in, "The streets belong to the people!" "The streets belong to the people!"

Their parade completed, the Frisco Angels parked their bikes up at the end of the block. As Hairy Henry was helping Fyllis from his scooter, a pair of TPF cops came over and told him he had committed a violation by allowing her to stand up on the seat while his machine was in motion. They asked to see his license, and then ran a radio check at headquarters to see whether he had any outstanding warrants. There were no traffic warrants out on him, but they learned that Henry had just been paroled from San Quentin, having finished an eight-year bit. They told him to come with them over to the station house and they would return his license to him there. Hairy Henry told them to keep it. More cops came over, and he was arrested for resisting arrest. "What resist? You never told me nothin' 'bout no arrest! What arrest? What for?" They dragged him into the paddy wagon, but his tight friend and Hells Angel brother, Chocolate George, started pulling him back out again. He was bystander during the incident and felt that the coppers were doing Henry wrong. The cops piled all over the two, and after a struggle, shoved them both inside the wagon, locking the wire-mesh door.

The rest of the Frisco club had walked back to the party long before the cops had made their move against Henry, but several persons witnessed what went down and one of them ran over and told Emmett about the bust. He decided to lay it on the people and see if there was enough solidarity on the street to warrant the continued talk of community. Slim Minnaux, who was tall enough to be seen and heard far back in the crowd, bellowed out the news and told everyone to march on the park station for their release. There was a loud shout of unanimity as the people turned as one and started towards the station house. The party mood continued with poet Michael McClure strumming his autoharp and Hells Angel Freewheelin' Frank shaking his tambourine, both walking in front with everyone singing, "*We want Hairy Henry! We want Chocolate George!*"

Reinforcements were called in by Captain Kiely when he heard what was happening, and the cops surrounded the station. The

crowd turned along Stanyon Street, went through Golden Gate Park and across to the parking lot in front of the station house. The line of cops fell back in face of the two to three thousand marchers who were lighting the candles now and still maintaining the song, "*We want Hairy Henry! We want Chocolate George!*" Some of the people even pushed their way past the surprised coppers and inside the station and almost succeeded in releasing both prisoners, but were driven back outside at gunpoint. A coffin, used to symbolize the death of money, was held up and quickly filled with the \$380 bail required for the two. This was handed over to the Frisco club's president, Angel Pete, who remarked that he had never seen anything like it. The people had never stood up for the Hells Angels before, and the speed with which the money was collected really surprised him and he yelled, "Thanks!" to the crowd as he left with his brothers for the bondsman.

Chocolate George was bailed out later that night, but Hairy Henry was kept locked in the felony tank at the city prison on a parole hold with no possibility of bail until the case against him was tried. That's what you call being burned, and Emmett was pissed off. He got Henry an attorney who said he would defend him gratis. He even got to see Henry at the city prison — but not as a visitor.

Emmett was spotted lifting a one-hundred-pound box of prime round steaks from the rear of a truck being loaded at the Armour meat company. A truck driver, who was goofing off in the cab of a trailer parked nearby, clocked him as he slid the meat into the back of the Ford wagon and drove away. The fink also wrote down the plate number before calling the cops. Emmett had just dropped the haul at Clayton Street and was driving back to his pad with a steak he intended to fry for himself before collapsing asleep. He heard the sirens and the order to pull over at the same time. There was a .38 staring at the left side of his face and he didn't argue. They found the piece of meat on the floor underneath the dashboard wrapped in a sheet of paper. He had carefully pulled the car into a parking space along the curb, so it wouldn't be towed away, and he was then handcuffed and taken downtown to the Hall of Justice in a squadrol. There he was booked for possession of stolen goods and suspicion of grand theft. He said hello to Henry when they locked him inside the same felony tank, and was asked what he'd been popped for.

"Possession."

“Possession of what? Grass? Coke? What?”

“Meat. Possession of a fucking piece of meat!” And everyone laughed.

But this one wasn't a fun bust. The Armour meat company, as well as a couple of others, had been reporting frequent thefts to the police, and he was going to be in real trouble if someone could place him at the scene of any other grabs. He sweated a little, but he could hardly keep his eyes open or his mind on the problem. This was his first day off in nearly three months and he just crashed on one of the bunks until his bond was posted the next day.

There didn't seem to be any witnesses to any of the other heists, or at least they weren't coming forward, but the company still wanted to prosecute him to the full extent of the law and set an example of him in the newspapers. Fortunately, his attorney, a strong man named Richard Wertheimer, who studied law after becoming crippled as a longshoreman, was able to talk with a few of the company's directors and make a deal. Emmett was to make restitution for the one hundred pounds of round steak and they would ask the court to reduce the complaint to simple petty theft and to grant clemency. At the preliminary hearing, Dick Wertheimer spoke with the judge in chambers, and when the court was in session continued his plea from the floor, asking that his honor understand that “the boy wasn't stealing the meat for himself or to sell for cash but he did it to divide among the poor and hungry, disenfranchised, young people who've been crowding into the Haight-Ashbury . . .”

Judge Joseph G. Kennedy was presiding and his response to that argument was, “Well, son, even Robin Hood had to pay his dues. Six months . . .” — and he hesitated long enough for Emmett to mutter, “Shit!” for having copped a plea — “. . . suspended. And six months probation.” With the stipulation that he reimburse the Armour people before the completion of that probation.

A week later, Hairy Henry and Chocolate George were in the same courtroom with Brian Rohan, the attorney Emmett had asked to defend the two. As soon as the court was called into session, the prosecution dismissed the charges for lack of evidence, and Rohan flipped out because Henry had already spent weeks in jail, and Rohan had put in long hours preparing for the defense. Why had the D.A.'s office waited until now to drop the charges? Why hadn't they notified him and his clients sooner? But there was nothing to be done. When he stormed out of the courtroom into the hallway, he ran smack into one of the arresting officers, a punk-faced bastard

named Kerrens, standing next to a crowd of newsmen. Kerrens had made a quick reputation on the streets in the Haight as a brutal, lying prick, and Rohan knew this. He really let it fly in a good, solid, five-minute tirade, which he closed by promising the cop he was going to build a harassment-brutality case against him that wasn't only going to get him kicked off the force, but also give his wife grounds for divorce. Emmett enjoyed the at-the-drop-of-a-hat performance and so did Rohan. The cameras had recorded every moment of his displayed outrage and the cop's embarrassment for the six o'clock newscasts. It was plenty slick.

The Frisco Angels wanted to repay the people of the Haight for having come through with their brothers' bail. The club wanted to throw a party and Angel Pete talked about it with Emmett. They decided to have one in the Panhandle on New Year's Day and they did. It was called the New Year's Day Wail! and the Angels bought beer, which they gave away to everyone, and paid for the PA system. Emmett arranged for an eighteen-foot, flatbed truck to be used as a stage. Since it was early Sunday afternoon, Emmett had to go wake up Big Brother and the Holding Company, as well as the Grateful Dead. Pearl cursed his being to infinite damnation, and Jerry Garcia suggested he go play Russian roulette with a loaded automatic, but they came and he played his beautiful guitar licks and she sang her trashy soul out for the people.

It was a great day and a hell of a party — the first free rock-concert-party in any city park put on solely by the people for themselves. By late afternoon everybody was high and happy. The cops came, saw the way everyone looked wasted, and split, muttering something about the absence of a park permit. The crowd shouted a goodbye after them: "*The parks belong to the people! The parks belong to the people!*" Even so, Emmett believed the cops would have vamped, if the music had continued past dark. But the bands had to gig at the Fillmore and Avalon ballrooms that night, so there was no music. None that was played over the loudspeaker system, anyway. The "Wail!" ended with the falling sun and the Angels rode off on their scooters and everyone else drifted away, smiling with the feeling of having had a good time.

Emmett got loaded after he returned the truck, and bedded down with Natural Suzanne — a high-hipped, eighteen-year-old Michigan girl with sharply etched cheekbones, who dropped out of Antioch to live in the Haight-Ashbury. She had been staying with Emmett for a few weeks and they both liked it. The past three months, since the

Free Food began, had been ball-breaking lonely for Emmett. No one was really into the food but him and the women. In fact, if it hadn't been for those women there wouldn't have been 4 P.M. Free Food in the park everyday or any day. They were the real strength in the Haight-Ashbury community, the real Diggers. Cooking two or three twenty-gallon milk cans full of stew for two hundred people can be a goof, if you do it once a year, but try doing it for two or three days in a row, for two or three weeks, for two or three months. And not get paid — not make any money from it at all. It's a bitch!

The news media began referring to the Diggers as “a sort of hippie philanthropic, do-gooder organization based in the Haight-Ashbury”; as “Mod Monks,” and as “a new breed of hip Salvation Army social workers without portfolio.” No matter how deep into the streets they delved, they couldn't come up with anyone who would claim responsibility for any of the Digger above-ground activities. Emmett was enormously popular on the streets and because of this, and because he continued to shun publicity, giving the press the go-by, the HIP class regarded him with a certain apprehension and dislike. He didn't care. He knew what he was doing and he just didn't care. However, the growing spotlight scene annoyed Billy Landout who split for the East Coast to see if he could rustle up anything in New York. Everyone, including Coyote and the Hun, thought Bill was an innocent, holy, little guy, but Emmett knew better. He knew him when he was a tough kid on the streets of Brooklyn, and he hadn't changed. The toughness was still there, he was just very quiet about it. William Everard seemed to have been the same way. He also pulled the same kind of a fade back in the seventeenth century, leaving the historians puzzled as to what kind of a man he had been and what type of a role he played within *that* Digger movement. It's doubtful Billy Landout had the same sense of history, he simply wanted to have a chocolate egg-cream at the Gem Spa candy store on the Lower East Side, that's all. After he had gone, the Hun started a rumor that Billy had left because the city of San Francisco wasn't big enough for both Emmett and him. Emmett only heard that dumb gossip weeks later, after he had just spoken with Billy long distance, and it was too late to do anything about it. It was a pretty cheap shot to take at someone, Emmett thought. “But what the fuck! Some people are just small that way,” and he forgot about it.

A public health eviction notice was slapped on the Page Street Free Frame because several people were crashing there. But an em-

ployee of the Quakers, called Fish, found a new and much better location right away and they moved. It was a storefront on Frederick Street with a kitchen, bathroom, a spacious interior and a large empty basement. Motorcycle Richie, Gary, and John-John transferred what stuff was needed from Page Street, and Emmett stenciled the name of the new place over the front window: The Free Frame of Reference. He thought about putting up Number Two but decided it would have been too corny. Quaker Fish got his wife to sign the lease before she divorced him and returned to her parents in New England. There was a room in the back, to the right of the kitchen, which John-John, Gary, and Richie made into a bunkhouse, building beds and stealing some furniture. It was too small to sleep more than six or seven, so everyone else who wanted to crash used the basement floor which was covered wall to wall with mattresses. The women continued to cook the 4 P.M. Free Food at their house on Clayton Street, leaving the kitchen to be used only for coffee and whatever snacks had been lifted from somewhere.

The Ford wagon finally up and died one day, and it looked like the yellow submarine wasn't going to last much longer either, being driven sixteen to twenty hours a day. Emmett and a crew of Diggers were discussing the need for another vehicle, when in the front door walked Richard Brautigan, a tall, carrot-haired, thirty-five-year-old poet wearing grandpa glasses, a peacoat and a floppy, wide-brimmed, felt hat. He also sported a golden bristled moustache, which drooped over his upper lip like a nodding eyelash. Richard called his poems "Tidbits" and he wrote quite a few for the free handbills which were mimeographed and distributed by the Communication Company, a small organization set up by two office-staffers of *Ramparts* magazine. Their names were Claude and Chester and, turned on by the style of the Digger Papers, they effectively replaced the need for them by printing single-sheet newspapers which were handed out along Haight Street several times a day. The Communication Company was one of the best newspapers any community ever had.

Brautigan had some news himself that day — an item about a wealthy, young woman named Flame who wanted to buy the Diggers something they could use, and needed.

"Would she go for a pickup truck?" someone asked.

"Sure," came the reply, and Butcher Brooks jumped to his feet, asking Richard to take him to her and telling everyone else that he would be back that evening with a pickup he had his eye on. And

that evening he did return, driving a '58 Chevy pickup in great condition with a brand new set of tires. Next to him on the front seat sat a stunning redhead with long, full hair and skin the color of ivory. She was Flame all right and she soon became Brooks's old lady, living with him in another storefront on Webster Street in the Fillmore.

The pickup truck almost became a serious problem. Since it was registered to a nonexistent person, everyone wanted to drive it and make believe it was theirs. Emmett put an end to all that by taking the keys and either driving it himself or only allowing someone like Butcher Brooks to use it to take care of Digger business. The need was too great and it was too valuable in those terms to be squandered on tripsters who wanted to drive around Haight Street pretending they were hot-shot characters in a B movie. The truck was used as a free bus, however, picking up passengers along the streets who didn't have the fare for a regular one. This was done whenever it wasn't being used for something more important to the community as a whole. In fact every time the Diggers moved the vehicle, it was filled either with people, or stuff to be given away — it was never empty.

In the rear of the Frederick Street Free Frame of Reference was the free store, brimming over with liberated goods to be shared with whoever needed them. In the front of the place was a large space kept clear of furniture and made available as a lounge or hangout for the casualties of the so-called Love Generation. Kids who were beaten down by the mean streets or the cold, wet, foggy, San Francisco climate. Doctors would come by almost every evening to examine lines of them for things like hepatitis and bronchial disorders, sending them to the S.F. General Hospital when they showed symptoms of a serious illness. The Free Food continued to keep everybody from malnutrition except for the heavy dopers who stone-refused to get next to anything nutritional — so they died. Emmett had to be cautious about stealing meat because of his probation, and therefore the stew was usually made from a poultry stock. He met some right guys in a halfway house, however, who had just been released from Folsom and San Quentin, and they fingered some easy food scores for him. For a while things picked up, but only for a while.

It was at this same halfway house that the Quakers offered Emmett a ten-thousand-dollar-a-year job to do the same work he was doing, but as a member of their organization. They balked, how-

ever, when he asked them to give him the year's salary in advance, in one lump sum. Other churches and social organizations became interested in the Diggers and the work they were doing, but they were usually put off by Emmett's purposely hostile attitude, especially when he told them to go and take care of their own backyards, starting with the redistribution of their sect's wealth to the poor. The HIP merchants and others like them seldom approached Emmett, and when they did they treated him as if he were a combination of John Garfield, Timothy Carey and Pat O'Brien. That is to say, they showed him a condescendingly fearful respect.

The dope dealers usually stayed away, too, but one day the biggest dealer of top quality LSD, who was known as Bear, sent someone around with ten thousand tabs of white-lightning acid that had just been produced in the lab and was not as yet marketed. After the delivery was made to Frederick Street, the dealers sat back and waited to see whether the Diggers and their free giveaway were for real. You see, the ten thousand tabs were all the same color white and none of them had appeared in public. Therefore, they were identifiable. It didn't take long for the word to get around about what was being done with them. When it was certain they had been freely distributed among the Haight community, Bear came around himself to meet this Emmett Grogan and give him some more, along with seventy-five twenty-pound turkeys, in anticipation of the Human Be-In.

The Human Be-In was the brainstorm of the Haight Independent Proprietors and their market researchers and consumer consultants — who'd pointed out the need for national publicity, if the HIP associates hoped to merchandise their hippie paraphernalia to the international department store chains and to the smaller shops throughout the country. The HIP merchants were naturally afraid that Emmett and the Diggers might seize upon the moment to disturb their sweet, lovey-dovey courtship of the media by revealing the unstrained, unclean truth about the Love Ghetto. That's what the gifts of acid and turkey seemed to Emmett to be about — sort of a HIP version of a Jaycee basket of cheer. The Diggers had been working in the community for over four months, and even though the HIP merchants claimed in interviews to have helped, they never gave them a hand with anything. The acid was to have been their insurance against any outbursts to the press, but it didn't work out that way because it wasn't sold by the Diggers, so there was no debt owed. The only reason Emmett accepted the fowl and dope dona-

tions in the first place was that it wasn't entirely up to him. The others, like John-John and Gary, all dug the idea of themselves in the benevolent roles, giving away free acid to the people they knew on the street. All the street people were handed five hits of LSD apiece, and were asked to share them with others. But if they dealt the five to someone, for some needed cash, or swallowed all of them, or flushed them down the toilet or whatever, that was okay, too. It was free, it was theirs, they could do what they wanted with it.

The ironic part of the bribe was its total unnecessary. The HIP merchants didn't have to worry about Emmett's talking to the press and exposing the dreg of casualties in the Love Ghetto because he was cultivating his anonymity as a line of defense; a first line of defense against being devoured by a glut of cheap, fashionable notoriety; self-protection from arrest, prosecution and anything else that might impair his ability to perform. He wasn't denying his leadership by doing this, he was just seeking to maintain a distinctly low profile of himself as a leader. The Haight-Ashbury was jam-packed with reporters from every medium, and Emmett never said a word to any of them about the "Love Generation." The only scribe he did speak with was Poet Allen Ginsberg, who came to the city to counsel the HIP merchants on the structure he felt the Human Be-In should take. He invited Ginsberg over to the Frederick Street Free Frame one evening to hang out with the people there. He came, bringing Timothy Leary and Richard Alpert along with him. Many things can be said about Allen Ginsberg but only one really matters and is completely deserving: he's a good person and there aren't many around. The same didn't seem to be true of Leary or Alpert; and the young street people sitting close together around the floor in the Free Frame of Reference seemed to understand that. Especially one very young girl whose eyes were flirting with vacancy. As the two LSD shamans pitched their psychedelic banter, riffing about the transcendental importance of an inner life, this little girl stood up and announced, "You don't turn me on!" She held her ground and kept repeating the same accusation: "You don't turn me on!" And the others agreed with her and also began to chant, until everyone was shouting — "*You don't turn us on! You don't turn us on!*" — forcing the two of them to leave with a good man who should have known better than to squander himself on a pair of charlatan fools.

That's what the young street people were bitching about. They weren't worried about what either of them were saying or particu-

larly concerned about the truth or falsity of it. Their beef was with the way they were saying it, and neither Leary nor Alpert could carry the tune. But there they were every time you turned around — on the covers of magazines, on the radio and TV, all over the fucking place — representing them, the young people, the alternative culture. Two creepy, whiskey-drinking schoolteachers! It was sad and the young people in the Free Frame that night rejected out of hand the lie they were fed by the media and felt disappointed in themselves for having ever believed in the psychedelic duet.

Adjacent to the Free Frame of Reference was another storefront which had been leased by a Krishna consciousness group and fixed up for the arrival of His Divine Grace, the Swami. The dozen or so members of the Krishna commune were vegetarians and they used to eat an afternoon and evening meal while sitting around on pillows in a circle on the straw-matted floor. The only other activities these disciples seemed to engage in at their storefront, which they called a temple, were chanting mantras and listening to lectures by their Swami-Guru after he arrived from the East — the East Coast, that is. The disciples' heads were all shaven and they served their Swami twenty-four hours a day, believing that "if the spiritual master is pleased, then one can make great advances in the spiritual life." Nothing displeased the Swami more than "the disorderly bunch" that gathered inside the Free Frame of Reference next door to him, "clattering about like rowdies" and "creating a deafening din" which made it nearly impossible for his disciples to meditate. It didn't disturb his meditation, of course, he was a pro. His major ire, however, stemmed from the fact that the Diggers grabbed up most of the surplus from the Produce and Farmers markets, making it difficult for his disciples to elicit any religious offerings from the men who worked in the two wholesale outlets.

One night when Emmett was showing some movies in the Free Frame and the audience's laughter was particularly loud, the Swami became exasperated. He halted his talk and one of his disciples went to the pay phone on the corner and telephoned a complaint in to the park police station. The cops were evidently pleased by the call because they came immediately. The station was only around the block from the Free Frame and it was easy for them to mass together for a crackdown. A sixty-year-old lieutenant led two dozen cops and two paddy wagons the short distance. W. C. Fields' film *The Bank Dick* was being screened on a sheet draped across the front window and Emmett was standing by the door. He saw the cops begin to

arrive. Little Robert, a tough, young Indian with some Chicano blood, long black hair and nobody, also saw them, and he locked the door after Emmett went outside to speak with the officer in charge about whatever it was all about.

There were cops all over the street now, and all of them were staring at the images moving around on the sheet-covered front window. There are several scenes in *The Bank Dick* where Keystone Cops chase equally bizarre robbers, and one of them was being projected at that moment. While Emmett was talking over the fire laws and the alleged overcrowding of the premises with the lieutenant, the Cops were running all over the screen after a pair of bank robbers, one of whom's name was Repulsive Grogan. It was a very funny scene with a hilarious chase sequence and plenty of slapstick laughs, but none of the cops, who were standing in full view of the images being projected on the sheet in the window, seemed amused. Not one of them even cracked a smile or made a joke, in fact, they even appeared to be embarrassed. Watching the flick over the lieutenant's shoulder, Emmett could also see that the coppers were eyeing him with obvious annoyance, apparently feeling he had planned everything that way to make them look stupid. Their looks were getting Emmett a bit edgy because he knew what they meant. He was glad the cops felt like assholes, just the same.

The lieutenant wasn't a prick but he was an old man who should have been retired. He informed Emmett that the gathering inside the Free Frame was in violation of all sorts of fire codes and health regulations, but he agreed that his patrolmen didn't have to enter the premises and that there was no need for any arrests. The crowd could exit in single file, he said, without any fear. Emmett nodded for Little Robert to open up and he went back inside to inform everybody about what was happening. He did it quickly and all of them got to their feet and began filing out onto the sidewalk.

The lieutenant was standing by the front door, with his men positioned in back of him making nasty cracks to the dispersing crowd. Just about everyone had left when there was a loud noise from inside and to the rear of the building. Emmett turned in time to see Patrolman Kerrens, the rat himself, come crashing through the kitchen window, knocking over all the food being warmed on the stove and the piles of plates used to share it. He was running up toward the front with his right arm raised and waving, shouting that he found an outfit, a set of gimmicks. He was lying, of course, hav-

ing brought the works with him when he jumped through the window.

Little Robert caught Emmett's eye, and he slipped downstairs to the basement. It was a smart move. There were a few needle freaks crashing in the cellar and they had probably left behind their spikes when the lieutenant had ordered the place vacated. If the cops found their paraphernalia, Emmett would be rousted and probably convicted on a narcotics charge, but Little Robert's snap thinking insured that nothing was found in the basement.

Kerrens's shouting triggered the other coppers standing out front and they surged inside, actually, bowling over their rusty-gun lieutenant, as they moved. Seeing Kerrens running toward him, Emmett blew it and caught him full flush in his guileful mouth with a roundhouse right which he hooked practically from the floor. Kerrens galloped *Smack!* into it, his legs kicking out from under him as he smashed *Bam!* onto the floor, stretched flat. He went down so fast and stiff, it was just like the rapid-speed antics of the Keystone Cops in the *Bank Dick* movie, which no one bothered to shut off. The coppers almost stomped on the cold-cocked Kerrens as they all piled over one another for a clear shot at Grogan — imitating the Keystone Cops on the film-screen, who were also colliding into each other while attempting to apprehend the other Grogan. It was a comedy, all right, with cops mimicking cops, and Emmett thought he was dreaming. The last thing he saw before a blackjack put out his lights, was Repulsive Grogan firing at the Keystones from the back of a vintage convertible roadster driven by W. C. Fields who was mouthing some astute observation about the poor quality of modern firearms compared to the sound reliability of the flintlocks of yore.

The cops tore the Free Frame of Reference apart and destroyed all they could. They poured the foodstuff on the kitchen floor and added water until it became slop. They ripped up the clothes hanging on the free store racks and threw paint over them. When everything was smashed and broken, they brought Emmett around and dragged him into a squadrol. They drove him away, and the crowd, which had grown to about five hundred, remained quiet. No one else was arrested. Little Robert snuck out of the Free Frame while the two sets of cops were trying to pounce on the two different Grogans.

At the park police station, Kerrens was still shaken, with a split, fat lip and a swollen mouth, and Emmett thought he was going to

catch one hell of a fucking beating—the kind of beating that doesn't give you time to worry about disfigurement, just allows enough thought to hope you'll continue breathing after you pass out. His partner drove Kerrens to the hospital for treatment, and Emmett wondered whether they were going to bring him there, too, because of the way his forehead had been cut by the sap. The lieutenant was still peeved at having been disobeyed, disregarded and kicked aside by his men, and he ordered a plainclothesman to drive Emmett to the city prison. He wanted the prisoner to be booked and locked up downtown because he felt there would be more trouble for him if he put Grogan into one of the back cells where the rank and file could get at him and probably beat him to death. Needless to say, Emmett felt that the lieutenant had made a wise decision.

The next morning he woke up in the felony tank, all bruised and very sore. After a lump of oatmeal for breakfast, he was taken downstairs for arraignment. The courtroom was filled with spectators and a murmur rose as he entered. Both his eyes were puffed, but he could see the familiar faces of people he knew, sitting on the rows of seats in the gallery. He returned their signs of encouragement with a smile before turning to face the bench. He felt good that they were there, good that the people were behind him, good that he wasn't alone.

Butch Hallinan, the eldest son of the famed attorney, Vincent Hallinan, was his lawyer. He had tried to get Emmett out on bond earlier that morning but no bail had been set. He was being held on a probation hold because he violated his probation by getting himself arrested, and bail could not be posted or set without the approval of his probation officer. The P.O. was in the courtroom, seated alone near the empty jury box.

The prosecutor began to read off the charges that were filed against him and—as they always do—he simply read aloud the number of the penal code that was alleged to have been violated and not the name of the crime it represented. As the prosecutor was mouthing off a whole string of these numbers, he came to one which no one seemed able to identify—not him, or the defense counsel, or even the judge, who finally asked his court clerk to look the number up in the California book of penal codes. When the clerk located its meaning, he brought the lexicon over to the bench and his honor announced that it meant maintaining and operating an opium den. The courtroom burst into laughter, and the judge had to gavel for

order before continuing. "It says here that there has to have been an Oriental present at the time of the offense in order for this to be a valid charge. Was there an Oriental present when this defendant was arrested, Mister Prosecutor?" The courtroom began to convulse, and even the judge seemed to think that it was mildly amusing for he pointed out that "no one has been arrested or charged with this crime, since the year 1891."

When order was restored to the court, Butch Hallinan began the defense argument by shouting that the cops and the D.A.'s office were harassing Grogan and conspiring to violate his rights guaranteed under the Constitution. He was getting a bit carried away but the judge calmed the proceedings by asking him to approach the bench with the prosecutor. Emmett's P.O. joined the huddle and his honor accepted the prosecution's advice and dismissed all the charges against the defendant. The tremendous deluge of unfavorable publicity that was bound to stem from the opium den charge, the prosecutor felt, would surely lead to other charges that the police had infringed upon the rights of the defendant and so forth. These claims would probably be accompanied by an outcry of "frame" and it all wasn't worth it, as far as the assistant district attorney could see.

Emmett was impressed because they even dropped the charge of assaulting a police officer, and after a brief chat with his P.O. he was cut loose. Several reporters from both the establishment and underground media tried to interview him when he was released from the city prison. Their persistence finally forced him to break the story in the press so they would all quit trying to scoop an exclusive out of him. He did it by contacting a radical weekly that had just begun publishing and wasn't going to last very long — *The Sunday Ramparts*. The newspapers were apparently hot about his story because of the mutiny angle and he was careful to emphasize that part in the short interview he telephoned into *Ramparts*. He said the lieutenant "seemed to be getting on in years and his men showed him nothing but an incredible disrespect. He lost charge when his subordinates pushed him to the ground out of their way and actually ran over him in their absurd, uncontrollable and childish anger with me for having accidentally knocked off one of the patrolmen's hats. It was sad and certainly disgraceful for the bystanders to witness how a bunch of grown police officers disregarded their lieutenant and commander in charge, tossing him aside as if he was a piece of trash or something." The story broke under headlines on the

front page of the citywide weekly and it caused a mild controversy at city hall. There was serious embarrassment for the park station's commanding officers. They were quizzed by other reporters who investigated what became "their discipline problem" with probing questions that disturbed the status quo of the station house for a while. It wasn't much of a revenge, of course, but it did offer a bit of satisfaction. And a week or so later someone fired a few rounds through the front window of Kerrens's house as he sat down for supper. Apparently the bullets weren't aimed at him, just a few warning shots, splintering a glass and the salt and pepper shakers. Emmett wondered who'd done it, and also what sort of a cordial prank he could pull on the swami in his Krishna reservoir of pleasure. But he forgot about all of it when he cooled and resigned himself to the fact that there were more important things to do than begin a religious war.

The Human Be-In was publicized as a "Gathering of the Tribes," but it was actually more a gathering of the suburbs with only a sprinkling of nonwhites in the crowd of three hundred thousand. It was a showcase for beaded hipsterism with only one stage for the assembly to face. On it sat the HIP merchants, their consultants, and several psychedelic superstars, while the Quicksilver Messenger Service, the Airplane and The Grateful Dead played their sets over a PA system guarded by Hells Angels who were asked to do so after several incidents had occurred. The turkeys had been made into thousands of sandwiches under John-John's supervision, and the bread was salted down with crushed acid. Gary organized the free distribution of the sandwiches to those who looked like they needed something to eat, physically or spiritually. Afterwards, Emmett walked to one side of the stage and stood below it, watching the so-called luminaries of the alternative culture. He felt a sense of anger and despair over the way the Be-In had been set up and presented. Their advertising had assembled three hundred thousand people, and all they gave them was a single stage with a series of schmucks schlepping all over it, making speeches and reciting poetry nobody could hear, with interludes of music. It was even more incredible to Emmett that the crowd crushed forward for a better spot where they could stargaze at the feeble spectacle. The HIP merchants had invited the Berkeley radicals to participate in the Be-In, as a placating gesture to the left-wing, liberal media. They were more than happy to come, of course, and were represented on the stage by the baby-fat runt himself, Jerome Rubin. All made up in the image of a true

Russian theorist complete with a Trotsky-Stalinesque moustache, he called for a marriage between the Haight-Ashbury and Berkeley tribes, proclaiming that "our smiles are our political banners and our nakedness is our picket sign!" He was awed and shaken by the enormity of the crowd and several times he seemed about to wet his pants, ecstatic over his getting to speak to so many at once. But he was afraid to begin sounding like the cornball square he is, so he gave up the microphone after a few minutes and sat down to ask his gooseberry, Stew Alpert, whether he had come on like a hippie or an old straight. Stew Alpert is to Jerome Rubin what Clyde Tolson is to John Edgar Hoover and he was quick to assure him that he flashed everyone with his ability to make hip-sounding remarks and even shocked some with his new image. Timothy Leary followed and he seemed to be a bit juiced, only able to mumble, "Tune-in, turn-on, drop-out," once or twice to the crowd before he sat back down with that same old shit-eating grin all over his face.

Allen Ginsberg, like everyone on the stage, was pleased with the giant, press publicity-engineered turn-out of people. He even appeared to believe that the mere assembling of such a crowd was a superworthy achievement in itself, negating any need for further action. In a way it did. Since the body count of three hundred thousand assured the HIP and their friends of worldwide media coverage, why give the press anything to photograph or write about other than the people who gathered? That way it was one great big fashion show, that's all.

More ham chewers trouped up to the mike and kept saying how wonderful it was with all that energy in one place at the same time. Just being. Being together — touching, looking, loving, embracing each other — that's what it was all about, they said: "The New Consciousness!" Then, the mantra began: "*We are one!*" "*We are one!*" Three hundred thousand people shouted repeatedly that they were one, and Emmett just sat on the grass and watched them pretend, wondering how long it was going to take before people stopped kidding themselves.

Someone parachuted out of a single-engine plane into the middle of the meadow and several thousand people began swearing that they just saw a vision of God. Poet Gary Snyder ended it all by blowing on a conch shell and everyone turned toward the falling sun and walked toward the Pacific Ocean to watch the dusk from the beach.

Later that evening and throughout the following week, the mass

media kept applauding and broadcasting the news about what they called the dawning of a new era for the country and for the world. They pointed out that everything had been peaceful with no fights among the *gigantic crowd* of three hundred thousand. Well, no large, serious slugfests, at least. Just a few dozen minor stompings. The love shuck was given momentum by all the coverage, and the press even began calling the Love Ghetto of Haight-Ashbury things like “Psychedelphia” and “Hashbury.” The HIP merchants were astounded by their own triumph in promoting such a large market for their wares. They became the Western world’s taste makers overnight and built a power base upon their notoriety and their direct line into the mass media. The city’s officialdom began to take the HIP leadership class a little more seriously. They held public conferences with them about token problems, like the rerouting of the municipal buses to avoid clogging up the Haight Street traffic, which was already overburdened with squares, shopping for a far-out purchase to bring back to suburbia.

Emmett was angry. He didn’t give a fuck about how much bread the HIP merchants were making, or particularly care that only a chosen few in the community were actually benefiting from these profits. He was simply angered by the outrageous publicity that the Haight Independent Proprietors had created to develop new markets for the merchandising of their crap — angry about how their newsmongery was drawing a disproportionate number of young kids to the district that was already overcrowded — thousands of young, foolish kids who fell for the Love Hoax and expected to live comfortably poor and take their place in the district’s kingdom of love. Angry with most of the heads in the community who were earning a dollar doing something, like the rock musicians, and kidding themselves by feeling that all the notoriety was good and would bring more money into the underground and expand the HIP shops, providing more jobs for those who wanted them. The truth was that the disastrous arrival of thousands too many only meant more money for the operators of fly-by-night underground-culture outfits, the dope dealers, and the worst of the lot, the shopkeepers who hired desperate runaways to do piecework for them at sweatshop wages. It was a catastrophe and there was nothing to be done except leave, or try to deal with it as best one could. Whenever someone sought to reveal the truth of the situation, they were put down, ignored or dismissed as being unhip by the longhaired, false-bottomed hipsters who had money in the bank. Emmett understood that he might be

making a mistake by judging his anonymity more important than exposing the hype that was going down, but he felt it would be dumb to open his mouth to the media. He would only end up as down payment for the future of a mob of middle-class kids who were just experimenting with hunger — youngsters who were playing hooky from suburbia to have an adventure of poverty. He felt that most of them would return to the level of society which bred them but he also knew that some of them would never, ever get back home to compare their stories of wantage with their parents' "You'll-never-know-what-it-was-like" tales of the Depression.

"Emmett Grogan" had become an anonym to the public and he understood that. It would have been relatively easy for him to have captured the media spotlight, gain recognition, and finesse his own acclamation as a leader by broadcasting to the youth of the nation, telling them to stay where they were because they had been deceived. But it already seemed too late to stop them. They were thoroughly duped into coming to the Haight-Ashbury and they were eagerly on their way and there was nothing to be done. He decided to continue in his attempt to effect something substantial and relevant to cope with the oncoming invasion, instead of exchanging his anonymity for the notoriety which would have accompanied his denunciation of the HIPs as pigs to the press.

He had been dealing in Free Food for over four months now, and things like Free Food do something to a person when he keeps them going for a long time. They tend to give him a healthy respect for reality and a deep disdain for the fake political ploys of the fraudulent Left. And so, he went on as a Digger, doing things that were, at least, pertinent and to the point of some community need, and he left the performance of trivial, unavailing antics to the fatuous publicity seekers who were most of the self-proclaimed radical spokesmen of his generation.

His seemingly resolute adherence to anonymity confused the political careerists, and he enjoyed watching them try to figure out whether he was just a sucker or someone with an angle up his sleeve. But he never thought about the semantics or tactics of politics long enough for him to become bitter. His work kept him too tired and busy to want to hassle himself about mere words and people who did nothing but use them. There was, however, a large group of men in the city who functioned only with words, but whose use of them was very important to Emmett. They were the poets who first broadcast the news to him — the news that he now needed to know. They had

all come to San Francisco for a sort of reunion, using the activity surrounding the Human Be-In as their point of convergence. Emmett wanted to meet and speak with all of them and was knocked out when Richard Brautigan told him that the poets felt the same way about the Diggers and wanted to have a poetry reading for them.

The arrangements were quickly made for a reading to be held in Gino and Carlo's bar in the beat section of North Beach. It was advertised by word of mouth, and by a newspaper columnist as a "benefit for the Diggers." So many poets showed up to read that night, and so many people came to listen, that the gathering had to be divided in half between Gino's and another bar, forcing the poets to walk back and forth to each place if they wanted their poetry to be heard by everyone.

The people who made up the audience that night had been reading news stories and had been hearing about the Diggers and "their philanthropic social work" for months, but never anything about where the Diggers got the money to do all those things. So when the word went out that the reading was to be a benefit for the Diggers, they naturally assumed that meant a donation. But it didn't. There was no admission or cover charge or money collected in either bar — it was all free. Allen Ginsberg and Gary Snyder accidentally passed a hat around Gino's for a collection, however, while the Diggers were arranging things at the other location. When Emmett and Coyote arrived, the money had already been collected and the hat was given to them. But, instead of accepting it, the two immediately asked for everyone's attention and announced that there was a mistake. "The only type of benefit that could be thrown for the Diggers is one where everything is free!" Then, they gave the hat to the bartender and told him to count the money out on the bar in front of everybody, and to continue buying rounds for the crowd for as long as the bread held out.

"That's a Digger benefit!" laughed Coyote, and everyone applauded.

And Gary Snyder remarked to Allen Ginsberg, "Did you see that? They gave it all away — back to the people!" The money lasted a long time because there was a lot of it in that hat. "An awful lot of it," Emmett had thought when it was handed to him. It was far into the morning before the sound of poetry turned into conversation, and everyone agreed that a good time was had by all. The only other

poets the people would like to have seen there that night were Charles Olson and Gregory Corso, but they were well represented, even though they hadn't been able to make it to San Francisco.

Emmett admired all the poets but valued one in particular because, unlike most members of the Beat Generation, he spoke about the discipline of Eastern philosophies with more than abstract knowledge. Gary Snyder went to Japan and became a Zen Master. On returning to the United States, he wrote a poem which the editors of the S.F. *Oracle* wanted to publish in their psychedelic paper as an example of his new work. He gave it to them but they only ran it in the first couple of copies of an early edition, pulling it out of print because, they claimed, it was "too hostile" to be compatible with their mild approach toward "consciousness raising." The poem simply seemed to indicate the need to relate man back to nature by calling for the correction of man's overall white, Anglo-Saxon way of thinking with American Indian, Japanese and Hindu thought. At least it seemed that way to Emmett, and he asked Gary Snyder if it was all right for him to have it printed up by the Communication Company and given away free. It was and he did.

A CURSE  
ON THE MEN IN WASHINGTON, PENTAGON

*om a ka ca ta ta pa ya sa svaha*  
As you shoot down the Vietnamese girls and men  
in their fields  
Burning and chopping,  
Poisoning and blighting,  
So surely I hunt the white man down  
in my heart.  
The crew-cutted Seattle boy  
The Portland boy who worked for U.P.  
that was me.  
I won't let him live. The "American"  
I'll destroy. The "Christian"  
has long been dead.  
They won't pass on to my children.  
I'll give them Chief Joseph, the Bison herds,  
Ishi, sparrowhawk, the Fir trees,  
The Buddha, their own naked bodies,  
Swimming and dancing and singing  
instead.

As I kill the white man,  
the "American"

in me

And dance out the Ghost Dance;  
To bring back America, the grass and the streams.  
To trample your throat in your dreams.  
This magic I work, this loving I give  
That my children may flourish  
And yours won't live.

*hi 'niswa' vita 'ki 'ni*

A short time after that poetry reading, there occurred an event which was a turning point in the lives of many people. Several Diggers were still members of the S.F. Mime Troupe and they also belonged to the radical Artists Liberation Front, an organization comprised of Bay Area artists who sought to make visible the latent and often evil stupidity inherent in the American government's handling of our city, state and country's affairs. They would attempt to accomplish this through the sponsorship of art exhibitions, films, plays, concerts, or any event which had an educational theme geared toward heightening people's awareness of what was being done by politicians in their name.

Emmett, Coyote and the Hun frequently talked about the wealth of talent represented in ALF and discussed various ideas for getting them all to work together as artists on one giant project, on one colossal "liberating" event. The only real difficulty in organizing such a collaboration was finding a suitable location where the entire ALF membership could freely convene to perform en masse. They mentioned this one afternoon during a conference with two Methodist ministers who were also officers of the Glide Methodist Church. The parish of Glide Church is the Tenderloin or the Times Square district of San Francisco, making it one of a few churches in the world with a congregation composed largely of prostitutes and homosexuals of either sex. Because of this, Glide Church naturally placed much importance and effort on working to relieve social problems and to insure the welfare of its parishioners, as well as on maintaining a foundation which studied their sexual habits and did statistical research in conjunction with the Kinsey Institute.

When the two ministers pressed the topic further, they were told that the Artists Liberation Front simply needed a place to hold "a carnival of the performing arts" or a "happening." The ministers

conferred for a moment, then gladly donated the use of any space or facility in their building, including the church itself with its cathedral-like interior. They did this without actually knowing what they were committing themselves and their church to, and Emmett and the others made a point of not telling them more of their plans than they thought was wise.

Later in the day, they telephoned around and arranged for the people they felt could organize a meaningful ALF event, to meet that night in the basement of Glide Church. By 9 P.M. everyone who had been asked to come had arrived and the planning session got started. There were poets Richard Brautigan and Lenore Kandel; Quaker Fish who acted as brilliant soft-pedaling liason with the Glide officialdom; Claude and Chester and the Communication Company; Coyote and his full-out blond Louisiana old lady, Sam, who had a distinct and widely known penchant for undressing any time socially; the Hun and his woman, Judith, a fine dancer and body psychologist extraordinaire; Butcher Brooks and Flame; Emmett and Natural Suzanne; Slim Minnaux and NanaNina, and soft, warm, beautiful, lonely Fyllis, who was jinxed with always being in love with someone else's man, more Diggers, more ALF members and a dark-haired, powerful-looking man of medium height who arrived with his wife, Lenore, and stood by himself during the entire meeting, periodically staring at Emmett with his intense, black eyes. The man's name was Tumble and he was thirty-three years old. At first, Emmett became confused by the attention Tumble was giving him, but quickly dismissed the looks to concentrate on the discussion at hand.

The talk began with everyone asking each other what sort of improbabilities they would like to see happen in the different rooms, and it didn't take long for the suggestions to become bizarre. After a while, the separate offices and rooms of the Glide Church building, the interior of the house of worship itself, and the outside area and adjacent parking lot were marked off and designated to different groups of persons at the meeting. These individuals were to use the space or spaces they were assigned, and their various talents to design and create an assortment of permissive settings or scenes in which they themselves and others would be able to act out their own fantasies. They named the event "The Invisible Circus" and decided that in order for it to be effective it had to run for an entire weekend or a full three-day period. They also resolved to limit publicity to word of mouth with the exception of one thou-

sand tricolor poster-handbills of a sketched circus-wagon announcing The Invisible Circus as a seventy-two hour environmental community happening sponsored by the Diggers, the Artists Liberation Front, and Glide Church, with the time, place and date. Emmett was enthusiastic and he worked hard on the event, whenever he could get away from the Free Frame of Reference and the Free Food for a while. Like the others involved, he wanted to show up the feebleness of most public gatherings, like the Human Be-In, by providing an ample opportunity for everyone who came to enjoy themselves as active participants in the happening, not passive stargazers.

He also became tight with Tumble during the time they spent realizing all the elaborate possibilities of the circus. Tumble lived in an apartment in North Beach, and often after they finished at the church late at night, Emmett would go back there with him and sit at a large, round table in his kitchen, talking about the Diggers and what they were into. Natural Suzanne would come along with him, sometimes, to watch Lenore sit at a little table over to one side of the kitchen, moving her intelligent, graceful hands quietly making the strong, exotic jewelry she sold to the large San Francisco Import Mart in North Beach. Tumble was turned on by the things Emmett spoke about and he began working with him, driving the Digger truck around on food runs and making pick-ups for the Free Frame of Reference. Emmett was very glad that Tumble wanted to lend himself to work because most of the Diggers, especially the former and/or continuing members of the S.F. Mime Troupe, had switched their attention and energies to the Invisible Circus and other guerrilla theater activities, leaving only a few who were willing to stand up under the pressure of the other work.

It didn't take long for some, like John-John, Gary, and Richie, to become bored with the monotonous heavy chores required at the Free Frame, and they would disappear during the day, returning there only to sleep at night. That left only the women, who came through like champs as usual, Little Robert, and a handful of others whenever they weren't in jail, and Emmett, who was getting irritable and very touchy under the strain, snapping at people and yelling all the time instead of talking. Now Tumble came, who was strong enough and had more than his share of the street-wisdom acquired by most men who had done terms, to lighten the load for everyone and allow them to relax a notch.

The night of the Invisible Circus, the officials and ministers of Glide Church began to get rather nervous, wondering what they had gotten themselves into. They had accepted all the lies and half-truths liaisoned to them by Quaker Fish, but it was difficult to be deceived about what they saw with their own eyes. There was an elevator that ran from the street level entrance of the church to a large hall in the basement below, and Emmett had filled that hall with literally tons of shredded plastic he had spent days trucking over from a plastics factory. When people descended to the hall in the elevator, they stepped out into three feet of plastic strips and it was quite a struggle for them to move around, falling all over themselves as their feet got tied up in the strewn cord. Once they made it through the plastic jungle, they were confronted with a crush of people feeling each other up inside a low-ceilinged, cramped rec room that was sweltering hot because of its proximity to the boiler, and blustering with outrageous noise from a rock band whose amplified sound was so loud in that tiny space that it brought many to tears. The barren Formica church cafeteria took up the rest of the basement, and it had been turned into an R and R center, with a huge punch bowl on one of the tables filled with Tang spiked with salutary doses of acid. Upstairs, a row of a dozen separate offices had been redecorated as "love-making salons" with candles, incense, floor-mattresses covered with colorful spreads made in India, bottles of oils, perfumes and lubricants, doors with locks on their insides and all the light bulbs removed. Down the corridor from "love alley," Richard Brautigan, working with Claude and Chester, had set up "The John Dillinger Computer Service." Using the machinery from the Communication Company, they printed Flash! bulletins and news items, notifying everyone about what was going on where and how to get there and also telling them the news right after it happened. This was done by dispatching reporters all over the church to cover various events and report back to "Dillinger" headquarters to type their stories on stencils. With these stencils several hundred releases were immediately mimeographed and rapidly distributed to the crowd. One reporter even went across the street to a "Tenderloin" bar, bought a beer, and eavesdropped on a heated argument between the bartender and some of his patrons, while also jotting notes. Then he went back to the church, typed it all up, had it run off on the Gestetner, and returned to the bar with copies of the word-for-word report of the argument, which correctly

named everybody in the bar who had been involved. It nearly blew the juiceheads' fucking minds to see themselves and what they were doing only a few minutes before, described in print.

The Hun was holding a conference "On the meaning of Obscenity" with a lawyer, a minister, a police-community relations cop, and himself seated at a large table with hundreds of spectators standing around watching. Behind them was a glass display case which was built into the wall with a door on the back of it that opened into another room. In that room was Slim Minnaux who opened the rear door of the case a crack and stuck his cock through, laying it on the only shelf. While the Hun was conducting the three knowledgeable in their serious discussion of obscenity, Slim was wagging his cock around on the shelf behind them, displaying it to the audience and none of the panel could figure out what was so goddamn funny.

The obscenity conference ended with a naked couple being carried into the room on a canopied mattress by four bearers, as if they were transporting an Egyptian pharaoh. They lowered the carriage onto the conference table, and the young man and woman began making love, as an enormous sheet of paper that was taped across and between the sidewalls to hide one third of the room burst open, and a dozen belly dancers leaped through. Sam led with her milk-white skin moist and glistening, her nipples puckered taut and blushing pink, and a black silk scarf floating against her white hair and across her sloping back which was covered with prickly heat. Judith following with the others, dancing around the lovemakers to the beat of six or seven drums, and enticing the gathered to join in their erotic warmth.

The cathedral-like interior of the church itself was alive with hundreds of people actualizing their fantasies, while someone played Chopin's "Death March" on an electric organ. Several couples were draped over the main altar, fucking, as a giant, naked weight lifter towered above them, standing on top of some sort of tabernacle in a beam of light, masturbating and panting himself into a trance. Other persons were screaming their testimony, or giving witness over the loudspeakers from the microphones in the pulpit and the missal stand and beside the altar lectern. A dozen conga drums beat their rhythms against the walls, echoing high up in the archway. A man sat cross-legged on the carpet and traced the altar-facing with a set of multicolored, magic-markers. A pair of excited doves flew round and round, while people stripped off each other's clothing in

the candlelight, and clouds of smoke from a thousand burning incense sticks swirled aloft to the center of the cupola. A group of drag queens stood in the vestibule giving each other head in an orgy of mmm's and ahhh's and being looked at by a small band of teenyboppers who were turning red in a flurry of giggles. Some Frisco Hells Angels were in the back pews being entertained by a beautiful woman dressed in a Carmelite nun's habit who kept shouting for "More! More!" and they were giving it to her. A black transvestite was on his knees screaming in contrition for his sins, as he was lashed with a whip by a grinning toothless albino. An old, white-haired, bearded man announced he was god and loudly accused the overflow congregation of having taken his name in vain. "You did!" "You did!" he said, again and again. Some youngsters felt one another's recent pubescence, pantsying in the balcony, while a few naked bodies raced up and down the aisles, pedaling bicycles. Two hookers walked in off the street with a horny john and gave him some behind a statue of Christ with blood all over the front of it from a dude who had just got his head cracked during a scuffle.

It was like the set of an incredible Fellini wet-dream, and it went on and on with the sights and sounds interlacing into surreal harmony, and everyone moving, watching, seeing it all, and no one afraid, but laughing joyfully, happy, and now and then a scream followed by a hushed silence with everything still for a moment until the person who screamed would laugh and give away the joke, and it would all get back to normal again with the music wailing, moaning for a lost soul, loud like tears, as the faces bobbed up and down in a sensual parade of assumed freedom taken, making it all one big happy prickly pussy crab-lice moment of eternity.

The press got wind of the goings-on at the Invisible Circus, of course, and showed up with photographers and television news cameramen, but no one would talk with them and they just hung around bug-eyed, ogling the activity with their mouths gaping. The cops also came with several fire marshals who brought court orders that ordered the building vacated immediately because of an assortment of violated regulations which presented fire dangers, such as the mountain of plastic in the basement. Needless to say, the officials of Glide Church, who had been hovering on the brink of cardiac arrest all night, were relieved by the court orders which were announced throughout the building over the PA system and in bulletins handed out by the John Dillinger Computer Service around 4 or 5 A.M. that Saturday morning.

During the eight or nine hours since it began, over twenty thousand people had passed through the Invisible Circus and there's no telling how many would have finally showed, if it had been permitted to continue. When it was forced to end, the few thousand who remained went out to the Pacific Ocean to herald the dawning of the sun, and to roast pork sausages over a bonfire for breakfast, listening to Michael McClure play his autoharp and sing his song, "Oh, Lord, Won't You Buy Me a Mercedes Benz" with Free-wheelin' Frank singing, too, and beating on his tambourine. Even though a dozen reporters spent nearly two hours at the church, not one line was written nor one word spoken about the Invisible Circus in the news media. It had been too incredible to explain, and so it and the fantasies that were realized during its brief existence became personal memories cherished by the people who were there and were part of an event, the likes of which has never been seen again in the city of San Francisco.

The Invisible Circus proved to be a much-needed respite for Emmett who got himself blind-wasted, but was back on the street the next afternoon with Tumble, delivering the Free Food to the throng in the Panhandle. A few Diggers, like one talkative twenty-five-year-old named Tobacco, got it together during the week and hustled rent money for several crash pads. There were three on one block alone and they slept over 120 people a night with only two rules enforced: no needles or sets of works and no weapons allowed. Besides the four or five people who lived at and operated each of these crash pads, there were few others older than eighteen. They were runaways.

The runaway situation had become critical since the Human Be-In, with the kids not only running away from something but running to something. The myth of the Haight-Ashbury had been manufactured to appeal to the young and they were running as fast as they could to it. White middle America was outraged that their children were leaving, and since a runaway has no constitutional rights, and is merely the property of his parents, they demanded their return. The liberal Democratic senator from Connecticut, Abraham Ribicoff, proposed a bill which would have brought the FBI into the search for runaways and further called for a computerized system of federal investigation on behalf of "American motherhood" and its preservation. San Francisco Juvenile Court Judge Ray J. O'Conner became publicly irate and said that all the Digger

leaders should be jailed for contributing to the delinquency of minors by harboring runaways.

There was a montage of runaway photos tacked to the "Wanted" bulletin board at the park police station and Police Chief Cahill ordered his men to begin "daylight raids" along Haight Street. These raids were quickly renamed "haul-ins" by the kids because the coppers would sweep everyone up off the street, not just the very young suspected runaways. Within a short time the S.F. police department formed a special team to conduct these haul-ins which also roused kids sleeping at night in Golden Gate Park. This tough special cruising force was named the S-Squad or the SS, and each member of this team had a particular fondness for cracking their billy clubs upside the kids' heads.

The SS didn't discriminate either, they arrested everyone, even a couple of HIP shopkeepers and a couple of their straight customers. It was getting to be bad for business and the HIP merchants formed another ad hoc committee for police-community relations. They were aware of the power base the Be-In gathering had afforded them and they spoke with Chief Cahill about the overzealousness of some of his men in enforcing Penal Code 370 or public nuisance, on persons who had money in their pockets to spend in their stores. Afterwards, they held a press conference stating that they were all going to work together to solve the problems that were occurring in the Haight-Ashbury and the chief publicly agreed to see them whenever a discussion would be helpful. The newspapers quoted the merchants as saying it had been a "cordial, meaningful meeting" and carried a story listing all the HIP merchants' names, the names and addresses of their shops and what was sold in each of them. The papers also mentioned a statement by one of the owners of the Psychedelic Shop who proposed to arrange for some sort of a finger signal and mantra chant with Allen Ginsberg to clear the streets, so that whenever P.C. 370 was being violated, the crowd would disperse as soon as the signal was heard, and no one would have to be arrested.

Well, that never happened but the HIP merchants did sponsor a Council for the Summer of Love, which was supposed to have been a service to aid the thousands of kids who were coming to the Haight when school let out. It just turned out to be a clearinghouse, however, for a bunch of bad artists and their equally bad art. The only thing the council tried to do on behalf of the expected hordes was ask the city to purchase an outlandish tent larger than two

football fields where a hostel could be set up for the kids to crash. Since the size of the tent seemed so preposterous, they didn't get it, and of course they naturally never thought of hustling the bread for it themselves. The Haight Independent Proprietors also created the HIP Job Co-op to locate employment for those who wanted it. The trouble was that most of the jobs available were for unskilled labor or office workers, and since the kids had a better educational background and were white, they took the openings away from the unemployed minorities. Even the post office jobs promised to San Francisco's blacks during the "riot" were given to the newly arrived hippies because of their higher scores on the department's examinations. This aroused the black and Chicano communities, causing friction and animosity between them and the longhairs who began arrogantly to consider themselves the "new niggers."

The apprehension generated by the approaching so-called Summer of Love also led to the creation of three other organizations which were regularly funded by proceeds from benefits, as were all of the community's organizations, except the Diggers. The first of these organizations was Happening House founded by Leonard Wolf, a professor at S.F. State, who once pleaded to be arrested during a naked dance recital by Jane Lapiner at the Straight Theater on Haight Street, to publicize his solidarity with the community. And he was. In fact, he was the only person arrested, the coppers finding it difficult to refuse him, since he kept insisting. Afterwards, he opened Happening House with a few of his fellow academicians and they called it a "community center," but it was really only a teaching venture where faculty members from S.F. State taught classes, and their college students planned artistic diversions for the amusement of the kids who were flocking to the district.

Huckleberry House, the second organization, was as lame as its name. It was started with money from the Glide Foundation which also salaried the staff of ministers who operated it. It was basically a referral center where some runaway kids would come when they became disillusioned with the Haight-Ashbury. Their parents would be notified, and the kids would be given room and board for a couple of days, until their family made the necessary arrangements for their return home. It was a nice, mild, safe, responsible way for the church to become involved in "hippiedom" and the hierarchy was probably glad that the turnover at Huckleberry was as slight as

it was. But, no matter how minimally, it did relieve a desperate situation.

The last of these enterprises was the Switchboard. It was also a referral center, but really worked as an answering service for messages from parents to their runaway kids. Each week, they published a long list of names in the Bay Area underground papers like the Berkeley *Barb*, notifying persons that they had received messages for them. The more relevant side of the Switchboard functioned by locating bed space for travelers in volunteer crash pads, and advising people in trouble about "free" lawyers, and providing a "free" bail service in collaboration with the Vista O.R. Project. The Switchboard was the only one of these operations that did any amount of substantial work for the welfare of the Haight community.

The Diggers had developed their medical services and health examinations at the Free Frame of Reference to a point where some of the doctors were even making house calls to treat people who were too sick to move, or had too many sick children at home to leave their house. These services were not restricted to the hip alone. The word about them spread among the other poor people, the blacks and Chicanos, and they, too, took advantage of the free health care. The doctors were mostly young and worked as residents in various hospitals around the city. To protect themselves from any sort of possible malpractice suit, they had a form mimeographed which each of their prospective patients had to fill out, giving the doctor involved permission to treat him. None of the patients ever complained about any treatment they'd received, and in fact they had nothing but praise for the doctors. A large part of the antibiotics and other medicines used in the treatment of the patients was hustled by a few nurses and the doctors themselves from the pharmaceutical houses in the area.

One of the heads of San Francisco's health department, Doctor Joel Fort, approved of these types of medical services, even though the Diggers had no facilities to speak of, but he was soon removed from his position on account of his "liberalism" and replaced by Dr. Ellis Sox who became quickly known as L.S.D. Sox because of his campaign against the Haight-Ashbury. He would make outlandish statements to the press about the health conditions in the Haight, claiming the possibility of dangerous outbreaks of every disease carried by rats from the bubonic plague to leptospirosis and sending teams of inspectors into the district to examine the private sanita-

tion of private house interiors, while never enforcing any of the regulations against the filthy neighborhood businesses and restaurants. Since the landlords wanted to break the leases with the hippies, who had been the first tenants in years in most of the buildings, and rent to secretaries and junior executives who would pay higher rents, the health inspections served as justification for the eviction notices that usually followed.

During this same time, a doctor named David E. Smith became friendly with Professor Wolf and set up an infirmary at Happening House which he modeled after the Digger operation. At first, everyone was glad about this new medical service and was happy that there was another benefit for the people, but those feelings soon changed. Everybody became disheartened when Smith, M.D., began his own self-aggrandizement with even more sensational press releases than L.S.D. Sox. He talked about an epidemic of "marijuana cough" and about drugs only he seemed to know anything about. One of these he called Love Juice, which he said was made by mixing DET with DMT — a concoction invented by syndicate mobsters in the East who brought it West to peddle in the Haight-Ashbury.

Smith, M.D., seemed to be more concerned with the pharmacology of the situation than with treating the ailing people who came to him for help. He seldom prescribed anything more beneficial than aspirin or thorazine, while keeping a log of his activities and compiling a mound of statistics about drugs and their abuse, which he used in his pitch for the funding of his own medical clinic, separate from any other facility. He had only been at Happening House for six weeks when he had raised enough money to open that kind of operation and cover the cost of paying himself a salary. It was an apartment on the second floor of a building on the corner of Haight and Clayton streets and he converted it into an office complex which he called the Haight-Ashbury "Free" Medical Clinic. But it was far from being free. Just because no one was made to pay a fee when they went there, didn't make it a "Free Clinic." On the contrary, the patients were treated as "research subjects" and the facility itself was used to support whatever medical innovations were new and appropriate to the agency. And at least once a week there'd be an interview with David Smith, M.D., in the newspapers, or on the television, or in the folds of some national magazine, like *Life*, in which he'd expound on his feelings toward such dangerous drugs as STP, or B-2, a combat weapon and incapacitating agent created

by the U.S. Army which was somehow being sold in hip communities across the country.

Everyone was sad that the doctor contented himself with making speeches about drugs like "68" which nobody had ever heard anything about, instead of seriously devoting himself to the care of the community's health. It was also a waste, as well as a shame.

Besides the H. A. Medical Clinic, the district sprouted a group of short-order lunch counters which sold "Loveburgers" and "Love Dogs" and gave away a "Love Guide" to the HIP shops. Film producers, like Sam Katzman, used the community as a location for cheap, Hollywood quickie-films like *The Trip* and a young entrepreneur started a firm that rented one or more hippies for parties called Hire a Hippie Unlimited. Storefronts in the area were being leased for forty thousand dollars and Grayline ran a bus tour through the district for tourists. Drove of evangelists descended on Haight Street to bring the young people closer to Jesus, and the S.F. police department jumped on the publicity bandwagon by organizing a series of ridiculous narcotics raids for reporters, which only netted an ounce or two of grass. An example was the "Super Jean" fiasco where the cops claimed to have broken up one of the Bay Area's biggest dope rings but really only arrested a harmless pot-head.

The street people of the Haight reacted to the police harassment with Sleep-Ins at night in Golden Gate Park to protest the city's ordinance against such activities, and with Mill-Ins at the main intersections of the district to demonstrate for the repeal of Penal Code 370 and express their belief that "the streets belong to the people!" Realizing that the overly centralized Haight-Ashbury was only necessary for the shop owners, the older residents of the area — folks who had been there a while and had their own pads — started to move away to Marin County and Berkeley, trying to get out before the "Summer of Love" arrived. The underground press continued to ignore things like this migration of the old-timers from the Haight and remained concerned with other, more frivolous matters. For example, the straight merchants in the district tried to con everyone into believing they'd get high from smoking dried banana peels and the underground papers got wind of the story. The Berkeley *Barb* even devoted its entire center fold as a pullout, which explained various recipes for browning and baking the banana skins and described several methods of smoking them, once they'd been dried.

A thing like that would have been funny but it happened all the time, causing the Diggers to blast the underground press for printing nonsense rather than publishing the news the people had to know, and serving the people they claimed to represent. The Diggers also called for a conference among themselves, the HIP merchants, and anyone who was actively involved in the Haight-Ashbury, to discuss what could be done for and about the waves of young immigrants heading for the district. Because it was neutral territory, the basement of Glide Church was used for the meeting, which was more than well attended. The main figures or speakers at the conference sat on a dozen or more chairs that were arranged in a circle in the middle of the one hundred fifty to two hundred spectators. Emmett sat next to Tumble, Coyote and the Hun, facing the editorial staff of the *S.F. Oracle* and the members of the Haight Independent Proprietors association.

The meeting began with Coyote asking the shopkeepers what they planned to do about the continuing constant assault on the community by the cops. He was answered by one of them who read a proposal that had been adopted by the HIP merchants' recently formed organization, The New Community, and drafted by its Ad Hoc Committee for Better Police-Community Relations. "We invite all law enforcement officers, news personnel, firemen, health inspectors, judges, barristers, detectives, narcos, military personnel, and state and local government representatives and their families to join us for a meal — a dinner — to advance our understanding of each other and promote community goodwill and service."

Emmett couldn't believe he heard that and said so. "Are you serious! Haven't we been through that 'Take a Cop to Dinner' rubbish before? You gotta be kidding! When are you guys gonna take your fingers out of your assholes and —"

Another HIP merchant interrupted by commenting, "We used 'Love' successfully in dealing with the media during the Human Be-In, and Tim Leary said that if we continued to share our love with the other establishment agencies, and with the persons who run them, we'll eventually win our right to —"

Emmett jumped up, cutting him off. "Lookit, nobody wants to hear that dribble, understand! The only relevant thing to our situation Leary ever said was that 'Tune-In, Drop-Out' metaphor of his, and the only right anybody'll get by following his advice is the right to go mad — to become a gibbering idiot! What do you think we are, chumps? We don't wanna hear that shit! You're the only ones doing

well by 'Love,' and all we wanna know from you people, you who're using the Haight-Ashbury as a marketplace to sell your cheap artifacts of the so-called New Consciousness, is what and how do you intend to affirm your responsibility to the community? Huh? How?"

A bearded shopkeeper muttered something about the HIP Job Co-op being affirmation enough of their responsibility to the community.

Emmett remained standing and shot back, "Yes, the HIP Job Co-op! That's a fine example of what's going on here. Sure, it manages to get some helpless runaway girl a job. A job in an attic-sweatshop making dresses for a dollar an hour! Say it takes her two hours to make a dress. That's two dollars, right? Well, then the people who employ her — the incense-burning hippies — take that dress 'n sell it for twenty-five or thirty dollars. After a while she gets disillusioned about this kind of short action and she drops further into the street. Then, we end up with her. An' that's where your HIP Job Co-op's at, motherfucker!

"You HIP merchants and some of you other people around here have done the most to build the myth of the Hippie-Longhair, the incense-burning, bead-stringing freedom, and now you ain't doin' a goddamn thing to cope with this immigration crisis you ticked off. You ain't concerned about it, are you? What are these kids goin' to do, when they get here 'n find out that the myth is just that — a myth? There are already enough hungry confused people on the street and now there's going to be a lot more. An' you cloud-dwellers better come up with some alternatives about what to do about 'em 'n cut out all this metaphysics shit you're all so fuckin' fond of 'n quit playin' Monopoly or someone's going to take it personal 'n stuff an I Ching up yer ass like a suppository!"

As soon as Emmett sat down, the two brothers who owned the largest and most successful of the HIP shops agreed that the hippie world was being marketed without conscience, and promised they were going to limit their commercial operation and turn the back half of their Psychedelic Shop into a "calm center," so that the kids could wander inside off the street and meditate in pleasant surroundings. The proposal made Emmett bow his head in disgust and hold it with both his hands, wondering what preposterous, lunar logic could inspire anyone to think that a "calm center" would even slightly alleviate any of the problems which had to be faced in the district. He looked up after a moment at Tumble, who was flexing his mouth and jaw muscles with contempt for the silly proposition,

and they both shook their heads at one another as the Hun mimicked applause, offering a heavily sarcastic, "Terrific! Terrific!" He went on to explain some of the Diggers' plans for dealing with the summer months, concluding by asking the Haight Independent Proprietors to aid in any way they felt they could.

The merchants reacted with approval for the ideas he spelled out, but announced that the association had previously decided, as a group, to concentrate all their financial assistance on helping Doctor Smith's H.A. Medical Center, the HIP Job Co-op, Happening House, and the Council For The Summer of Love projects, which they thought would be able to handle satisfactorily the influx of young people arriving during the next few months. They did remark that if the Diggers could continue their "exemplary, charitable work," all the better! But, of course, their HIP association wouldn't be able to afford much in the way of aid to the Diggers because of its already overburdening economic involvement with the aforementioned social-activist organizations.

Emmett felt that did it. There was no reason to continue the meeting. It was over and he ended it. "Uh-huh! You're all going to financially ensure the existence of a pharmacist's center for the research of drug abuse and abet his persistence in building a career for himself, an employment agency which either places runaways in lowly sweatshops owned by the same employers who supervise the agency itself, or gives out-of-town college kids the jobs that are needed by San Francisco's poor, an uninspired experiment in education conducted by the academic community of multi-million-dollar universities, and a platform for the city's unimaginative artists to display their utterly bad art! You're going to allow these pitiful scams to remain throughout the summer to hopefully provide you all with a façade which'll represent your deep, heartfelt concern and empathy for the community. A community which ain't gonna keep letting you guys off forever because you play stupid. No, someday it's gonna find out that all of you have been aware, conscious of what you were doin' 'n not doin' all the time. That you knew what you were makin' all along! An' when they do find that out, they're gonna bomb everyone of you 'n your shops, 'n the banks where you been depositing the money you been makin' out of existence! Blow every fuckin' thing away! Everything! Ha! Ha! Come on, let's get outta here!"

The Diggers got up together and headed for the staircase, glaring back at all the eyes who followed them out the door. Someone in the

crowd wished aloud, "Peace, brother. Peace." Emmett stopped, turned a quarter of the way around toward the direction from where the voice had come, and answered the farewell: "Peace? Listen fella, there's very few people that have peace on this planet, why should we?"

Then the Diggers left, and Tumble remarked as they walked up the stairs, "That's one room we forgot to include in the Invisible Circus. They're talkin' up more fantasies in there right now, than a lot of the people carried out that night in the church next door!"

Unknown to Emmett and the others, there were several reporters in the crowd during the rap session, and that weekend the underground weeklies hit the streets with news of the Glide Church meeting spread all over them. One was headlined CLASS WAR IN THE HAIGHT, and detailed a story about a battle that was being waged between the street people led by the Diggers, and the monied, hippie class headed by the Haight Independent Proprietors. In several different newspaper accounts of the Glide meet, the name Emmett Grogan was connected with a description of a "demanding spokesman who had the aquiline nose of a leader" and he was spot-quoted and misquoted.

In one version which appeared in the Los Angeles *Free Press*, and was written for that paper's three hundred thousand readers by Jerry Hopkins, Emmett was said to have actually threatened the HIP merchants with the bombing of their stores, unless they gave over a percentage of their profits to the community. It even further alleged that he inferred a bombing had already occurred, and would be followed by another, if the shopkeepers didn't comply with his demands for the distribution of a part of their wealth to the people.

Needless to say, Emmett was flipped out by the generally false coverage, and in the case of the "bombing threat" story, at least one instance of vicious, deceitful reporting. He wanted to choke every one of those lying, yellow-journalist throats, bend all their fingers back until the bones of their knuckles snapped, rip their snide tongues out of their smug faces. That's what really got him crazy about these small-time reporters who took cheap shots at people — their petty self-regard for their own minor self-importance. "Who the fuck do they think they are? Making up all that shit that never happened, putting words in my mouth that no one ever said? Everybody who reads those fuckin' lies is gonna believe we're all just another bunch of punk anarchists who want a piece of the pie, a bunch of lames who're just jealous of the bread the HIP merchants

are makin' n are tryin' to extort some of it for ourselves. Those cocksuckers!"

Tumble pointed out that the HIP merchants had spread the word about the Glide meeting, and that was the reason there were so many people there, making it impossible to screen out the press. "Yea, 'n they probably called the papers themselves, too. Why else would reporters from L.A. be there?" They continued talking about it for a while, but there was nothing they could do to prevent what was already taking place because of the rotten newspaper stories.

The pay phone in the Free Frame of Reference kept ringing with reporters who hadn't been at the Glide meet and wanted an interview from "Emmett Grogan" or another "qualified Digger spokesman" for a follow-up story on the "Class Warfare in the Haight-Ashbury." Emmett didn't speak with any of them. He wanted to keep his low profile as a leader as low as possible. He also felt that if any more publicity was created about himself, it would just serve to cause friction between him and the rest of the Diggers who would feel he was copping the spotlight all for his own. No, the Diggers didn't need any more notoriety and everyone seemed to be in agreement about it.

However, when KQED, the city's National Educational Television station, called asking whether Emmett Grogan was available to be a guest on a talk show, Coyote answered, telling them that Emmett wasn't, but that he was and they invited him. He rationalized his appearance on the show by saying that he had accepted as a member of the Mime Troupe and not as a spokesman for the Diggers. Emmett watched and listened to him say, "Hippies are the fruit of the middle class and they're telling the middle class that they don't like what has been given them by the American Empire's materialistic-oriented society. And what had begun as a cultural revolution is now shaping up and heading toward a revolution of violence."

Coyote delivered his statements in a suave, earnest style, and Emmett enjoyed his charming performance because he knew that all the Bay Area New Left men and women who were watching the show were comparing Coyote's quick, intelligent rap and hip-radical appearance on the tube with the dry-crusty, moth-eaten riffs and stale, banal manners of the corny, run-of-the-mill, radical spokesmen who were regularly on the tube. He was colorfully different from these stiffs, all right, and a dynamically-hip spokesmen, but as a leader he was in trouble. His problem was that he couldn't say

“No!” — didn’t know how to say “No!” — and it was something he had to learn.

Emmett was also a bit confused by the very fact of Coyote’s appearance on the tube. The two of them had often talked about the necessity of remaining anonymous, as had the Hun and the others, and about the need to safeguard against revealing any secrets with slips of the tongue. But, while Emmett had protected his anonymity, Coyote, the Hun and some other Diggers had repeatedly gone on radio, given interviews, and now appeared on television. The academician-director of Happening House, Leonard Wolf, had even gotten Coyote and the Hun to tape separate biographical interviews with him for his book of hip profiles, *Voices from the Love Generation*. Emmett wondered if they just meant it was dangerous for *him* to make appearances in the mass media. He didn’t know, but guessed it was all right for them to deal with the matter in any way they wanted, as long as they didn’t cause too much attention to be focused on the Diggers. And they didn’t, and he forgot about it.

During the week, the brother-owners of the Psychedelic Shop limited their operation and redecorated the back of the store as a “calm center” where the kids quickly began congregating to sit around on the floor cushions all day long, trading dope with each other. Emmett was arrested twice on traffic warrants, which had been issued because several tickets for parking and moving violations had been ignored. Rather than waste the money paying fines, he paid the penalties by spending a few days in the city prison. When he got out, he found that the Frederick Street Free Frame of Reference had been closed by order of the fire and health departments. In addition to the cop standing outside the vacated premises, the landlord had placed a wire gate over the rear windows and had padlocked the front door. He had received a score of complaints from his other tenants about the Diggers and he was obviously relieved about the city’s order calling for their eviction.

Slim Minnaux, Coyote, Tumble, the Hun and other Diggers had already located another place, however, and it was only a few blocks away on the corner of 901 Cole Street. It was a much bigger and better location with a second floor balcony-promenade surrounding the entire inside, and front walls made of banks of connecting plate-glass windows, leaving the whole interior visible from the streets outside. The free store was soon stacked with goods and crowded with customers, two of whom were hefty, black welfare mothers who hung around day in and day out, waiting for prize merchandise that

they could take and sell to one of the secondhand stores in the Fillmore for some extra cash. Whenever anyone said anything about this practice to either woman or one of their many friends, the reply was always a sharp, "*Well, it free, ain't it? What you talkin' 'bout, then!*" These two women did offer a service of their own to the many girls who needed it: they generously advised their hip sisters about the machinations of the California welfare system and held a daily class in how to overcome the bureaucracy's basic stinginess and comfortably provide for themselves and their children.

The free store took up two thirds of the main floor, which had a wall dividing the other third of it into a separate annex or room where Judith organized a free sewing shop and tie-dye center. In there, women were taught how to tie the knots and use the dyes, and people would come in off the street all day long to have the clothes they were wearing mended, or made more interesting with colorful tie-dye patterns and sewn-on patches. Because the free center was the only place in the city actually producing tie-dyed garments at the time, several persons approached Judith and the others with business offers, asking them, for example, to tie-dye a few dozen white T-shirts for a percentage of the profits of their sale at one of the HIP clothing shops. But none of the women would go for it, noting that if they were in it for the money, they would open their own shop and make a mint from their unique designs, especially since they were the first fullscale tie-dye operation in the Haight. Soon, their tie-dyed clothing was seen everywhere in the district, and a handful of girls who learned the basics from Judith and the others, went to work for the HIP shops, mass-producing tie-dyed items into a fashion that eventually spread throughout the country.

Every evening, the doctors who were working with the Diggers would provide their free health service which was named "Home Free." Besides the medical examinations and free treatment, a legal aid service was also set up, which made a group of lawyers available who were willing to defend community residents free of charge. These lawyers did much to make the city aware of the rampant police brutality and harassment tactics being carried out against the longhaired residents of the Haight, and also gave the kids a feeling of security that someone would be in court to defend their rights whenever they were swept off the street by the cops.

The Hun hustled the rent for the storefront and even signed the lease for it himself, which surprised Emmett and some of the others at first. But it soon became obvious that the Hun considered it his

free store, and sort of took charge of the place. Before, he only visited the two previous free store operations and occasionally dropped by the Panhandle Free Food at 4 P.M., keeping himself from getting too involved while maintaining his position at the S.F. Mime Troupe. But, when it became apparent to him that the Diggers weren't just a short-term thing, he embraced the Cole Street free store as theater and approached the project with a different attitude. The place was named "The Trip Without a Ticket," referring to a comment made by an anonymous Digger regarding his unwillingness to pay for someone else's trip — to end up as the price of someone else's ticket. The Hun used the store as a base for implementing his ideas and thoughts on guerrilla theater. He resigned from the Mime Troupe, and with his old lady, Judith, tie-dyeing in the next room, he spent all his time at the Trip Without a Ticket, observing everything that took place in and around the free store as theater, and the people involved in the activity as protagonists, actors consciously and unconsciously improvising their roles in life.

Most of the life-roles people were cast in had been given to them — handed to or forced on them by one hierarchy or another, or by circumstance which seldom made them interesting, simply "types." But the people who hadn't acquiesced, the ones who hadn't accepted the worn-out, hackneyed caricatures as substitutes for their lives, for their being themselves, were interesting and exciting. These people were conscious of their existence and aware of the roles they were playing. They were "life-actors." And Emmett, the Hun, Tumble, Coyote, and several others would get into long discussions about life-actors and about why the things they did were to be considered "life acts." All the conclusions they made during these sessions were utilized in the Cole Street free store operation, and everyone connected with the Trip Without a Ticket worked hard at creating theater all the time.

Emmett and Tumble continued with the Free Food, driving the produce around in the pickup, along with the goods for the free store. Tumble wanted to organize a fleet of trucks, so that the entire city could be covered in the same day and so that Haight-Ashbury, which seemed to be ignored by the privately owned municipal sanitation company, could be cleared of the mounting piles of garbage. Slim Minnaux and Coyote went on tour with the S.F. Mime Troupe, performing in the brilliant and skillful production of *The Minstrel Show*, an old-time, darky, vaudeville-musical of poignant, biting social criticism, with all the performers in blackface, so that

the audience remained unable to tell whether they were black or white until the actors removed their gloves at the end. The Hun developed his concepts about theater in "his" free store, and from mental notes he had taken during discussions with Emmett, Tumble and many others, he wrote an intelligent, perspicacious manifesto, which was published as an eight-page pamphlet by the Communication Company and distributed freely throughout the city. It was also mailed to different parts of the country, giving the Hun a reputation among the Tulane Drama Review Set, as one of the brighter, more ingenious, radical minds involved with "liberating theater" in America. The perceptive article was also an attempt at correcting the underground's concept of the Diggers, as a "hip Salvation Army." It was an effective piece to a degree, and naturally, entitled "Trip Without a Ticket:

Our authorized sanities are so many Nembutals. "Normal" citizens with store-dummy smiles stand apart from each other like cotton-packed capsules in a bottle. Perpetual mental outpatients. Maddening sterile jobs for straitjackets, love scrubbed into an insipid "functional personal relationship" and Art as a fantasy pacifier. Everyone is kept inside while the outside is shown through windows: advertising and manicured news. And we all know this.

How many TV specials would it take to establish one Guatemalan revolution? How many weeks would an ad agency require to face-lift the image of the Viet Cong? Slowly, very slowly we are led nowhere. Consumer circuses are held in the ward daily. Critics are tolerated like exploding novelties. We will be told which burning Asians to take seriously. Slowly. Later.

But there is a real danger in suddenly waking a somnambulistic patient. And we all know this.

*What if he is startled right out the window?*

No one can control the single circuit-breaking moment that charges games with critical reality. If the glass is cut, if the cushioned distance of media is removed, the patients may never respond as normals again. They will become life-actors.

*Theater is territory.* A space for existing outside padded walls. Setting down a stage declares a universal pardon for imagination. But what happens next must mean more than sanctuary or preserve. How would real wardens react to life-actors on liberated ground? How can the intrinsic freedom of theater illuminate walls and show the weakspots where a breakout could occur?

*Guerrilla theater intends to bring audiences to liberated territory to create life-actors.* It remains light and exploitative of forms for the same

reasons that it intends to remain free. It seeks audiences that are created by issues. It creates a cast of freed beings. It will become an issue itself.

This is theater of an underground that wants out. Its aim is to liberate ground held by consumer wardens and establish territory without walls. Its plays are glass cutters for empire windows.

*Free store/property of the possessed*

The Diggers are hip to property. Everything is free, do your own thing. Human beings are the means of exchange. Food, machines, clothing, materials, shelter and props are simply there. Stuff. A perfect dispenser would be an open Automat on the street. Locks are time-consuming. Combinations are locks.

So a store of goods or clinic or restaurant that is free becomes a social art form. Ticketless theater. Out of money and control.

“First you gotta pin down what’s wrong with the West.

Distrust of human nature, which means distrust of Nature.

Distrust of wildness in oneself literally means distrust of Wilderness.”

— Gary Snyder

Diggers assume free stores to liberate human nature. First free the space, goods and services. Let theories of economics follow social facts. Once a free store is assumed, human wanting and giving, needing and taking, become wide open to improvisation.

A sign: *If Someone Asks to See the Manager*

*Tell Him He’s the Manager.*

Someone asked how much a book cost. How much did he think it was worth? 75 cents. The money was taken and held out for anyone. “Who wants 75 cents?” A girl who had just walked in came over and took it.

A basket is labeled *Free Money*.

No owner, no Manager, no employees and no cash register. A salesman in a free store is a life-actor. Anyone who will assume an answer to a question or accept a problem as a turn-on.

Question (*whispered*): “Who pays the rent?”

Answer (*loudly*): “May I help you?”

Who’s ready for the implications of a free store? Welfare mothers pile bags of clothes for a few days and come back to hang up dresses. Kids case the joint wondering how to boost.

Fire helmets, riding pants, shower curtains, surgical gowns and World War I army boots are parts for costumes. Nightsticks, sample cases, water pipes, toy guns and weather balloons are taken for props. When materials are free, imagination becomes currency for spirit.

Where does the stuff come from? People, persons, beings. Isn’t it obvious that objects are only transitory subjects of human value? An object released from one person’s value may be destroyed, abandoned or made available to other people. The choice is anyone’s.

The question of a free store is simple: What would you have?

### *Street events*

Pop Art mirrored the social skin. Happenings X-rayed the bones. Street events are social acid heightening consciousness of what is real on the street. To expand eyeball implications until the facts are established through action.

The Mexican Day of the Dead is celebrated in cemeteries. Yellow flowers falling petal by petal on graves. In moonlight. Favorite songs of the deceased and everybody gets loaded. Children suck deaths-head candy engraved with their names in icing.

Street events are rituals of release. Reclaiming of territory (sundown, traffic, public joy) through spirit. Possession. Public NewSense.

Not street-theater, the street *is* theater. Parades, bankrobberies, fires and sonic explosions focus street attention. A crowd is an audience for an event. Release of crowd spirit can accomplish social facts. Riots are a reaction to police theater. Thrown bottles and overturned cars are responses to a dull, heavy-fisted, mechanical and deathly show. People fill the street to express special public feelings and hold human communion. To ask "What's Happening?"

The alternative to death is a joyous funeral in company with the living.

### *Who paid for your trip?*

Industrialization was a battle with 19th-century ecology to win breakfast at the cost of smog and insanity. Wars against ecology are suicidal. The U.S. standard of living is a bourgeois baby blanket for executives who scream in their sleep. No Pleistocene swamp could match the pestilential horror of modern urban sewage. No children of White Western Progress will escape the dues of peoples forced to haul their raw materials.

But the tools (that's all factories are) remain innocent and the ethics of greed aren't necessary. Computers render the principles of wage-labor obsolete by incorporating them. We are being freed from machinistic consciousness. We could evacuate the factories, turn them over to androids, clean up our pollution. North Americans could give up self-righteousness to expand their being.

Our conflict is with job-wardens and consumer-keepers of a permissive looney-bin. Property, credit, interest, insurance, installments, profit are stupid concepts. Millions of have-nots and drop-outs in the U.S. are living on an overflow of technologically produced fat. They aren't fighting ecology, they're responding to it. Middle-class living rooms are funeral parlors and only undertakers will stay in them. Our fight is with those who would kill us through dumb work, insane wars, dull money morality.

*Give up jobs, so computers can do them!* Any important human occupation can be done free. Can it be given away?

Revolutions in Asia, Africa, South America are for humanistic industrialization. The technological resources of North America can be used throughout the world. Gratis. Not a patronizing gift, shared.

Our conflict begins with salaries and prices. The trip has been paid for at an incredible price in death, slavery, psychosis.

An event for the main business district of any U.S. city. Infiltrate the largest corporation office building with life-actors as nymphomaniacal secretaries, clumsy repairmen, berserk executives, sloppy security guards, clerks with animals in their clothes. Low key until the first coffee-break and then pour it on.

Secretaries unbutton their blouses and press shy clerks against the wall. Repairmen drop typewriters and knock over water coolers. Executives charge into private offices claiming their seniority. Guards produce booze bottles and playfully jam elevator doors. Clerks pull out goldfish, rabbits, pigeons, cats on leashes, loose dogs.

At noon 1000 freed beings singing and dancing appear outside to persuade employees to take off for the day. Banners roll down from office windows announcing liberation. Shills in business suits run out of the building, strip and dive in the fountain. Elevators are loaded with incense and a pie fight breaks out in the cafeteria.

*Theater is fact/action*

Give up jobs. Be with people. Defend against property.

Emmett appreciated the Hun's brainy semantics and his sapient analysis of the Diggers as life-actors, and their activities as theater, because it provided a very good cover and satisfied the curiosity of the authorities and general public, as well as exciting the hipper members of the New Left. Of course, it was just a superficial description of what was really going on — the same thing as classifying the Saint Valentine's Day Massacre as "Theater of Cruelty." It was simply an account of the casual, outward, conscious style of the Diggers and some of the things they did, and not an examination of the heightened awareness of the intrinsic essence of the Digger operation or its motives. The elements of guerrilla theater and street events were merely accessories contingent upon the fundamental reality of Free Food, the free stores, the free goods, and the free services made available to the people. The San Francisco Diggers attempted to organize a solid, collective, comparative apparatus to provide resources sufficient for the people to set up an alternative power base, which wouldn't have to depend on either the state or the system for its sustenance.

When the people — meaning the various ethnic, lower economic,

oppressed minorities of the United States of America — were able to drop out of the system and become independent within their own power structure, rather than dependent on the state's, then they would have the chance to eliminate their considerable racial prejudices toward one another, and unite themselves as a single popular class to fight for equality, forming a united front to abolish all classes through a prolonged series of uprisings embodying a socialist revolution.

That's what the mass media called the philanthropy of "a Haight-Ashbury band of hip social workers without portfolio" and the Hun "Guerrilla Theater" and Emmett "Free Food."

"Some Salvation Army!" Emmett often thought to himself. But he was glad that the mass media joked about the Diggers as mod monks and that the so-called heavies of the New Left slighted the Diggers as lightweights and claimed that they were politically naïve and irrelevant. He was glad because it was going to be a long haul of determined action and not just one "revolutionary" outbreak by a bunch of leftist rhetoricians, before the stage would be set for the total reconstruction of society into a popular social democracy. And Emmett knew that if he revealed the innermost truth of the Diggers and their work, it would have only provoked their annihilation by the government. So, even though it was frequently hard to do in the face of the smug logorrhea chattered by punk radicals, he just kept his mouth shut and tried to take care of business.

It was after the Hun's piece had been printed, and while Emmett was up at the Communication Company's office-pad that he discovered *Ramparts* magazine was preparing a story about the Haight-Ashbury, concentrating on the district's leading figures, their political attitudes, or lack of them, and focusing special attention on the Diggers, particularly Emmett Grogan. Fully aware of *Ramparts'* facile dependency on muckraking and frequent reliance on falsifying "for the good of the cause," Emmett figured he had to try and do something about the article or at least the parts about him and the Diggers. He thought about it for a moment and decided to appeal to the editors on the grounds that, if they publicized him and the Diggers as radicals in their national magazine, it would seriously interfere with their work and definitely hamper them in their attempts to serve the people — the same people whom the magazine purported to wholeheartedly support.

Tumble drove Emmett over to North Beach and dropped him off a few blocks away from the magazine's offices before continuing on

home. As he walked over to *Ramparts*, Emmett wondered whether the editors would sacrifice the kind of colorful copy that satisfied the voyeurism of their readers, "For the good of the cause." But he never got to ask them that question because, when he turned the corner onto Broadway, he saw a scene going down which made talking to ink-slinging calumniators seem less important that day than usual. At first glance, it looked like a stick-up was being pulled with a short, black kid holding an M-1 across his chest and standing on the bottom steps of the front entrance to the *Ramparts* offices.

A squad car had just driven up and Emmett planted himself against a parked truck for a better view, as one of the cops got out and walked over to the young, armed black, leaving his partner to burn up the police radio frantically reporting into headquarters with his eyes bulging and his face all twisted, flapping words at the microphone. An older black man, about thirty, with a moustache and a .38, came out of the front door and stood on the landing at the top of the steps, watching the cop talk to the younger guy below him. In addition to both having guns, the two blacks were dressed the same way, in car-length black leather coats and black berets. Emmett looked closely at the older one and remembered seeing his picture somewhere wearing similar clothes. It only took him a moment to match the face with the name of "Bobby Seale" and quickly figure out that whatever was happening had to do with the "Black Panthers."

The little dude with the M-1 snarled something about the Fifth Amendment to the cop, who took a couple of steps around him and up toward the landing, until he was right next to Bobby Seale. Seale stared at the copper real hard, which made the cop visibly nervous causing him to talk louder, shrilly like he had a red-hot poker up his ass. "Who's the leader?" he asked and Seale answered by gesturing toward himself. The copper said something else which angered Seale, and he stuck his face into the cop's, yelling, "*Goddamit! I don't want to talk to you! So, you can go away from here! Go on, git!*" And the copper apologetically muttered, "Oh!" turned around and walked back down the steps, as more cops drove up.

These were plainclothesmen, and as soon as they got out of their cars, they began talking heatedly among themselves. One of them pointed towards the little dude who looked very young, but they didn't do anything, just kept on talking back and forth to each other. More of them drove up and Bobby Seale opened the front door at the top of the stairs and shouted inside. Two more black

men came outside carrying M-1's and stood with him on the landing.

Warren Hinckle III, the bilious editor of *Ramparts* at that time, appeared behind the glass front doors, wearing a moth-eaten patch over one of his eyes. A police lieutenant clocked him standing inside the entrance and called out to him. When he stuck his head out between the doors, the copper asked him what the trouble was all about, indicating the gun-toting blacks. Hinckle III replied that there was no trouble and assured the lieutenant that everything was under control. This got the coppers mad because it meant they couldn't make any moves on their own, since the person who owned the place had no objection to the guns, making it perfectly legal for the blacks to be carrying them, unconcealed.

Television news cameramen and reporters began showing up to take part in the drama, and one of them, of course, immediately attempted to provoke a bit of action by trying to barge up the stairs and inside *Ramparts*. But an M-1 blocked him and he was shoved back down the steps. The newsmen didn't seem to understand that if their self-righteous arrogance provoked any shooting, they'd end up shot like everyone else — the only difference would be that the bullets that hit them would've been fired by both sides. Apparently, they were either unconcerned about this fact or simply too fucking dumb to realize that nobody was kidding except them, because when three or four more bereted black men came outside of the offices, and they all started to leave, surrounding a striking black woman like guards, an ABC newscaster and camera crewman almost incited their own demise.

Bobby Seale was coming down the front steps alongside a bulky, muscular, strong-looking black man of medium height who was carrying a shotgun. Emmett recognized him from a newspaper photo as Huey P. Newton. The two of them were walking one on each side of the black woman, holding up magazines in front of the cameras and blocking any attempts to photograph her, when one of the TV crewmen grabbed at the periodical Bobby Seale was using for cover. Seale grabbed it back from the asshole and Huey P. put his magazine over the lens of the camera trying to focus in on the woman who obviously didn't want herself filmed. Suddenly, the six o'clock newscaster, who was standing by the camera with his microphone ready, caught hold of the magazine and pushed it into Huey P., striking him in the stomach. At this point, two other blacks, who

were trailing behind, scooped up the woman and hustled her across the street into a waiting car.

The newscaster's blow was slight but it was plain to see that the blatant audacity of it outraged Huey P. and he dropped the magazine and belted the newscaster square in his mealy face, knocking him flat up against the wall which rebounded him into his cameraman. All the cops tensed up and their hands began fidgeting around the butts of their holstered pistols, and Bobby Seale motioned to his brothers that the time seemed appropriate to split. But Huey P. didn't think so and he stood out in front of the others, pointing at the dazed newscaster and shouting for the cops to "*Arrest that man! He assaulted me 'n I want you to arrest him! Go on, arrest him GODDAMMIT!*" The cops all began flipping the straps off the hammers of their .38's, and Huey P. jacked a shell into the chamber of his shotgun and ordered his brothers to "*Spread out!*" behind him, and they did, facing the cops with their M-1's gripped tight in both hands and angled toward the sky.

It looked like it was all going to blow any second, and Emmett moved off the sidewalk into the street, positioning himself for cover out of the line of fire a hundred feet away on the other side of the row of parked cars. Just then, a fat, chunky cop started coming forward yelling, "*Don't point that shotgun at me! Stop pointing it at me, I tell ya!*" The traffic coming from and going to the Bay bridge was bottled up at the freeway ramp behind Emmett, and the copper's screaming had all the people in the cars staring with their mouths open wide in utter disbelief at the showdown occurring only a short distance away from them.

There were about thirty cops all crowded together on the sidewalk now, and the chunky one kept hollering and making threatening motions towards his pistol, and Huey P. held his ground in front of him with his shotgun tilted, ready for action. He wasn't going to let that fat cop bully his way any closer and he started challenging him to remove his gun from his holster. "*Go on, you big fat racist pig, draw your gun! You goddamn coward! Go on, I'm waitin'!*" The fat cop froze, startled at being called. The other cops began moving away from him out of the line of fire, and when he saw that, he sort of sighed, hung his head low and gave up. Huey P. Newton laughed in his face.

All of a sudden, one of the black guys who walked over to the car with the woman and the other two, came running across the street

screaming, "*Please! Please! Don't shoot! The cops are goin' to kill all of us! They're going to kill all of us! Please! Please!*" Huey P. shouted for him to shut up his sissy-ass mouth, but it was too late. His cry-baby bleating had startled the cops back into their bully-boy attitude, and they began to come on cocky once again, trying to take command of the situation by ordering the Black Panthers not to move or wave their weapons. But Huey P. didn't go for any of their shit and he replied back to them with a bit of his own advice, "Don't any of *you* go for *your* guns!"

Everything became shattery at his response and seemed about to burst into a shoot-out, but the Panthers began backing off, having successfully made their point several times over: that cops aren't so quick to push people around when they aren't the only ones armed. The Panthers stepped carefully backwards, easing their way through the traffic and moving across the street where they quickly got into their cars and split, to the amazement of all onlookers. When they had driven away, the cops broke into a flurry, scurrying all over the place to their squad cars. The sirens all began blaring, as they tried to bull through the jammed traffic — all the while radioing into headquarters about the two "carloads of niggers driving around the fucking city with loaded guns!" It really got them crazy.

Emmett had also been sincerely impressed and he walked over to one of the staff writers who was now standing on the front steps of the *Ramparts* building with a group of his coworkers and asked him what it was all about. He was told that the Black Panthers were accompanying the widow of Malcolm X, Betty Shabazz, as her bodyguards, while she was in the city for a speaking engagement and an interview with the magazine. Emmett also discovered that Warren Hinckle III and the other editors were all too busy enjoying their vicarious experience to want to diminish "their" few precious moments by talking about the particulars of the "Hippie" cover story. Through the office's plate-glass window, Emmett could see them swilling from paper cups, laughing and slapping one another on the back at having been participants in the memorable put-down of the cops, and he decided to let it go for a while and split back to the Haight for something to eat.

Emmett first heard about the Black Panther organization back in October '66 around the same time Free Food started. Bobby Seale had been a stand-up comedian and Huey P. Newton a tough, street blood, when the two of them met as students at Merritt College, where they both became student leaders. It was after they dropped

out of the school, to work as community organizers for the North Oakland Poverty Program, that they created the Party by writing out its ten-point platform and program. The “points” were divided into “What We Want” and “What We Believe” categories of practical, specific demands for things they felt were needed, and should be — things that were guaranteed by the U.S. Constitution and had been demanded by black people for a hundred years, things that were directly related to what they had before they were forced to leave Africa. The language used to express the ten points was concrete, easily understandable, and seemed to cover all the ground concerning a man’s right to existence on the planet, be he black or brown or whatever.

Emmett felt that the articulation of the Party’s platform and program was far more inspired than the choice of “Black Panther” as a name. It was too narrow a title for a group which stressed “inter-communalism” and besides, one of the Ku Klux Klan’s first dens or local chapters in nineteenth-century South Carolina had also been named after the same predator — one of the only animals to kill for sport, not just food. Emmett assumed that the name had been chosen as a follow-up to the SNCC group, which had been formed to protect black people and civil rights workers in Lowndes County, Mississippi, during the early sixties, and not in emulation of the “Black Panther squads” of the U.S. Army’s special forces division. He also wondered how all the low-money people in America, not just blacks, were reacting to the Party’s alien titles of “Chairman” and “Minister of Defense” assumed by Bobby Seale and Huey P. Newton.

These were only minor details when one considered that the Black Panther Party was not fundamentally a black racist organization, not racist at all. They worked hard in the Bay Area black community to teach the people their rights, especially their right and duty to defend themselves against brutalization by the “racist power structure.” They did this by patrolling the black neighborhoods on weekend nights with loaded weapons to make sure the people weren’t terrorized or murdered by some “racist pigs” or local “coon-hunters,” the way they usually were in Oakland on Friday and Saturday nights. Their concern for self-defense, with arming the people, and with guns branded them undesirable to the moderate and cultural nationalist black organizations, but that was okay with them because as far as they were concerned all them “Negroes” and “jive-ass esoteric motherfuckers” weren’t taking care of the needs of

the people, and were just out for whatever they could get their hands on for themselves. This attitude gave the government and the spot-quoting press the opportunity to paint the Black Panthers as a ruthless gang of vicious, black-racist, terrorist, back-shooting cop-killers, rapidly making them targets for every trigger-happy lawman and every political candidate who was riding on the back of the "law 'n order" frenzy which was spreading throughout the country.

At that same time, the cultural revolution was in full swing in the People's Republic of China, and the news media in San Francisco was always full of stories about the Chinese waving their little Red Books. Since there was so much free advertising going on, Bobby Seale and Huey P. Newton, like two free-enterprising young men, took advantage of the situation by standing on street corners, selling the *Quotations from Chairman Mao Tse Tung*, using the scratch they made to buy shotguns and pay the rent on their storefront-office, where they recruited their cadre, many of whom were still in their teens, like little Bobby Hutton, the first rank-and-file member of the Black Panther Party.

They were an energetic and ambitious black revolutionary organization, and it was soon after they put the cops down in front of *Ramparts* that the magazine's only black staff writer, who interviewed Betty Shabazz that day, joined the Party. He had just been paroled from San Quentin where he had done an eight-year-bit at the bottom of the prison's pecking order as a rapist, which afforded him plenty of quiet time to write a book. His name was Eldridge Cleaver, and he was given the title of Minister of Information after he helped Chairman Bobby and Minister Huey P. begin publication of the Black Panther Party newspaper which transformed the organization into an armed propaganda unit no one could ignore. No matter how outlandishly and crazily Cleaver jerked off his rhetoric, there was always something in the paper which made its existence worthwhile to the black community and to the country's other low-money people as well.

Emmett understood what the Panthers were doing and respected them as brothers in the same struggle.

David Smith, M.D., still managed to maintain his quest for public recognition, striving toward "success" at his Haight-Ashbury Medical Clinic, which he continued to insist was "Free" simply because no one was made to pay him a fee for being a research patient. One of the clinic's statistics briefly interrupted the "experimental" oper-

ation, until he was apprehended and singled out for the press by the doctor, as an example of the type of psychosis which he claimed was rampant in the Haight-Ashbury. The statistic called himself Joe SuperSex and he gained his notoriety by stealing a box of urine testing tablets from the H.A. Medical Clinic and giving them away as dope, poisoning several young people. But he wasn't the only one to nearly tarnish the clinic's "wholesome record of unselfish humanitarian service" — there were many others. A few of the more cunning were imposters, posing as doctors working on the staff of the H.A. Medical Clinic and going around making house calls. It was a pretty funny scene, at least if you weren't one of the young females who'd had the canals leading from their uterus to the external orifice of their cloacae probed in examination. It was shortly after the series of imposters that the clinic discontinued making any house calls. The Diggers wanted this Mickey Mouse operation replaced with really "free" competent medical clinics in the Fillmore, Potrero, Mission, Hunter's Point-Bayview, and Haight-Ashbury districts.

One afternoon, Emmett left the truck with Tumble and took some time off from the Free Food to see whether anything could still be done to effect some sort of control over the *Ramparts'* Hippie article which had him deeply worried. He went over to the Communication Company to see what Claude and Chester knew about it, and found them mimeographing a letter from Neil Cassady in Mexico to Allen Ginsberg, who was preparing to leave San Francisco to return to New York by way of the college lecture circuit.

Neil Cassady was an intense, strong forty-year-old with rippling muscles, an unequalled tolerance for alcohol and drugs and a voracious desire to communicate everything he knew, or whatever he was thinking about, to everyone all the time. He was a gypsy-traveler with no money in any bank, and the hero of at least one book, who lived his life with a velocity that seemed to preserve his prime, but would have killed most men twenty years younger. The style of the letter offers a brief but accurate glimpse at Cassady's makeup and a quick poetic insight into one of the things which concerned him besides pleasure, which was always on his mind until he died from it a short time later.

San Miguel'Allende, GTO — MEX 3-31-7 6p.

i know it looks like my mind's gone — but No — still, i'll recapitulate. But first — Bro. against Bro., almost, in USA. (Bloodless for most part)

Civil was as Rite Rite cleans up for year or more — i.e. R. Reagon now as governor has already appointed Big Business/man as Labor Commissioner, Welfare Chief is a Lawyer who opposed welfare, State Conservator (redwoods) is a big lumberman; real estate czar is supposed to be fare housing crusader, as Clemency Sect., and ex-D.A. who favored capital punishment — get the idea? — then, late '68 — not slow, but fast adjustment as new awakening spreads throughout our culture — meantime, watch out, fishes coming to the surface are to be caught — hooked if your beard's long or hair more than 3 inches. all emotion, no reason, etc. etc.

Many hip folk thought that same way at the time, which was why the Communication Company was printing up the note. After they completed running it off, Emmett got Claude and Chester to take him over to see Warren Hinckle III at his house, so he could find out whether the editors of *Ramparts* were writing a serious, investigative report on “hippiedom” or just using the fashionable popularity of anything “hip” to boost their circulation and pocket more subscriptions.

Claude and Chester were an odd couple but appeared made for each other, working well together. Claude was a Topanga Canyon beat from Los Angeles who seemed to be trying to wear out his black Mennonite clothing and extra-wide-brimmed, flat, high-crowned, western-style hat — the kind worn by morticians in the Old West. To add to his graveyard look, he sported thick, black-lensed glasses to partially correct his near blindness, and at the same time, prevent anyone from seeing his eyes. He was only a little over twenty but was married to a pleasant woman nearly twice his age, and even though he seldom talked, he made most people laugh just by being around. He was also a slick hustler and a talented mechanic, skillfully maintaining the mimeograph machines that had been bought on time from the Gestetner Corporation but never paid for, leaving their repair entirely up to him.

Chester, on the other hand, didn't have any mechanical ability and was too obvious to be a good hustler. He was in his early forties, but the speed with which he carried out most of his activities gave him a much older look. His frequently haggard appearance blended in with the prevailing taste of the youthful “hippies” and none of them ever called him “Pops.” Being a veteran of the “underground culture movement,” though, he might have enjoyed and probably would have nurtured such a fatherly tag. He also considered himself

an unofficial historian, having authored a sensational catalogue of footnotes on the Beat Generation as well as several other cheap paper pulps about the drug-oriented, bohemian way of life to appeal to the insatiably prurient appetites of middle-class suburbia. While Claude operated the Gestefax stencil maker and printed up hand-outs on the machines, Chester would scour the Haight-Ashbury district, looking for "hot" news items which he jotted down in one of the many composition books he carried around in a weathered canvas bag that hung from his shoulder by an adjustable strap which had been in the same position for about fifteen years.

The Communication Company had been modeled after the Digger Papers' operation, and the service it provided the people of the Haight was exceedingly valuable because the news it disseminated was for the most part, essential and needed. The only trouble was that both Claude and Chester also worked on the staff of *Ramparts'* advertising department where they spread all the newsworthy information about the Haight-Ashbury to the magazine's editors, as a matter of conversation. Since Chester had a well-marked and unrelenting ambition to become a famous underground journalist, Emmett suspected him of feeding those editors too much "news" about the Diggers that was nobody's business. So, he remained wary, and considered himself alone, when he entered Warren Hinckle III's house with the two of them. His sole mistake was in going there at all.

Hinckle III glad-handed him at the door and invited them all inside an expensively furnished, tastelessly comfortable salon where Emmett planted the grimy seat of his dungarees on a large, clean, white-tufted sofa. After he was asked his preference, he was handed a giant tumbler filled with practically half a pint of Southern Comfort and several square chunks of ice, which clinked around in the thick, heavy glass, making that rich, solid sound you hear in Hollywood movies. It was all right and Emmett enjoyed the juice, even though he had to use both hands to drink it.

Warren Hinckle III was pouring himself a fist of whiskey from a bottle on a portable liquor cart. He appeared to be one of those middle-aged, heavy-drinking, college fraternity types who operate as journalists in the radical-liberal political arena for their own personal prestige and self-importance, as well as for the money they make from their usually short-lived publications and the exaggerated influence they feel they assert on minor public officeholders. Their motives are seldom, if ever, based on any progressive, hu-

manitarian or beneficent interests. Hinckle III began by informing Emmett that the article in question had already been written and was presently at the printers where the plates were being offset for the presses. He also noted that there was only a passing mention of Emmett and the Diggers in the story, and that there was nothing to worry about. The conversation continued with Emmett having downed his first glass of booze and working on an equally large second, while chatting about his career in the army and telling a few humorous stories about the work he was doing as a Digger in the Haight-Ashbury.

He only stayed for about twenty, twenty-five minutes, and two weeks later, *Ramparts* magazine was on almost every newsstand in America with a picture of poster-artist Stanley Mouse on the cover and "A Social History of the Hippies" written by Warren Hinckle III inside. The article amounted to nothing short of stone fabrication — a farfetched piece of snide bunko about a fictive "summit meeting of the leaders of the new hippie subculture," which the Diggers had supposedly "convened in the lowlands of California's High Sierras during an early spring weekend" to discuss "the state of the nation of the hippies." As a preface to the plated concoction, there was a full-page photo montage of the alleged "Dramatis Personae" of whom "Emmett Grogan" was one, representing the Diggers. The picture they used was a snapshot taken by a girl one day, when he delivered some Free Food from the produce market to her commune. It was a black-and-white shadowy print, while all the others were bright, clear technicolor shots, and its murkiness was a consolation, because few people who didn't already know him could recognize him from it. But it did capture his image all right, showing him in his fatigue jacket wearing his IRA cap at an angle.

As soon as Emmett saw that March issue of *Ramparts*, he knew it meant trouble. And he became more certain of the ticklish situation it was to cause, after he read the two pages of copy which described him in unreal, outlandishly romantic terms, as the Frodo Baggins of the Haight-Ashbury and "roguish hero and kingpin of the Diggers." The profile of him also outlined several of the anecdotes which he told to Hinckle III during their brief drinking session, and concluded with a lambent flame of intellect by advising the hippies that if they didn't start actively protesting with marches and rallies, instead of just living their protest, more and more youngsters would begin "to drop out of the arduous task of attempting to steer a difficult, unrewarding society" and the driving would be left to the

Hells Angels. Whatever that meant, besides being an obvious attempt to strike terror into the hearts of lily-white liberals with a vision of descending anarchist hordes of outlaw bikers stuffing their wives' vaginas with Nazi swastikas and jamming motorcycle chains into their rectums with mental institutional force.

But Emmett wasn't concerned with the basic absurdity of the article's premise. He was preoccupied with the problem that was certain to stem from the publication of the crap in the first place. The kind of trouble he was anxious about wasn't anything the authorities or their law-enforcement flunkies might do, but rather, the brand he felt sure was going to be put on him as a result of the magazine's cheap glorification of him as a mock-hero. It was bound to cause friction with his brothers and sisters, and sure enough, when he walked into *The Trip Without a Ticket*, everyone acted like he had betrayed all of them by revealing himself as "their leader." Persons on the street greeted and waved to him with false respect but his own people felt cheated, and cold-shouldered him.

He tried telling them what happened, that he had nothing consciously to do with the setup, but they kept coming on like he intentionally hurt them in order to accept the plaudits of strangers. The HIP merchants were also undoubtedly convinced that he was behind the *Ramparts* story from its inception because the magazine spot-quoted him putting them down heavily.

The situation was bad and bound to get worse. All the people whom Emmett worked with and had turned on, even Tumble and especially the Hun, felt they had been used for his aggrandizement and fame. He decided to split, to hang it on the limb, until things cooled and the impact of the *Ramparts* story faded. He talked it over with the women who assured him the Free Food would continue, as long as somebody trucked the produce to them to be cooked. Tumble said he would see to it. Then, Emmett walked over to where Super-Spade, the black grass dealer, was standing in the cold, predusk fog outside the Mnasdika clothing shop on Haight Street and borrowed three hundred dollars from him, as a long-term loan.

Back at his pad on Fell Street, Emmett laid out his plans to Natural Suzanne, removed five hundred tabs of LSD from the one thousand he'd stashed before the Human Be-In, as a source of emergency funds, and flew to New York for half fare, using a youth card someone had given him for Christmas.

No sooner had he gone, than the San Francisco press and other

newsmen from the national mass media swooped down on the Trip Without a Ticket looking for a story. They all wanted to interview the “longhaired hippie” who scoffed at his generation’s talk of “love” as being merely a bullshit shuck, and who claimed that the Haight-Ashbury was nothing but a “Love Ghetto” populated by middle-class kids who were having “an adventure of poverty” and whom he fed from his Digger free soup kitchen. He was handsome with “the aquilined nose of a leader” and he had a good, jaunty, rebellious image about him, with that bold cap of his, and most of all, he wasn’t Jewish! Yes, he had definite qualities and was good “star” material, but “where’d he go?”

When anyone inquired about him at the Trip Without A Ticket or any place in the Haight-Ashbury for that matter, they were laughed at and told “Emmett Grogan” was just a myth and didn’t exist. The FBI eventually came around and took the Hun back to their offices for “routine questioning” about the Diggers, their Free Food and free store operations, and about the whereabouts of “Emmett Grogan.” The Hun was careful to maintain the Salvation Army–Goodwill cover line, while expounding on his ideas for new wave theater, and claiming that the Diggers had simply made up “Emmett Grogan” as a mythical, nonexistent, heroic figure to fool the press. As for the photo in *Ramparts*, the Hun offered that it was a picture of an actor who had been a member of the Mime Troupe a while back, and had played a small part in an adaptation of Brendan Behan’s *Borstal Boy*. The eight-by-ten glossy, he said, had been given to the radical magazine as a lark to perpetuate the legend of the nonexistent “Emmett Grogan.” The FBI regarded the long-haired, shaggy Hun with such contempt and ridicule that they unquestionably fell for his “myth-making” line, and they dropped the “Emmett Grogan issue,” filing it away as a prank.

Emmett returned to New York City on a Sunday. He always seemed to travel from place to place on Sundays because there were fewer people around, and it had become a habit when he was in Europe. He seldom if ever made any moves on a Saturday, which he considered a wrong time of the week for him, a jinxed day, for no other reason than that he was born on a Saturday, whatever the fuck that had to do with anything. But it did.

On the plane, he sat across the aisle from a young college student type dressed in a conservative suit and vest which he tried to academically liberalize with a wide-knot, cotton tie that had Day-Glo

flower patterns all over it. His hair was also a little long in the back, but just a little, and he was intently reading Warren Hinckle III's fake "Social History of the Hippies" in *Ramparts*.

Emmett looked at this kid who would graduate to a mild, pageboy haircut and tie-dyed clothes within the next year or so, and he watched closely as the student read the last two pages of the article which were about him. It certainly seemed strange to Emmett to be sitting next to somebody who was reading about him and smiling and chuckling aloud over a few of the things he'd done as a character in some clown's idea of a short story. Very strange! For a moment Emmett wanted to take his IRA cap from his back pocket, put it on, tap the kid on the shoulder, point to the name "Grogan" in the article, then point back to himself and laughingly say, "That's me!" But only for a moment, because that wasn't what it was all about. "Nobody's on the make in this game. At least, I ain't," he thought to himself, and if he had been, he wouldn't have to tap no college kid on the back to be recognized, that was for sure. Every student in the country would know what he looked like, if he wanted them to. "Every motherfuckin' one of 'em!" he assured himself before falling asleep in a seat designed by a moron.

When he got to New York City, Emmett called up Candy Sand, a young, bouncy-cute woman who was secretary to an American literary figure and a sympathetic twenty-four-year-old with whom he had only recently become friendly over the long-distance telephone. She had gone to the same midwestern school with one of the women who now worked with Digger Free Food on the West Coast, and she told Emmett, "Of course, you can come over!" And further invited him to stay in her place for as long as he needed to, because she had lots of room, she said. "And lots of warm, bubbling hospitality, too," Emmett thought.

Her pad was on the Lower East Side at the corner of Second Street and Avenue A on the third floor of a turn-of-the-century tenement walk-up above a Spanish grocery store. It was rent-controlled at sixty-five dollars a month and the roomy interior had been inexpensively, but wisely renovated with natural colored, rough pine covering all the walls and cabinets, hiding the cracked plaster and peeled paint underneath, and giving the whole place an expensive, West Village modern look. It was also very comfortable and intelligently furnished with lots of cushions and soft places to sit or lie, and a red checkered cloth over one table to tell you it was part of the kitchen, which wasn't closed off, but open-walled toward the

large front room. The light that came through the many clean windows on every side, filled the space with an airy, Scandinavian feeling.

It was hard to believe that it was just another walk-up pad in a Lower East Side tenement, and Emmett was very glad he was offered such pleasant digs where he could lie back and relax, refreshing himself with a few days' vacation for the first time in six months of Digger-free activities.

Candy was as sweet and cheering as her apartment, and she was graciously considerate of her guest, staying out of his way and giving him plenty of quiet time to rest and think about what he was into. Emmett thought quite a bit about that during those few days, comparing the Diggers with the other politico-social activist groups and their ideologies. He even came up with a name for the integrated assertions and aims of the Diggers' visionary theorizing. He called it the ideology of failure — "You got nothin', you got nothin' to lose." That's why everything the Diggers had done and did was "free."

Emmett also thought about all the radicals who were always so quick to call him and the Diggers anarchists, simply because they didn't openly espouse one revolutionary program or another. In their narrow, bigoted view, one had to be either a Marxist, Leninist, Trotskyite, Maoist, or hold to some combination of these ideologies, or else be politically categorized an anarchist. All those radical labelers ever did was read, write about or discuss the different revolutionary theories, dealing with semantics, while Emmett and the Diggers refused to discuss publicly or define the political dialectics of the work they never ceased to continue to do. Work which was alien neither to Marxism or Maoism, but at the same time needed neither to endure.

The Diggers didn't particularly care which ism they were putting into practice with their work and were also, in fact, mildly amused at the word-slinging radicals, who were as full of puritanical shit as the country's right wing was cowardly absurd.

Emmett lay lazily around the pad for three solid, quiet, fat days before he finally got an urge to go out and gander around the neighborhood. He decided not to look in on his family this time for many different reasons, but mainly because he didn't feel like making apologies for his new life-style. He tried to locate Billy Landout, who was off somewhere apparently traveling around the country. So, he was more or less alone, with everyone he now met in New York being a fresh face with no reference to his past.

The streets were windy with smoke from the boilers, and cloudy with flakes of soot from the Con Edison plant on Fourteenth Street, which blackens the sky and pollutes the air of the Lower East Side. He walked north on Avenue A towards Tompkins Square Park, past bundled-up longhairs and thin-clad Puerto Ricans bopping along with their fists clenched inside their pockets against the cold, on their way to cop. He bought a *World Journal Tribune* and an East Village *Other* and entered an old-time ice-cream parlor and lunch counter called the Sweet Shoppe, where he sat in a booth and had a cup of coffee and a toasted English muffin.

It was two o'clock in the afternoon, and he felt good and rested from the long hours of sleep and doing nothing but eating Candy Sand's cooking and thinking about the past six months, which now seemed so long ago to him. But a short article in the East Village *Other* newspaper snapped it all back home. On the top of one of the inside pages was a story about the Glide Church meeting between the San Francisco Diggers and the HIP merchants that had been held several weeks before. The story was the same one which had been printed in the L.A. *Free Press* under Jerry Hopkins' byline, and it told about Emmett Grogan threatening to bomb the HIP merchants' shops if they refused to kick back some of their profits to the community.

Emmett got real fucking sore about the article all over again. He paid his check and steamed out of the Sweet Shoppe along Avenue A towards Ninth Street, and the address he read on the underground newspaper's masthead. The East Village *Other's* office was a storefront across the street from Tompkins Square Park and Emmett had no trouble finding it. There was a girl sitting at a desk which guarded the entrance to a back room where the next edition of the newspaper was being composed. Emmett told her he wanted to speak with the editor. She asked his name and "what about," and he said it was none of her business, and she replied that if he didn't answer her questions, he wouldn't get to see the editor. But he insisted, saying it was an "urgent personal matter," which seemed to make some sort of sense to her because she got up and went into the back room, giving him the cool eye as she turned.

The whole front portion of the outer office was crowded with back issues of the paper piled all over the floor, and the walls were entirely covered with the different poster-size front pages representing each and every edition of the newspaper that had been published since its birth. Emmett scanned the series of headline graphics

papering the walls and noted that most of them dealt either with the bestiality or brutality of the police. He wondered whether the publisher and the editorial staff of the newspaper really hated cops that much, or were just catering to their readers, most of whom were students.

The girl returned and pointed him out to a paunchy, pale, bald-headed man in his early thirties wearing a baggy buttoned-down shirt turned brown at the collar by the stuffy steam-sweat-heat of three days' wear.

"Yes, can I help you?"

"Are you the editor?"

"I'm one of them."

"I want to speak with the person who's the head of this operation."

"You do, huh? Well, what's your name, and what's it you want to talk about?"

"The name is Grogan. Emmett Grogan, 'n what I want to talk about I'll tell the person in charge."

"I'll be right back," he said, and turned into the rear room.

The girl at the desk overheard the dialogue and was giving Emmett a different kind of once-over stare, now that she figured he was "somebody," but when skinhead returned with another dude, he told her to go for some coffee, and waited until she split before introducing the founder-publisher-executive editor of the East Village *Other*. Emmett immediately recognized him and his showy, auburn, handlebar moustache, as the guy had been bartender in Stanley's saloon on Avenue B, where Billy and he often went drinking during his leave from the army a year ago. But he didn't mention this to either of them, just shook their hands and stated his beef, pointing out that the article was stone bullshit and asking them if they understood the position it had placed him in, now that he was in New York.

"You see, when the mugs who own the territory around here find out that I'm in the neighborhood, they're going to think from reading this crap about me threatening to bomb the HIP shops out in San Francisco that I'm going to try the same thing here, try to strong-arm the hippie merchants who lease store space from them, the same way 'n they're going to get mad when they think that I'm muscling in on their thing, because that's what it comes down to in their eyes. There's nothin' political or social about it to them — just some guy tryin' to get a piece of the action 'n they're gonna take

that personally — very personally, 'n fuck knows what'll happen! Now I gotta go see that they get set straight about what I'm into before they get the wrong idea about why I'm here, 'n do something I'll be sorry for — so, if anybody asks you about this article about me, you just tell 'em it was a mistake, 'n it's bullshit, because that's all that it is — bullshit! An' don't print anything else about me, either, understand. I don't need, want, or care for my name being in newspapers. So do me, and in the long run yourselves, a favor 'n don't write anything about me because you'll only interfere with what we're trying to do for the hip community, 'n I'm sure you wouldn't want to do that. Good! So we understand one another. Be seein' you." And he shook their hands again and left before they could reply or even say anything.

Later that night Paul Krassner, the lampoon editor of the satirical, leftist periodical newsprint magazine catcalled *The Realist*, which government authorities continually contended was blatantly pornographic, told Candy Sand about a community meeting being held that night in a Lower East Side loft to discuss the problems facing the "hip community of the East Village." Emmett had met Krassner in San Francisco when he was taking a VIP tour of the Haight-Ashbury with some of the HIP hierarchy, and he was impressed at how a man of such tiny physical stature could be such a gross smart-alec. He burned some of Krassner's money in response to a series of journalistic inquiries and also gave him some free acid, the mere giving of which had, for some cryptic reason blown Krassner's mind. So Emmett went to the community meeting with Candy Sand and Paul Krassner, where he was introduced to the East Coast's version of HIP. They weren't united under the same or any other name but were certainly uniform in their "hippie" manner and style, affecting a similar and possibly weightier identification with the psychedelic experience.

Most of the thirty-some-odd persons present at the meet were in their twenties, had been raised in upper-middle-class environments, had finished college and had dropped out of their establishment futures because they were bored and wanted a chance to put creativity back into their lives, to make an art out of living. They were more wordy and less spaced out than their San Francisco peers, and since the Lower East Side didn't exactly border any spectacular woodland or rolling green hills, they were more concerned with community politics than with the ecology of their environment. Even though they tried to dress up their surroundings by constantly

referring to them as the "East Village," the neighborhood still refused to allow them room enough to escape or transcend the reality of its mean streets. The Haight-Ashbury, its population being largely hippie flower children, encouraged the myriad activity of the esoteric sciences, but the Lower East Side, peopled predominantly by blacks and Puerto Ricans and some Eastern European immigrant families, most of whom were either Ukrainian or Jewish, was a low-money environment where people thought flowers were a luxury because they died too easy, even when they had thorns, and transcendentalism an annuity a person got from the government when he reached age sixty-five.

No there was scarcely enough room to breathe, much less make believe on the Lower East Side, and Emmett listened as the talk centered on the ill treatment the arriving hippies were receiving from their black and Puerto Rican neighbors. He kept quiet until he felt that those assembled were wrongly, but eagerly convincing themselves that the Puerto Ricans and blacks were prejudiced against them solely because of their long hair and life-style, making them the country's "new niggers." This conclusion, that the hippies were the new niggers of America, seemed to delight the group, and they quickly began exchanging different tales of outright bigotry they had experienced.

Their histrionics in describing their scenes of personal discrimination sounded like the blackface hokum of the San Francisco Mime Troupe's minstrel show with lines like, "You know what really gets 'em crazy? Bare feet! When they see a longhair walkin' down the sidewalk in midwinter just after a snowfall with no shoes on, it blows their minds! 'N they don't know how to deal with it, so they get angry!" "Yea, 'n when they always see longhaired dudes with their arms around hippie chicks, it gets 'em wild because they know the hippies are makin' it together 'n they're not gettin' any!"

Emmett interrupted and ultimately curtailed the show by simply pointing out that the Lower East Side of Manhattan had always been a tough neighborhood and in tough neighborhoods the new kid on the block always got beat up and ". . . in this case, the hippies who're moving into the tenements now are the new kids on the block, that's all, 'n they're being put down just like every other new group that moved there before 'em, 'n that may not be the way you want it in the East Village, but as long as the East Village is part of the Lower East Side, that's the way it's gonna be. But there's more to this trouble than the traditional old-slappin'-down-the-new rou-

tine or the longhairs freakin' out the shorthairs crap you've been shootin'." And he continued his rap by laying down a few of the other beefs that the longer residents of the neighborhood had against the hippies.

They were especially upset, he said, because of the hippies' readied willingness to pay the higher rents and whatever-the-market-will-bear prices fixed by the slumlords. This overcharging, coupled with the fact that the poor residents of the area knew damn well that most hippies came from the wealthy white suburbs of their American dream and therefore didn't really have to live in their low-class poverty neighborhood, aggravated their already deep dislike for the outgoing, jubilant hippie style, and ticked off a series of violent outbreaks to "wipe the smiles off their faces," because what the fuck were they so happy about anyway!

This spawned an attitude that the hippies could afford to be happy, paying the increased rents and inflated prices with "money from home," while the people who were really poor and not just "tripping," suffered the ironical burden of their presence. Thus they became the fair-game targets of people who needed some quick money fast, which was nearly everyone. The sight of a pair of well-fed hippies walking through the neighborhood, panhandling change against a backdrop of desperate bleakness may have appeared farcical to strangers, but to the people who lived their entire lives in the area, grew up there, it was a mockery, a derisive imitation of their existence and it got them angry. Plenty angry.

Besides this basic false role-playing of theirs and the increase in prices and rents they caused by moving in, Emmett went on to tell them that the hippies were also being blamed for the spreading of infectious hepatitis and venereal disease among the families in the area, as well as for the intensified police campaign of inundating the area with beefed-up squads whose patrols were spreading heat all over the place and putting an impossible strain on all illegal operations. This seriously hurt the community, because those "outside the law" activities were its financial backbone and constituted between 35 to 40 percent of the economy of the Lower East Side.

"So, as usual, it comes down to money again, but that's the way it's always been when a new bunch comes into a territory where another group has previously taken up residence, settled in, and has come to consider it their turf. The hippies present an economic danger to those people who've never been anything else but poor, and they've already proved to be a threat to the community in more ways than

one. A threat not only to the neighborhood's flimsy economy, but also to the neighborhood people's values, hopes and dreams. You see, most of these people *want, more than any of you could ever not want*, things like a pre-fab house out in the suburbs or a pre-fab apartment or bungalow back in Puerto Rico. They're just like all the other lower classes that came before them, dreaming of becoming middle class with all the trimmings that go with it. The difference between the Puerto Ricans and the others before them is that the Puerto Ricans aren't white, so they've become static in the low-money bracket, but they don't smell as bad, therefore they're not going nowhere as fast as the black people and are being permitted token breakthroughs here and there.

“What I'm getting at is that their dreams of someday makin' it out of what they regard as a sewer are very important to them, 'n when hippies come along riffin' about how unhip it is to make it into middle-class society 'n how easy it would've been for them to make it, but they didn't because it was insignificant, these low-money people get confused and upset because here are these creepy longhaired punks who grew up with meat at every meal and backyards to play in and the kind of education which is prayed to God for, and they threw it all away for what? To become junkies like at least one member of every family on the Lower East Side? To live with garbage and violence and rats and violence and no heat or hot water and violence and disease and violence? Is that what hippies thought was the hip thing to do with their lives? Well, to these people and their sons and daughters who've had no alternative but to live their lives in the disaster of the Lower East Side, there ain't nothin' hip about junk or poverty or violence, and they have nothing but contempt for young, educated fools who think it's exciting to live in a world they really know nothing about, the kind of world these kids' middle-class parents built the suburbs to protect them from.

“However, these parents never figured their children would attempt suicide by scaling the fortress walls of suburbia and running to the ghettos which had become part of their generation's fantasies — fantasy ghettos like the Haight-Ashbury and the Lower East Side where sidewalks were more real than the lawns of Westchester and where people were red-blooded human beings, instead of blanched, bloodless, cardboard automatons. The poor have no sympathy for these young whites who're searching out what was kept hidden from them. They have none at all because of the hippies'

arrogance, an arrogance they wear on their sleeves, an arrogance which mocks the poor for wanting what they've rejected, and insolently pities them for not comprehending or understanding the reasons why they left the 'American Dream' behind.

"So, you better face the straight goods, brothers an' sisters. You ain't the new niggers or spics, 'n you're never gonna be. You have too much to fall back on whenever you want to or have to — good education, a home, family, the color of your skin — 'n the people in the neighborhood know that, an' also that you're still the children of the ruling classes, whether you like it or not. As far as they're concerned, you're just having an adventure — an adventure in poverty which, if you aren't careful, may prove more real than you're ready to deal with."

The crowd in the loft didn't seem to like a thing Emmett said, primarily because he burst the underdog image they were casting for themselves. Nobody said anything after he stopped talking because, like it or not, everything he said seemed to be true. There was a silent pause for a moment, then a tough-looking Jewish bohemian woman in her late twenties asked Emmett what he thought could be done to relieve the troubled situation the hippies were facing in the Lower East Side and how they could hip the poor to the inherent lie of the American Dream and its middle-class accoutrements.

First of all, he said, they had to jettison the self-satisfying impression that they were the "new niggers" — which was going to be difficult. It was very comfortable on the bottom of the social heap where you could lie back, stay doped up and not accept any individual or community responsibilities, feeling perfectly hip about having been classed the new losers and doing everything by doing nothing to justify the classification. If they could get past that, Emmett continued, then they could apply their "fortunate" backgrounds in serving the needs of the neighborhood, not as "hip social workers," but as members of the community who wanted to develop it for themselves as a place where they could enjoy life and where their children could grow without being forced to attend the stifling institutions run by the city government.

They could start on their own by opening free day-care centers for the children, and later, free schools and free stores where they could hip the community to the truth about the American Dream and show them that the hippies weren't just passing through the neighborhood on a trip, but settling down and trying to build a life there for themselves. Afterwards, they could organize free block par-

ties and free rock concerts and Latin festivals in Tompkins Square Park, and clean the streets and vacant lots of their garbage and abandoned cars, so they could be used by the people and their children without the danger of being bitten by rats. Then they could set about fixing up the tenements where they lived.

Someone who said he was a member of the Progressive Labor Party remarked: "That's all well and good, but don't you think that the people who will ultimately benefit from all this proposed cleaning up of the neighborhood and the renovation, say of the tenement dwellings, will be the persons who own all the buildings — the slumlords, and that if the area is made more pleasant, the people themselves will become more or less content with their situation and try to keep what they have, rather than revolt against the forces which keep them in oppression?"

"No!" Emmett fired back. "That's a trap: keep everything bad, in fact, make it worse to heighten the contradictions and educate the people, making them aware 'n letting them see the oppressor. Everyone vote for Ronald Reagan, so when he's governor of California repression will become real to the people and they'll rise up in revolution. Bullshit! They'll just turn in whoever's threatening them financially or personally, like the Jews on Long Island during the McCarthy fifties, and vote for Reagan again.

"People dig dictators and being told what to do, as long as they're benefiting from it, getting paid. As far as the Lower East Side slumlords go, if the streets of the neighborhood and the buildings get fixed up so they're pleasant and livable 'n the landlords try to evict the tenants who made the repairs so they can rent to faggots and secretaries who want a hip address, we'll defend ourselves and we'll kill them! It's as simple as that. An' don't anyone say that we won't be able to get at them because we won't be able to find out who they are or where they are. That's a myth! Because it's already been done before and will be again. We'll find out and don't nobody worry about that. We'll find out, even if they live in Dayton, Ohio, and we'll kill them. Once the people get it together and have a chance to live with a degree of comfort and in surroundings that aren't rat and disease infested and without having to scuffle all the time or hassle against impossible odds, nothing will be able to stop 'em until they get just as much as everybody else. Nothing! Until everybody's equal in a classless society and all have enough of what they need 'n nobody has to go hungry, so some fat man can eat baked Alaska at

the Four Seasons, or his fat wife imported smoked salmon from Nova Scotia at Grossinger's.

"No, when the people get that inch they're going to want more than the proverbial mile. They're going to want all of it 'n the ones who own it are going to have to give it up or have it taken from 'em! 'N it's up to guys like me, up to us 'n others like us to get that inch for the people, so they can taste what it'll be like when those few who own everything are knocked out of the box, and the many can finally live like human beings, instead of like serfs in a kingdom run by a handful of aristocratic, robber-baron families. Up to ones like us, because we know about what low-money people can only dream about. We've experienced what they still hope for 'n we know what has to be done 'n how to do it.

"Most important, we don't have to do it. We don't have to do anything. We can survive comfortably without hardly hassling at all because we know how the monster works 'n thinks 'n we can manipulate it for our own ends. That's easy. But suppose we took it a step further 'n didn't fuck with it specifically for ourselves. Suppose we did what we know how to do for nothin', for no other reason than we know how to do it. Suppose we did it for free! Did what was necessary, so the people would have the inch they needed to get that first mile on the road to a social democracy, 'n did it all for free! We couldn't lose, 'cause when you start by doing it for free, for nothin', you got nothin' to lose and you're beyond the possibility of defeat! That's what's called the ideology of failure, and if you brothers and sisters would apply that to your lives and roles in the community instead of just playin' out your adventure of poverty, dead hands of fantasy, we'd be able to get it on in the Lower East Side, and rip-off that inch before anyone knew we weren't kidding! And the hippies would soon become an integral part of the community, rather than just depending on the passage of time to earn them acceptance."

Then Emmett spent an hour laying out what the San Francisco Diggers did in the Haight-Ashbury, explaining the overall difficulty of their work, and how they actually went about getting it all done. He was careful, however, not to give away any secrets or discuss how they obtained free goods by theft, because he didn't feel it was appropriate for a room full of people he didn't know, and in the end, would probably prove dangerous to him and his West Coast comrades. He did make a point though of showing the absurdity of the news media's description of the Diggers as "philanthropic do-good-

ers” and went on to explain the importance of anonymity in any attempt to achieve individual or collective autonomy.

All the thinking Emmett had done during his lay-up at Candy Sand’s pad had charged him with a new surge of energy, and he rapped for over two hours. When he finished, there was nothing really left to say or ask, except the obvious question which each of the New York City hip people assembled in the loft that night to discuss their “community problems” had to ask himself: was he or she really serious and together enough to begin the difficult work of serving the needs of the unrewarding Lower East Side and its people for nothing, for free, totally and uncompromisingly free. It was a question no one asked out loud, for each person had to deal with the answer to that one himself, later, and alone. “For the time being, anyway,” Emmett thought, and everyone adjourned downstairs to a bar for a couple of beers before going their separate ways.

The group crowded around Emmett because he impressed them with his rap, and they pressed him for more answers to questions no one should have had to ask. It was funny how people at first always thought of him as just another “handsome lug” and a gang leader because of his reticence and rough exterior, until he began to talk, revealing that he knew fucking well what he was doing and exactly how to take command when he had to. It always seemed to amaze them that he wasn’t an illiterate imbecile or a dumb dead-end kid or something. He often wondered why they had that image of him, and concluded that it was part of a “noble savage” hangup which made them imagine him as some sort of existential primitive hero who depended on his primate instincts and not much else to fulfill his assigned duties given to him by some mysterious cabal of revolutionary intellectuals who sought a merger of hippie radicalism and New Left politics.

It was a joke, all right, and Emmett often used it on people who insisted he was a “truly great leader,” by replying that he just took orders over a pay telephone in a prearranged public booth in whatever city he was in. “They just call me up ’n I go ’n do what they tell me.”

Less than a week after the “community meeting” in the Lower East Side loft, Emmett stopped into the East Village *Other* office to look over the latest issues of the few West Coast underground weeklies which were available there. He had been on the phone with his brothers and sisters in San Francisco several times during the previous two weeks he had spent in New York, and they’d told him

everything was going all right with the Diggers and the Haight-Ashbury, but he still wanted to see what else had been occurring in the West. The skimpy and often fallacious news about those other activists and happenings was to be found only in the self-indulgent folds of California's underground press which, much to his regret, Emmett was forced to skim for some slightly relevant information.

He never got around to looking at those California weekly undergrounds, however, because his eyes caught a glimpse of something tacked to the side wall as he was walking into the back room: the galley proofs of the copy for the next edition of the *East Village Other*, and one article's headline caught hold of Emmett and stopped him. He read the bold letters, **DIGGER LOGORRHEA**, and pulled the copy off the wall, reading it fast and wincing every time his eyes ran over the name Emmett Grogan. The girl who was sitting at her desk post got up and went into the back room when she saw from the look on Emmett's face what might happen.

He was furious! Not only had they not respected his appeal to them not to print anything about him in their paper, but either through incredible stupidity or malicious intent, they falsely reported the rap he gave a week before at the loft, attributing things to him which neither he nor anyone else had ever said that night. The article quoted him as having declared that an outbreak of terrorism was necessary to educate the people and force the exploiters of the counterculture to their knees to make them give away all their goods to the community for free! It was outrageous! Stone fucking lies, all of it! He could hardly believe it, and when he looked up and saw the skinhead editor standing there alongside the handlebar-moustached founder, publisher, executive editor, he blew it!

"What the fuck do you call this shit, huh? Well, what is it, motherfucker!"

"Hey, listen, this is a newspaper and we print . . ."

"You're fulla shit, it's a newspaper! It's a bloody, fuckin' rag!"

"We print stories our readers expect us to."

"Stories?! Fuckin', bold-faced, bullshit lies, you mean!"

"Look, we were there, both of us, 'n we heard . . ."

"You heard shit! There's not one thing in here that's even half true. It's all lies and you know it. Both of you motherfuckers know it! Nothing but fuckin' lies!"

"Look, that's debatable. You may think . . ."

"Debatable, my motherfuckin' ass! It's all a lie, 'n a stupid, dumb

corny pack of lies, too! You're not even slick enough or smart enough for anyone but a cretin to believe that I said any of this bullshit, that anyone even talks this way! You two-bit mother-fuckers!"

"Well, why don't you write your own version of what happened and we'll print both of them to let . . ."

"You'll print shit! Nothin'! you hear! Not one fuckin' word about me, ever!"

The two of them looked at one another, and realizing that Emmett wasn't going to give them back the galley proof of the article, the handlebar moustached publisher grabbed for it and Emmett shoved him away, sending him crashing into a pair of file cabinets. Skinhead only moved his hands to adjust his glasses, apparently trying to call Emmett's attention to the fact that he was wearing them, and the look on his face seemed to say, "New York State gives persons twenty years in prison for hitting a man with glasses." The founder-publisher stood his distance well behind the desk and nervously threatened, "Listen, if you don't give us back that article and leave this office without any more trouble, I'm going to call the police!"

Emmett had to laugh. Here he was, standing in the middle of a room whose wallpaper pictured cops as vicious storm-trooping Nazi animals, and the publisher of the East Village *Other* was going to call them to arrest him! Incredible! Emmett continued to laugh as he tore the galley proof into tiny pieces and threw them into the air. Walking toward the front door and the street, he kept laughing, and the founder-publisher twitched his handlebar moustache and trembled furiously as he tried to make like he was really dialing for the cops. Emmett tried to encourage just that by prompting him to "go 'n fuck your dead mother!" as he walked out the door into the brisk, early spring afternoon, wondering whether he had provoked the punk-faced dude into actually completing his call to the police.

Emmett didn't intend to lose any sleep over it, and for the next couple of days, he roamed around the Lower East Side looking up the people he met at the loft meeting and checking out their various activities. He spoke about guerrilla theater with the Angry Arts, a group of politically conscious artists, and described the Communication Company operation to the Black Mask, a band of radical pamphleteers who were printing leaflets. He talked about how to finance economic collectives and business cooperatives to achieve financial independence and token autonomy from the state with

Chino Garcia, a mammoth twenty-two-year-old Puerto Rican and affable ex-gang leader who was in charge of the Real Great Society. This was a Puerto Rican cooperative business venture and community action group which also ran a free school, appropriately called the University of the Streets. He discussed hip political issues over a telephone hook-up with the audience on Bob Fass's midnight WBAI listener-sponsored radio show called *Unnameable*. He got to know the black leaders of the neighborhood by drinking a couple of beers every day in PWee's bar on Avenue A and spoke the language with the Italians while shooting pocket billiards with them in their pool hall across the street from PWee's.

When several members of the San Francisco Mime Troupe were performing their controversial minstrel show at the University of Calgary in Alberta, and got jailed by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police for having a marijuana seed lodged in one of the wardrobe trunks, Emmett, with the help of the friends he made since he arrived in the city, organized a series of demonstrations in front of the Canadian Consulate in New York. He also spoke to the consul in charge, with poets Allen Ginsberg and Gregory Corso, whom he had finally met at the Chelsea Hotel and with whom he'd shared several hustler-gourmet meals at Grant's restaurant on 42nd Street. The consul took quite a battering during their conference, with Gregory slamming his fist on his desk and loudly demanding the actors' release, and Emmett firing unanswerable, hard, quick questions at him, and Allen calmly implying it all seemed to be highly repressive, while also remarking that the facts lent themselves to a possible charge of collusion on the part of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police to interfere with the rights of American citizens.

The protests and news coverage of the demonstrations helped, but it was Emmett's phone call to the Canadian theater critic Nathan Cohen, and Cohen's subsequent column in the Toronto *Star* that freed R. G. Davis and the others from the inevitable long prison term which would have followed their trial on trumped-up charges. The charges were dismissed because of the adverse publicity in Canada stirred up by Cohen's dynamite column, and R. G. Davis and the Mime Troupe are forever grateful to Mr. Cohen for his righteous defense of socially relevant theater.

It was only after Emmett had acquainted himself with the various action projects on the Lower East Side that he realized there was really no feeling of community among the hip artists, and no real sense of belonging to the neighborhood. They were more involved

in protesting national issues like the war in Vietnam, than in getting their own streets cleaned of filth and made livable. In fact, they seemed to dig living in a slum and like the smelly garbage strewn all over the place. It gave it a romantic look, one of the members of the Angry Arts commented.

One thing was for sure. If any of the things he talked about at the loft meet were ever going to get done, it was certain that he would have to take a large hand in the work, and he wasn't sure he wanted to spend that kind of time in the East. His brothers and sisters in San Francisco had told him the West Coast was clear for him to return, and he was anxious to get back there and continue the work he started. But Natural Suzanne, Fyllis, the Hun and a new poetic plum of a woman named Lacey Pines, who joined in the Free Food activity of the San Francisco Diggers a month before, were all on their way to New York, and so Emmett decided to wait for them before going back. Until then he continued to immerse himself in the neighborhood, working with the action groups and offering the advice of his experience.

The one thing Emmett really wanted to accomplish on the streets of the Lower East Side was their cleaning. He felt that if all the garbage and abandoned cars could be removed from the alleys and vacant lots of the neighborhood by late spring, the community would have a better chance of making it happen during the summer. The East Village artists could construct playgrounds for the kids in the empty lots and the hippies could organize block parties and street fairs on the weekends. After their streets had been cleaned, the black and Puerto Rican residents would be put in the position of keeping them that way and defending against persons from other blocks dumping their refuse there. When the whole area was completely cleaned up, Emmett felt it would breed a community spirit and lay the foundation for the solidarity needed for more community action.

Everyone with whom he talked about it agreed that the removal of garbage from the area and a general cleaning of the neighborhood was the first major service that had to be completed before the people would respect or see any value in forming a coalition among all the community groups. It was the kind of action that would make the advantages of joining forces obvious and would be accepted as totally neutral since it benefited everyone equally. But how do you get rid of years of waste, tons of heavy-duty debris from the nearly one hundred separate streets which make up the neighbor-

hood, and get it all done before summertime? It was no small feat and Emmett went around discussing it with the different community groups, trying to come up with an angle, a way to get it taken care of. At the same time, Bob Fass began talking about the problem on his radio program, and after a few nights of discussing it with his audience and his guests he came up with the lame idea of having a series of "Clean-In's" to be held every weekend until the Lower East Side was cleaned up. He invited all the members of the listening audience to come to a specific street in the neighborhood that Saturday to participate in the first Clean-In.

They came, all right! About two hundred of them from all the different boroughs and suburbs of New York City, carrying protest signs about the various social evils which were bred by filthy streets and sporting the buckets and mops and the wire brushes and cleansers with which they intended to realize the first of the Clean-Ins. They were all in a jocular brotherly mood as they grouped in the middle of the street for what they considered to be a social event, something like a hayride. The people who lived on the block hung out of their windows looking down on the milling, mostly white kids, who were discussing how they should go about attacking the problem of "helping the poor help themselves."

They were quite a sight, these boys and girls — who grew up in places where there were lawns to play on and trees to climb — as they separated into pairs and walked to different spots along the block, wearing their casual "Saturday work clothes" which they always wore whenever there was a car to be washed or leaves to be raked at home. They kept to themselves and the people who lived there left them alone, just watching as they swept up paper with their brooms or actually got down on their hands and knees to scrub a patch of sidewalk spic and span.

That's what was really so pathetic and absurdly futile about the Clean-In. In the center of a neighborhood which averaged six to eight abandoned cars per square block, you had a group of weekend hippies on their hands and knees frantically washing away some stain of middle-class guilt from the pavement, while tons of real garbage remained untouched, clogging all the lots and alleys. The arrogance of it was so outrageous and obvious to almost everyone, that Bob Fass announced on his radio show that there would be no more Clean-Ins because most people from the Lower East Side neighborhood felt that they were a bummer, and he had to go along with their feelings because, after all, they did live there!

Emmett pondered the depths of vanity and self-indulgence required to organize such jive-ass events as the Clean-Ins, before directing his attention to the serious matter of relieving the neighborhood of its abundant and weighty loads of trash and scrap metal. He was convinced it was going to require a fleet of trucks to make the number of hauls needed to clear the area, and that fleet would have to meet some sort of schedule if there was to be any hope of getting the job done before summer. But how was anyone ever going to arrange for the trucks to appear in the first place? "Where are they all supposed to come from?" Emmett was thinking to himself over a cup of coffee one morning. He hadn't made very much progress in locating the trucks when he noticed what turned out to be the solution to the problem on the front page of the morning paper — the good old New York *Times*!

In the lower right-hand corner of page one, almost lost — like only a front page story can be lost by the *Times* — was a brief headline announcing a developing scandal within the city's private sanitation companies. This one-liner was followed by an article reporting the progress of some committee that was investigating several reports of kickbacks and payoffs to various city officials for their help in assigning city contracts to the area's private sanitation companies which were alleged to be controlled by organized crime. The story went on to detail a specific instance of alleged corruption on the part of one city agency official in collusion with the head of a reputed crime syndicate family "with its headquarters on Elizabeth Street in Lower Manhattan's Little Italy." The reputed head of the Elizabeth Street crime family was none other than Don Signore Jimmy Peerless himself, and Emmett, immediately understanding the kind of trouble the private sanitation companies found themselves in, flashed on the idea that they could use a sizable dose of good publicity in the New York press. He wondered how receptive they would be to a little public relations advice from him. Well, he would know soon enough because he was going to speak with the men in charge in the same place he spoke with them almost exactly ten years ago to the day, as one of the Aces Wild who came to their section of Little Italy to go against the Chaplains in a game called Ringolevio.

There was also a good precedent for the offer he was about to extend the "family" men who used the Elizabeth Street Cefalù Social Club as the headquarters for the overseeing of their private sanitation companies, as well as their other varied business inter-

ests. The precedent showed that active concern for the welfare of the poorer elements in a "family's" territory was always good for business, as well as being beneficial to the family's public image.

The precedent which Emmett recalled later that afternoon in Italian to the gentlemen of respect at their Cefalù Social Club on Elizabeth Street, took place in South Brooklyn during the summer of '66, less than a year before. The possibility of a dangerous and potentially disastrous giant rumble occurred over the integration of a predominantly white high school in the East New York-Flatbush section of Brooklyn, and hundreds of cops were sent to patrol the area between the last days of July and the first week in August while thousands of kids roamed the streets fighting, looting, and burning down whatever stores they considered part of enemy turf. In a desperate final effort to end the madness and avert the colossal rumble which was set to be staged at any moment, the Lindsay administration got Relocation Commissioner Frank Arricole to contact the Gallo brothers, Larry and Al, through their lawyer, and arranged for them to get past police lines hopefully to persuade the Italo-American kids, who ganged together to stomp the niggers from integrating, to go home and stop making trouble.

At that time, the Gallo brothers were still involved in a much publicized gangland war with the Profaci-Colombo family that began back in '60 and escalated in the summer of '61, after the oldest of the three brothers, Larry Gallo, was lured one Sunday afternoon to the Sahara cocktail lounge in Brooklyn, where two men came out of the back of the darkened saloon while Larry was standing alone at the bar and tossed a piano wire around his throat and started to strangle him. A police sergeant happened by, intervened, and got a bullet in his face. The two shadowy hit-men got away and Larry Gallo lived to step up the war along with his two brothers, Crazy Joe who was eight years younger and kept a full-grown lion in his office on President Street for protection during the gangland warfare, and Albert "Kid Blast" the youngest of the three, who turned out to be an ineffectual leader which got him renick-named "Kid Blister."

The Gallo Gang's continuing warfare in Brooklyn earned them a lot of very bad press because of the twelve dead bodies that were found and the twelve more missing and wounded. So, Larry Gallo naturally jumped at the chance to muster a little public goodwill for himself and his gang by doing the community a service it had asked of him. He arrived in a black Riviera at the intersection which

served as a meeting place for the Italo-American gang kids and was greeted with a VIP celebrity welcome by the kids and cops alike. With his kid brother Crazy Joe in prison, and his youngest brother, Kid Blister Al, having proved a washout, it was left up to Larry Gallo himself to get the leaders of the Italo-American kids to tell their gang to break it up and go home. He approached those kids who he knew had influence and control over the gang, and simply told them all to go home. One white kid began with a "But the niggers —" and Larry Gallo smacked him in the mouth, dropping him cold to the ground. By nightfall, there were no kids on the streets and there was no more trouble, big or little, after that.

For his service to the community, Larry Gallo got his picture taken with his arm around Mayor Lindsay and another city hall guy, and the next day the photo was on the front page of every newspaper in the city with Larry Gallo's broad smile grinning from ear to ear right above the ligature scar on his throat where the piano wire had left its mark. All the captions in the metropolitan newspapers had remarked something to the effect that Larry Gallo was probably a good guy at heart.

The gentlemen of respect listened as Emmett went on to detail the proposal he felt would aid them in their present unfortunate situation and afford them a public platform to prove their goodwill by cleaning up their neighboring Lower East Side community — from which they could exact a series of tributes in the form of press conferences and releases implying the moral and social responsibility of their private sanitation companies.

Then he laid out a plan whereby the eighty-five separate blocks making up the Lower East Side could be cleared of all debris within the following two and a half months. By dividing the area into ten distinct sections, he figured that a fleet of ten or more of the private sanitation companies' giant green garbage trucks could haul away enough of the rubbish to clean all of the lots and alleys of the community in eight consecutive Saturdays' work, leaving the city glaringly responsible for the removal of the abandoned cars.

Emmett spent over an hour rapping about his idea and making his proposal clear to the gentlemen of respect, assuring them that he would guarantee total press coverage of any community service they chose to perform on the Lower East Side. Now it was up to them, and he sipped at his very hot cafe espresso and Grappa Liquore, as the gentlemen of respect discussed his proposition among themselves in a Sicilian dialect only they could understand.

Finally they turned their attention back to Emmett and informed him that they would agree to try it out to see how it worked on the following Saturday morning, which was only three days away. "'N you better make sure you got everything covered, kid, 'cause we gotta pay our men overtime from the time they show up at eight o'clock on Saturday morning to the time they finish up. So don' you go fuckin' up, 'cause there's lots a money we puttin' out to see this thing gets done right. So you better do your best like us, see, or you're gonna have a lot to answer to us for, if you fuck things up somehow. So, don't! It's a good idea, but we don' wanna throw no money away for nothin' you understand?! So, you make-a damn sure it counts front page! Okay, you a good kid. Now, what you gettin' outta all this?"

Emmett told them a line about how he wanted to give everyone on the Lower East Side a chance to live together in peace and harmony without the filth of garbage that had accumulated because of the city sanitation department's criminal neglect of the neighborhood. It was exactly their criminal neglect which he hoped to expose with the generous cooperation of the private sanitation companies who were being wrongly slandered by those same city hall officials.

Emmett shook all their hands before walking out into the crisp evening air of Hester Street for his long but enthusiastic walk back to the pad on Avenue A, thinking for a moment about the last time he was on Hester Street and what he came there for then, and also briefly wondering whether Willie Pondexteur was still in the penitentiary at Dannemora, or paroled by now, or dead. It seemed such a long time ago that Emmett hurried to push the thoughts of that day out of his mind, thinking instead about how he had to keep the upcoming Saturday cleanup very quiet, and at the same time organize slick press coverage of the event.

But even though Emmett maintained tight security about the project for Saturday, word of the cleanup by the private sanitation companies got to the wrong people in the East Village and they leaked it to the city government administration, who flooded the Lower East Side neighborhood with their own department of sanitation trucks on Friday, and copped all the publicity for the city of New York. Several Puerto Rican gangs — with whom Emmett had discussed the proposal he made to the Elizabeth Street "good people" — were outraged by the city's publicity stunt cleanup, after having always avoided their community in the past. They printed

up reams of paper on the Black Mask's mimeograph machines and went up to the rooftops bordering the streets and tossed them into the air to float down to where the department of sanitation men were working. The leaflets all said the same thing in big black block letters: PICK ME UP, MOTHERFUCKER! And the sanitation men did, just as they picked up the other symbol of the modern slum, the mounds of broken glass which were everywhere. In the contemporary nonreturnable world of the Lower East Side, bottles were only good for throwing and not for the regular two cents or nickel deposit they had been worth a few short years before.

The fire department was there too, giving out stuffed fluffy animals to the children as an expression of their goodwill to the inner-city ghetto community. There were two types of small stuffed animals packed by the gross in boxes. One set was small black kittens with white faces and the other was a thousand or more tiny gray mice with black button eyes. As if the children of the Lower East Side didn't have enough real mice to play with in their own kitchens! Was it just that the firemen were all so blind dumb from their weekly whiskey-beer bashes in Staten Island and strangers to the reality of the neighborhood they were paid to protect, or was the giving away of the stuffed mice to the children a conscious insult meant to demean the residents of the community? The children didn't really care to figure it out, assuming instead that the firemen knew what they were doing. When the fire department officers sitting on top of their bright red hook-and-ladders cheerfully handed the tiny gray cotton-stuffed playthings to the children lining the sidewalk, the kids didn't return the smiles, but simply stared blankly back at the men who were supposed to be "public servants," and dropped the little toy mice into the gutter where the water being used to wash down the back alleys ran off the sidewalks and carried the hundreds of make-believe rodents to the whirlpool over the sewer at the end of the block. The last thing that could be seen of the sinking toy mice was the glimmer of their shiny black button eyes, as they congested at the mouth of the corner sewer, like a rush hour crowd pushing and shoving and cramming together into subway trains to get somewhere ahead of god-knows-who.

At first, Emmett had no idea who informed the mayor's office of the planned Lower East Side cleanup on Saturday by the private sanitation companies. But it didn't take him long to figure out that it was one of the self-proclaimed leaders of the East Village hippies who did it just to make Emmett look bad in the eyes of the gentle-

men of respect, and also to prevent him from accomplishing the kind of community service which would make him a more powerful neighborhood figure. And he didn't believe it was done to him out of pure jealousy either, by some political careerist dude who was on the make for a piece of the area's leadership pie. No, it was the work of a person or persons who didn't want him taking care of business in their territory and thereby disrupting the status of their already established hierarchy of East Village hipsters. However, Emmett had no time to waste at that moment playing "Who done it?" He had to contact the "good people" and let them know what went down and that he hadn't been directly responsible, and "maybe next time."

He thought it was wiser for him to talk with the gentlemen of respect over the telephone just in case they felt it was all his fault for some off-the-wall reason of their own. Early that evening he called the Cefalú Social Club, but nobody wanted to talk over the phone, and before he could make up some excuse about not being able to go over there, they sent a car to pick him up and bring him back to Elizabeth Street. The gentlemen of respect were a bit cold toward him, but their stone-faced looks seemed to understand that Emmett wasn't entirely to blame for whatever had gone wrong, and there was no reason for them to believe that Emmett had anything to do with leaking the information of their planned operation to the mayor, so they shrugged it off as a try, as a "You win some, you lose some." They told Emmett it was a good idea. "You have any more, you come tell us, understand? Maybe it works out better next time, okay? Good. But you gotta learn the people you dealin' with over there on the East Side, a little bit about *Silencio*, before you come back with any more ideas, right? Or it just end up to be a waste of time. So long now. See you sometime. An' remember, tell everybody to keep their goddamn mouths shut from now on, 'n you, too. This should be a lesson to you that you need to have some respect for *omertá* if you ever want to get things done, right? *Allora, arriv-della. E stai attento, capisci?*"

"*Si, d'accordo, Don Signore. Arrivederci, Signori.*"

"*Addio.*"

Emmett forgot about most of that business shortly thereafter, only thinking once in a while about how long the city's department of sanitation was going to keep up their goodwill cleanup of the Lower East Side, and about exactly who tipped them off in the first place. But after a while he even forgot about that, since once they

started removing the tons of garbage from the area, public pressure insisted that the department of sanitation continue until the job was done, and slowly but surely they were doing just that. As far as figuring out who the informer was, Emmett narrowed it down to someone connected with the East Village *Other*, and there was no great need for him to peg whoever it was any further, because it really didn't matter who the individual had been, as long as he knew which cabal the dirty rat motherfucker belonged to.

One evening Emmett was walking crosstown to the East Side from the lower West Side where he had just cased that district's wholesale produce market and meat-packing houses. He was thinking about hustling some vegetables and ripping off a truckload of meat to give each block on the Lower East Side two sides of beef or a full steer to butcher and distribute among themselves. It was a good idea, and he was assured by at least one Puerto Rican street gang and by a few blacks at PWee's saloon that they would help get the meat shared through the neighborhood as quickly as humanly possible before it went bad, or before the cops, who were known to be stealing meat themselves, got pissed at someone else taking what they considered to be their private loot and caught on to who did it and where the haul had been taken.

It was only when Emmett remembered that the neighborhood was comprised of approximately eighty-five separate streets without counting any of the avenues, that he was able to realize the enormity of the job. It added up to a whole lot of fucking meat! About 170 sides of beef or eighty-five whole cows would have to be liberated and distributed among the people, if everyone was going to get an equal taste and the community was to be treated as a whole with no one section being left out to later claim unfair treatment.

"*Oooooee!* Is it ever gonna be one motherfucker of a score!" Emmett smiled to himself, while also vowing that if he ever did pull it, Robin Hood would have to be goddamn extra careful this time or he would end up paying more dues for this caper than he thought possible. For no matter how popular the heist would be in the eyes of the people, Inspector Raymond Maguire, the crackerjack head of New York City's Safe and Loft squad, had just been recently placed in charge of a special truck unit because of some big midtown hijacking, and he would bury Emmett in some upstate penitentiary, the same way he would have if he had nabbed him back in the Christmas season of 1958, when he successfully worked Park Avenue to pay for the kind of freedom which could no longer satisfy him. It

would certainly be ironic, to say the least, for him to be popped by Inspector Maguire after all those years. Busted for stealing some fucking meat! “Hot damn, Vietnam!” as the man said.

Emmett snatched a giant orange from a fruit stand outside an Italian grocery store and continued along Bleecker Street, deftly turning the fruit over and over with the tips of his fingers, peeling it in such a way that the rind remained intact—a two-foot-long streamer of bright orange skin which would have made Ilse Koch proud. He tossed it into someone’s garbage can and bit into the pulp, noisily sucking the juice from the fruit and letting it drip down his chin and squirt up his nose. When he finished off the orange, he licked his lips to savor the last of it, and dangled his forearms away from his body, flapping his wrist-limp hands in the crisp cool air to shake them dry. A little further along the 300 block of Bleecker Street, he scooped up a ball of shaved ice from a fish stand in a market and washed away the stickiness.

Emmett enjoyed the afternoon alone among the trucks and stalls in the lower west side of Greenwich Village marketplace which was about to be relocated to the Hunt’s Point district of the Bronx. He had been surrounded and hounded by people whom he didn’t know ever since he came out of his seclusion at Candy’s place a few weeks ago, and today was the first time he really had all to himself. He liked being alone, and he guessed it was because he didn’t feel as lonely when he was all by himself which was sort of selfish, but fuck it! It was better than being encircled by lots of people who were all looking at him, hanging on his every word without really caring or understanding what it was he was actually saying. That’s when he really felt the almost overwhelming loneliness, which often filled him with despair and a desperate longing for a good woman, a home and some kids to love and be loved by—his own family in a small house in the South of France or in the Southwest of the United States. But it always seemed too much for him to ask, when so much that should have been done in the Book of Revelations wasn’t done and now had to be done, so there would finally be something new under the sun. Anyway, he would probably just get bored with a family of his own and blow it. He was still too young, after all, to feel as old as he felt.

His thoughts were suddenly interrupted by someone shouting his name from across Bleecker Street, and he turned to see a young couple crossing over to him from Liberty House, a storefront enterprise that had been organized by the remarkable black woman Fan-

nie Lou Haimer, to retail goods which were handmade by poor blacks in Mississippi to finance various civil rights activities in the South and to provide some small money for their own meager existence.

Emmett watched the pair as they came toward him through the traffic. The guy appeared to be in his early thirties, had a big nose, a stumpy body, and a large head which was made to seem bigger by a mop of curly, black hair. The girl whose hand he was holding was in her middle twenties, had a short-cropped pageboy haircut, buck teeth, and was pertly pretty the way young stenographers in a steno pool look pretty compared to the sagging hags who've been sitting in front of the same typewriters for forty years.

They were both broadly smiling when they bounced over to his side of Bleeker Street, and they seemed delighted to have bumped into Emmett whom they said they had briefly met at the now famous loft meeting weeks before. The guy introduced himself as Abbie Hoffman and the woman as his old lady Anita, and went on to ask Emmett if he was walking over to the East Side, and if so "do you mind if we walk along with you 'cause we live in a pad on Saint Mark's Place, 'n we're on our way there now." Emmett said, "Sure!" he didn't mind, and the three of them began moving east with this guy, whom Emmett insisted on calling Abbot, bending Emmett's ear all the way.

First he remarked how impressed he had been by Emmett's rap at the loft that night and how hip it was. Then he commented about how the *Ramparts* article had been a heavy turn-on for a lot of radicals like himself, showing them all how the hippie movement held a wealth of political potential and should be approached in the same manner and style that Emmett used to establish the socio-political Diggers in the Haight-Ashbury. After that, Hoffman talked mostly about himself, running down his own biography and describing the many roles he had played as a member of the radical movement.

Abbot's old lady Anita didn't say anything, content just to give her old man a glowing look of approval once in a while, as Emmett listened to him tell his life stories: how he'd been a pool shark as a youngster in Gloucester, Massachusetts, and a helluva shoplifter and a slick hustler of all sorts. He also kept pointing out that he'd been a heavy activist in the radical movement for over a decade, "before anyone had ever heard of Emmett Grogan, ha! ha! ha!" And he went on to tell about how he worked for SNCC in the South where

he was sort of press agent — public relations liaison man for them and the other civil rights groups, as well as being the man behind Stokely Carmichael, writing his speeches among other things, and on and on.

Emmett could clearly hear the guy's hunger pangs in the anxious sound of his voice. Abbot had been working in the "movement" for over ten years, always in the background, while others reaped the glorious laurels of fame, and now he was approaching his fortieth birthday — within a few years he was actually going to be forty fucking years old! — and nobody would ever have heard of him!

"The guy must fall asleep with fantastic dreams of grandeur every night," Emmett thought, but he didn't think it mattered to him one way or another, and so he accepted when Hoffman invited him inside his pad for a beer. Once they were there, Abbot continued to profile himself as a heavyweight who also knew his way around the East Village, all the while hinting that he would be a good man for Emmett to work with. But even though it was true that Emmett didn't have a tight working partner in New York City, he had no intention of getting next to Hoffman, at least not that way, anyhow. The guy did seem more than enthusiastic and energetic enough, however, so Emmett agreed to work with him now and then whenever something relevant came along to benefit the Lower East Side community. And that was Emmett's mistake. He didn't know it at the time. He might have had a slight inkling, but he really didn't know that he was making a serious mistake in getting involved with Hoffman, in allowing Hoffman to get involved with him. A blunder that he was only to discover he had made after it was far too late to rectify.

They were into their third or fourth can of beer when Emmett became buzzed by the juice and got trapped by his own ego and began riffing about what he was into on the West Coast and hoped to get into on the Lower East Side. He also rapped heavily about the importance of anonymity in getting things done, and Hoffman loudly agreed before he started to quiz Emmett, picking his brains for the secrets to the Diggers' style and their keys to being "political hipsters." Abbot carried on his interrogation like a cop, intently searching out clues, trying desperately to understand what he'll never understand.

The next day, Emmett compounded his initial mistake by stopping by the Hoffmans' ground floor pad at 30 Saint Mark's Place and dropping off a load of San Francisco Digger leaflets and Com-

munication Company news handouts which Abbot had said he would have reprinted and distributed throughout the Lower East Side in the hope of organizing the same type of news service for that lower Manhattan area. But in reality Hoffman had some different plans of his own, which didn't particularly concern the establishment of a Lower East Side Communication Company. He wanted to employ whatever information he could garnish from the set of papers for his own benefit, to study and learn the new words he would need to use if he ever hoped to mask himself successfully as a radical, hip politico, and street theater director. In that pile of papers which Emmett had unthinkingly left with Hoffman, was all the education Hoffman needed to pass himself off as a political hipster. The assortment even included the Hun's bright and original "Trip Without a Ticket" essay on guerrilla theater, as well as all the other significant Digger writings that were printed during the past year in San Francisco and were destined to soon become the private textbook pages of a street theater manual and hip lexicon for Abbot Hoffman and his East Village cronies in their quest for personal recognition as national figures in a mock-revolutionary movement of masquerade, just "for the hell of it!"

Emmett didn't see what was happening and didn't even notice the carnival that was going on around him because he was blinded by his own ego, bathing in the respect that the East Village underground was showing him. A respect he was being granted by the counterculture hippies because he refused to become a public figure to the squares, never giving any interviews to the press or accepting any of the many offers he received to appear on various radio and television talk shows. His strict adherence to his own code of anonymity quickly made him a unique and legendary figure in the underground, and he knew that. So he nurtured that image by being more secretive and making his simple anonymity seem unnecessarily mysterious.

One night a beat political group who called themselves the Anarchists were going to throw a party in an Avenue B loft which belonged to the founder-publisher of the East Village *Other*, and they invited Emmett as well as all the people he could get to come. "Are you guys *sure* you want me to invite *all* the people I can get in touch with to come to your party?" "Yes! Invite as many people as you can. Invite the whole fucking city if you want! Everyone!"

So he did. The party was called the Anarchists' Ball and Emmett demonstrated his own anarchistic touch by telephoning Bob Fass

at WBAI and a few other radio personalities who had their own shows on different stations, informing them of the Anarchists' Ball and asking them to make spot when-and-where announcements about the party to their listeners who were all to be told they were invited. "'N tell 'em to bring their own refreshments!"

So many people showed up at the Avenue B loft that night that the Anarchists' Ball had to be relocated across the street to Tompkin's Square Park with everyone telling everyone else they had been invited by "Emmett Grogan" whom nobody could find because he wasn't there. He went to the movies to see *The Thief*, a modern quasi-silent film starring Ray Milland, which has only a bit of dialogue and is seldom revived in theaters since it was made over twenty years ago. The estimated crowd of three to four thousand at the Anarchists' Ball had the cops freaked and thinking that there was about to be a riot or that some sort of gang war was going to happen. The Anarchists were delighted that their Anarchists' Ball had really turned into something chaotic and a true expression of their love for Kropotkin, Proudhon, and nihilist Dadaism, and they all agreed that Emmett Grogan was an anarchist extraordinaire. Since so many people who didn't know what he looked like were looking for him, one of the head Anarchists, Paulsky, assumed the name "Grogan" and went around through the gathering, passing as Emmett and shaking hands and making cracks about how the cops, who encircled the streets bordering the park with lines of blue-coated reinforcements from neighboring precincts, were all scared shitless by the mob.

There was certainly no doubt that the cops were definitely confused and perplexed by the large gathering of people, who were in a cheerful party mood, chugging wine from half-gallon jugs, toking on reefers and dancing to music being blared from several portable radios. Perplexed because at least half of the crowd were not from the immediate area, having traveled there from sections of Brooklyn, Queens and even Staten Island. Throngs of neighborhood young people whose cheap transistors were tuned in to either Latin or rhythm-and-blues stations dead-eyed the middle-class hippies who swarmed into their turf for a night of dancing to the songs of the Loving Spoonful and the Mamas and the Papas resounding from the FM bands of their more expensive wireless receivers.

The black and Puerto Rican kids kept their distance from the clean-faced strangers, but they didn't just stand around staring at them. They jumped and shouted, danced and laughed to prove to

themselves and to everyone else that they could out-party any bunch of white kids. Some of the hippies who lived on the Lower East Side moved around, coming on to the bunches of cute chicks who had driven in from the suburbs, while others panhandled change or tried to deal drugs to the visitors. Most of the East Village longhairs were partying hard themselves alongside their neighbors, however, trying to make some sort of contact with their black and Puerto Rican brothers and sisters.

The cops were bewildered all right, and when they asked some kid what was going on and were told it was the Anarchists' Ball, it all still didn't make much sense to them. Yes, they were confounded about not exactly knowing what was happening and bothered that they had no advance warning or information that such a gathering was going to occur that night. But they were by no means "scared shitless" by the mob and far from afraid that things might get out of hand or beyond their control.

You see, Tompkins Square Park had been the setting for many riots earlier in the century, and after they took place, several city departments and agencies got together and redesigned the park, stringing it with so much cast-iron fencing that it gave the place the look of a labyrinth and made it virtually impossible for any crowd to move anywhere en masse. The four-foot-high iron railings were placed randomly throughout the park, successfully dividing it up into small sections, and at the same time, separating into easy-to-handle groups any large mob that might gather. Also, in case of trouble, there were handball and basketball courts in the northeast section of the park enclosed and encircled by thirty-foot-high chain-link fences — that could quickly be converted into a makeshift jail or temporary holding facility for prisoners apprehended during a mass arrest.

Since the long hot summers of the mid-sixties spawned so many insurrections throughout the country, the cops held monthly pre-dawn maneuvers on the Lower East Side, which they considered a "trouble area," and the sealing off of Tompkins Square Park was the main concern of those riot control exercises. Emmett had seen the cops do their thing very early one morning when he was returning to Candy's from the East River, and it only took them about three and a half to four minutes to secure the park — which was quite impressive, even if there really was no traffic at that hour for them to contend with.

Therefore, the cops were hardly shitting in their pants in the face

of that crowd that night. In fact, they were probably hoping something would explode so they could do it for real and set in motion the master game plan they had been rehearsing for so long.

The Anarchists' Ball ended at 11:30 P.M., the bewitching hour that puts the "disturbing the peace" ordinance into effect for the general public. It was agreed that a good time was had by all, even the few from the suburbs who got beat for some of their money in dope transactions which turned out to be nothing but burns. The crowd dispersed peacefully, and even though it was a relatively simple thing to arrange, nothing like the Anarchists' Ball in Tompkins Square Park has ever been seen again on the Lower East Side.

Emmett got back to Candy's pad about midnight, and no sooner took off his jacket and poured himself a short glass of wine, when the phone rang. The caller identified himself, but immediately swore Emmett to secrecy before he would say what it was he phoned about. Emmett promised he would never reveal the person's name to anyone ever, and then listened as the dude excitedly related what he had heard with his own two ears and had been privy to less than an hour before.

"Emmett, they're gonna get you killed! They were all there tonight, in the park at the Anarchists' thing, all of the East Village heavies, the hippie leaders, 'n what you did by inviting all those people to the ball freaked them out. There were thousands of people there from all over, 'n all night long, everywhere you went in the park, all you heard was Emmett Grogan, Emmett Grogan. Your name was all over the place! Everyone was talking about you 'n asking questions 'n looking all around for you! Well, it really got the head hippies who've been running things around here since before you came East crazy, 'n they talked for a long time about how something had to be done about you before you copped all the power from them 'n took over things in the East Village by yourself! They're scared, real scared, because you're always putting them down 'n pushin' them around, 'n they're really afraid that you'll put them all out of business if you're allowed to go on like you have been. So they're going to pay somebody to kill you before you get control of everything 'n force all of them to knuckle under or get out of the picture! 'N they mean it, too! What's-his-name already has someone lined up for the job, 'n they're all gonna put up the bread together tomorrow to pay the guy's price, so you'll be hit before the week's out. I don't know what you're gonna do! You know who they are. I don't know what else to tell you. I can let you

have some money if you need to split. Anyways, I just thought you oughtta know what they're up to. If I can help in any way, call me, okay? 'N don't worry. I'll let you know right away when there's anything new or I hear about any other developments. Wish I could do more. Talk to you later, man, hear?"

"Yeah. Thanks. Be seeing you."

Candy was already asleep because she had to get up early for work the next morning, and she'd been out very late the night before at a party at Casey's Restaurant, where many people who're involved in the publication of words for a living hang out and hold casual but classy get-togethers. Casey is, of course, the name of the owner, an affable Chinese man with waist-length black hair whom Emmett had met at the same party with Candy. It had been sort of a lark for him to rub and bend elbows with so many literary notables, as well as making him just as tired as gracious Candy Sand. But the phone call sparked his adrenalin and gave him the type of second-wind surge which always renewed him. He was glad Candy was already in bed, leaving him completely alone with the incredible thought that his death was being purchased the same way housewives pay exterminators to get rid of insects, or farmers put up bounty for hunters to go after varmints.

It was unbelievable, all right, and there was very little if any reason at all for Emmett to disbelieve the person who phoned him with the news. He was in his mid-thirties and was a responsible figure in the New York radical-hip political circle, a respected member of the East Village leadership set and a person who also happened to secretly feel a personal friendship for Emmett and who just didn't cotton to killing or any use of violence, that's all. He was definitely not some scatterbrained kid looking to create a little excitement by making up a nifty story or by crying wolf to scare up some action. No, what his man had told him was for real. Emmett was certain of that.

His problem now was to figure out how to prevent it from becoming "for keeps." It was no good for him to waste time trying to pin down how the contract man would go about hitting him without making it look like what it was—a hired killing. But he did squander some time on the various ways he might be killed. He would either simply disappear which was already part of his myth anyway, known as "doing a Grogan," or get his skull caved in and his pockets rifled, to be found dead in the streets and be labeled just another robbery victim by the cops. But that might cause too much

of a storm in the ever-tenuous relations between the hippies and the Puerto Ricans and blacks, and therefore might prove too risky a method in the long run.

When he'd given enough thought to how he might be done, he turned his attention to various methods by which he could avoid it. Every once in a while, as he thought, Emmett's belief would be staggered for a moment by the simple preposterousness of it all — by the undeniable probability that he would be dead within the next couple of days.

When he flashed on that, on the downright outrageousness of that pack of scumbags paying somebody to snuff him, of even insinuating they'd do such a thing, Emmett began to shake with rage. Once he actually put on his jacket, laced up his boots, took the Walther PPK automatic which a brother laid on him back in Frisco out of his bag along with several extra clips of 9 mm. ammunition, and started to go out and get a few of the punk motherfuckers before they could pay somebody else to do him. But he stopped short of the door, holding the Walther loosely in the sweaty palm of his hand, considering it a foolish move, the kind of ploy that should only be left to Mike Hammer's fantasies, and certainly not something for a man alone in the concrete reality of a city like New York to do against impossible odds and with nobody to back him. But he came close, awfully close, and that group of psychedelic asshole suckers who decided to pay to have him taken care of would never know how close they came to having a burp gun jammed up their noses and the trigger pulled until it didn't work anymore.

Emmett finally went to bed around three or four o'clock with his Walther under the pillow and the extra clips in one of his boots. He didn't particularly like automatic pistols, preferring the sturdy reliability of a .38 revolver to the fickleness of an automatic, but even though he would trade it in a minute for a good snubnose Smith & Wesson, he was glad it had been given to him, and he always kept it close and clean to reduce the likelihood of it ever jamming up on him in a spot. He tried to remember the last time he took the Walther apart and gave it a thorough cleaning, but he fell asleep before he could recall.

Candy Sand had just split to her literary secretarial job when Emmett awoke at 10:30 A.M. with a poisoned headache from an unrestful night of bad dreams. He was sipping a cup of light coffee and smoking his first cigarette of what was apparently going to be a very long day when there was a knock on the door, and every

thought he had the night before suddenly added up and told him that this was probably it. He tiptoed quickly, barefooting it into the bedroom where he snatched up his piece and two extra clips and slowly came back out, positioning himself flat against the wall on the right side of the door, out of the way of any possible line of fire.

There was a second volley of knocks which was more aggressive and louder. A quick chill ran up Emmett's naked back, and he flushed, with beads of sweat breaking out all over him, making his dungarees cling uncomfortably tight at his crotch and the balls of his feet moisten the wooden floor. No one had ever before knocked on the door of the pad during the morning, at least not since Emmett had been there. There was no buzzer downstairs, so maybe it was just a Con Edison man wanting to read the meters. "No, if it was somebody like that, he'd of announced himself. They always announce who they are. Everyone knows that. An' I don't give a fuck what he says he is if he does say so either. Even if he's Western Union, I don't want any! And I'm gonna tell him I don't want none, too, to let him know I'm here, because that way, if he's the one who's supposed to do me, he won't know I've got a piece, 'n he'll brazen it, maybe even come bargin' in, 'n I'll blow his fuckin' head off. That way it'll all be over 'n done with right away instead of getting dragged out 'n makin' me crazy."

The knocking started again, but this time it was more like someone pounding on the door with their fist. Then came the giveaway, and at first Emmett didn't believe it, but it sounded again loud and clear. A girl's voice calling out his name, "Emmett! Emmett!" shortly followed by, "It's me, Natural Suzanne!" All the taut tension seemed to slip out of his body. He sighed and took a deep breath, letting his arms relax to his side and his gun dangle limp in his hand. For a moment he was disappointed that it hadn't been what he thought, because then it would at least have been over. But only for a moment. It was actually better it turned out this way. He remained cautious, however, asking Natural Suzanne casual questions through the still-locked door about things only she knew about, while making believe he just got up from bed and was still drowsy stupid with sleep.

But it was her all right, and she was alone, with a suitcase, jumping excitedly across the threshold after he opened the door, and going into an immediate impassioned description of her trip from San Francisco to see her mother and sisters in Michigan before com-

ing to New York and Emmett. Her overwhelming joy at being in the Big Apple city for the first time, and the sprightly, cheerful depiction she gave of her journey as an adventurous voyage made Emmett feel very old, hardened by the reality of the weapon stuffed in his waistband and the unhesitating intention he had only moments before about using it. She was very young.

Her arrival, however, had changed the spot he was put on by the East Village hippie leaders, and when she further told Emmett that Fyllis, Lacey Pines and the Hun were also on their way to the city and should arrive within the next twenty-four hours, it made his situation drastically different from what it formerly had been. He was no longer alone. He immediately called the person who phoned him the night before with the news that he was deemed too dangerous to live, and told his friendly contact about the arrival of his sisters and brother from San Francisco and asked him to spread the news among the East Village leadership who wanted him out of the way. He told him to inform them that he would be returning to the West Coast with Natural Suzanne and the others as soon as possible, within a week or two, hoping that the news of his imminent departure would give the hippie punks enough reason to cancel their plans for his dispatch.

Emmett was satisfied that it would work, and by the time the others arrived from San Francisco later that same day, it had. The East Village hippie hierarchy conferred about the new development and they unanimously resolved to drop their plans since he was leaving anyway, which was all they wanted in the first place. Emmett's friend phoned him with the news of their decision, but also warned him that the postponement was based on the grounds he would split the city within the next two weeks, and further advised him to plan accordingly. "Okay, thanks a lot. You really saved me this time around 'n I won't forget it. Be seeing you!"

Emmett continued meeting with the East Side community's activist and social-political groups, such as the Angry Arts, the Black Mask, the Anarchists, the Real Great Society and the Group Image, and talked over the possibility of their forming a coalition to organize a New York Communication Company of their own and establish other services for the people in the neighborhood by cooperating, instead of competing among themselves and bad-mouthing each other.

He knew he had very little time left to get anything relevant started, but he tried just the same to turn some sort of trick before

he would have to leave and return to the West Coast with the women and the Hun — who were also meeting with the different Lower East Side factions, trying to turn them on to consolidating their energies for the solution to some of the more important community problems.

Emmett didn't tell anyone about the plot the handful of East Village hipster marketeers had made against him. He only implied to his San Francisco comrades that his presence in the neighborhood wasn't particularly welcomed by those who used the area as a marketplace for their own benefit. He could have revealed the story of the plot to the mass media and thereby the people, but he felt that they probably wouldn't have believed it unless his contact also came forward to corroborate his testimony, and that was more than unlikely. He also couldn't figure what real good it would serve to bring it out into the open. For a man who was alone like Emmett to give something of himself away to the press, he had to be damned sure he was going to get something for it. So he decided to keep it quietly private between him and the hip marketeers, only letting them know that he knew about their pipe laying against him.

The East Village market operators, however, didn't react to his knowledge of their plotting as quietly as he had, and they set a campaign in motion to discredit his work in the community, knowing full well that any statements he might make about their conspiring against him would quickly sound like the paranoid ranting of a man looking desperately for a way to save face. This public campaign to discredit Emmett and his work was made necessary because of an article by Richard Goldstein that had just appeared in the *Village Voice*, the Greenwich Village radical-liberal weekly founded in the fifties by Norman Mailer, among others. This article successfully made Emmett seem the center of a personality cult by labeling the Diggers "Grogan's people."

Emmett had bumped into Goldstein over a month before in the Clayton Street house where the Free Food was prepared for the Panhandle, and he thought he was just another young kid who'd run away from home, because he was only a little more than five feet tall and had a neat, blond, childlike appearance. When Goldstein identified himself as a reporter for the *Voice*, Emmett at first figured he was jiving, but told him that if he was a reporter, he was wasting his time around the Clayton Street place, because there wasn't anyone there who was going to talk to him. Then he left to go make his daily rounds with the truck. Goldstein stayed, however, and some-

how got Fyllis to open up for an interview, calling her "Miss Metesky" in the article.

The story was entitled "In Search of George Metesky," Metesky being the man who exemplified for Billy Landout and Emmett the absurdity of protest, with his twenty-five-year career as the Mad Bomber of New York which began when he was denied disability payments after being blasted in the face with steam while working for Con Edison. Goldstein based his report on the same sort of hippie leadership meeting in the Haight-Ashbury that Warren Hinckle III and Jerry Hopkins used as the premises for their unfactual articles. Goldstein didn't rely as heavily on fabrication, contenting himself with a snotty description of the meeting as "Emmett Grogan's debut, because the Diggers are his thing," and prophesying that "it will be interesting to watch the crucifixion when the Diggers drive the money changers from the temple, and Grogan may attempt just that."

The story went on to make Emmett and "his people" into an image of "hip resistance" and called them "the new realists, committed to an existential ethic of direct responsibility," as well as the "social workers of the Haight," who "give food, shelter and, ultimately, protection from what Grogan views as a hostile, murderous establishment."

It was just the kind of personal publicity that Emmett always avoided and tried to thwart, because he knew it would only lead to further friction between him and his brother Diggers, and it did. Even though he himself didn't speak with Goldstein, the reporter wrote about him in personal terms, using the *Ramparts* piece and "Miss Metesky" for the basic information he needed to give rise to a hero whose fall he seemed to await with relish. Emmett blew it and tongue-lashed Fyllis for having talked to Goldstein about their work together, because ". . . now all the dude's waiting for is to write a follow-up story about our crucifixion — about how we got wiped out because we proved to be too much of a serious threat to the establishment hippies! Sure, it'll make good copy for the papers, won't it Miss Metesky? And you can give them another interview when you're in jail!" But he didn't stay angry long, because, after all, Fyllis was only seventeen, and fidelity was her name.

Since the *Voice* story publicized Emmett to New Yorkers as a popular hip leader of the West Coast underground, his East Village enemies felt compelled to publicly denounce the role he was playing in the East. They gave Candy Sand's unlisted phone number to

their friends in the media, and calls began coming in, asking for interviews with Emmett or inviting him to be a guest on radio and TV talk shows. One prime time television show was particularly persistent in their efforts to get Emmett to appear, phoning three and four times a day. He finally accepted their offer after he dreamed up a scheme for dealing with them.

The program was the Metromedia talk show moderated by Alan Burke, a backbiting, venom-tongued carper who was the New York version of L.A.'s TV personality and evil-speaking knocker, Joe Pyne. Both of these stupid sarcastic interviewers relied heavily on insulting their usually dumb or eccentric guests to amuse their studio audiences and to get home viewers to watch their programs. Emmett's plan was to dress Natural Suzanne up in his recognizable clothes and IRA cap and have her appear on the show as the mythical and legendary "Emma Grogan." The Hun was more than willing to accompany "Emma" on the program and act as a Digger spokesman, while Fyllis and Lacey Pines were to perform their walk-on roles in the "guerrilla theater" piece, as members of the studio audience, using lime and cherry pies as their props.

The show was being taped, of course, but everyone had been assured that no matter what happened it would be televised, because the point of the whole program was to make people look ridiculous, even Alan Burke himself. The taping was to begin at 6 P.M. that Sunday evening, and an hour before, the three giggly, nervous women and the Hun, who was musing over the possibilities of his television appearance, entered the Channel 5 studio with a suitcase filled with melting custard pies and phoned Emmett, who remained back at the pad, to tell him everything was going as planned.

When it was showtime, Alan Burke smugly introduced "Emma Grogan" and "her shaggy Digger sidekick," the Hun, as his guests for the evening, not knowing that it was going to be the last time he would have the upper hand or, for that matter, any control for the rest of the program. The Hun immediately stole the show away from the not-too-bright Burke, after he made some rather stupid and derisive remarks regarding the questionability of "Emma's" sex. The interviewer was upset by the Hun's quick-witted comebacks and sharp counterattacks which ultimately destroyed him by capturing the attention and applause of the audience and even the admiration of the technical staff. The Hun was coming up seven and eleven every time, and Alan Burke finally tried making friends with him, which Fyllis and Lacey Pines took as a personal affront to their

integrity. So one of them ran up and pelted him swoosh! in the face with a cherry pie, while the other bombarded the audience, flinging pies every which way from the stockpile in the now open valise.

The scene was chaotic with a fat lady running around screaming, "My dress! You've ruined my dress!" and Alan Burke slumped stunned in his chair trying hard not to choke on the cream filling his mouth — unable to talk or see because of it — and children picking up lumps of cream from the floor or the backs of the seats and eating it or throwing it around the room, and the Hun rising from his chair and masterfully commanding the cameramen to follow him as he walked toward the exit, delivering a monologue and directing the camera work: "I am in a box looking at you through a box. And you are in a box, watching me through a box. I am leaving my box and the things which make up my box. I've made my decision. What are you going to do about the box you are in?" And he walked toward the door marked Exit, directing the attention of the different cameras to the rafters of lights and to the various other things which were part of the studio, — and then centering them on a close-up of himself as he opened the door and walked out in silence, leaving the sound of chaos behind him and the camera focused on the slowly closing door. The picture on the home screens faded to a commercial station break.

Afterwards, the "motley group of Diggers" tramped over to a Broadway cafeteria to get something to eat, and Natural Suzanne phoned Emmett to give him a brief account of what happened, saving the blow-by-blow description for later. While he was waiting for them to return to the pad, Emmett got another call. This one was from John Gruen, a reporter at that time for the *World Journal Tribune* and a devotee of East Village bohemia, who wanted an interview. Emmett told him no, but made the mistake of not hanging up immediately, giving Gruen enough time to ask him what he was doing interfering in the affairs of the Lower East Side community when it was really none of his business.

Emmett fell into Gruen's trap by getting angry and asked him what the fuck he was talking about! The reporter shot back that there was all sorts of talk all over the East Village of how Emmett was butting his nose into things that didn't concern him and how he was causing trouble between the different neighborhood groups who got along fine by themselves until he showed up. Emmett caught on, but it was too late. He had already lost his temper. "Man, that sort of jive talk only comes from those East Village marketeer-

ing hip-huckster friends of yours and nobody else. Now don't bother me! I'm just a pimp for the kids!" And he slammed down the receiver, angry with John Gruen for baiting him, but more angry with himself for blowing his cool and giving the reporter words to spot quote.

The gang returned to Candy Sand's place full of descriptions of their "Alan Burke Special Performance" which they wouldn't view until it was televised the following weekend. Sure enough, early the next day the newsstands of the city carried the *World Journal Tribune* with Gruen's article discrediting Emmett under the banner headline "Hero Hogan Grogan Stirs Up Lower East Side!" The story named all of the neighborhood groups with whom Emmett had been working and claimed that he was pitting them against each other without citing any reason why he would want to, except that he was a pimp for the kids!

He wondered for a moment where he came up with the certainly Freudian symbol of himself as a pimp, and furthermore why he ever slipped it to the reporter. But he'd been doing too much wondering lately, so he quit it and got angry instead. "Will you look at that! The East Village power punks are trying to impress me with their contacts! That guy turned everything neatly around and made it all come out backwards to make me look like some nitwit troublemaker! He's probably got half the Lower East Side believing it, too! The power of the press! A real slick trick! A real cutie! I wonder where he lives?"

By midafternoon the phone was steadily ringing with people calling to ask Emmett if he saw the "Hero Hogan Grogan" story, and reporters looking for follow-up stories of their own. Even the police captain of the neighborhood precinct, Captain Fink, called, asking whether Emmett would like to come into the station house to talk things over. Fink, like all the other callers, was told that no one at Candy's number knew of any "Emmett Grogan," and when he and the rest were asked where they got the unlisted phone number, there was a momentary silence, then the usual "I don't know. Somebody just gave it to me, I guess . . ." The *New York Times* was particularly pressing since they had been beaten to the story by a rival city newspaper, and Emmett finally agreed to meet with their only black staff reporter, Earl Caldwell. But he had no intention of revealing his true role in the neighborhood or retracting any of the twisted facts of Gruen's piece with statements of his own. No, he was

simply going to let the matter die, helping it along a bit by boring it to an early death.

It was easy. A few days before, Emmett had smoked some DMT with the LSD Bear, and some other psychedelic luminaries who gathered for a party at a Tibetan-decorated pad on Mulberry Street. Among the small throng was Leary's sidekick, Richard Alpert, who gave Emmett his phone number and invited him to call whenever he felt the psychic need to do so. And that was now! He phoned Alpert and asked him to meet with him the following morning at the 23rd Street office of *Inner Space*, a psychedelic periodical that wasn't destined to last very long.

He told Earl Caldwell to meet him at the same place, and the following morning he showed up with Alpert only a few minutes behind him. Emmett sat next to Alpert on a funky couch facing Caldwell, who was braced in a straight-backed chair with his pad and pencil all ready. He asked Emmett some sort of lead question about the Gruen article, but instead of answering, Emmett wound Alpert up by asking him to expound on the metaphysics of the psychedelic reality of the Lower East Side, and leaned back into the soft cushion of the sofa, watching as Caldwell began to stop jotting down notes and lifted his head, uncertain about what was going on. He eventually looked back to Emmett and was about to interrupt the good doctor's rambling, but Emmett gestured for him not to and to continue listening, nodding his head with a facial expression that suggested, "Dig Alpert, man! He knows what's happening! He'll tell you what you want to know! Pick up on his vibes, man!"

Earl Caldwell must've sat there for forty minutes trying to figure out why he was there on an assignment, while Richard Alpert went on and on about esoteric philosophies only he knew of, and Emmett sat silently in mock awe of the man whom he had introduced to the reporter as his guru. When Alpert stopped for a moment to ask the publisher of *Inner Space* magazine, who was religiously recording every hollow sound of his voice on a tape recorder, for some water, Caldwell saw his opportunity and took it, splitting from the office with the haste of a man fleeing a fire. Emmett laughed as he watched him run down the stairs like a thief and out of the building.

After Richard Alpert was given his glass of water, he continued his rap into the tape recorder, and Emmett returned to Candy's place where he laid out the scene for the Hun and the others.

Emmett had played it right, and nothing appeared in the *Times*,

and the phone suddenly quieted down. By using Richard Alpert and his psychedelic logorrhea, he got himself dismissed as a cracked pot-head, and nobody was writing stories about them this late in the game, giving Emmett the pass he wanted and needed to take care of his business.

But it already seemed too late. His name was the only name the straight press knew that was connected with the Diggers, and they were going to keep on using it whenever their stories referred to the "mystery-shrouded group," no matter how much he played the psychedelic buffoon. A flood of articles began to appear in the New York press about the San Francisco Diggers, using the *Ramparts* portrait of Emmett as their "well-known figure" profile and putting imaginary quotes in his mouth without even pretending to have met him.

It was really getting him down, "all this image bullshit!" and he decided it was mainly because he was separated from the reason — the work in San Francisco — which made necessary the Salvation Army cover, and he became anxious to get back, to return to the unshakable reality of Free Food and, at the same time get away from all the image-persona hustle of New York where talk was substituted for action and people were measured by their list of credits.

By now he had given away all of the acid he brought with him from Frisco, and had gone to so many meetings on the Lower East Side where he saw the same faces, that he began to feel that meetings had replaced relationships and organizations had replaced the community. He no longer went to them, but rather casually toured the neighborhood visiting the friends he made in the few weeks he had been there.

It was during one of these late afternoon walks that Emmett was invited by a friend to accompany him to the Theater for Ideas, "for a look at the city's star intellectual radicals, as they sit in a salon, like a forum, and discuss the chosen topic, 'The Enemy Is the Liberal.'" Since he had nothing really better to do, Emmett went to the studio apartment that evening to gawk at the gathering of New York's chic circle of radical superstars. But it backfired on him because he became the star attraction and center of attention and got himself dumped on and hissed at by the glib, pompous audience.

There were about seventy-five persons sitting on rows of wooden, folding chairs facing a dais where a panel of *Ramparts* editors sat behind a cloth-covered table with a pitcher of water and glasses. One of them was old one-eye himself, Warren Hinckle III, and Emmett

immediately got his fur up. He should have simply left, but he didn't. Instead he sat there and listened as the panel and the audience had a thoroughly good time patting themselves on the back for their unswerving radicalism, and at the same time condemning the "liberals" as the enemy because of their fearful acquiescence to the establishment political party system. He listened to that kind of self-congratulatory rap for nearly three quarters of an hour before it and the stuffiness of the room and the people who were in it caused him to stand up and accuse the assembled themselves of being the "real enemy," while the liberal was just a patsy and anybody's pawn.

"You're the real enemy because you extend the present system of American society, deluding yourselves with words while paying tribute to the state with taxes, and making believe you're in solidarity with the blacks in Harlem and the peasants in Vietnam from the top-floor windows of your deluxe apartments and East Hampton estates! Who the fuck are you kidding? You're the real enemy! The liberal will always follow whoever's winning, because he usually knows no better or is too frightened! But you people know better, don't you! You know which side you're on in some cocktail conversation like this, sure you do! But when you're in your stockbroker's office, whose side are you on then, huh? Certainly not mine — not for all the crumbs you could ever feed me from your tables! To talk about the liberal as being the enemy is like kicking a dead dog! Talk about yourselves as being the enemy to all those people whose side you claim, you insist, is the same side you're on. Talk about it because you're not on the same side. Talk about it because you're the real enemy, and not the liberal!"

The audience immediately burst out with someone shouting that "the Diggers were merely the Salvation Army in disguise!" and someone else charging that Emmett "was just creating rest camps for teenagers!" Warren Hinckle III jumped in and described Grogan as a "visionary who has the cunning of an Army Supply Sergeant in a B movie." It all added up to "what right does that scraggy hippie social worker have putting us down! Where does he get off, anyway, knocking radicals like us around!"

Then came the clincher that was supposed to prophesy Emmett's co-optation by the society he claimed to have dropped out of. Paul Jacobs, who led those Berkeley "Community for New Politics" radicals in that demonstration months before to protest the Haight-Ashbury curfew during the "San Francisco Riot," started screaming from in back of the audience that "like it or not, Grogan, you and

the Diggers are going to be exploited because of the fantastic capacity of this country to absorb new ideas and attitudes! Macy's will soon be selling Digger dresses and some company'll put out a candy bar named after you people before long, and they'll put up promotion posters proclaiming, "Eat a Digger!"

The audience laughed and applauded. Paul Goodman, the sixty-year-old author and self-professed "community anarchist," tried to gavel the meeting back to order by declaring, "I'm a Roman senator, not a Digger!" And Emmett got up to leave with Natural Suzanne. There was just no use in wasting energy, and he walked out of the Theater for Ideas, remarking to the crowd that "There are eight million stories in this Naked City, and you people know *every goddamn one of them!*"

Two days or so later, an article about the meeting appeared in the *Village Voice* under the headline, "A View from the Left," and described him as a "tall, lean and scraggy twenty-three-year-old ex-Brooklynite," and went on to say that "'The Diggers,' according to Grogan, collect free food from merchants or grow it themselves and dispense it free to whoever desires it. They also collect used clothes and give them away," he said."

It was a good thing Emmett was at the airport when he read the news story, because as soon as he saw that "he said" crap about collecting free food from merchants, he wanted to go and commit some mayhem on the person who wrote the lie. "He said!" The guy who wrote this bunk has been reading too much of the *Daily News!*" And he tossed the paper with its "Eat a Digger!" quotes and radical-liberal gibberish into a waste can as his flight was called.

Before he finally left the city, however, he had done one very important thing which he felt he had to do if he really wanted his name to be erased from the files of the mass media. He gave it away. Gave away his name in the same manner he gave his identity to Natural Suzanne for her appearance on the Alan Burke show. He didn't change his name, he just gave it away to whoever wanted to use it, whenever, as had been advertised in *Realist* magazine by Paul Krassner: "The leader of the Diggers doesn't exist, and his name is Emmett Grogan, a hoax unwittingly played upon you by the underground press and the establishment press. Even *Ramparts* was tricked into using the photo of a member of the San Francisco Mime Troupe. Emmett Grogan is the generic term for an existential hero of our time." The name quickly found popular usage among the street kids who started a make-believe game called "Will the Real

Emmett Grogan Please Stand Up!” It got to a point on the West Coast where no one would even believe Emmett *was* Emmett, until he got corroboration from someone he knew personally. He was even able to identify himself to reporters — especially in California — and not be believed. Even the San Francisco *Chronicle* ran a paragraph in one of its stories on the Haight-Ashbury that said, “Whenever a Digger identifies himself as ‘Emmett Grogan,’ it means nothing since all Diggers call themselves Emmett Grogan on the general principle that anything which confuses the straight world can’t be all bad.” It was a fantastic success.

However, when it was all over and his name seldom if ever appeared in the media and everything got private once again, Emmett felt a strange uneasiness about the thorough success of his feigned nonexistence, a feeling that maybe he’d been too successful in convincing the media he was only a myth and the name “Emmett Grogan” nothing but a hoax.

He didn’t exactly understand why he felt this way. He just did, that was all. But after a while, he decided that it was probably because he was just disappointed in how easy it was to accomplish; bitter at how incredibly easy it had been to dupe the media, and resentful at how quickly they accepted the lie. Emmett finally concluded that he was basically upset about all of it because his ego was insulted. His two cents apparently meant very little to the world.

The Hun returned to San Francisco ten days before, having spent only a few days in New York and leaving right after his appearance on the Alan Burke show. Emmett didn’t understand why he came East in the first place, but decided that the Hun had gotten himself a round-trip ticket somewhere and just felt like taking off for a while. The girls, on the other hand, had come to visit their folks. Fyllis’ mother had been ailing and Lacey Pines hadn’t seen her sisters for what seemed like a long time to a girl just turned eighteen. Natural Suzanne, of course, had wanted to be with Emmett, stopping to see her family on the way to New York. She had been Emmett’s old lady now for nearly six months and had grown much older than her eighteen years. She was a tall, beautifully proud-featured girl with a deep-felt shyness which stemmed from a tragic accident that occurred when she was a child.

It happened on her ninth birthday toward the end of a party her family gave her. She was all dressed up in a colorful, chiffon birthday dress and had pinned the tail on a donkey, had dunked for apples, and had popped some balloons, happily enjoying her party,

when she brushed by the homemade birthday cake resting on a patio table, and one of the lighted candles fell against her dress, setting it aflame. Her mother turned when she heard Suzanne's screams, and seeing her child about to become immolated by her burning dress, ran for the garden hose, and doused the flames with sprays of cold water — the worst thing she could have done because as soon as the cold water came in contact with the child's scorched flesh, it instantly scarred her hips, thighs, and waist.

Because of this scarred portion of her otherwise beautiful body, Natural Suzanne developed a fear of ever being seen without clothing, which made certain activities like swimming and lovemaking impossible for her to enjoy. But when she met Emmett, he was fortunately able to get her to overcome that fear that kept her locked away from the joys of a full life. It was easy.

The first time he returned with her to his Fell Street pad to make love, she said "No," and he asked "Why?" and she replied that she'd been scarred by fire as a child and she was certain he wouldn't want to see the scars because they were ugly. Emmett didn't say anything. He just quietly undressed her in the pale light of a small, broken Tiffany lamp, and when he finished and was standing naked himself, he slowly examined the broad solid lines of Natural Suzanne's South Sea Island girl-like body with its small, round, firm breasts and perfectly shaped brown nipples, and he asked, "What scars?" Then they made sweet love, with him slipping in and out and all over her silky flesh — made satin-smooth by the surplus oils that were transferred to the rest of her body from the patches of slick, dead skin that had no use for nutrients. That night Natural Suzanne began to make up for what she might have missed, and, from then on, she's done whatever she pleased with her body, even gone swimming in a film star's Hollywood pool surrounded by starlets. Whenever anyone asks her how she came to get those scars, Natural Suzanne always answers, "What scars?" and goes on living her life the way people are supposed to.

Emmett arrived in San Francisco on the second Sunday of April with Natural Suzanne, and the two of them moved into a makeshift guest room in the rear of the Webster Street storefront leased by Butcher Brooks and his old lady, Flame. The next day the United States Supreme Court denied a thirty-seven-year-old black Californian's plea for commutation, and Ronald Reagan gave the nigger to his voters as a gift for their electing him governor of the state. Two days later, on April 12, 1967, Aaron C. Mitchell became the

195th man to die in the gas chamber and the 501st man to be executed in the recorded history of California, and, hopefully, the last.

The most important lesson Emmett learned from his trip east was that whatever happens to America doesn't necessarily have to happen first to New York, as that city's inhabitants like to believe. The obvious proof was the San Francisco Haight-Ashbury district's acknowledged position as the birthplace and growth center of the American youth counterculture and the expansion of human consciousness that was going to overwhelm the rest of the country with an astounding energy of awareness in the next few years.

But Emmett could see that Haight-Ashbury was already deep in the throes of a critical dilemma and was quickly approaching disaster with the hordes of arriving runaway youths overburdening the Digger operations which were struggling to meet the needs of these kids and the community.

Brooks, Slim Minnaux, Tumble and, of course, the women, had maintained the daily supply of Free Food for the Panhandle of Golden Gate Park where a growing number of newcomers were gathering to eat at four o'clock every afternoon. The Trip Without a Ticket Free Store was still being managed by the Hun and everything was under control, but the pickings were slim and getting slimmer. There were a whole new string of crash pads which were constantly being closed by the cops, but regularly reopened by young people who called themselves Diggers, whom Emmett had never met.

Emmett returned to his work with Free Food and trucking goods around to be given away at the free store. There hadn't been a party or any kind of free celebration in Haight-Ashbury since he left six weeks before, and he felt like organizing some kind of an event that would put fun back into the streets. So he did. First he got a permit from the Park and Recreation Commissioner because he wanted it to be at night, and he knew that if he planned some sort of happening in the park to take place after dark without legal permission, the cops would vamp on the people who gathered and a lot of heads would be broken because of him. So he got the permit and began putting together the first and only free rock and roll party ever held in a San Francisco public park by the people at night.

The Diggers got together and worked hard, hustling money for the pair of eighteen-foot, flatbed trucks to be used back-to-back as the stage, and for two giant spotlights, like the ones used at movie

premieres, to be played on the dew-laden leaves of the park's trees as a light show. The Grateful Dead, Country Joe and the Fish, and Janis Joplin and Big Brother and the Holding Company were invited to play, and they said they would. More different-colored lights were arranged to be strung throughout the area, and someone came forward with a half dozen strobe lights to be played on the people as they danced.

All through the organizing, Bill Graham, who let Emmett use a storefront warehouse below his Fillmore dancehall to stash materials and several boxes of fruit for the event, insisted that the nighttime rock and roll party, which was called the "Outlaw Mutation Boogie" among other things, was never going to come off the way it was planned, because he felt the people were incapable of achieving that kind of organization themselves, and he kept telling Emmett that, every time they met during those few days prior to the free dance-concert, adding that he was prepared to pay the Beatles any amount to book them for a free concert which he himself wanted to present in Golden Gate Park. Graham asked Emmett how he felt about the idea of him presenting the Beatles free, and Emmett replied that it would be terrific, but if he really wanted it to be free, totally free, he should leave out the "Bill Graham Presents" part and just let it happen without anyone knowing who was responsible.

Anyway, the Panhandle Park Dance was a phenomenal success, with the giant spotlights lighting up the trees and glistening the tiny dewdrops on the leaves into a sparkling rainbow of a light show, drawing thousands of people towards the strobe-lit area where they danced and hollered and laughed and had a good time. Soon after everything got started and was well under way, working smoothly, Bill Graham showed up with some of his Fillmore auditorium staff and gave out apples to the crowd and helped Emmett and the other Diggers inflate balloons which were being strung around the stage and told them that it was obvious now, and he could see, that he underestimated the people and their power to get it on without professional help and he was glad they were successful. Bill Graham's straight that way.

The park permit read that the gathering had to be dispersed by 11:30 P.M. or be subject to arrest by the police who had been assembling in force two blocks away since nine o'clock that evening, obviously hoping that the permit would be ignored so they could wade in with their nightsticks and incite a riot and fill their empty paddy wagons with bloodied longhairs. Emmett was fully aware of this, as

were the rest of the Diggers, and at about twenty minutes after eleven he got up on the stage and stood to one side as the last of the three bands, the Grateful Dead, finished the sixth or seventh number of their set. When they had, he told Jerry Garcia that the next song had to be the last because they only had a few minutes to wind things up before the cops vamped and someone got hurt. Then he told the crowd who were really into partying by this time that the next number would be the last and the music started up before the shouts of disapproval from the audience could be heard.

After the band finished, Emmett stepped up to the microphone once more and told everyone to go home because it was all over now and "Good night!" And they did. The crowd moved quickly and quietly out of the Panhandle Park in all directions, and a police captain, standing next to a squad car that had pulled up to one side of the stage only moments before, stopped the Hun and Coyote and asked them the name of the guy who just spoke over the microphone, and they told him it was just somebody from the crowd, that's all. The captain didn't go for it and asked some more people because whoever the man was, the captain was later overheard telling his sergeant-chauffeur, he was too powerful to remain unknown to them. It doesn't take anyone special to incite a crowd he figured, but it certainly takes someone particular to tell twenty-five or thirty thousand enthusiastically partying people to go home — and be instantly obeyed. The name of the man who could do that they had to know, but no one they asked could tell them, and Emmett left as soon as Coyote and the Hun tipped him off about the inquiries.

It was shortly after that Friday night's Outlaw Mutation Boogie that Emmett began receiving gifts of weapons from his brothers, who felt that his life was now in danger. They sensed that he had exposed himself as a much too popular and powerful figure in the Haight when he stepped up to that microphone and that he was now someone recognized as a dangerous person, not only by the police and other government agencies, but also by the many underground-underworld cabals who didn't want their positions of control in the Haight community jostled or usurped by the likes of him or anyone else.

In fact, Emmett's comrades believed he was dangerous to someone right at that moment, and when you're dangerous enough to someone, they usually try to kill you. So one of his brothers gave him a British Webley revolver and two full boxes of .38 ammunition and a twenty-five-minute-rap which was apparently supposed to fill him

with alarm because, "You made yourself a target the other night, Emmett. Put yourself right on the spot for anyone who feels threatened by you or who just doesn't like your looks to draw a bead on you, brother. Yep, you made yourself the number one target around here the other night when you got up on that stage and showed everyone just how much of a heavyweight you really are in the eyes of the people, and you better get used to the idea and get used to it fast, because from now on, you're it!" That was just the kind of comforting encouragement Emmett wanted to hear.

Someone else left a rusted World War II Italian Berretta wrapped in newspaper on the front seat of the Digger pickup, just after Emmett had jumped out of the truck for a moment to buy a can of Ballantine Ale at the Haight Street Liquor Store. When he returned and found the loosely packaged automatic pistol in the cab of the truck, he immediately pulled off the main thoroughfare and quickly parked alongside the curb of an inconspicuous, vacant side street where he read the hastily scribbled note that was stuck into the barrel of the gun:

TO EMET GROGON

*Theres been lots a storys going round about how your in danger  
Some evil persons dont like what you do for us and they been spreading  
bad vibes on Haight Street about what is going to happen to you  
So we thought you can use this Its all we had and we know it don't  
look like much but we thought you can clean it up and its better than  
nothing if you dont have nothing else Anyway we want you to have  
it because it may help keep you safe and we wanted to show you  
that we are behind you 100% on account of we love you*

*From all of us who need you and hang out on Haight  
Street and at the Do-nut shop*

SIGNED — ANONIMOUS

The sincerity of the note and the trouble the person or persons had gone to in explaining their offering to him convinced Emmett that there was indeed some heavy shit going down on the scene concerning him, and the anonymous chicken-scratched missive and rusty-gun gift did more to put him on edge than anything. It made him feel that there was really something he didn't know about himself or someone or something which was already common knowledge on the street, but which for some fucking reason was unapparent to him!

Or was it just a fucking put-on, a prank someone played on him

to make him paranoid? By the time he started up the truck and pulled down to the corner of Fell Street, Emmett didn't care about it anymore and dumped the paper-wrapped rusted automatic, which probably would never have worked anyway, down the sewer and tore the note up into fine, little squares, letting them flutter out his window like a handful of confetti. He geared the truck onto the entrance ramp and along the freeway to North Beach and Tumble's pad without the slightest intention of ever telling anyone about the anonymous package left on the front seat of the pickup or the note that accompanied it, offering a little help from some friends.

It was at Tumble's pad that afternoon that Emmett met Larry Little Bird, a Pueblo Indian who had been raised on the Santo Domingo Reservation near Santa Fe, New Mexico. Little Bird was twenty-five years old and thoroughly maintained his Indianness; a black-pearl-eyed man who was as graceful and strong as a birch tree dancing in the wind. He quietly studied Emmett over a can of malt liquor and within less than thirty minutes of their having been introduced, Larry Little Bird invited Emmett to return with him to New Mexico, because he had the look of a man who could learn what every man needs to learn about himself and what every Indian like Little Bird knows.

Strangely, and to some perhaps selfishly, Emmett didn't have one hesitating thought about leaving with Little Bird that evening for New Mexico, and it would be a month before he'd realize why he went to the wilderness without ever seriously considering his responsibility to his charge — the streets of Haight-Ashbury. The Communication Company issued a handbill the next morning, announcing that "Emmett Grogan has gone for a while," and everyone wondered why, with the promised cataclysmic "Summer of Love" drawing near. So did Emmett Grogan.

It was dawn when they drove up to the comfortable, wood-stove cabin set deep in the woodline on the outskirts of a village called El Rito in the northern part of the state. It was here that Natural Suzanne was to stay with Little Bird's tall, Kentucky-born woman, Cease, while Emmett went into the forests to be taught without words the lessons he had come there to learn.

He had absolutely no money, but Little Bird had a bit and staked Emmett to a short, eighty-pound-pull Bear bow, sleeved in camouflage cloth, and a dozen aluminum-shaft target-and-hunting arrows, as well as a .22 single-shot Magnum, which is treated like a boy's toy by the American Rifle Association, but in reality is a weapon that

can bring down the largest game if the person squeezing the trigger is equal to his quarry. They also bought a pair of brown woolen secondhand trousers, a dark green wool shirt, and a pair of low-cut Converse sneakers, which are sturdier and do the same job as moccasins for a man who plans to walk softly in the woods. In fact, all the clothing was bought with the silence of the hunt in mind, and Little Bird painted the sneakers green and brown and spotted the same colors on the pants and shirt to make them blend even more with the background of the springtime forest, as their wool texture would soundlessly harmonize with the quiet of the brush.

Emmett seldom spoke with Little Bird. He simply followed him into the hills every morning after sunrise and coffee, and watched his every quick but careful movement, learning as much as his Indian brother wanted to teach him, until dusk fell and they returned from the woods to the cabin in El Rito where they ate dry bread, deer jerky, and a thick, bean-paste stew and smoked the only tobacco of the long day before undressing in separate rooms and lying down on the matted floor with their women and talking softly with them, while making love for an hour or so until it was beautiful to stop and fall asleep to dream of what the next day might bring.

Emmett followed Little Bird's eyes during their first week together in the New Mexican hills bordering Colorado, and saw the many different creatures who lived there, who sensed their presence but were not alarmed because of their quiet way and the scent Little Bird spread on their camouflaged clothing — a scent that came from tiny sacs of liquid found above the hind hooves of deer. Little Bird had acquired and saved this liquid from the many deer he had slain over the years. It was Little Bird's knowledge of the ways of the wilderness and Emmett's careful attention to his teacher's planned style of movement that allowed them to approach and get within yards of the splendid animals of the land.

Emmett flashed on his past experience in the wilderness of the Italian Alps, but he felt more of a closeness here with the earth and the life which lived from it. He was especially awed by the delicate nearness he was permitted by the animals. The cottontails and jackrabbits, the skunks and raccoons, the feathered tribes of birds perched by their nests at the base of the hills by the cabin in El Rito. And higher up toward the range of mountaintops where the wilderness was truly unspoiled, it was the same. Snowshoe rabbits gave them a glance, porcupines eyed them from the underbrush;

flocks of wild turkeys trooped by them, always being led by a tough old gobbler; a brown bear lumbered along after being assured he was in no danger; a herd of antelope enjoyed the vegetation along the edge of a woodline fencing in an open meadow and curiously gazed for a moment at the frozen-still duo; the proud, antlered bucks stood tall and strong, surrounded by their yearlings and the does whose bellies were just beginning to swell with their unborn fawns. Each one of those magnificent stags was strikingly individual and solely responsible for his small herd — and the sight of them charged Emmett with a deep feeling that one of them was to be the answer to the question that brought him to New Mexico.

At night after eating his food and salad of wild onions picked from the ground and before lying down to talk with Natural Suzanne, Emmett would sometimes stand alone outside under the stars and listen to the howling of the coyotes and the whistling of the elks' mating calls and understand that whatever it was he was about to discover, it would be soon. This made him feel warm and open to the smells carried by the brisk, dark air, but nervous, that there was so much to manhood and being a man.

It was ten days after he arrived at El Rito that the meat was finished and more was needed for the women to make a new stew. Little Bird told Emmett over coffee that morning that today they would go for rabbit, and they went out of the cabin and walked into the hills with the morning sun warming their backs like always, but with a feeling inside them that was different from the other times they left together for the woods. Of course, they had always carried their weapons with them on their walks, but even though they sometimes had been only a few feet away from an animal, Little Bird had never used his bow or Emmett his rifle, because no meat had been needed for their table. However, now there was a need, and the rabbits they had only been watching they now were hunting.

Emmett had practiced a couple of hours every day at twilight with his bow, but it would take a while yet before he would be sure enough with it to make a clean kill. So he left it behind, carrying only his .22 Magnum rifle and some shells when he climbed into the hills with Little Bird, who cradled his Bear bow and ported a pouch of arrows slung across his back.

One thing Emmett quickly understood about the spirit of hunting: you only took what you went in after, and not just anything that you might happen across. Today they were hunting snowshoe

rabbits, so Little Bird carried only blunt-tipped arrows to stun and Emmett steel-jacketed bullets to pierce, eliminating the possibility of mangling the meat of the animals with soft, hollow-point shells or thick, razor-edged arrows.

The sun was still low in its dawn, and the air was still chilly and wet with the last moments of night, when Emmett and Little Bird came upon the bunch of snowshoes, nibbling on the underside of a large berry bush right where they knew they would be at that early time of the day. As the rabbits continued eating their morning meal, Little Bird slipped next to a birch tree to break the outline of his figure, and Emmett followed his comrade's example, halving the shape of his image behind the thin, moist trunk of a young sapling, while slowly raising his rifle to his shoulder and bracing his left forearm against the rough bark to fasten his leverage and steady his aim. Little Bird had already eased an arrow from his pouch and stood poised with the shaft resting across his bow and the two fingers of his right hand pinching it in position with the still-relaxed string.

There were three rabbits, and the men were on both sides of them with Emmett closest to a pair and Little Bird not more than ten yards from the pudgiest. Emmett had a bullet already in the chamber, and a five-shot clip. He would hit the brace nearest him while Little Bird stunned the outsized one who was eating alone. Emmett kept both eyes open as he took bead on the tip of the nose of the snowshoe farthest from him, and watched Little Bird pull back his bowstring with one swift, silent motion. Emmett began to squeeze his trigger when he saw the blunt arrowhead nearing the shaft of his Indian brother's bow and returned his attention solely to his target.

The arrow and bullet shot through the air simultaneously with the crack report of the rifle overwhelming the clean sound of the snapped string—and the sweet whistle of the feathered arrow's flight was lost in the resounding echo of the gun blast. Emmett rapidly ejected the casing of the spent shell and bolted a fresh round into his chamber, and Little Bird unsheathed another arrow and quickly placed it flat across his bow, but Emmett's bullet tore into the bone above the third rabbit's twitching nose before Little Bird pulled taut his string. His unsheathed arrow did not go unused, however, because Little Bird's alert black eyes caught sight of another snowshoe leaping from beneath a bush some twenty yards away toward the protective cover of a large patch of underbrush. Emmett also saw the rabbit racing frantically, and he bolted another

round into the chamber of his rifle, but waited, calmly leading the running snowshoe with the blackened sight of his barrel.

He could have dropped the rabbit four times while Little Bird was smoothly pulling back on his waxed string and bending his bow to its full arch, but he didn't, because no one had to tell him that the first shot belonged to his Indian friend and brother who spotted the animal begin his frightened dash, before Emmett. This time the sharp twang and the soft swoosh of the arrow's release and its swift flight and its thumping contact with the body of the rabbit was not drowned out by the unnatural sound of exploding gunpowder. Little Bird had stun-killed the animal with a direct blow above his tiny heart just as he was about to escape into a hole over thirty yards away.

Both men stood still for a moment, making sure that there was no more activity in the area before moving towards their catch. Emmett placed the safety on his rifle while Little Bird made sure both his hits were dead by breaking their necks. Emmett's pair, of course, had been killed instantly, and there was only a small inedible portion missing from the front of each of their heads where his bullets had ripped away some bone. If he had hit the rabbits anywhere else, there would have been very little left to eat. But he hadn't, and so now he had his first clean kills as a hunter.

They gathered the four rabbits together, and Little Bird made a slight incision in each of their stomachs to check their livers for spots which would mean they had some springtime or early-summer disease and could not be eaten. But there were no spots on any of them which was not unusual, because they were rather high up in the hills where the temperature seldom rose to the type of sultry heat which supposedly abets such disease in rabbits.

Emmett watched with a certain amount of amazement as Little Bird deftly moved his fingers around the insides of the rabbits, examining their innards and skillfully handling their entrails, searching for some trace of disorder. His amazement was caused by the obvious excitement that Little Bird was experiencing as he dealt with the warm bodies of the freshly killed animals. His eyes were wide and alive with a sort of spiritual enthusiasm, and in fact his whole body seemed involved in a climaxing orgasm that wasn't sexual, but rather religious. Sweat poured out of him and his muscles trembled and his mouth watered and his face jumped and twitched, while his whole body shook with the death experience. No

words passed between them, but Emmett began to understand part of what he was there to learn by sensing the enormity of Little Bird's reaction to the kill. The words of an Indian hunting song which Little Bird had translated to him one evening started to beat their message into his brain: "I aim my golden bow; I pull on my golden string; I let fly my golden arrow; and it strikes the heart of the target, and I fall dead. For I am the target. And the target is me."

There were many more snowshoes, cottontails, and jackrabbits, and three wild turkeys taken during the next two weeks, and each time the animals were treated with the same respect that both men would have had for themselves had they been the targets of their own weapons. Also, during that time, Emmett became more and more one with the creatures he hunted and soon Little Bird could see that his pupil — who was only a bit more than two years his younger — was now ready to learn what he brought him there to teach.

One morning, the two men did not leave together for the usual walk in the northern hills. Emmett left alone, to hunt the three-year-old buck he chose to be his first deer when he saw him standing proud against the waters of a rain brook in the light of a falling sunset. He picked the buck from dozens he saw on his walks with Little Bird through the woods, because there was something about the stag that told Emmett it was him.

It was a three-hour walk to the place in the forest where Emmett knew the buck had eaten his dawn meal and bedded himself down on pine needles to sleep away the sunlight in the shade of the tall, thick cover of a thousand trees. When he reached the outside of the young buck's territory, Emmett knelt quietly against a birch and slowly checked every inch of the area with eyes that were now trained to see what they had been blind to a month before. He remained frozen, moving nothing but his eyes and, ever so carefully, his head, for a timeless hour, before relaxing the stiffness of his muscles against the soft, dew-moist earth.

Emmett could sense the presence of his buck nearby, and his eyes showed him at least a dozen places where he might be lying, but gave no definite hint as to which of them was the actual resting place of his deer. Emmett had learned well not to be anxious, and so he waited motionlessly for some sign that would bring the stag to him. He was downwind, and it was a brisk one, rustling the leaves

and covering any sound of his humanity or his rough asthmatic breathing.

He would do absolutely nothing to startle the buck to his feet and spook him out of whichever shadow he was lying in. He didn't want it to be that way. He wanted to hit the animal as he calmly rose from his sleep, so that the kill would be the cleanest of kills, and the deer would not even have to suffer a moment's shock of apprehension. Emmett loved this stag he had come to hunt. He had seen him three or four times, and the buck was always alone by the watering hole or pulling buds from the oak brush. That may have been the main reason Emmett chose to hunt him as his first deer: he always saw him alone. This was curious because he was obviously a young, strong buck who should have been followed by at least a brace of does and a yearling or two.

But Little Bird had pointed out that it wasn't that odd, because his mates might have recently been hunted by the handful of Indian men who ventured this far north "out of the white man's hunting season," or else they might have fallen prey to the many predatory cats who roamed this particular area. Either of Little Bird's observations could be true, and Emmett wondered whether animals like his young buck felt loneliness in some way at all. He didn't feel silly in supposing that they did sense something similar to man in their instinct toward life, and he looked up at the clouds and watched them roll and lumber around the blue sky for what seemed like hours until a formation appeared in the mass of white billow and separated itself from the rest of the cumulus puffs to stand alone and apart — a cloud shaped like his antlered stag deer.

Emmett was stunned when he lowered his eyes and saw rising up in front of him, not more than a few yards to his left, the buck he had come to hunt. He blinked his eyes to clear them of the sky and swung his rifle slowly around the trunk of the tree, until the barrel was aimed at that sharp, smooth surface of hide-covered bone alongside the buck's right ear which showed no sign of alarm or fear. He was magnificent, with a strong, handsome face and taut-muscles beautifully framed in a hard body. His legs were long and he casually shook the stiffness of sleep out of them and muffle-pounded his razor-edged hooves on the ground, snorting himself awake.

As Emmett began to squeeze off the round with both his eyes open, the refrain of the Santo Domingo Pueblo hunting song played on the rhythms of his mind and the beat of his heart. The .22

Magnum explosion momentarily blurred the vision of himself falling gracefully, but hard, dead to the ground, the target of the bullet he had just fired. For he was the target, and the target was him.

Emmett fought to keep from trembling at the sight which now lay only a few feet away on the ground, twitching the last nerves of life from his body. He looked at the buck and saw himself, and watched as the animal's spirit left the creature still, and saw how it would be when the time came for him, and he waited silently and allowed the splendid buck to unsufferingly die in peace and in private.

The hollow-point bullet exploded inside the creature's brain and killed him instantly, but that instant was eternal for Emmett. He moved slowly toward the downed buck, after he was satisfied that the magic of his death had ended. Now kneeling beside him, Emmett sensed an overwhelming oneness with the deer.

He slit the animal's belly neatly open and gutted him like a young surgeon performing an abdominal operation on a live body for the first time. Then he tied first the front and then the hind legs of the deer together as he'd been told to do by Little Bird, using some stringy, cordlike sinew he removed from the stomach along with the rest of the entrails. He paused for a moment to look again at the strong beauty of the buck and to let the poetic harmony of the song he learned from his Pueblo Indian brother beat throughout his being.

The past month he spent stalking in the woods and climbing in the mountain forests had strengthened his body to a point where he could feel the difference in himself. By using all of this built-up strength and by exerting all of his pent-up energy, Emmett was able to hoist the slain stag onto his shoulders. He stood calmly for a moment afterwards to adjust the weight on his back and to achieve a snug one-to-one balance with the two-hundred-pound animal he now had to carry all the way back down to the cabin in El Rito. When he was satisfied with the way the deer sat on his shoulders, he picked up his .22 and slid it through both the pairs of corded legs, resting his forearms over the butt and barrel ends of the rifle to apply just enough easy pressure on the coupled legs which were folded over his round, bony shoulders and down against the upper part of his heaving chest. With his arms hanging loosely in this position, Emmett felt he would be able to keep the animal braced easily in place and maintain the even distribution of its weight across his back.

He flexed and rolled his shoulders one final time to see if the deer would shift on him, and when it didn't, he began the way back to El Rito, sure that his burden would stand the test by staying put for the entire walk down through the quiet, wooded foothills of the Carson National Forest and Tierra Amarilla.

Once he found the proper and comfortable rhythm for his stride, Emmett settled into the march and walked with the silent and stern, but graceful, determination of a man in a footrace with darkness and fatigue. He instinctively knew that if he began to take rest stops along the way, his body would tempt him to lengthen each respite until he gave up the agony of his effort. So he didn't stop at all during the next three hours, refusing to acknowledge the ache, while stepping quickly and carefully along the damp ground, cautiously choosing every spot before planting his feet with a firmness that might have been mistaken for anger by someone who was unaware of the enormous energy which Emmett Grogan had discovered within himself that seemingly timeless afternoon. A vital, spiritual energy which surged through his body, filling him with an invisible physical strength from the moment he aimed his rifle at the wilderness within himself and fired on the target of his own animality.

It was dusk when Emmett stepped out of the woodline and made it across a dusty, dry, flat field and the rest of the way to the cabin on the outskirts of El Rito. Little Bird stood in the shadow of the back wall and came forward to greet his friend, student, and brother with a strong, silent, calm look of love, and helped him remove the deer from his back which was now screaming with a pain that was only overcome by the ecstasy of Emmett's triumph over himself.

They laid the magnificent buck softly down on a large piece of canvas tarpaulin which Little Bird had spread on the earth at the rear of the house a good hour before Emmett emerged from the forests. Then Emmett stood straight and watched from above as Little Bird checked the inside of the belly of the slain stag for anything that might have been missed and which, if left in the deer much longer, might have spoiled the obvious quality of the meat. But there was nothing, and Little Bird was privately proud that his white brother had cleaned out the innards so well, and he quickly completed his examination of the rest of the animal, pleased with the single, small round hole on the side of the noble head where the .22 bullet had struck and which he knew had felled the deer instantly and painlessly.

After Little Bird satisfied himself about the cleanness of the kill, he rose and stood alongside Emmett and silently regarded the magnificence of the buck with the man he now knew he had taught well. They remained standing there together for a solid five minutes before Little Bird spoke the word Emmett badly wanted to hear. "Good," was all he said.

Cease and Natural Suzanne appeared out of the rear door of the cabin with a piece of fry bread and a single bowl of stew, which they laid down on the canvas next to the buck's proud, antlered head. He would eat the same food they were going to eat that evening so his spirit would not go hungry on its voyage to the ethereal hunting ground in which the Indians believe. The women also stood with their men for a few moments, silently regarding Emmett's splendid buck in the last minutes of twilight before darkness. They, too, were proud of Emmett for he was now a hunter — which was what his being there was all about.

As soon as they finished their supper and Emmett briefly relieved his body's exhaustion with two soothing hand-rolled cigarettes, he and Little Bird went back outside where they carefully skinned the buck and sectioned up his meat to be cooked later as steaks, or thinned and hung to dry as jerky, or used in stew. It was exacting work and it was nearly midnight before Little Bird salted down and buried the skin in the earth, and Emmett scooped out and jarred what was left of the buck's brains for use in the future tanning of the skin.

When they were finished cleaning down the animal and had sliced most of the meat up for jerky, Natural Suzanne and Cease quick-fried several small but delicately delicious steaks taken from the backbone of the deer, and they ate what Emmett considered the finest meat he had ever tasted. Afterwards, each couple went to their section of the cabin's divided main room where they lay down together. Emmett was too completely exhausted to talk with his woman, but she understood and kissed him with her juice-filled mouth, softly raising his cock hard with her lips and her tongue, easing forth an ejaculation that burst full-loaded wet against the inside of her cheeks, splashing like a hot wave down her slender throat and sedating Emmett into the slumber of a long, deep sleep.

He didn't wake up until the uncommonly late hour of nine o'clock the next morning. He felt a strange urge swelling up inside of him, even before he came fully awake and opened his eyes. Little

Bird's younger brother had driven to El Rito earlier that morning to visit, and the two of them were out on the huge prairie field, picking wild onions, potatoes and other green vegetables to be used in the stew, and Cease and Natural Suzanne were already boiling down the deer's bones for stock over the wood-burning stove in the kitchen.

Emmett pulled on his dungarees and went out back to take a good, healthy shit in the outhouse and get some well water to wash himself awake. As he splashed the water on his face and scrubbed the sleep from his eyes, the sensation got stronger and stronger, pulling him away from the dry New Mexican earth where he was standing and setting him down on the concrete sidewalks of San Francisco. It was a powerful feeling rather than a stubborn thought, which was priming his instincts and telling him to move on, to leave the country for the city, to get back to the place he came from. The towel flapped against his face, as the energies he acquired the day before joined with his old primal instinct to overwhelm him with a force that made his whole body tremor and understand that it was time to go. To go to the place and the people that were flashing in visions behind the lids of his closed eyes. The place and the people he left to come to the mountain by himself. The mountain where Little Bird showed him all there was to see and where Emmett Grogan, for one split second of eternity, became a magnificent, buck deer.

He spent all the time he needed to spend on the mountain and had learned what he needed to learn. Now it was time to return to the valley where the earth was covered with cement and where the people lived their lives hoping for a moment's relief, and show his brothers and sisters what he saw, simply by returning.

The women were still busy in the kitchen, and Natural Suzanne poured Emmett a large tin cup of strong, black coffee sliced with chicory when she saw him coming. But Emmett didn't stop to drink it after he entered the back door. In fact, he wasn't conscious even of having crossed through the kitchen on his way to the section of the cabin's main room where his belongings were neatly stacked. There was nothing in his thoughts but the knowledge that it was time.

He moved like a man possessed but unfrantic, and within a few minutes he had packed his few things into a knapsack, sleeved his bow in its case, bound his arrows together and strapped them onto the side of the pack. He decided to leave the .22 in the corner of the room where it was leaning against the wall next to a couple of boxes

of shells, a pair of shotguns and two Colt .45s. He stood up straight and quietly for a second, swinging the backpack over his right shoulder and loosely clutching his bow in the fingers of his left hand. When he was satisfied that he had made no mistakes in picking and choosing what to leave behind and what to take with him, he looked slowly around the room for what he knew would be the last time, and nodded his head at a robin that was winking at him through the only window.

Emmett walked out the front door of the cabin and down the dusty dirt road to El Rito where he would begin his long hitchhike back to the city of Saint Francis. He never said a word to Natural Suzanne or to Cease, nor did he search out Little Bird to say good-bye. He didn't have to.

It took him four days and all of the eighty-five cents he had in his pocket to get back to Frisco with only the heavy deer scent on the Black Bear, Rain-tite jacket Little Bird had given him to protect his senses from the immediate, hard, cold, unnatural assault of the city and its streets. Emmett kept one of the lapels tucked near his nose, using the perfume of the wilderness to defend himself against the industrial smell of progress and modern civilization. At first he felt weird in the midst of the rush-hour city, like he felt those few times he was released from the slow pace of the jails and prisons where he had been forced to sit out too much of his life. It was almost the same way now, returning from the mild, casual environ of the forests to the rapid, nonsensical, heated game of the city.

Instead of hitching rides, he walked through the downtown area and across to the Fillmore district where he knew Coyote would be in the large bottom floor of a house in which he was living with his woman, Sam, and a number of other people. Emmett walked because he wasn't tired and because he wanted to let the feel of the city work him over and massage him back into the shape he would need if he was going to pick up where he left off.

It was the first week of May, and while Emmett was walking toward his brother's pad with a bow in his hand and arrows on his back, Bobby Seale, twenty of his brothers, and six of his sisters, were walking around the Capitol in Sacramento with guns pointed straight up in the air or straight down to the ground, propagandizing to the urban blacks and to all the low-money people who live in the cities of America that the Second Amendment of the Constitution of the United States gives them the right to bear arms for their own self-defense — a right Ronald Reagan and his state legislature

were, at that moment, attempting to infringe by passing a bill called the Mulford Act which was aimed at keeping the lower classes disarmed and powerless, while at the same time increasing both the firepower and the repressive investigative powers of the police agencies throughout California.

The Mulford Act meant a lot at the time because, as the Panther Party mandate stated that day in the Capitol at Sacramento, the bill pending before the legislature “. . . brings the hour of doom one step nearer. A people who have suffered so much for so long at the hands of a racist society, must draw the line somewhere . . . to halt the progression of a trend that leads inevitably to their total destruction.” It doesn't really matter what eventually happened to that act any longer, whether it's still pending, was shelved or passed. It's just another fucking bill to pay, and that's the way it's always been, until it isn't anymore.

Emmett walked heavy through the city, smelling himself as much as possible to prolong his taste of the mountain. Coyote was glad to see his brother looking so raw-meat wild, and his old lady, Sam, gave Emmett a plate of food, a beer, and made ready a place for him to crash the weariness of the four-day journey out of his system with a good sound sleep, alone.

No one in the house asked him any questions he might not want to answer, and he told them little because his had been a private voyage, and he came back smelling good and that was enough.

Coyote and Communication Company Claude told him all the news he needed to know and within two days he was back with Tumble and Brooks and the women and Slim, delivering food and stealing meat and whatever else wasn't nailed down. Billy Landout even returned from wherever he had been, settling on the outskirts of San Francisco in Daly City with a family he formed along his way and getting back into Free Food again with the others.

Thirty days of solid, hard, relentless work came and went for Emmett like a flash. The food was now rolling once more after it lagged for a while, and there were thousands of kids coming into town from all over with flowers in their eyes and bellies to be filled with hot Digger stew and Super-Spade grass. It was getting very crowded around the Haight and the glint-glimmer of the summer of love fast faded for those who came, wanting what was never there.

Besides the physical labor of trucking around free food for the people and all sorts of free goods for the Trip Without a Ticket free store and checking every once in a while on the rapidly opening and

closing Haight-Ashbury crash pads, and taking doctors around on their evening runs and transporting loads of piled-up garbage to the dump and getting busted on charges that were always dismissed, and trying to see and oversee that every one of his brothers and sisters had what they needed for doing what was necessary. Besides being overactively involved in all of that and more, Emmett also began to write about things which he understood and which concerned the people toward whom he felt a responsibility. The Communication Company would print his writings as single papers and distribute them throughout the city, and instead of signing his name at the end of each piece, Emmett drew  which is the universal signature of primitive man.

The first paper he wrote was:

THERE IS A GREAT DEAL TO BE SILENT ABOUT

Contemporary history is a money conspiracy — the key to the atom. The facade of present seeming normalcy shows signs of weathering. Each day the cement crumbles a little more and the consequence is an increasing self-division. Portents of chaos everywhere as we grow aware of our own nakedness and impotence. Time is shrinking into itself; only the present seems to hold possibility. We are no longer the heroes of history.

Long-term goals and institutions have lost their relevance. Work is time spent in thrall. *Now* is an accumulation of ends with all goals immediate. Children are tearing away the false front of dignity and status. They are entering existence knowing that today is the first day in the rest of their lives. They want an authentic identity. A new barbarian race flashing on pagan energy, searching for rituals and tribal touch. As they fly from banality and approach the essence of horror.

New determination to pursue experience to its farthest limits. Mad exuberance and hunger for sensation are a constant goad. A demonic circle. A response to existence in last century, at the bottom of personality looking up. Efforts not wasted in games which kill time, deaden awareness and brutalize feeling. Masks thrown off and one enters the inescapable truth and squalor of own being. Beyond the reach of compulsion. *Beyond the possibility of defeat.* Ideology of failure.

Flow with real tides of existence which reach into an underground beyond guise, hate, or love. All contacts immediate and intense. All real things are to be faced in all moments of agony and joy. Everything else is a deception. Politics is an arena where words are juggled in a gigantic hoax. Sharpen senses to continue and improve dialogue with existence. Meaning only found beyond experience. Basic impulse always religious, a cold light on our own incompleteness. Like a debauched child's face.



Another news sheet of Emmett's had to do with another Human Be-In that was proposed by the editors of the San Francisco *Oracle*, the HIP merchants' association, and the Leary-like community shamans dressed all in white. These brilliant wizards wanted to gather 500,000 people on a reservation near Gallup, New Mexico, to celebrate the summer solstice of June 21, 1967. They had already gone to speak with the Hopi Indians who lived there about it, but were given no answers to questions they had just begun to ask, when the reservation's Indian sheriff and his deputies threw them off the land because of their total disrespect and utter arrogance toward the elders of the tribe. For a group of some thirty-year-old hippies who purported to have an enormous regard for the Indians, they did all they consciously could to insult and disturb them.

Fancy, spangled-dressed HIP merchants committed sacrilege after sacrilege by entering the sanctity of hogans and coming back out with the secret, traditional masks of dancers they ripped off the walls and exposed to crowds of uninitiated children who gathered outside the doors of the huts and tepees, startled by what the hippies with their "Santa Claus" beards were doing in the face of thousands of years of spiritual tradition. Longhaired couples flung off their clothes and quick-fucked and gangbanged one another on ground the Indians considered holy, as an expression of the freedom they found by dropping out and as a symbol of their unfailing love for and solidarity with the Indian and his culture. But the Indians didn't see it quite that way. In fact, most of them got plenty goddamn mad at all the hippie men and women running around naked and copulating in the dirt in front of the Indian men, women and children. Some of the stray white women even tried to seduce a few of the young Indian bucks which brought a swift reaction from their wives and wives-to-be.

On top of all of this banality, marijuana and LSD were given to the children. This was the final outrage to the Hopi who had not even invited these "Indian lovers" to be their guests. So they kicked them off their land and told them never to return, no matter how much money the Haight merchants insisted the Indians could rake in behind a Human Be-In. It was shortly after the hippies had driven away in their VW buses that the elders of the tribe discovered that several masks and other spiritual ornaments and accessories were missing — stolen by children born of the same race of people who once before robbed the Indian of everything and left him with nothing.

Emmett's piece about the self-appointed, Haight-Ashbury community leaders' meeting with the Hopi Indians was much different from the account that had been reported to the people of San Francisco by the hippies who were there, and it went on to point out the mercenary absurdity of having a "Be-In" at Gallup, New Mexico, in the first place — because of things like the 120 degree heat, the lack of food or water, the antipathy of the Indians and all residents of the area who would surely, with the cops on their side, violently resist an invasion of hippies.

This tight, two-page report regarding the proposed event was picked up and spread around the underground press and turned out to be enough to cancel all the shopkeepers' plans for a Grand Canyon blast. The marketeers' dream of another West Coast Human Be-In got what it deserved.

The  series of papers were becoming well-known editorials among the underground, and speculation was high as to who was writing them, with Emmett taking every precaution against his being discovered as their author. He wrote several more of these articles on the attitude New Mexico and its people had towards the longhairs, informing persons who were thinking of migrating to that state about an entrenched animosity the Indians had for almost everyone and the Chicanos had for the Anglos, especially the hippie Anglos.

There has always been a smoldering resentment on the part of the Chicanos against Anglos, because the cities they once dominated in New Mexico, like Albuquerque, were taken from them by Anglo immigrants who had been moving there since 1940 to work for the federal government. It was the atom bomb and these federal pay-rolls that made Albuquerque a more or less major city, a center for atomic weaponry, increasing its population by almost 800 percent in three decades, from 40,000 to 320,000, and thereby drastically changing the culture of the whole state from Spanish to Anglo.

This tension between the Chicanos and the Anglos skyrocketed with the arrival of the longhairs, who began traveling to the state for its high altitude and desertlike climate, which made it something of a health resort for them. The gap between these money-from-home-counter-all-cultures Anglo immigrants and most of the state's poverty-stricken, unemployed Mexican-Americans was immediate and deep. The longhairs treated the land as a giant playpen, run-

ning around drugged and naked in a false spirit of liberation and goofing on the dirt-eating-poor Chicanos whom they considered “unhip.” These same impoverished Chicanos — their live-down-the-road neighbors — who tried to scratch a living out of the earth, the earth that mocked their labor in the same way that the frivolous, wasteful behavior of the Anglo hipsters mocked their back-breaking lives, watched what they considered the hippies’ debauchery and grew very angry.

This anger continued to smolder within, until it was given a chance for release by the fundamentalist Protestant preacher Reies Tijerina, who came from Texas to lead the first Brown Power uprising of the desperately poor in northern New Mexico during that summer of ’67. This seizure of a whole county of land from the Anglos by Tijerina and his Alianza brothers and sisters gave the state’s Chicano population a new pride in themselves as a people, and with that pride came a strong desire to strike out at these “young, white, longhaired punks” who taught the Chicano children to disrespect their parents and betray their Mexican-American traditions with talk of rock and roll music and free love.

The many tension-filled spots throughout the state suddenly exploded in a series of violent incidents in which the solitary were murdered and the together were raped and beaten. The situation continued and grew into an open war with the governor of the state publicly saying, “Yes!” to the Chicanos, giving them the Go sign to attack the longhairs for their arrogant life-style which was “bound to make anarchists of their Chicano young anyway.” It went on like that until the longhairs armed and began defending themselves, and the war against the “outsiders” reached the stalemate it remains at this day. Only one or two incidents occur each year that ever make the front pages of the big city Albuquerque newspapers, which only thirty years ago were printed in Spanish.

Emmett wrote strongly in these articles about the then-developing situation in New Mexico, and through them tried to temper the arrogance of a group of transient white children who thought flowers were lovely and poverty still an adventure. He never knew if any of the things he wrote had any effect on the migration of longhairs to the Southwest, but he did discover that the Chicanos who lived in the Mission district of San Francisco responded favorably to his reports, and it was eventually through those very same few words he wrote on white pieces of paper that he met and joined some of the

emerging young radical street leaders in their fight against the poverty and hard-drug epidemic in that Spanish community of the city.

Every night Emmett would try to piece together some message to himself and anyone who cared to read and understand. He attacked the lackadaisical hedonism of the Haight by shouting over and over that “. . . the point of life is not rest, but action. Death is rest! And everyone will have enough rest for eternity. Now is the time for action, because the world must be seen clearly . . . Western society has destroyed itself. The culture is extinct. Politics are as dead as the culture they supported. Ours is the first skirmish of an enormous struggle, infinite in its implications.” And on and on, every chance he got, Emmett tried to smack awake those people who he felt were being duped to death by themselves and others.

*Who the fuck are you, anyway!* Sitting there in lotus and desperately suffering Anglo Entertainment Syndrome. Hungry for rituals and tribal touch. Lack of elders to initiate you into the magic of yourselves. You are starving! Most of you would be soldiers if not acid. Dig the lack of sensitivity to the Indian thing, obvious on its face; murder all over again. First: the physically meat bodies of Indians gunned down all over the place. Second: the treatment of Indians as property by the Haight Independent Proprietors’ attempted wipe-out of the Indian soul simply by camping on it. You’re all romantically Indian-struck! Witness the horror of HIP *Oracle* newspaper staff sitting on Third Mesa in Hopiland, chanting Anglo, Super-Culture Prostitution of Hari Krishna to uninitiated children. Nervous status maneuvers! The time-worn, white-man arrogance of a million questions with backup answers. The Indian message to mankind is simply, “*Go with silence and closed eyes.*” Stop looking into another man’s world! Turn onto yourself! Don’t consume someone else! Eat yourself and kiss the now with full-blown lips! *Courage is implicit!*

One day Emmett found a hand-lettered poem taped onto the steering wheel of the pickup truck. He had just stepped out for a moment to buy a can of Ballantine Ale:

IF I AM DOING IT  
AT ALL, IT'S FOR  
LOVE NOT FOR OIL.  
I LOVE CRUSADERS!  
WHOS GOT THE GRAIL?!  
IF IT'S FULL OF OIL

THERE'S A BETTER ONE MADE.  
IT'S NEW AND IT'S  
THEOREY, BUT MAYBE  
WE CAN GIVE IT AWAY  
SO THAT THIS TIME  
THE SECRET IS A  
GIFT FROM  
A FRIEND.

It was signed with the same ancient swastika marking with which Emmett had been ending all of his Communication-Company-published material, and he folded it up and put it in his pocket, understanding that he was never going to be able to use that mark as a pseudonym again, because he just wanted to sneak all the way, and that's all there was to it!

June came up fast, and, a few weeks before the country's schools were scheduled to close and release their students to take part in the invasion of the Haight-Ashburys of America in search of a highly prepublicized "Summer of Love," the Diggers were invited by members of the East Coast national leadership of the Students for a Democratic Society to attend one of their annual weekend meetings in a woody campground in Michigan. Coyote was back acting with the San Francisco Mime Troupe in their free outdoor commedia dell'arte productions in the parks around the city and wasn't interested in the invitation. But the Hun had resigned his position with the company long ago and thought it would be a good idea to catch a breather from the free store guerrilla theater before the hordes of flower children descended on the Haight. The formal invitation was mailed to the Diggers at the Trip Without a Ticket on Cole Street, and the Hun, therefore, was given first notice of the conference.

Emmett and Billy Landout found out about it a couple of days later when Coyote mentioned that he wouldn't be going. Soon afterwards, the Hun had a meet at his house with Emmett, Billy and Tumble, and the four of them decided they'd go to the conference for the specific purpose of disrupting it — calling the white radicals' bluff which hadn't been done since the days of civil rights when the integration ne plus ultra of all integration promised to the black people had turned out to be their integration into one of the most absurd systems of isms in the modern world of commodities, universally based and dependent on class conflict for its survival.

Anyway, the four men felt that a five- or six-day drive to and from the heartland of America would be a refreshing break from the

heavy routine of their daily Digger activities. Also, the “Digger phenomena,” as it was called in the media, had begun to sprout up in other areas of North America in all sorts of shades, shapes and sizes. Emmett thought it was about time something was revealed to separate the heavyweight life-style of the San Francisco Digger family from the lightweight dilettantism of the credit-card-carrying-Christian-do-gooders in Los Angeles, the do-nothing, ideologically rhetorical “digger Provos” in Berkeley, the hip-social workers of Toronto — and above all the New York diggers, who were publicly led around by Abbot Hoffman and his publicity-seeking cronies.

Emmett didn't like all of that nonsense very much and neither did the rest of the San Francisco Digger people, who felt put down by all the vaudeville clowning that was being carried on in their name, while they themselves actually were overburdened with real, unfunny slave labor, trying to begin the construction of a world *where you didn't have to laugh anymore!* So that Thursday morning the four of them climbed into the Hertz car rented with a finders-keepers-losers-weepers credit card and began their long drive to Michigan with intent, as well as with jugs of whiskey and wine, cans of beer, and plenty of amphetamines to get them there nonstop the next afternoon.

It was one hell of a run with the four men taking turns behind the wheel to maintain an average speed in excess of ninety miles an hour, and the tires blowing out one, two, three, four, five, six times on the salt-hot, flat stretches of highway from Nevada to Nebraska — where in the town of North Platte the local, fat-bellied sheriff pointed out Buffalo Bill's house as he escorted them out of his limits with a “Be on yer way an' don't you never think 'bout comin' back this town again, specially after the sun go down. You understan' my meanin' or do I have to spell it out more plain for you freaky fellas, huh?” And on into Kalamazoo, Michigan, the next day at about five in the evening where a giant, lime-colored, neon sign was screaming *Insulin! Insulin! Insulin!* in the front window of a country drug-store, flooding the dim dusk of the main street with its loud green message and advising them to pull over 'cause it was time to sponge up the two days' booze with a hot supper before continuing on to Denton and the conference.

They pulled into a space along the empty curb in front of a bar-restaurant-grill that looked small-time hokey-light from the outside, but was huge, bigtime, country-heavy on the inside, which they discovered on entering the place and walking right smack into the

jowls of a giant, loose, Friday-evening-crowd of one hundred steel workers, spending the lid off of the wages they had just been paid at the town's mill before bringing the rest home to their old women.

Emmett walked through the front door first, and the laughing, yelling, loud-talking, bulk-muscled, short-sleeved, polo-shirted, white workmen fell into a stone-faced silence the instant they saw him and his long hair hanging below the shoulders of the canvas, Rain-tite jacket he always wore. The silence grew louder and colder as each of his brothers stepped inside behind him and followed him the thirty or so feet past a pair of pocket pool tables toward the long, walnut bar along the back wall, where room was quietly made for them by men who were standing with their feet on the rail.

As he moved forward, Emmett could see that none of the seventy or eighty tables in the place was empty, and his quick glance also told him that the burning sensation he felt flushing at the base of his neck was the glare of the one hundred or so pairs of clean, mid-western eyes seated in the jungle of chairs around those tables, dead-panning their shaggy clothes and two-day auto grime. When he got to the bar the bartender was waiting, and the man seemed a little frightened about what Emmett guessed he figured was going to happen after the silence broke. "He must be the owner, and that's why he's worryin'. He don't care nothin' 'bout us, it's only the damage to his place that he's feelin' anxious 'bout," thought Emmett, as he looked into the man's eyes and ordered what they had been drinking for the past two days on the road. "Four double Four Roses rye whiskies 'n four bottles of Budweiser beer, please."

No one moved except the man behind the bar, as he set up the order and asked with his voice cracking if there'd be anything else. The menu was written in chalk on a blackboard above the bar, and Emmett glanced at his brothers about what they were going to eat, and back up at the board, then down again into the worried owner-bartender's face that was all rosy pink from capillaries broken by booze and said clearly, "Four hot beef stews 'n plenty of bread and butter, please." Emmett calmly tucked the corner of a twenty-dollar bill under his still-full bottle of beer, so the man could see that no matter what might go down, he would get paid.

Whispers began to break through the quiet, and as they grew louder the men closest to the four of them returned to whatever they'd been talking about, minding their own business. The jokes about beatniks and hippies quickly followed, but never loud enough to become a challenge, and the laughter came back into the strong

bellies of the crowd of hard-working men who lived what was left of their lives only on weekends.

Everything looked like it was going to be all right, when the Hun, for some singular, absurd, irrational reason of his own, walked brazenly over to the rack of pool cues along the side wall, took one out and returned to the bar with it in his hand. Emmett was just as surprised at the Hun's crazy move as most of the workmen who saw him make it. The food hadn't come yet, and it was going to be another five or ten minutes before it did, and then it would take the four of them about five or ten minutes more to eat it all which made it almost a solid half hour before they'd be leaving the place, and "What the fuck are you going to do, just sit here at the bar with that pool stick between your legs to be ready in case you have to beat away someone or somethin', huh! You goddamn, ignorant prick!" Emmett, Billy and Tumble didn't say any of that out loud to the Hun. They just looked at him that way and tried to let their eyes do the talking for them, but he didn't hear them, or wouldn't, being too busy out-hippin' himself which was his usual pose during tight situations.

Some of the men in the joint thought the Hun's action was funny, and they laughed uproariously. But some of the others didn't think his move was hilarious at all, and in fact seemed to consider it downright insulting to the "live and let live" hospitality they were willing to display. It didn't take long before one of them came over to the little, five-foot-eight-inch, 130-pound Hun to see whether he wanted to play out the move he'd just made.

The guy was about fifty with long, stringy muscles and white hair, and he already had half a bag on. He stood next to the Hun who was sitting on a stool at the end of the bar with the cue stick resting on his left leg, and Emmett standing by his right elbow. The guy had a mixed drink of rye and ginger ale in his hand, and he swayed a little bit as he stood looking at the pool cue, and finally lifted his head clumsily to ask, "Wha' you gonna do with that?"

Emmett felt he couldn't allow the Hun the chance to answer the dude with his usual flip-lip, because his answer would set off whatever was going to happen to all four of them. So Emmett slid between the guy and the Hun's back and politely, but soundly, answered that "he ain't gonna do nothin' with it, 'cause I'm gonna use it for what it was made to do. That's what my friend brought it over here for in the first place — to shoot a game of pool. But after he brought it over, he just realized how tired he really was from all the

drivin' he done today, and I decided to play the game he ain't goin' to. Is that all right, mister?"

The white-haired, wiry guy looked at Emmett for a moment before walking away and back to the other end of the bar where he came from. A young guy picked up where the older man left off, however, by approaching Emmett and asking him if he cared to shoot a game with him. There was no animosity visible in the younger fellow's face, just a bit of curiosity maybe. So Emmett said, "Sure, but we'll have to make it a quick game of nine ball, 'cause my food'll be comin' up soon. That okay with you?" The cat said that it was, and Emmett racked the nine balls, using only his forearms and hands to shape them together, and everyone in the bar saw by the way he packed the balls into the difficult diamond formation without a wooden frame that Emmett knew what to do with a pool table.

They flipped a coin and Emmett won the toss. He shot the cue ball hard into the right side of the diamond pack, sinking the number three ball on the break and scattering the rest all over the table. He sank four more balls into the pockets with his next four consecutive shots before missing an easy bank into the corner, leaving the other guy to run off the last four neatly positioned balls on the table, including the nine ball which meant the game. Emmett paid off the dude with what they agreed to play for, a drink, and also thanked him for letting him shoot a quick game, shook his hand with a "much obliged," and then sat down on the stool at the bar where his hot beef stew had just arrived from the kitchen.

It was dark by the time the four of them left the bar with their bellies warm and full and their minds toying with the refreshing idea of a little sleep. Denton wasn't far, and Emmett said he'd drive the rest of the way to the campground. He had no idea how tired he was nor how juiced he'd gotten in the bar, and therefore had no reason to slow down from the ninety-mile-per-hour pace they maintained across more than half the country. There were very few cars on the road, and after he was at the wheel for about forty minutes he began to get the feeling they were lost.

The others were all sound asleep, so Emmett picked up the piece of paper from the dashboard that was the hand-drawn map the owner of the bar had given them to find their way to the camp in Denton, Michigan, and held it up in front of him, resting it on the steering wheel without slowing down, and shifting his eyes from the road to the paper and back.

He traveled about five miles this way and had just taken another glance at the map, when the asphalt-covered side road he was whipping along suddenly opened onto and across a four lane highway. During the seconds Emmett was glancing at the map, his eyes missed the road sign which would have told him to stop for the intersection, so he didn't know to slow down or even what he was approaching until it happened. The car leaped across the interstate highway between a pair of oncoming trailer trucks whose drivers more than likely shat in their pants, and ended up on the other side of the crossroad that was paved only with gravel-dirt which couldn't handle the high speed of the car's wheels, sending it into a side spin that startled the other three awake just in time for them to see what Emmett's eyes were screaming about. The right side of the car was rapidly sliding toward a concrete road abutment with terrific, slow-motion, instant, fast energy, as if it were being drawn to it by some hidden magnetic force. Everyone jumped to the left side of the car, Billy literally climbing into Emmett's lap, to get away from the roaring, oncoming, concrete block. The split-fraction-of-a-second it went out of view, they all cringed, waiting for the impact that never came, because fate or whatever squeezed the car a hairbreadth past the deadly stone abutment and sent it jumping into the air where it floated still for a moment, before crashing down into the river on the left side of the road and breaking in half.

It all occurred, from start to finish, in about two, three, or four seconds' time, but it seemed longer — much longer. No one was hurt, only a few bumps and the after-shock of waking up into a nightmare and nearly dying. They stood in the thigh-high, quiet water of the small river for a while, each one silently musing to himself about what just happened, and all of them trying to come out of the stupor their brush with sudden death caused their systems. Billy Landout was sitting out of the water on top of the car's trunk; Tumble had his leg hanging over one of the front fenders; the Hun was standing a few feet from the cracked auto and checking out his eyeglasses to see whether or not they were damaged; and Emmett was leaning against the side of the car with his arms outstretched across the top of the roof, thinking the same thoughts as the others.

A farmer turned onto the road with his wife in the cab and his six or seven children in the rear of a tailgate pickup. He stopped, of course, and looked agape at the sight he knew he never would believe if he hadn't seen it with his own two eyes. The man gestured

for his family to remain in the truck as he stepped out and approached the bank where he asked the four brothers, who were still standing in the middle of the river, whether he could oblige them in any way, like by telephoning the local sheriff's office or a garage or something.

There was a pleasant smile on the farmer's face which couldn't help show how amusing the outrageous spectacle seemed to him. Tumble asked the farmer to please use his phone in both the ways he mentioned and told him they would all wait for the police and garageman to show. Tumble closed with a sincere "Thank you," and the farmer headed back toward the cab of his truck, but he didn't climb into it. Instead, he leaned inside for a second and turned back around with what looked like a Brownie Hawkeye camera, complete with flash attachment, in his worn, hard hands.

He returned to the edge of the bank, holding the camera and shyly asked, "'Scuse me, fellas. I know it might seem downright impolite, but I jus' hadda ask you or I'd be kickin' myself for weeks if I didn't. You see, ain't nobody gonna believe it when I tell 'em 'bout you 'n the river 'n the car 'n all, 'n I would be much obliged if you let me take a snapshot of you 'n everything before I git on back to my house 'n make those phone calls you asked me to."

Tumble and the Hun whispered something like "Nothing doing!" to themselves under their breath with the latter going on to the others about how the photo could be used later to identify all of them, if anything happened at the conference or someplace else nearby. Emmett stopped him before he got himself and the others caught up in paranoia, cutting him off with logic. If the four of them didn't oblige the farmer with a snapshot that each of them could simultaneously blur with a bit of slight movement and closed eyes, the guy might become insulted enough not to oblige them with the necessary phone calls, and they'd be spending the whole goddamn night wet and cold.

All this discussion was done in quick whispers while paying unflinching attention to the farmer who was standing above them and returning their shit-eating-grins with an enthusiastic, hopeful smile. Billy Landout delighted the guy by yelling up to him, "Sure, it's all right for you to take a picture. But just make it no more than two, okay? 'Cause we're gettin' kinda cold here in this river, 'n we'd like to get on out and into some warm clothes. Just tell us when you're ready, so we can pose real nice for you, okay?"

The farmer got real happy very fast and clicked off the two photos

with a polite, "Ready, aim," each time, cuing the four Digger brothers on exactly when to jerk their images slightly and guaranteeing that when the film was developed the farmer would have two pictures of four ghostlike blurs hanging around and on top of two halves of a car in the middle of the neighborhood river. He probably would say something like, "Shucks! They all moved!" But his evidence would be good enough to convince his cronies of the freakiest scene he had ever seen in his life.

The guy was overjoyed about what was obviously going to be a lively topic of conversation for months, and he got his whole family to wave excitedly "Thank you! And goodbye!" at the four subjects of the area's future gossip, before pulling on down the road a few miles to his home where he made the phone calls he promised plus several more to his buddies, a few of whom showed up along with the local sheriff and garage mechanic.

Tumble told the cop he was driving the car when it slipped off the road, because Emmett didn't have a valid license and was still a bit too obviously drunk. As it turned out, the sheriff believed everything Tumble said to him except the part about how fast he was traveling when he inadvertently put the car into a skid by trying to avoid hitting a rabbit. Tumble insisted that he had only been doing forty-five or fifty miles per hour, and the sheriff kept denying that it was possible to do all the things that were done to the car and make the kind of skidmarks that were clearly visible in the churned-up dirt road, without going at least eighty, if not ninety miles per hour. So he told Tumble he was going to have to take him into town before the justice of the peace where the matter would be settled, and he'd pay a fine.

Emmett, in the meantime, was talking with the garage guy about how Hertz would pay the expense of towing it out, and they'd have to pay his price, that is, if Emmett didn't call them first and tell them where it was now located on that back-country road. In return for not calling the Hertz Company until the next morning when it was too late, Emmett asked the not unfriendly young mechanic if he'd be kind enough to drive him and his brothers to the Denton campsite where they were supposed to have been hours before. The fellow said it'd be no trouble at all, and also thanked Emmett for the fifty-to-seventy-five-dollar job he just gave him by promising not to call.

The sheriff was writing something in his book when Emmett walked over to hear the Hun inquire of the cop, "What are the

people like around here?" The stout fifty-year-old sheriff raised his head, so his eyes were level with the Hun's, staring into them with complete understanding of what the Hun meant. He wasn't angry or nothing; he simply wanted to let the slick-city Hun know he wasn't so goddamn smart or talking to no goddamn civil-servant fool either, and he waited for a moment before answering with a mild sense of his own country wisdom. "If you can generalize what all the people might be like 'round here by regardin' one individual, you might just as well use me as an example, or Hank, the garageman over there, 'cause I'm one of the people 'round here, mister, same's him 'n same's them other folks that stopped by here before. There ain't no difference 'tween them 'n me, 'cept the jobs we do, that's all. I'm one of 'em 'n have been all my life 'n will be till I die. Now, if that answers your question, you're welcome." Then he walked over to his car and told his office on the radio what happened and that he was taking the car's driver into town to stand before the justice and pay a fine.

Emmett talked it over with Tumble, and they decided that the best thing to do was for Emmett, Billy and the Hun to go to the meeting at the camp outside Denton, where there had to be a lawyer whom they could bring back to the justice of the peace's office to argue Tumble's case, if the fine was too stiff to pay. The other two agreed since there was very little else they could do.

The sheriff called Tumble over, and the two of them drove off with Tumble sitting next to the cop on the front seat. The others went with Hank, the garageman, who knew exactly where the summer camp was, and they were there in less than ten minutes. Hank also knew what was going on there, and after writing his name, garage address, and phone number down on a piece of paper for Emmett to phone in to Hertz, he split in a hurry.

The main cabin where the first of the organizational meetings was already under way, was all lit up inside with white light, and the three Frisco Diggers could see it was packed with the type of young and old people they expected to find at such a dry-crust-dull shindig. The three of them looked at each other for a moment, smiled, and someone said, "Let's go get that lawyer."

Emmett opened the door and stepped inside first, right in front of a long table covered with mimeographed papers and lined up next to the knotty-pine wall on the right side of the room. It was the dais, and Thomas Hayden, a neatly middle-class-dressed, short-haired, pockmarked, college-graduate radical, political careerist and SDS

leader, was in the middle of his welcoming address to his fellow delegates, who were all attentively seated on rows of wooden folding chairs that entirely filled up the rest of the room.

Hayden stopped speaking when Emmett moved to a spot directly between him and his audience and silently stood there for the moment it took the Hun and Billy Landout to enter the large rec room and plant themselves on each side of the open door. Everyone else was also quiet, probably startled by their curiosity as to who the three men were who interrupted their meeting.

Emmett's left side was facing the delegation, and his right side faced Tom Hayden and the other speakers seated at the platform, to whom he nodded a slight greeting before turning his back on them to full-face the audience. As soon as he did this, there was a yelp of recognition from the rear of the room where Abbot Hoffman was sitting against the back wall with his pseudo-Digger buddies Paul Krassner, Jim Fourat and Keith Lampe, all dressed up in their beaded, purple-colored hippie costumes and Mexican cowboy hats. Emmett gave them the same sort of nod with which he greeted Hayden and the dais.

"My name's Emmett, 'n that fella over there's the Hun, 'n the one next to him playing the flute is Bill Landout. We're here representing the San Francisco Diggers which we'll get around to later. First, we have to do somethin' more important. You see, we had an accident 'bout six miles from here, 'n one of us, our brother Tumble, was taken to town by the sheriff to stand before the justice. Now, to make sure he don't end up in the slam 'n to get him back here with us, we need a lawyer 'n someone with a car, unnerstand?"

Emmett waited, looking around the room for some sign of someone willing to volunteer. When he felt he waited long enough, which was about a minute, he took a different tack, and with extreme politeness asked one paunchy, bifocaled man in his mid-thirties whether he was a lawyer. The man said that he was and replied to the next question with, "Yes, I've got a car."

This was Emmett's cue to rip the fat guy from his seat and forcibly lead him outside to his car which they drove away with Billy Landout behind the wheel following the lawyer's directions on how to get to the town of Denton. Emmett soothed the very ruffled attorney by explaining that he should have identified himself as a lawyer immediately and volunteered, because "we've been on the road for two solid days now, 'n we're not in no mood to waste no time. Anyway, you're here to show how you're concerned for the

people, ain't you? Well, just think of us as two fellows who're giving you an opportunity to exemplify your radicalism and responsibility to the people. Okay? Okay!"

The Hun remained behind to make sure that the meeting wasn't reconvened in the orderly manner in which it started. He accomplished this by simply stepping over to the speaker's platform behind the dais, pushing Hayden out of his way with a handshake and a "Thank you kindly," and swinging on the audience with an excited ramble-rap, the likes of which they never heard before and most of them probably never have again.

He poured it on them with his sweet 'n sour, white-nigger-hipster tongue, lashing out the Trip Without a Ticket message that "Property's the enemy and has gotta have its inanimate values destroyed by any means necessary. Which means that one has to begin by assaulting oneself — attacking all the conditioned misconceptions in one's own head first, before waging warfare against the various machines of the system. Organize your own goddamn heads! Get yourselves together! And quit all this make-believe bullshit! Bullshit, like organizing the teachers, the workers or this 'n that! Don't organize the motherfucking schools! Burn them down! Or just walk away from 'em and leave 'em alone, and they'll rot! Drop out of the system, 'cause you're only kidding yourselves if you don't, and your own children know that, and that's why they're leaving you alone, why they're running away from the lies that are your lives!"

On and on the Hun blazed about guerrilla theater and about Free! for all, because it's yours, and about how Moscow was more fucked up than Mississippi. All the young persons and all those in the audience who had any minds left were completely turned on and overjoyed. The older lefties, however, who had been wrapped in their make-believe, international Communist workers' game since the thirties, forties and Joe McCarthy fifties didn't want to hear it but had to, and were physically upset by almost every word. They came to that cabin-campground in Denton, Michigan, to continue the Workable Lie that allowed them to play with ideological rhetoric and join in harmless activities which didn't interfere with their private financial welfare, and here was the Hun, yelling at them, demanding that they drop completely out of the capitalist economic system and stop their kidding around. It disturbed them very much, because they didn't come to hear the truth.

As soon as Billy Landout pulled the lawyer's car onto the main street of Denton, Emmett spotted Tumble standing alone outside

an empty bar with a brown-paper-bagged can of beer in his hand. He got into the car, and Billy turned it around and headed back toward the camp while Tumble told them the story of his appearance before the justice of the peace and his subsequent release with no fine, but with an open invitation to dinner and to spend the night in an empty bedroom in the wooden frame home which doubled as the courthouse. Tumble insisted it was true and that the judge just liked him, that's all.

They were all still laughing when they walked into the main cabin where the Hun was just ending his scattered speech, and the attorney sheepishly returned to his seat, glad to be back in the safe milieu of his not-so-serious comrades. The lawyer wasn't even brave enough to ask for the return of his own car keys, so Billy left them hanging in the ignition.

Billy Landout walked over to the far end of the dais table and sat down on top of it, crossing his legs in the lotus position and smiling. He continued playing a low-keyed melody on his flute — which was all he had driven more than halfway across the country to say to these persons assembled in Middle America, and it was beautiful.

The Hun finished, and an older man of fifty or sixty commented very loudly that what he said was negated by the simple and obvious fact that he'd never been a member of the proletariat working class, and therefore had never dropped out of anything because he had always been on the outside, whereas, the man went on, he himself spent the past thirty-five years or so as a rank-and-file member of the Auto Workers Union and had been, and still was, working goddamn hard every goddamn moment of that time to change the capitalistic mentality of his fellow workers and the structure of the union which, he concluded, was a goddamn more important revolutionary role for him to play "than to be sittin' on a table like that fella over there playin' with a toy flute!"

There was a boisterous round of applause by the majority of the assembled for the workingman's brief statement. When the hand-clapping and backslapping died down, Emmett held back the Hun from making a hip rebuttal, and Tumble stepped forward to take up the gauntlet.

All eyes were on Tumble, waiting for how he was going to answer the challenge, and watching as he removed two cards from his wallet. When he was ready, he struck a heavy stance and stabbed the old leftist dead with his black, shiny eyes.

"You see these two cards, fella? All of you, d'ya see 'em?! Well, a

little less than a year ago these cards were me, and they'd been me for over twelve years before that or for just about one third of my life. I got them both at the same time and from the same man, when I was twenty years old and fresh out of a California penitentiary. This one here is the card that says I was a longshoreman on the San Francisco waterfront every day of those dozen years. And this one says I was a member in good standing of the American Communist party, when I was just that, up until I became twenty-four or five, and it didn't seem to make much sense for me to renew my membership. Now, both of these cards were given to me by the same man, or, I should say, by the associates of the same man — Mr. Harry Bridges, who I'm sure all you members of the working proletariat know to be the head of the San Francisco longshoreman's union, as well as a radical champion of all workers' rights.

“What I'm driving at is that neither of these cards is me anymore. Oh, they still have my name on them all right, but they ain't me no more — no way! The reason they no longer are, is a long, long story which I'll shorten by simply reachin' its conclusion for you. But I want you to all understand that I didn't jump to no quick conclusion then, when I actually canceled both of these cards out of my life forever. It was a goddamn long-drawn decision I made after tryin' to work within their confines for all those years of my youth. I didn't jump to no fuckin' conclusion! I thought about it slowly for a long time — too long!

“Anyway, the reason I gave up my card-carrying membership in both these organizations was I realized they were full of shit, and I didn't want to be a part of that shit. Part of the lie that says all socially relevant change is brought about through the power of the working class. You see, I really want to do something to change this goddamn system we got here, and when I realized that I *really, really* did want to do something relevant to change the miserable way most people live in this fuckin' world, I knew I had to stop kidding myself by going to monthly Party meetings, while at the same time earning over three hundred dollars in take-home pay every week. I mean, I had no real beef with anything, really, as long as the two hundred dollars for my thirty-five hours' work was coming in every week. And it was basically those wages that made me see that my involvement with the Communist Party, U.S.A. was nothing more than an elitist hobby that made me feel self-righteously good once a month, that's all, and did nothing for no one. One day, I just looked 'round at all my friends who were all playing the same

make-believe union, party, workers-of-the-world-unite! game, and I could see that they were all comfortably fat, and so I decided that I was finished with all of that running-in-place bullshit, and I dropped out of the lie and into the truth of myself.

“Then I was lucky enough to meet my brothers here, and ever since I’ve been working with them to change things. To change things not by demanding that things be changed by protest marches or by demonstrations that *ask* that the changes be given to the people. No! But by changing things ourselves.

“It’s as simple as that. We see a change that has to be made, we don’t ask or demand that someone else make it happen. We just fucking well make it happen, and if anyone tries to stop us, then we’re prepared to defend our right to make those changes that are relevant to our lives and the way we live them.

“I’m talking now about immediate, localized changes, like stopping poor kids from being hungry by getting food for them to eat, or letting a landlord know that he better fix his slum buildings up with heat and hot water in the winter, or we’ll burn his own family’s fucking suburban house down for him. And he understands, because we let him know that we know where he lives. You dig? And all sorts of real, actual, relevant things like that, like the Free Stores, where a poor person who can’t afford something might find it, and not secondhand either, but brand fucking new, so’s she or he can get a taste of what it could be like, if we worked together to change things, instead of just jerking off together, masturbating high-falutin’ words all over each other — words that sound real good, but don’t do nothin’! Nothin’ for nobody, never! Like I done for those twelve years, those boxcar years of my life, when I tricked myself into standing still because I was getting good pay for it — for making believe, mister! For making believe that, because I was a worker and a Communist party member, I had the integrity of a true, revolutionary human being, when in reality I was a stone liar, lying to myself and everyone else and not even capable of gettin’ a nigger a gig with my own union or any other union for that matter, except the janitors’ union.

“I was just like you, mister! Like most of you people right here, playing trick-the-tricker, but only succeeding in tricking myself. I’d still be throwin’ those same boxcars and crappin’ out on history if I hadn’t accepted the truth that I was doing nothing for nobody but my own goddamn selfish self, and if I hadn’t met these men here who’re now my brothers. This one’s gonna speak to you next now,

'cause that's what he came here to do. So you listen to him, 'cause he just might save some of your lives from never living and from never changing the routine limbo of the Workable Lie that's got you coming up boxcars every time and never changing nothing to do with even yourselves, much less history, for chrissake!"

The persons who clapped and hollered and yelled their approval at Tumble as he backed off from center stage were mostly the young who, within a couple of years, were going to drastically change the direction and focus of SDS, but not the basic motives for their involvement in the activities of the organization. Their personal motivations would remain the same as the Old Left's, even though the activities would switch from do-nothing ideological conferences to do-nothing terrorist tactics. Their motives would be just as selfishly personal and as deliberately unconcerned with the needs of the people. They would give vent to their own private frustrations with pseudo-guerrilla, war-game playing and romantic adventurism, and do about as much — these "weathermen" — for the liberation of the country's low-money people into a classless society as George Metesky, the Mad Bomber of New York, did. Nothing! Except some sensational headlines in the newspapers for the voyeurs to get a giggle over. And it's a shame.

Emmett moved forward between the rows of chairs and climbed up on a table in the back of the room, squatting down on top of it and making everyone turn around to see him. He picked up where Tumble left off, telling the crowd about the importance of anonymity to persons who seriously attempted to effect relevant changes in any social order and tried to achieve at least a token independence from the economic system, with the ultimate goal of course being autonomy. An individual and collective autonomy, a spiritual and material autonomy that would eventually lead to the long, hard struggle which would have to be fought to establish a post-competitive, comparative, classless society where all power would be decentralized and given to the people through a form of democratic socialism.

He then began to explain how the Diggers in San Francisco simply assumed their own freedom to serve the people by trying to get every brother and sister whatever they needed, to do what it was they had to do. It was this assumption of freedom, he continued, that caused the radical movement to falsely believe that the individual Diggers and their organization were anarchistic and led the straight establishment into believing that they were just a bunch of

“mod monk, hippie, social workers.” Both assumptions were wrong, but did provide them with the cover they needed, at the time, to continue their work.

“However, now it’s gotten to the point where everyone’s missing the point and that’s why we come here — to let you know the truth of what we’re doin’ in San Francisco, so’s you can understand and tell your comrades, and only them, that we ain’t what everybody says we are, but just what we’ve now explained to you. We did this ’cause what we’re doin’ in Frisco needs to be done everywhere and done right! Not like no Salvation Army or no bunch of romantic Robin Hoods, but like, and by, plain and simple free men and women who do it ’cause they love the people! Love the people, not with the slop-bucket love of liberal do-gooders who’ve got false commitments to humanity, but love with a muscle ’n gut love that sweats and lives and dies for the people. The people who need to be doing what the Diggers in *San Francisco* are doing and nowhere else. Let that be clear — *nowhere else!* The people need to see other people giving it *all* away, before they can dig the basic absurdity of this goddamn parasitical society! It heightens the human contradictions of existing within this inhuman capitalistic system where the best man wins if he kills his brother or sister or a couple of hundred thousand faceless, yellow people in Asia. It heightens the human contradictions of surviving within or under any system of government that’s now maintaining some form of social order in the world today. It heightens the human contradictions to such a degree that a person, if he’s really a good man or a good woman, will have to refuse to acquiesce to any society that doesn’t fulfill its social responsibility to every human being in it!

“Now, when you go around liberating stuff to give away to the people, you gotta watch your ass ’n stay as invisible as possible! You gotta be and remain anonymous, because the society you’re fuckin’ with is, sooner or later, gonna start flexing its muscles in anger at the thought of swallowing the bitter, Digger pill of ‘It’s free, because it’s yours!’ And their police lackies are gonna slam your ass away! If you ain’t anonymous, if you got your name written all over everything you do, you ain’t doing nothing! ’Cause if you was, and you had your name on all of it, they’d lock you up forever or blow you away for good!

“In other words, if you’re really serious and you’re actually doing something serious, ain’t nobody supposed to know what you look like except the people you’re doin’ it with and some, never all, of

the people you're doing it for. And, of course, the police — they always know what you look like, but if you're really slick, they won't know who you are or what you're doing. And if you don't get what I mean, that's your blues, 'cause that's all you're gonna get from me except my best wishes that y'all don't get got."

The younger, hipper ones laughed as Emmett stood up straight on top of the table to stretch his legs. There was some loud movement behind and to the left of him, and when Emmett turned, he saw that Abbot Hoffman raised his stumpy body, instead of his hand, to ask a question or say something.

"Emmett, you know, whether you like it or not, you're going to get co-opted, because you're too together, too singlehanded, and they're gonna make an image out of you and steal your anonymity and sell you across the country as the 'new antihero'! Before this year's out or sometime in 1968, they're going to put you on the cover of *Time* magazine or *Life* or *Newsweek* and sell your charisma as the fashionable way to be. Whether you like it or not, within a year you're gonna be on a lot of posters on a lot of walls!"

It was the same riff that Paul Jacobs used, to try to cancel Emmett and the Diggers out months before at the Theater for Ideas in New York. This time, however, Emmett was determined to handle the always-the-same challenge of his probable co-option differently. He could feel the whole load of the past year's slave labor and solitude swelling up inside of him and taking the love right from his eyes, leaving them dead cold. He was going to blow it, but he was going to do it his way, for his own reasons, and not as an emotional response to a punk's lame remark.

As he squatted slowly back down, Emmett ran his eyes into those of Tumble, the Hun and Billy, giving them the sign that it was time to effect the epilogue to their already disruptive performance at the SDS conference. Then he sucked the audience into the eye of the storm that was squalling inside of him by speaking softly.

"Abbot . . ."

"It's Abbie, Emmett!"

"Abbot, you're wrong. I'm not goin' to be on the cover of *Time* magazine, and my picture ain't goin' to be on the covers of any other magazines or in any newspapers — not even in any of those so-called underground papers or movement periodicals. There ain't gonna be no posters of me anywhere, and I ain't goin' to put me on sale this year or next year or the year after that, until I feel it beautiful to stop.

“Now that’s probably very difficult for you here to understand, ’cause you’re always jumping up and pointing at yourselves on TV and in the press to show everyone that you were there, too! But not me, nor my brothers and sisters, understand? And do you know why I’m so sure of that? Do y’all know how I know that what I’m sayin’ right now’s the truth? Huh?”

“Well, it’s simple. You see, I’m not kidding! I’m not kidding you, me or anyone else about what I do to help make the change that has to be made in this country of ours, here!

“Must be real fuckin’ hard for you motherfuckers to understand that, huh! Most of you suckers’d give your rectums to get yourselves plastered all over the cover of any one of them magazines as the *Big, Bad Radical!* Huh, wouldn’t ya! And now you’re all lookin’ at me — me who’s more beautiful ’n heavier than any motherfuckin’ man or woman in this room! And you’re wondering why I don’t let ’em take my picture ’n become the big, bad radical of the year to all America, ain’t ya!

“Why such a beautifully muscled, aquiline-featured, rough ’n ready, romantically hip, heavyweight, handsome cat like me who’s got more style in the heel of his motherfuckin’ foot than any of you’ll have forever — why ain’t I coppin’ the front pages of all them fuckin’ rags that’d just gobble up everything I said ’n make me the national, hip, radical Hero Number One overnight?! *Why? Why? ’Cause I ain’t kiddin’, you ugly, motherfuckin’, lyin’ cocksuckin’, punk-faced, pussy-whipped assholes!*”

Emmett jumped off and suddenly flipped over the Formica lunch table on top of the seated crowd as his words erupted throughout the room, and Tumble watched Emmett’s back so nobody would hit him with something from behind. The Hun sat on a windowsill looking at the mad spectacle of Emmett Grogan knocking down girls, punching cats in the face, slapping the older SDSers left and right and all over the fucking place, screaming that they were all “*Cowardly ugly!*” while Billy Landout giggled into his flute and kept right on calmly playing. It was good theater, with people scurrying all around to get out of Emmett’s maniacal way, and him screaming and them screaming, but only passively resisting the one-man, violent assault against the dignity of their Workable Lie.

It lasted a full few minutes and ended with Emmett throwing a black cat out the front door because he was the only black person there. “You goddamn nigger, you shouldn’t be *here!* Your people need you! There’s a war on, so get your fucking black ass back to

your black brothers and sisters where you belong! And the rest of you motherfuckers, get outta here 'n go to bed! Go on, it's past your bedtime! But not you, lawyer man! Not you! You're going to drive with us in your car to get something to eat in the all-night diner in Denton town and, later on, to Kalamazoo where we're going to pick up a brand-new car from the nice Hertz man. Won't that be nice, huh? Get goin'!"

Emmett awoke the midmorning of the next day stretched out on the rear seat of a fresh sedan he vaguely remembered getting from the Rent-a-Car company to replace the one he totaled the night before. He sat up to discover that he was alone and the car parked next to the curb of Wells Street in the Chicago neighborhood known as Old Town. It took him a while to figure out how to open the rear door of the car because of a jackhammer, hangover headache and because there wasn't any rear door. It was a two-door sedan and, when he couldn't find the catch to release the back of the front seat, he slammed against it hard with both feet, and it snapped free, bowing broken toward the dashboard and giving him the access he needed to climb out the front side of another moronically designed Hertz wreck-a-car.

He stood for a moment with both his legs spread wide and planted firm on the sidewalk to get his balance and let his dizzy spell pass. Thoughts of the previous night's SDS meeting and the role he and his brothers played in its disruption competed with the pain and filled his brain. "The Diggers are an avant-garde gang of a new kind of status-free people! Basically young, hip, ageless, street-wise-savvy, ballsy, macho, righteous, with chutzpah, flexible in that we can do almost everything to the degree that we are capable of doing anything, resourceful, beautiful, courageous heroes of history! Romance is the routine of our daily lives — uninhibited, unpredictable lives without fear of spontaneity! Unordinary, mystery individuals collected together in a bonded union of commitment to muscle 'n gut love of the people! Our inevitable deaths will be the products of the lives we've chosen to live with a healthy respect for both history and eternity!"

"Oooooee!" Emmett emptied whatever other thoughts were coming up next by blowing them out of his mind with a whistling sigh, as he walked toward the two plate-glass windows of the shop in front of him. It was a bookstore, "Barbara's Bookstore" read the sign, and Emmett glanced back at all the things he'd just said to himself for the umpteenth time and muttered a line from one of

Texas black-bluesman Lightning Hopkin's songs, "It's kinda crazy to keep on rubbin' at that same ole goddamn thing!"

Then he entered the bookstore where everyone was frozen still, except his three brothers who'd taken it over for a while. Billy Landout was sitting up cross-legged-lotus on the checkout counter with his back against the cash register, playing a sweet, close-your-eyes tune on that wooden, penny flute of his. The Hun had Miss Barbara, the owner, pinned in a hypnotic trance which he induced with his deluxe-special, super-hip-riffster, rap-elixir that had her narcotized and mesmerized into the magic of his flash-brilliant-spinning web of words. The customers, an employee, and whoever else was in the store, were all in the back-left side of the room where Tumble, unconcerned with their presence, was scratching an on-the-spot-inspired poem with a black crayon on a plasterboard wall that partitioned the stock storage room from the rest of the place. It was a long poem, eventually filling the entire, empty, top-to-bottom space of the wall with Tumble's articulation of his own sense of the reality in which he lived and worked with his Digger brothers and sisters. Emmett watched Tumble on his knees painstakingly writing down what was on his mind and read:

#### STATE OF THE SOUL PREPARED FOR WAR

A document using the word love-life. Not using the word hate. But by implication incorporating negative energy as incisive scalpel wielded by brains, hands, hearts of loving brothers.

#### CHOOSE YOUR WEAPONS

Flowers or guns — stand by them; learn their essential energies. Apply them as the use permits. You can have both; only you can't shoot flowers and guns make lousy flower pots.

#### PREPARE TO SURVIVE

America throttles herself in abstract property wars, consumer vessels floated on the blood of our own. We wear flowers in our hair because they're there and beautiful.

#### SUICIDE OR MURDER?

(What are *you* thinking about)

(What are *you* thinking about)

Guns are

Machines of death

We prepare our minds with.  
To perpetuate life. Protect  
Our women and children.  
Machines we intend never to use  
Except in defense.  
And when those of you who would  
Strangle our only human possibility  
Die by our bullets — they will have been fired  
Into your brains thru eyes of our loving you.  
Your blood soaking the ground will be our blood —  
Your death our death.  
But we shall pass gently on from there in this body  
To tend further children and other flowers; and  
Your body shall rot and nourish the planet's new  
Seeds long before ours.

/?/1/?

And the winner shall be man; and man shall survive.  
My people shall live because they know — each one —  
Unto himself IS THE LEADER — and every invention  
Of slave politic trickery will fail and crumble,  
IMMEDIATELY, in this source dialectic of one to one  
Confrontation with all things.

THE FACE OF THIS INDIVIDUAL'S REVOLUTION:

*YOU ARE THE LEADER* .....

the san francisco diggers  
june — 1967

Later that night, the four of them were in a diner in Drag City, Kansas, eating the last hot meal of their trip back to Frisco. There were some hot-rod country boys in the place, hanging on the juke-box and posing for their girl friends. They were big, but there wasn't going to be no fight or trouble or nothing, because they were only as big as high-school football players are big and just as young. The food was good, and the four brothers were glad it took the youngsters a long time to come over to ask them questions about Haight-Ashbury, because they wanted nothing to distract their attention from enjoying the savory meal.

The kids were nervous at first, because Tumble answered their questions, and he was nearly twice their age and hard-fisted tough with a face to match, the kind of a man who would've been a very big fish in the little pond of their small town and someone who would never have even spoken with them, much less politely answered their queries. The boys asked all kinds of things about San

Francisco persons whose names they read or heard somewhere. Then one said, "Y' know me 'n a few others are goin' out there in a couple of weeks t' join up with Emmett Grogan 'n his Diggers. Did any you fellas ever meet him?"

The statement made Billy Landout laugh and the Hun drop a dime into the jukebox to play a Hank Williams record. Tumble looked at Emmett who was sitting next to him and slowly turning around toward the seven or eight kids to ask them something. "Where'd you fellas hear about that guy and what-did-you-call-'em, the Diggers?"

The kids sort of looked at each other with a mild disbelief that four grown-up, longhaired, on-the-road, real-live Haight-Ashbury, San Francisco hippies didn't know everything there was to know about Emmett Grogan and the Diggers. The one who seemed to be doing all the talking started up again saying, "Man, everyone knows 'bout Emmett Grogan 'n the Diggers, even 'round here! Why they run the Haight-Ashbury 'n make sure everyone gets 'nough to eat 'n a place to sleep 'n clothes to wear 'n everything a body needs to do his thing! Why there's a girl livin' less than a mile away from here right now who ran away 'bout six months ago when she turned fifteen, 'n went to Frisco where she lived with the Diggers 'n even made it with Emmett Grogan himself. Swear to God! Right, fellas? And talk is she's carryin' his baby right now, but nobody knows fer sure, so's it could be just talk. But she was there all right, 'n she stayed with them people, 'n they done right by her, too. Otherwise, even she said, she'd never of made it alone through those three months she spent out there 'fore the fuzz picked her up. Man! You fellas just gotta know 'bout Emmett Grogan and the Diggers, if you're from Frisco!"

"Oh, we do! We heard about 'em, but we'd already hit the road, drivin' around the country by the time they really started their operation in the Haight. Good people! What's the check, chief, 'n put it all on one, okay? Well, I guess we'll be seein' you fellas out on the coast soon, huh?! Been nice talkin' with you. Be seein' you."

"Yea, later, man!"

An unexpected and strange phenomenon began to take place among the four men inside the car as soon as they were on their way. The brief encounter in the diner with the young teenyboppers, and the way they spoke about "Emmett Grogan" and "*his* Diggers" and

"*their* leader" set Emmet apart from his three brothers, not as a matter of his choice, but rather theirs.

Billy Landout thought that Emmett's underground-superstardom as an invisible American cultural hero was mildly hilarious. "They've already got you in the Hipsters Hall of Folklore Fame, and they don't even know what the fuck you look like! You're just hearsay, Emmett. Just a whole lotta hearsay." Then, Tumble suddenly became sullen toward Emmett and showed signs of remaining glum for the entire last lap of the journey. The Hun was predictably bitter at so outrageous an assault on his ego. After all, he was one, too, wasn't he? He even began to make insinuations that Emmett had been using "him" and "his" Free Store all along and was further conspiring to employ "him" and "his" thing as the main rung in the ladder that he was planning to climb to success and fame!

Emmett remained jocular about the whole absurd affair, assuming that his brothers knew it was all a ridiculous matter and he had nothing consciously to do with a media image which he himself had done the most to liquidate. "I mean, look! They were just a bunch of kids who are still a year behind in history and haven't heard yet that I don't really exist. That's all!" But when the Hun went on to insist that "No!" that wasn't all, with his wild-eyed, paranoid, conspiracy-against-him fantasy, Emmett felt like an asshole apologizing for something he could only control by dying.

So he blew it, and started over the front seat for the Hun, to maybe slap some sense into him or at least crack him in his mouth, but Tumble grabbed him, pulling him back down into the rear just as Billy almost lost control of the ninety-mile-per-hour speeding car, driving it along the metal guard rail for a few yards before being able to swing it back into the lane and down on the highway. All of them knew at once that very little was ever going to be the same between them again, and Emmett, especially, felt it was the beginning of the end for their always more or less tenuous solidarity as brothers, and for the name "Diggers" — just a word meaning "Free" — which had somehow already gotten out of hand and onto the charts.

The proof of this pudding came in its eating early the next morning, when the four men pulled into a service station alongside the Route 80 Freeway that bypasses Sacramento. This was to be their last stop, because they were in the home stretch with only eighty-five

more miles to go to San Francisco which they left back-to-back together, but to which each of them was now returning somehow alone in the same car.

While the attendant checked out the radiator water and put four or five dollars' worth of gas in the car, the four men used the facilities in the separate ladies' and gents' bathrooms to wash away the sleep none of them had during the night, especially Billy. He had driven the past dozen hours, only stopping here and there for gas and never saying a word, just softly playing a tune on a ten-cent harmonica that appeared from his same old floppy jacket somewhere along the way. He didn't trust any of the other three with his life anymore, since the deal between all of them had gone down in the diner, and he wasn't going to put himself in any of their hands by riding in a car that one of them drove. So he hadn't, and even though the Hun complained that he wanted to share some of the driving to relax his nerves, Billy Landout silently refused with Tumble fully backing him up because his eyes could see that it was the only sensible thing to do with a strange, unknown road blanketed in the darkness of a night filled with tension. Emmett didn't say anything, for as long as Billy Landout was behind the wheel, he knew he was safe.

The four of them were standing by the coffee-dispensing machine, sipping the boiling hot, tan-colored water, when the Hun went into a sarcastic riff, asking Billy if he could please drive the rest of the way home, now that it was daylight and the freeway was jammed with traffic, making it impossible for him to endanger any of their precious lives by speeding. Billy said he didn't mind a bit, if the others didn't, because he was going to lie down on the back seat and sleep the last leg of the journey into the city. Then he walked toward the car and began unlacing his shoes for his nap.

Tumble walked over to the attendant, paid him the money, and chatted about what the traffic was probably going to be like at that time of the day. Emmett took a minute or two getting change of a quarter, so he could buy a couple of packs of Dentine gum to get the taste of the watered-down coffee out of his mouth and also make believe his teeth were clean. The Hun was already behind the wheel, gunning the engine to announce that he was ready to depart, and Emmett ran over and climbed into the front seat with Tumble after they tossed a coin for who was going to ride shotgun.

The three of them had more than enough room in the front seat. Emmett, in the middle, fiddled with the dials of the radio, trying to

locate a San Francisco station, and Tumble leaned his head out the window to catch the breeze that would hopefully resurrect his face from the exhausted numbness of his head. The Hun pulled into the middle land of the freeway and was driving unusually smoothly, only using the express lane now and then to pass a Sunday driver, being careful not to draw the attention of a state highway cop.

They had been driving nearly two hours and had just bypassed Berkeley, swinging off the freeway and onto the entrance ramp of the bridge to take them across the bay to San Francisco, when Emmett turned around to wake up Billy Landout in the back seat, only to discover he wasn't there. "Billy! Billy's gone! He's not there!" Tumble jumped around surprised, then up on his knees, bending over the back of the front seat to check out the rear floor of the car. "Where the fuck is he?! Billy!"

As soon as they crossed the Bay Bridge they turned off an exit and pulled the car onto a city side street, double-parking it for a moment to finally make certain that Billy wasn't there. His shoes were there, underneath the woven cotton blanket where he was supposed to be, but wasn't. The three of them looked at each other, and at the same time each realized that they had left Billy Landout back at the Sacramento service station without his shoes and with no money. They left him there, and whether they did it consciously or unconsciously it didn't matter. It was all the same. They left him there, and it didn't make any difference who was driving or who wasn't. They *all* left him there.

They left Billy Landout back there in a service station nearly one hundred miles away without his shoes, because they really didn't care about each other anymore, and now everything was finally different. Everything Emmett imagined the night before had just proved itself to be brutally true, and he was more sad than angry because he instinctively knew that his brother Billy Landout would never forgive him for having left him behind like that without even his shoes, and he wouldn't be his brother any longer and would never speak to him again. And he never has, not even to listen to Emmett simply tell him, "Sorry, Billy. Sorry."

After that real and symbolic purge of one of the brothers, only the Digger women remained a united front while the men took care of what they had to in their separate ways. Emmett did practically nothing besides work with Free Food, picking it up or stealing the meat and delivering it to the women who cooked it for the now outrageous "Summer of Love" hordes who crowded into the Pan-

handle every day at four in the afternoon. He did the Free Food work mostly by himself, but whenever he did have a partner to help him with the operation, it was usually a woman. Women who weren't on the make to become "Emmett Grogan's old lady" or looking for a chance to play a role in a romantic, Robin Hood-adventure trip — rather, women who were strong, sincere, loyal and brave in their determination to serve the people and help liberate them from the oppression of their poverty.

These women were only girls to most men because the majority of them were still in their middle or late teens or had just turned twenty. To Emmett, however, they were always women and will always be women — every one of them more beautiful than the rest. It wasn't long before he came to trust them more, much more, than he did most men who claimed to be his brothers.

The Hun was involved only in the theater of the Trip Without A Ticket free store and spent the rest of his time developing the guerilla theater possibilities of the streets. Tumble managed as many trucks as he could get hold of and used them to deliver goods to the free store, transport garbage from the crash pads to the dump, bus people around the city, and every other conceivable usage he could think of. Coyote kept himself busy performing with the San Francisco Mime Troupe for what he promised would be the rest of the summer. Billy Landout split from the city and never came back there to live or work again, just to stop on his way to someplace else.

Emmett seldom regularly saw anyone but the women, and he would only get together with the rest on special occasions, as when they'd all work with each other to stage a celebration for something like the summer solstice or the Fourth of July. His job, which he usually did with Tumble during the production of each of these free-for-all extravaganzas, was always the same: to arrange with the leaders of the rock groups, like Janis Joplin or Jerry Garcia, for them to play; to get enough eighteen-foot, flatbed trucks to use, coupled back to back, as stages for the bands — of which seldom less than two were ever set up in one of the expansive meadows of Golden Gate Park; to supply the meat or poultry and to make a deal with a special group of elderly black men from the Fillmore district to prepare a huge vat of barbecue sauce with which they'd baste the meat they cooked over an open charcoal pit all morning and afternoon of the day's event, giving each piece away to the hungry crowd

as soon as it was browned and the unhurried black men felt it was ready to be eaten.

They were always monstrous affairs with thirty to fifty thousand people attending, even though they were always purposely held on a weekday to keep the crowds down. There were at least twenty-five or thirty such "parties," as they were called, which were all paid for by money hustled for whatever was needed, like the flatbed trucks, and arranged, produced and given away by Emmett, Tumble, the Hun, Coyote, the women — by all the Diggers! Everyone else simply took care of incidentals or offered their services, like the rock groups. Only a handful of intimate outsiders knew at that time that the Diggers were entirely responsible for practically every free party ever held in the Golden Gate Park of San Francisco during those years of '67, '68 and early '69. Almost everyone else assumed that the rock bands, like the Grateful Dead, the Airplane or Country Joe and his Fish, put on the affairs to show people how much they appreciated and loved them for buying their albums, and also concluded that the various record companies paid the expenses for everything like the free barbecued chickens or ribs, as well as the salaries of the half dozen or so "old, nigger cooks."

The reason no one knew who was responsible was that the Diggers wanted it that way, since "free" means not copping credit. What began to make Emmett and the others bitter and crazy was that, after each of these events, some of the musicians in the bands, as well as several well-known HIP figures who considered themselves spokesmen for the Haight, made statements to the establishment and underground media which more than just suggested that they were responsible for the entire organization and cost of the celebration, because they wanted to express the love they felt for their brothers and sisters in the community, and "Blah, blah, blah!"

It was a burn all right, but neither Emmett nor anyone of the people he worked with said anything or did anything to set the record straight. Eventually, however, after all the bands made it to the big time, the one group whose manager claimed most of the responsibility for most of the free parties most of the time, found themselves in New York — facing an angry East Village community who were duped by their own stupidity and plenty of publicity about "the hip people's band" into believing that the only live music this particular rock group played was always heard for free. It got to a point where the leader of the band had to make a speech

explaining the reason they were actually charging an admission price for entrance to their New York concerts. He was forced into all sorts of strenuous positions, trying to defend his group's right to earn money from the hippie community, until he obviously was stretched to a point by all the interviews poking the same old "But we thought you always played for free . . ." line at him, that he finally screamed something like, "There's no free lunch! No free lunch! No such thing, okay?! We play music for money, and a long time ago, when we felt like it, in the park with our friends, okay?! I mean, we're professionals and this is a business, man!" And that was that, but it sure took a long time for it to go down, and it still didn't come out like it really was.

It was right after one of these free parties celebrating the Fourth of July, '67, that the Diggers finally gave the last thing they collectively had of themselves away — their name, the Diggers. No one knew it had been given away until the moment it happened. Heavyweight scribe and poet Kirby Doyle, author of *Happiness Bastard*, the first free novel published by the Communication Company, broadcast the news to the people in this street paper:

#### THE BIRTH OF DIGGER BATMAN

O sky glorious, O sky divine — People — dominions — nations — Heavens — door — O walking deliverance — O Passage — People — O People — Machines — Animals — Trees — Towers & Bridges — O Seed — O colors — Faces — All Moving Things — Life, hello . . . I want to tell you of the birth of Digger.

Morning, about 9:30, July 5th, 1967 — clear and sunny upon the city, the sky echoing with happiness, the streets still and clean and just to walk on them is to be silent in the bright rising from the night after a big 4th of July electric music and free feed celebration out in the park where Emmett and the cooks from the Fillmore had made barbecue for about 4,000 people.

I am up early and out into the street from Coyote's on Pine Street where the Communication Company lived — out and standing in the good day with the smiles all over me, just letting the warmth and the light honey about on me, my clothes glowing and the fine feeling seeping to the skin and a touch tasting to my innards, and O the head is just wanting to face with smiles in all directions. I had driven Susan Parker to the airport a couple days before and still had her car so I swings over a few blocks to Geary thinking to have coffee and a morning smoke with the Jahrmarkts, Billy and Joan and the kids.

Up two flights, rap rap on the door and Bill answers to my hello half-dressed and happy. "The baby's coming," is what I remember of him having said. And there is Joan sitting in the sun of those bright windows looking out over downtown and the bay, sitting on the bed, the mattress inevitably close to the floor, and the three kids — Jade, Hassan and Caledonia — kind of hushed and happy because they know the baby is coming and have been waiting too.

So Joany's been in labor since the night before and now sits very calm with a \$3 tin watch in her hand timing the contractions — about every 7 minutes and getting closer together. So me and Billy just standing there kind of stunned and sunny, not thinking too much about what to do. "You got any arrangements made?" I says, and "no" is his reply.

It kind of goes like that, having a cigarette and a cup of coffee in the warmth of the morning in the corner room with just one fact we're standing in — the baby's coming and we are smiling and blinking lumenant with speech in soft sounds. Nobody is thinking too much about hospitals though we figure lightly first about getting Joan into one of those places, but not too serious.

I sound on Joan if she thinks she got time for me to go phone around and see what I can do, get help I guess is what I meant, and she says there's plenty of time, so I cut out and drive over to Margo St. James's place on Nob Hill and start phoning.

I get ahold of Kaiser Hospital and after about seven switchings back and forth, I get ahold of some voice that says No, there is no chance of getting into their facilities without two hundred and fifty dollars in front even if the baby is on the way right now, and that the only thing that They, this voice can suggest is to take The Expectant to County Hospital, which said set of instructions vis-à-vis that exhausted brick pile of agony so offends my ear I come near to throwing the phone across the room.

So, I phone Tumble to let somebody else know what's happening (who tells Emmett who sends an ambulance which nobody quite knows what to do with except send it away). So I clean out Margo's refrigerator of all its food and drive back over to the Communication Company where is lovely Sam and Cassandra and Claude and Helene who I break it down to.

Right away Claude is on the horn talking here and there. I get Cassandra and head back to Billy's, drop off Cassandra and split down to the store to get some smokes and am just rounding the corner on Geary when Claude pulls up to tell me he is on his way to Bolinas to get John Doss, a friend and head of pediatrics at Kaiser.

Upstairs is Cassandra cleaning the kitchen, making coffee and a bit to eat for the kids. It is late morning now and we relax — everything seems to be going along unmolested by even the quiet logic of time— Cassandra softly busy in the kitchen, Billy sitting with Joan in the sunny

corner room, the kids hushed and talking among themselves in their room, and I with the stillness of no thinking in my head gazing out the window under the Bat flag at the greenish dome of city hall.

Rap rap on the door and I go to open it to Richard Brautigan who comes in under a soft tan hat, checks out the action, spots Cassandra in the kitchen, decides everything is cool, walks once again through the rooms, tall, slightly stooping like a gentle spider standing up (we are all spiders, or ants, or something, I remember wondering, watching Richard putting his hands in his pockets and taking them out), decides to split. "Be back in a while — need anything?" "No, nothing." Out the door he goes.

It's early afternoon now. Quite suddenly Joan gets up, walks into the kitchen and squats down flat-footed on the floor with her back leaning to the wall, contractions coming quicker, Billy kneeling with her, Cassandra calm, me getting nervous — smoking cigarettes.

Knock on the door and in comes Claude and Helene with John Doss, way over 6 foot, a tower of a man with those huge gentle hands that by mere holding can take the panic from a hurt child. All of a sudden it seems we got the best. Right away he's with Joan, coat off, talking real easy, squat'd down, laughing with the simplicity of things. Claude asks me if I want to smoke some gold and lays a joint on me — I take it and put it on Billy.

People begin arriving — Tumble and Lenore, Tumble much calmer than the day before in the park loaded on acid and telling Richie Marley real anxious, "There's a warp in the continuum!" Emmett arrives. Diggers start coming.

By now the kitchen is a place of prayer — Joan in labor on the big patch quilt now in the middle of the kitchen floor and around her kneeling and sitting silent people — silent and back within listening to what silence says at self to birth.

John Doss moves in from the crowded front room every now and then and kneels his huge person down to speak quietly to Joan as he feels with those giant hands across her belly for the baby within. Billy squats Arab-silent flat-footed beside Joan, his hair long about his shoulders, staring into the thick air that holds the deep flux of his unspeaking Arab Prayer.

Now the city has darkened for night, and Geary Street outside the window crawls alive with the homeward bound. Across the street the huge sign of an auto-agency — BOAZ, in Hebrew "the lion-hearted" — in black and white and red letters sends ancient benedictions into the rooms, and the green dome of city hall is alit as if it were a mosque removed one world and glowing not with bulbs nor candle but rather ringed with another light.

Now from out the night John and Sara and Coyote and Sam and Gandolf and Natural Suzanne and more Diggers arrive like a troupe or

miming chorus bearing brown paper sacks filled with sandwiches — huge Poor Boys from some ecstasy delicatessen — the picture: Joan about to give birth on the kitchen floor, one dim shaded desk lamp by her feet, and a dozen people encircling her eating sandwiches and smoking weed, faces all in shadow of the only lamp.

The contractions have begun to quicken and Joany is saying over and over again softly, "Come on little Baby . . . come on" — a little song over and over again directed inside as if by this time the intelligence of the as yet enwombed Baby was beginning to be focused on its birthing passage by the soft speech of Joany's song — "Come on Baby . . . come on little Baby . . . come on."

The labor was becoming long, more than 24 hours now and the concentration of Joan's song had drawn the muscle lines tensed above her eyes pointing to a spot between them, slightly above them, and directly within.

John Doss had a slightly worried look as his hands felt over her belly. He seemed to be trying to gauge the position. Reaching within he felt for the baby's head which seemed to be turned in a wrong direction. The contractions were now great visible waves that moved down across Joan's belly and with each one her tightened face appeared to have the full focused power of everything behind it pouring down through her body toward the slow and heavy workings and waves of force that carried the baby in its passage.

"I need an instrument," he said mentioning some sort of birthing clamp. "I have to turn the baby's head." He turned to someone there and told them to go across the street to the hospital and get an instrument and an intern.

Meanwhile John begins instructing Billy in how he, Billy, is going to receive his baby. Beneath the belly skin you can see the baby making its movements. Around Joan about a dozen Diggers and Digger ladies looking like all the accumulated faces of the Universe, the Divines of Ever pouring from each eye.

Like no time there is a bang on the door and two white coated hospital guys come in stiff and important with shiny metal in their hands, take one look at the scene and decide it won't do for them to have anything to do with it. John Doss goes to meet them and they start backing off real quick. John grabs one of the guys by the lapels and starts to jerk the doctor's jacket off and gets it down to around the guy's elbows.

"Take off that coat and get to work in here, for Christ's sake. Be a doctor for once in your life!" he says to the guy.

"Take it easy, John, take it easy," the other guy tries to soothe. "This can't be done here . . . it's not sterile. She must be moved to the hospital."

About this time I start to ride up. "She isn't going anywhere," I says leaning across Joan at the guy. "Cool it," Bill says from the floor. They

split threatening an ambulance, and for all we know, the Heat, so everybody settles down again with "Come on baby" going very strong.

So John is back down with Billy showing him how to receive the baby, when it starts to come out and so quick and easy it seems a miracle but Billy has the baby's head in his hands and it looks like throughout the whole scene of deliverance the baby had turned its own head and decided to come on out and with a thick liquid *whoosh* is right in Billy's hands. I am on my knees by Joany's head and I lean down with little more than a whisper, "It's a boy."

With some cotton string John Doss ties off the umbilical cord and cuts it with a pocketknife and the baby is born, out, free, alive and beautiful crying in his father's hands so fast that it was not a process of birth at last but life occurring.

John Doss begins cleaning up Joany and places the afterbirth in a basin.

"Eat!" he says to the circle of joyously lighted faces holding out the basin. "Everybody eat!" and starts carrying the basin around from one to one and each dips a hand to the stuff of birth and blood and tastes and never, from no dope I have ever taken, have I got so instantly high. Somebody marks the time, 10:41, and asks Billy the baby's name.

"Digger!" Billy answers back with a voice loud with single word as its own rising song.

The bloodied ends of the umbilical tying string Billy takes and wraps up in a poem I had made that afternoon to lay on the kitchen floor:

*Velvet kneeling meat —  
Crazyblood in his prayers.*

is all I remember.

At the instant Billy Batman called his child by their name, the Diggers knew it was given away and they never used it to refer to themselves again. Of course, it was a slow process to hip the San Francisco community to the fact that they were no longer to be known as the Diggers, but rather as the Free City Collective or Commune or whatever. Within a few months, however, no one in the Haight-Ashbury, except the press, used the word that is now simply the name of a burly, blond-haired boy who's already demonstrated that he's got the strength and the vision to go with his birth tag.

Emmett only left the city one more time that so-called Summer of Love to go to New York again to take care of some business and also on to London for a few days to take part in a conference billed as

“The Dialectics of Liberation.” As usual, it turned out to be a mistake and a waste of time for him, especially since he was now alone and traveled that way. It was quite uncomfortable at times, when all around him were apparently surrounded by their “brothers and sisters.” He hadn’t as yet resigned himself to the fact that he was, once again, the loner he had been for most of his prior life, and it was still hard and confusing for him to be working with and for men who didn’t particularly care about him or each other as brothers anymore. The hard, nitty-gritty reality of this wouldn’t directly strike him with its naked cold-bloodedness for another six or seven months. And so he went on about his business, as if everything was the same between him and his people and without letting on to even himself, much less anyone else, that the San Francisco family of which he was a member was coming apart at its seams.

The business that Emmett went to take care of in New York had to do with money. He fortunately didn’t have to spend much time getting what was needed together and sending it back home, using a dozen different money orders to make sure that the few thousand dollars was spread evenly among the people he wired it to — the Free City Collective.

This money he posted back to the people with whom he worked was not raised at any benefit function or charity ball. Even though times were often harder than it was possible to endure and the pickings were nowhere to be found, much less slim, the Free City people never broke their word to themselves by holding a rock concert benefit that would probably have raised enough money to bankroll all their operations for an entire year or more. They never did it, because it was too easy, and more important, they didn’t want the common, low-money people or even their children to end up paying for their trip.

The money they always needed was always gotten in the same various ways that Emmett was able to get it during those few July days in New York. That is to say, it was sometimes stolen or sometimes hustled from persons or corporations that didn’t miss it anyway. Some of the dollar energy they needed to operate was simply given to them, however, through a tax-deductible middleman by friends who’d made it in a legitimate business enterprise or in one sort of larcenous activity or another, in which case the necessity of using the tax-deductible middleman was eliminated. This money, given to them without any stipulation as to its use, was only taken

from friends, never from strangers, because these individuals were sincere and had no other way of participating in what Emmett and the rest were doing.

It was only after he sent the money back to the West Coast and was getting ready to return there himself that Emmett was invited to the conference in England by its London organizers. From the moment he found out the details of "The Dialectics of Liberation," Emmett felt he had a responsibility to attend because the forum was packed solid with hard-core-radical-political careerists, headlined by Stokely Carmichael, and including John Gerassi, Paul Goodman and Herbert Marcuse whom Emmett regarded with a respect he holds for few men. Also in attendance and representing their various fields of endeavor were the brilliant, vanguard psychiatrist, R.D. Laing; ecologist and student of mammals, Gregory Bateson; poet, scribe and the kind of good person that *is* hard to find, Allen Ginsberg.

He was the only one invited, however, to lay out what was going down among the young people for whom he apparently was selected as representative. So Emmett decided he had to go, but he didn't have any money or means to get there since he'd already mailed nearly all of what he had back to San Francisco. He was standing in Greenwich Village's Sheridan Square at the time, right in front of the *Village Voice* newspaper offices, and that was just about the only reason he had for entering and asking the receptionist if he could please speak with the publisher.

"Is he expecting you?"

"No, but it's an important personal matter, you understand. Just ring him up 'n tell him Grogan, Emmett Grogan, from San Francisco's here to see him, and I'm sure everything'll work out."

The secretary did just that, and, when she put down the phone, she told him that Mr. Edwin Fancher, the publisher, would see him in a few moments, as soon as he was finished with whatever had him occupied. Then she asked Emmett with a phony, rich-man's-daughter shyness, "Is it true?"

"Is what true, pretty lady?"

"That part in the *Ramparts* story — did you really get away with the meat after the butcher hit you over the head?"

"No."

"No?"

"No. Sorry. Next time I'll try harder. Just for you."

A jovial man whose looks Emmett immediately forgot came for-

ward from the rear, introduced himself as the publisher, and after shaking hands invited him into his office which was stuffed-cluttered with political rhetoric printed in every shape and form. It was in that cramped, stocked-with-papers office that Emmett made his less-than-five-minute pitch about how he had to go to England, and Mr. Edwin Fancher listened as the touch was put to him in the form of an exclusive writing proposition which both men knew would never be fulfilled. But he came through, anyway, like an old gambler staking a young fighter to his first main bout or playing a long-shot hunch.

Emmett left the *Village Voice* with a five hundred dollar personal check and was escorted across the street to a bank where he exchanged it for cash. Afterwards, he stood alone in Sheridan Square, counting the money and hoping that the publisher man didn't feel he'd been messed over with a smile and a grin or had come out on the short end of a dirty deal. For that wasn't the case. Emmett didn't hustle him; he simply asked and was given. But just the same, as he walked away, Emmett peeled an eye over his shoulder back at the newspaper office, thinking to himself that if he got any bolder, life was going to end with him being treated a hell of a lot colder. Amen!

At the Fifth Avenue office of the British Overseas Airlines later in the day, Emmett bumped into Danny the Riff, the twenty-four-year-old co-manager of the Grateful Dead rock group. He, too, was buying a ticket to London, and they on-the-spot decided to travel there together on the same flight that night. Both of them had some loose ends to tie up around the city before they left, so Danny suggested they meet around early evening in the Park Avenue apartment of a friend of his. He gave Emmett the address with a "See you there later, brother!" before bouncing away, looking real good, dressed in tattered-patched jeans and carrying an attaché case in one hand, a real, made-in-Africa, cast-iron-tipped spear in the other, and an enormous, kinky, Afro-like hairdo flopping all over his head, covering up most of his gentle Moroccan-Jewish face. Emmett watched him trip down the avenue past Saint Patrick's Cathedral, freaking everybody out, stopping them in their tracks and forcing them to turn their heads to get a better look at this costumed monster who was one of their children. He was a peaceful, gentle guy who never intentionally hurt anyone. Maybe that's why Emmett liked him and they were friends. Danny the Riff was a sweet cat.

Emmett shot into Brooklyn on the subway to see his family, and they were glad he did. His parents couldn't for the life of them understand the length of his hair or his name change or the things they heard or read about him and what he was doing. But they were happy to see he was healthy, except his mother commented that he looked a little thin, and his father was a bit disconcerted by the gold earring pierced through his son's left ear. "What does it mean, anyhow?" he finally asked.

Usually, when he was asked this sort of question, Emmett would reply, "It means that you don't know what it means, and I ain't never gonna tell you, ever!" But this man was, after all, his father, and he wasn't being in the least bit arrogant, just curious as to why any young man, especially his own son, would have a thing like that done to him. So Emmett told him, simple and clear, that his brother named Tumble put it there, and all it really meant was that there was going to be a hole in his ear forever which would never let him forget who put it there and what they had both been to each other. The gold earring that was fitted into the hole was given to him by another of his brothers, Coyote, for more or less the same reason. The only difference being that the earring could be removed or changed or lost, like in a fight, or even stolen, but the hole was going to be there for as long as he lived.

His father understood. It all sounded like a story he once read about a group of Rumanian gypsies, but he understood and thanked his son for explaining the matter to him. Then they drank some beer together and reminisced about Grandpa for a while before Emmett felt comfortably certain that he wouldn't offend his father by asking him about his own job and how it was treating him. His father was a proud, sensitive and extremely gentle man, and, even though he was his only son, Emmett wasn't exactly on familiar terms with him, having been away from home for most of his life, ever since he reached puberty.

There was still a bond between them, however, the same kind of bond that's always between two men who are father and son, regardless of whatever else they might be. And so Emmett heard that things weren't going as well as they should be and that his father was quitting the firm he'd been with for over twenty years to accept an offer from a long-time Greek friend of his who was about to open his own stock brokerage house. Leaving Delafield and Delafield, the place he worked at for half of his life, was a difficult decision for his father to make, but it was made easier by his friend who showed him

that his seniority and devoted service in that firm's business meant little in actual terms of pension or retirement benefits. In fact, it meant absolutely nothing at all, except maybe a thousand dollar kiss-off when he reached the age where he'd be too old to work.

Therefore, the next week was going to be his last at that house, and he'd be getting a lot more pay, future benefits and an executive-level managerial position where he wouldn't have to take all the orders, but give some of them, when he made the move to the new brokerage business owned by his Greek friend who he was sure would do right by him. "Good!" Emmett said to his father, and he was very glad that he might just be catching a break for once in his life.

He left shortly after that with a kiss for his sister, who said she'd be out to the West Coast soon, which for some reason didn't make Emmett happy at all, but he didn't have time then to discuss it with her. His parents walked him to the elevator and asked that he return soon and maybe stay awhile. They waved to him and shouted "Goodbye!" through the small window of the door as it closed and the car began its descent to the ground floor. It didn't matter to his mother and father that the window wasn't the porthole of a ship carrying him out to sea or the rear windshield of a taxi driving him to some air or bus terminal. It was still the window of a vehicle that was again taking their son away from them, and they couldn't care less that it was just an elevator bringing him downstairs. It was still taking him away, so they waved and said goodbye, and his mother began crying as she walked the few yards back to the apartment with the man who still made love to her in the same beautifully gentle way he had when he sired their son who, once again, was gone.

It was nearing five o'clock when Emmett entered the Park Avenue building, and the doorman showed him the way to the velvet-lined private elevator that would take him where he wanted to go. The difference between the funky, graffiti-scratched, slow-running elevator that his parents had to use every day, all the time, and the fine, delicately exquisite, smooth flowing quickness of the elevator in which he was now ascending, was maybe what it was all about: the difference between the way the inherited or chosen few live and the way most of the rest are made to live their lives. It was definitely one of the differences that Emmett wanted to eliminate somehow not only from his life, but from life itself.

The double steel outside doors rolled silently open, and Emmett gently slid apart the two glass-windowed, wooden doors of the car's

interior. Before stepping out of the elevator into the red-carpeted, satin-lined foyer, however, he looked down at the polished brass edge of the car's floor and saw that the name of the company that designed and manufactured both the elevator in his parents' building and la crême de la crême of lifts in which he now stood was the same, Otis. He silently congratulated Mr. Otis on his ability to touch all the bases and, smiling to himself, left and sealed up the car.

The door chimes were answered by a blond woman who obviously refused to accept the fact that she was approaching her middle thirties and was rich enough to purchase things which enabled her to fake her twenties. The moment she shook his hand at the door, Emmett knew how old she was, even though he was fooled at first. He could feel the years in the skin covering the fingers and knuckles of her hand which still clasped his, coaxing him toward the large salon that was the rear of the apartment, with a skylight for a ceiling and an immense, articulate, psychedelic painting drawn on one of its otherwise orange-red walls. She introduced herself to Emmett and, upon hearing her surname, he immediately assumed that she was the daughter of a famous film director who hadn't made a good movie in years. But she wasn't.

Danny the Riff was late and had phoned, saying that he'd be by within the next hour which would have left Emmett quite alone with the lovely, good lady, if it hadn't been for the seven or eight men seated around the comfortably furnished salon. Emmett forgot each of their names as soon as they were introduced to him, except for one who was apparently the woman's brother because he had the same surname, wore no wedding ring and looked a lot like her.

Emmett couldn't get over how difficult it was for him to handle people's names, especially when they had two more besides their first. "No big deal," he concluded as he sat down in a billowy armchair to wait for Danny the Riff in a room full of strangers who had already given him a large snifter half-filled with good brandy, because it was what he wanted, and were now trying to get him into their cocktail conversation. But that he didn't want and made it clear by playing spaced and not answering or saying anything. They finally left him alone and returned to what they were talking about among themselves which was business, the stocks and bonds business.

Emmett listened attentively, but unnoticeably, to everything that

was said, trying to make something out of the abbreviations and figures being tossed around. He'd been there about thirty-five or forty minutes and had only really spoken a few words to the good lady hostess, when something added up and he began to realize what it was: within the web of numbers and abstract letters of the alphabet that was most of the men's conversation, there was a message signaled to him, and he suddenly found himself decoding it.

The realization started slowly to build itself up inside of him and quickly became more visible and full. It had to do with the younger brother of the good lady. It had to do with who he was and what he did in the stock market and how he was connected to a pair of names that were mentioned during the course of the conversation. The names were Delafield and Delafield, and, as soon as Emmett heard them, he listened to everything real good, until he was able to figure out that the brother, the man in his very early thirties who was sitting across the room from him, was an allied-member partner of Delafield and Delafield, and was Emmett's father's boss and had been Emmett's father's superior, ever since he graduated from whatever college he attended.

It was immediately after that discovery that Emmett sat back in his chair, astounded at what he was beginning to understand about this brother and sister and about what they really had to do with him. You see, not only was "younger brother" over there Emmett's father's employer, but the guy belonged to the family who owned the Pennsylvania coal mines in which Emmett's grandfather had gone to work when he was eight years old, ninety or so years before. This sister whose penthouse he was sitting in and her younger brother were the children of the family for whom Emmett's father and grandfather had worked their entire fucking lives! They were the children of the men and women who owned It! Who still own It! Who bought and paid for the last two heads of *his family!*

He couldn't believe it, even though he knew it! He was fired with an immediate impulse to leap across the room and scar someone for the rest of their life with his glass. It was all so goddamn, overwhelmingly, unbelievably real that it was, at once, surreal and absurd. He began to calm himself with the thought that he'd never end up working for them, the children. The children who inherited his father's employment would never salary his son — or would they? Their family owns so much that one could end up working for them without even knowing it. The only way to be sure, certain, Emmett

thought, was never to work — never to take wages from anybody as long as he lived, which was preposterous, but probably true just the same.

Emmett was still in the exploding throes of this startling revelation that their family owned his family, and he was really working himself up toward something, when Danny the Riff showed, and they had to go right away or miss their plane to London. Danny seemed to be very tight friends with the sister and brother pair, or at least he was acting that way, so Emmett decided not to blow it, but simply cool the message that was boiling inside his brain.

He began shaking everyone's hand goodbye with a "Be seein' you!" and making damn sure that he didn't come up on younger brother too fast, rather saving him for last. When he did reach him standing at the end of the half-circle of men, Emmett listened to him say something like, "If there's ever anything I can do for you when you're in New York, don't hesitate to call. My sister always knows where I can be reached, okay? Good! Nice meeting you and have yourself a good trip. Bye now." Then he released Emmett's hand from his clasp, but Emmett grabbed his right back and held it tight, looking straight-eyed and softly telling him, so that no one else could really hear, although they knew that something was going down.

"There *is* one small thing you could do for me, if you have the time and would?"

"Sure, what is it? If I can do it, I certainly will."

"Well, there's this friend o' mine, see, who works at your place there, Delafield 'n Delafield. And I was just wonderin' if you'd say hello to him for me?"

"Of course, what's his name and what does he do at Delafield?"

"I really don't know what you call what he does. But he's been doin' it for over twenty years in one of them margin clerk's cages, you know what I mean?"

"Yes . . . uh, what was his name . . .?"

"His name's Grogan. Mister Grogan. He's my father!"

As soon as he said it, Emmett instantly knew that he did the righteous thing and that whatever it was he meant before, he meant it more than ever now.

In the elevator on their way down, Danny asked him what his whispered tête à tête with the brother had been about, commenting that it looked serious. Emmett told him that it wasn't nothing,

really. "Just wanted to let the man know that the both of us inherited the wrong side of the tracks."

"Who? Me and you?"

"No, me and him."

They landed in London before noon the next morning, and after taking a coach from the Heathrow Airport to the Piccadilly Circus passenger terminal, they hopped in separate cabs with Danny confirming where they were to meet that evening, before driving off to take care of the business end of music with a promoter in whose house he would also be staying for the next few days. Emmett read the address which had been given to him by friend and poet Allen Ginsberg, who told him that was where he'd be, and where Emmett could stay if he came over for the "Dialectics of Liberation."

When Emmett told the driver where he wanted to go, the man turned to have a look at this longhaired bloke sitting in the rear of his MacNab and asked him if he was certain he had the address right. Emmett looked again at the piece of paper to make sure and repeated it to the cabbie, assuring him that was where he wanted to go. There was a long pause during which Emmett was given a more careful once-over, and, only after the driver was satisfied that his scrutiny hadn't detected whatever it was he thought might be wrong, did he put the roomy sandy in gear and pull away in the direction of Regent's Park with his passenger enjoying memories of the view from the window, while dropping a questioning line or two about the July cricket matches at Lord's Ground to let the cabbie know that he knew London and didn't want to be driven around to fatten the meter.

Emmett had never heard, or at least couldn't remember ever having heard, of the street that was the address he repeated to the driver. He understood the reason behind this unfamiliarity when they finally got through the thick traffic and arrived in front of one of only four brilliantly white, Grecian-columned houses, standing side by side with a dignified magnificence that was designed to accentuate the exclusiveness of what was not a street, but a "terrace" bordering the rolling green splendor of the very private northwest side of Regent's Park. It was then that the driver again asked Emmett whether he was still sure that this was where he wanted to be let out, because, he explained, he knew for a fact that at least three of the four imperial houses were presently occupied by members of the Queen's royal family and, "'Scuse me, mate, but you jus' don't

look the type t' be visitin' them class of people, 'less you're goin' inside to fix the plumbin' or something. Ya know wha' I mean?"

The fact of the matter was that Emmett *did* know what he meant and wasn't really certain any longer, and, after showing the driver the slip of paper with the address on it which they both agreed he could have written down wrong, he told him to wait a minute, until he found out if he was in the right place by ringing the doorbell to see whether the residents were expecting him.

The door was opened by Marietta, the young, stoically tall woman of pale silence who taught Allen Ginsberg this and that about Indian music, prayers and mantra chants, whose mere appearance in the doorway all dressed in a cotton sari, wrapped warm with a bulky wool sweater told Emmett that this was where he was supposed to be, and he kissed her.

After paying his fare and reassuring the MacNab driver that he was home, Emmett took his small bag filled mostly with notes, papers and an extra pair of socks and walked back up the marble stairs, under an archway, and through the front door. He felt as if he were entering a palace, and he was. A small palace, but a palace just the same, lightly decorated with antiques and furnished with sparse but deliciously mellow Louis XIV furniture to avoid cluttering up the elegant space of walnut-paneled floors and ever-so-grand rooms.

Everyone was there and Allen introduced him first to two of the men who'd affected his life and whom he'd always wanted to meet, William Burroughs and Alexander Trocchi, both writers, poets, prophets and seers. The woman whose place it was came forward with the grace and beauty of years of wealthy refinement and with a delicate whisper greeted Emmett and sincerely expressed hope that his journey across the sea had been a pleasant one. Her name, strangely enough, meant "bread" in certain dialects of Italian and that was exactly what she had to offer and had been offering to poets for years in her role as the chief benefactress of dozens of artists throughout the world. She was a good, gracious woman of whom very few unkind words have ever been spoken. She showed Emmett to his room.

The giant main event of the week-long "Dialectics of Liberation" conference was to occur that night, beginning at 8:00 P.M., and a few short hours before that, Emmett made a mistake. He went with some of the men, whom he considered his elders because of their "beat experience," across town to a communal house where many of the old-timers and founding fathers of white hipsterism lived to-

gether as expatriates from their various countries or simply as British artists who felt outcast in their own land. It was a spectacular place full of singular originals — the men and women artists and their work. There was also plenty of dope, but unfortunately only two varieties of it, Lebanese hashish and pure London, drugstore heroin which was, of course, legal there for any registered addict.

The group sat in a quick cluster on the thick, Persian-rugged floor of what appeared to be the living room, — all the rooms looked so much alike it was hard to tell any difference between them with the exception of the kitchen and W.C. There was a tray on the floor, and Emmett helped himself to the papers, cigarette tobacco and hash, using about six or seven papers and mixing the loose tobacco with lots of hash to roll a “splif” which is a joint about as fat as a cigar and just as long. It took him nearly half an hour to smoke it with no help from anyone, because they all had their own or were not interested in anything else but the high-grade pharmacy scag. So was Emmett, and by the time he was loaded on smoke, he started getting a real yen to get off behind some of that fine A-1 stuff, and he did, doing himself up as if he had his last fix the day before, instead of a decade ago.

The moment the rush hit and the dope ran through his veins, every cell in Emmett’s body snapped with remembrance of the sensation they had never really forgotten during the ten, long, clean, past years. He nodded out right after what was only a cellular memory became again a real feeling enveloping his body in its own erotic warmth. He didn’t even have time for any regrets — if he had any — just enough time to nod his head plo! down on his chest which wasn’t heaving with its asthmatic wheeze any longer.

Emmett’s nod became a deep sleep with him propped up in the corner of the room, leaning against the interesting walls undisturbed by anything or body. One of the poet elders in the house woke him up after three or four hours, because night was rapidly falling, and Emmett had to get to the “Dialectics of Liberation” conference being held in a gigantic, fantastic, huge dome of a building appropriately called the Roundhouse. It had once been the warehouse, storage depot and garage for the numerous vehicles of London’s Metropolitan Transport system.

When Emmett arrived there a little before eight o’clock that Saturday night, he liked the industrial, working-class smell and leftover accoutrements of the brilliantly designed, hollow-mammoth Roundhouse, but he didn’t particularly like the look of the weekend crowd

of four or five thousand sitting in row after row of collapsible wooden chairs and drinking beer from large gallon cans which was the only way to juice that Saturday night, because all the pubs would be shut down by the time this main session of the conference ended.

Emmett was still loaded with the sleepiness of heroin and very much on the nod, his eyes pinned and glassy and all the love taken from them by a heavy look of coldness. He kept himself together, though, knowing that he had to, because in a few minutes he'd be sitting on the stage with all the left-wing superstars and would make a ten-minute speech. A speech he planned and even researched, but now was too fucked up to deliver properly. He had even forgotten his notes back at the house, but it was no big thing, really, because he'd have another chance the following day when the only speaker billed for the afternoon was him, and he had been assured that the response to hear him rap was well worth his having traveled there. So, tonight he figured he would relax and tomorrow do what he came to do.

They were all standing backstage, and Allen Ginsberg fulfilled his usual sincere diplomatic role by introducing him to everybody, one at a time. Suddenly she was standing in front of him, an elegant, gracefully tall black woman with a coiffeured Afro and dressed in a West African robe. She said her name was Angela Davis and that she had been hearing about Emmett and the Diggers in San Diego where she was a student and teacher in the philosophy department at the University of California. She invited him to look her up whenever he was in that part of the state and then let him go as Allen pulled him away towards the cluster of black people surrounding the man in whose entourage Angela Davis was traveling at the time — Stokely Carmichael.

Allen excused and pardon me'd his way through the group, holding onto Emmett and dragging him toward the center and the man who was all decked out in a bright orange shirt. When they reached him, Allen treated the introduction with the decorum he thought appropriate for a historic meeting. The two men were standing face to face only a few feet apart, and the backstage crowd quieted down to maybe hear what was going to be said as Stokely Carmichael stuck out his hand, his face broadening into a smile, intending to say something like "Glad to meet you, brother." But he didn't, because Emmett didn't raise his hand in greeting or change the cold, hard expression on his face or even give any sign that he intended to. He

just stood there, deadpanning Carmichael and his outstretched hand and the smile on Carmichael's face quickly dropped into a frown as he began to realize that this longhaired Digger dude, Emmett Grogan, was making him look like a goddamn fool in front of everybody.

Stokely Carmichael was obviously outraged by this stone affront to his dignity as one of the proclaimed leaders of American radicalism, and he did an abrupt about-face, stomping away and huffin' 'n puffin' thunder and smoke about "Who's that longhaired, motherfuckin' hippie punk think he is . . . !" He walked away fast and furious with his bodyguards and fellow Black Power advocates following him and glaring back at Emmett, mumbling to one another that they should've guarded their leader better and not have permitted that "white motherfucker!" to insult him.

The rest of the backstage groupies were whispering hard and heavy about what they just witnessed, and reporters were asking around about Emmett, like who he *really* was and why he didn't shake Carmichael's hand. A few even concluded that he was a racist and didn't want to touch black skin.

Someone finally asked Emmett himself, and he told them he didn't like Stokely Carmichael and hadn't wanted to meet him, but somebody unwittingly brought them together, and he felt he would've been lying the way all politicians, be they radical or conservative, lie, and so he simply refused to smile back at and shake the hand of a man he disliked extremely. "But it was nothing personal, you understand. In fact, very few things I'll do here or ever do anywhere are personal — they're political."

Shortly afterwards, Emmett was led onto the stage where he sat on the same kind of a wooden folding chair in which the five thousand or so persons in the audience were also seated, facing him with their ten thousand eyes, and he was suddenly very glad that he'd worn his wire-rimmed sunglasses to shade the pinning of his eyes.

The speeches were routine and predictable and were all sponsored by token honorariums from the London Institute of Phenomenological Studies, except Emmett's which was free. Psychiatrist R. D. Laing said everyone was crazy, including himself; John Gerassi had recently returned from Cuba and spoke about the necessity for a violent revolution; Gregory Bateson talked about the scientific apocalyptic aspect of the anxiety syndrome from which everyone was suffering; Allen Ginsberg insisted that the best tactic of psychopolitical action was to "make public all the private hallucinations

and fantasies of our priest-hero-politician-military-police leaders, like those of John Edgar Hoover, for instance"; the keynote speaker, Stokely Carmichael, still very upset with Emmett, lashed out at the longhaired hippies who, he claimed, were advocating peace in time of revolutionary warfare and were traitors to the radical movement, because their upper-middle-class affluence afforded them the choice of nonviolence and the means with which to drop out of the fight for liberation which he quoted as "only coming through the barrel of a gun!"; Paul Goodman suggested that governments might begin applying immediate social welfare ideals and principles by paying, for example, people on New York's welfare rolls to live in the country, instead of in the city. "Give them the same money, and say, 'You don't have to live *in* New York, you can live *out* of New York!'; Herbert Marcuse didn't say anything because he wasn't there, having hopefully found something more important to do with the time; Emmett spoke last.

He had been sitting on the stage for over an hour, wavering in and out of the focus of his consciousness behind his tinted, penny-bun glasses and every once in a while listening to what someone had to say. The only one he was hardly able to hear was Stokely Carmichael who yelled so goddamn loud that the tone finally became the point of his speech rather than the words. The crowd had given him an enthusiastic round of applause which they directed at the singer and not his song. Then, all of a sudden, Emmett found himself standing stage-center in front of the microphone and removing his shades for want of something to do and because none of the other speakers who were wearing them had taken them off to address the audience. It took him a moment to adjust his eyes to the startling lights, and, when he cleared them of the brilliance he focused on one individual out of that whole crowd of five thousand — William Burroughs, seated in the fourth or fifth row way over to the left of everyone with his tortoiseshell glasses, and his thinning hair combed flat to one side of his head, and his black, porkpie hat of ten years resting on his lap with his bony hands holding on to it so it wouldn't be snatched by one of his old-time pals and sold or exchanged for a nicer cap. He looked like an aging Hitler youth, sitting there erect and waiting with his thin lips pressed together and all dressed in black, waiting to be impressed, his narrow, Missouri face turned upwards, looking dead at Emmett with the wry knowledge of its own evil presence.

They locked eyes together for the longest moment as Emmett

remembered that this was the writer-poet-genius man who got his wife to place an apple or avocado on her head at a stoned-tequila-drunken party in Mexico, because his marksmanship was challenged by one of his pals or somebody. Then he carefully aimed the .45 pistol or whatever it was, firing a slug point-blank into the center of his wife's forehead which made her cerebrum hemorrhage and the police gasp. But they quickly called it an "accidental homicide," and everybody else said, "Wow!" except Bill Burroughs, who just sat there, like he was sitting there now, knowing full well that no one was ever going to know the secret that lies hidden in his brain.

Bill Burroughs and the rest of the audience were going to have to wait until the following evening to be impressed by Emmett, because he was too tiredly stoned to say what he wanted. What he did do, therefore, was to open his speech with "Today is the first day of the rest of your life!" which was a line he either made up or picked up somewhere during the last year. Shortly after he said it that night, it began appearing on posters and postcards and everywhere, not as a quote attributed to anyone, but just as a simple, declarative sentence to be sold by persons who never had an original thought in their dollar-billed lives.

He kept his speech short and to the point, which was to say, he refuted all of Carmichael's screamed remarks, not by giving away any secrets about himself or the people with whom he worked, but by simply explaining that the work they did together wasn't any Salvation Army trip, and concluding that neither he nor any of his people were so-called flower children, because they'd known ever since they were little boys and girls that ". . . flowers die too easy, even when they have thorns!"

Then he left. He walked off the stage and down into the audience where he sat and spoke with Michael X, a London black man whom he'd known when he was in London the first time around. Michael X was also the West Indian black leader who was going to end up paying for Stokely Carmichael's bottomless rabble-rousing against "whitey." Michael X was going to pay by being arrested for Carmichael's inciting the residents to riot in the streets of London's black ghetto of Brixton after the conference, creating hysteria and then immediately splitting the country with the promise that he'd be right back, knowing that he'd never return and thereby leaving Michael X to hold the bag which he was to do, for over a year in prison.

Emmett talked solely and briefly with Michael X about money

and how and whether he was getting enough to sustain the political-education operation that he and his brothers and sisters had organized and were attempting to maintain for the black people of Brixton. When he heard that money was very scarce and particularly hard for them to come by, Emmett gave Michael X an angle which eventually financially supported the work he and his comrades were doing for at least the following twelve or thirteen months. It had nothing to do with stealing or hurting anyone, and still has nothing to do with you, no matter who you are.

Early the next evening, Emmett found himself standing in front of the same microphone before about one thousand of the younger, heavier members of the same audience. This time, however, he was alone with no one else on the stage. He also felt a lot younger than the previous night, when his chippy shot of drugstore scag made him feel as old as the hills and as numb-dumb-cold-dry as a dead dog. He still couldn't figure out why he hit himself in the vein with the poison of his youth. Had it just been for old time's sake or had he been trying to impress his Beat elders with his own down hipster style? He gave up attempting to answer himself with a vow that he'd never chip again.

The rows of radicals who came to hear what he had to say were anxious but attentive, and Emmett was ready for them. He had memorized his speech the day before and had thoroughly gone over it that afternoon, blocking out its dramatic pauses and polishing up his delivery. When the moderator of the day's symposium of "Liberation," or whatever it was supposed to be, finished introducing Emmett as a "Digger, a hippie, an acidhead and a living mythical legend in his own time," he stepped forward to the applause and waited for it to subside, feeling ". . . righteously righteous and stone justly just," as his good friend and family doctor once said in a song.

The handclapping died down, and Emmett spoke strong and clearly into the microphone like an actor delivering a soliloquy, and the finger-popping revolutionaries listened to what they wanted to hear:

"Our revolution will do more to effect a real, inner transformation than all of modern history's revolts taken together! . . . In no stage of our advance, in no stage of our fighting must we let chaos rule! . . . Nobody can doubt the fact that during the last year, a revolution of the most momentous character has been swelling like a storm among the youth of the West. Look at the strength of aware-

ness of the young people today! Look at our inner unity of will, our unity of spirit and our growing community of thought! Who could compare us with the youth of yesterday? We are unanimously convinced that strength finds its expression not in an army, in tanks and heavy guns, but rather ultimately expresses itself in the common working of a people's will! The will that is uniting our groups with the conviction that men and women must be taught the feeling of community to safeguard against the spirit of class warfare, of class hatred and of class division! . . . We are approaching a life in common, a common life of revolution! A common life to work for the revolutionary advancement of peace, spiritual prosperity and socialism! Toward a victorious renewal of life itself! . . . Our job is to wake everyone up and do away with illusions! So that when the people are finally awakened, never again will they plunge into sleep!

"The revolution will never end! It must be allowed to develop into streams of revolutions and be guided into the channel of evolution . . . History will judge the movement not according to the number of swine we have removed or imprisoned, but according to whether the revolution has succeeded in returning the power to the people and in the bridling of that power to enforce the will of the people everywhere! . . . Power to the people!"

The entire speech lasted for over ten minutes, and Emmett was satisfied with his convincing delivery that now had the whole audience up on its feet giving him an enthusiastic, standing ovation. He stood motionless by the microphone, where seconds before he was gesticulating like mad, dramatizing every word. He stood still, not bowing, or waving, or moving his lips to say, "Thank you! Thank you!" He just stood there and waited for the crowd to settle back down, so he could finally tell them what he *really* came there to say.

It was a couple of minutes before it was quiet enough for him to again place his mouth near the microphone and say, "I can sincerely appreciate your enthusiasm and honestly understand your excited applause, but, to be perfectly truthful, I can accept neither. You see, I neither wrote nor was I the first person to have ever given this speech. I really don't know who wrote it. I have an idea, but I really don't know. However, I do know who was the first man to make this speech. His name was Adolf Hitler, and he made his delivery of these same words at the Reichstag in, I believe, 1937. Thank you, 'n be seein' you."

There wasn't a sound in the huge main hall of the Roundhouse for a full thirty seconds or more. Nobody even moved. Then, all at once, it exploded with the fury of one thousand persons who thought they'd been had, been messed over, come out on the short end of a dirty deal! They directed their rage at Emmett who got his ass out of there real quick, and then they completely flipped, breaking things up, setting stuff on fire, and spilling their anger outside onto the street where they began fighting with those few who thought that Emmett Grogan had showed them just how jive rhetoric really was by putting them all on, beautifully.

Emmett was still laughing the next day when he returned to the Roundhouse for a discussion workshop that was arranged by those few hundred radicals who dug what he taught them about themselves and revolution. They wanted to learn anything else he could teach them before he left later that afternoon on his week-long return trip to the United States through more than a dozen cities in six or seven countries.

So he opened up his bag of experience, showing them everything he knew that wasn't supposed to be kept secret, and closed the bag by advising them that some of Adolf Hitler's early speeches weren't bad or wrong at all. It was just another case of people "... picking up on the singer and not the song, which, of course, usually blows the singer's mind, like it did Schicklgruber's who began to take seriously the lunacy of his own fantasies and proceeded to actualize them, using the people as his pawns. I mean, the cat knew they were digging him and the way he said things, rather than what he had to say. *He* was all he had to say, as far as they were concerned! You can see that in any old newsreel film clip of him standin' up at some podium in the middle of a few hundred thousand screamers and all he's sayin' is numbers! EINS! ZWEI! DREI! You know what I mean?"

What Emmett did best was advise communes or collectives of black or white or yellow or brown or pink radical street people on how to get whatever they needed, how to get themselves economically together to continue their work. After the conference, he spent a rush-hour week, flying around to all the different countries of Europe on the same tourist class ticket for his return flight to New York. He visited every city where he knew something heavy was happening to meet the people responsible, like the Provos in Amsterdam; Joe the Fever in Prague; Communes #1 and #2 and the Free University in Berlin; the Mistral Bookshop and Post Office and

a whole lot of young heavies in Paris; everyone from the Exploding Galaxy to Peggy Duff to the Co-op Printing Society to Bromley by Bow's Kingsley Hall in London; and ten more cities on the continent in which there were groups of sincere, serious people at work, trying to lay the foundation for an intercommunal planet where there would be no boundaries dividing up the world, just different tribes of people free to live their lives the way they want, instead of have to — which is the only way to keep it all from dying.

Emmett got back to New York completely wiped out and totally exhausted from his fierce, whirlwind tour through Europe. His repeated discussions with the many different communal groups had him drained, demolished and half crazy behind “rubbin’ at that same old goddamn thing!” He had rejoined Danny the Riff somewhere along the way, and they returned to New York together where most members of the Grateful Dead rock family met them at the Chelsea Hotel. It was in a room at the Chelsea that Emmett finally collapsed with exhaustion and slept for thirty straight hours.

It was almost the second week of July when he eventually woke up and a Wednesday he'll never likely forget. The sun was already waning as he had a shower and shave, putting on the same clothes, except for a change of socks, and bopped out to 23rd Street and down Seventh Avenue toward Greenwich Village. He had about fifty dollars in his pocket, and his stomach was craving with the hunger of a man who went to bed hungry and overslept. He wanted to eat a steak, a big, juicy piece of rare meat with some boiled potatoes, maybe, and a green salad on the side. He got exactly what he wanted and more in a Sixth Avenue Italian restaurant and gamblers' bar named Emilio's. The place was across from the corner of West Third Street, meaning Emmett walked a full twenty blocks or a stone mile without even realizing it until he sat down to eat and felt a bit dizzy. He lifted up his feet to look at the soles and heels of his Tony Lama, black Western boots that the free city women bought for him with a hot credit card and muttered something to himself about how they were made for walking on dirt and grass, not concrete and grime.

The food and half bottle of red Bolla wine was just what he needed and the pizzaiola sauce covering the thick porterhouse was an added delight. He paid the waiter, but had a little difficulty getting himself up from behind the table and out of the booth, because the food added a good five pounds to his stomach and momentarily made him sluggish and awkward. He finally squeezed

himself loose, however, and walked over to the end of the long bar where he ordered a Liquore Grappa to light the burners of his digestive system and lessen the load in his stomach.

He had two more quick shots of the Italian white lightning before leaving Emilio's and slowly walking over to Tenth Street, past the Women's House of Detention where all the boy friends and pimps stood on the sidewalk yelling up to the faces of the inmates in the wire-meshed, pigeonhole windows "Everything's all right, baby! You gonna be back out on the street soon! Don't worry, okay?! Trust me!" Sure.

Emmett walked into Casey's bar where he'd been once before with Candy Sand at that literary party during the early part of spring. He remembered that they made a very good Irish coffee in Casey's, and he wanted one and possibly two or three. He stood in the front corner of the room where the bar curved in toward the wall. The tables were crowded with eight o'clock diners and the bartenders busy, tending aperitifs or sour, before-supper drinks. There was a very solid, strong-looking black man dressed in a gray suit and charcoal tie with his polished Florsheim shoe up on the bar rail next to Emmett's funky boot. He was in his late forties and, glancing at his reflection in the behind-the-bar mirror, Emmett saw that the cat was very happy about something.

The two of them began talking about nothing in particular, and they felt relaxed with each other as only men who have very little to fear or lose can relax with other men. They'd been rapping for about a quarter of an hour and had bought each other a round, when Mercer McKay, as he introduced himself, invited Emmett to follow him outside to the car he had parked down the street. Emmett did so without hesitation and pleased by the invite, because he instinctively knew he was going to find out what this black man, Mercer McKay, was smiling so much about.

The car was a practically brand new Cadillac Coupe de Ville limousine, all black shiny outside and luxurious leather upholstery inside, with one-way tinted windows, so no one could see into the spacious interior. Emmett slid into the passenger's side of the front seat and immediately noticed the gray hat next to him. Mercer was the chauffeur for whosever car this was.

"Lock your door back up, 'n take a blow o' this!" Mercer was handing Emmett a clear plastic vial of pharmaceutical cocaine and an eighteen-carat gold spoon to ever so delicately scoop out the snow

and snort it into his nostrils. It was very good coke, and Emmett no longer had to wonder why his man was smiling.

They'd been sitting inside the air-conditioned boat of a car, rapping and listening to music, when it suddenly came over the radio that there was "a riot erupting in Newark," an incredibly corrupt, deadbeat city where everyone is shortchanged, particularly blacks. Both men looked at each other, and Mercer turned the radio up louder to catch the news they were reporting. Then he started the engine and pulled the car away, swinging it toward the West Side Highway. When Emmett asked him where they were heading, Mercer McKay told him straight. "We're goin' t' Newark! I got my woman's there, 'n she ain't good for much, but what she's good for's plenty 'nough for me, 'n I don' want t' lose her in no goddamn police riot! This here car'll get me through, all right. You don' wanna come, you just say so, 'n I'll drop you off at your hotel. Well, what's it gonna be?"

They were in Newark a little more than half an hour later. The city was an explosion of flashing lights, flickering flames and fast moving silhouettes. The sound of running, laughing, screaming, glass-breaking, bottle- and brick-throwing young black bloods was a constant uproar. The gunfire, crisp commands and crackling radios of the police were scattered, but pervasive. The noise was overwhelming and the scene visually surreal.

Mercer drove into an alley where everything else seemed very far away, and he honked the horn twice. The bottom-floor door of a two-story wooden frame house opened cautiously, and out ran a fantastically beautiful black woman in a gold lamé mini-dress. Her name was Lucille, and she was around twenty years old and Mercer McKay's old lady. She hugged him and kissed at his face through the open window of the car, until he stopped her and said that things were getting too hot for them to waste time. "So go back inside 'n get the others, 'n let's get outta here!"

The others were Lucille's four equally beautiful sisters and her mother who wasn't bad looking herself. Emmett was literally dragged into the back seat by the four sisters, leaving the front seat to Mercer, Lucille and mama. The jug of coke also found its way into the rear of the car, and the fun really began, with the girls giggling and howling and grabbing at Emmett's body and him running his hands all over their legs, until he found the one who wasn't wearing any panties. Then he put his fingers to work, and Mercer

pushed a button to roll up the window that divided the front from the back part of the car, so Mama wouldn't hear the sound of laughter turn to the sweet soft sighing of sex.

The Cadillac took them right through Newark that first night of the riot and passed the roadblocks the state police had set up, to cordon off the "trouble area." Some of the cops even saluted the limousine as it went by, probably figuring it was carrying a high political official or somebody equally important to their careers. The rest of the night was spent partying in Mercer's downtown pad with Emmett finally returning to the Chelsea Hotel around dawn, the sister who didn't like to wear panties hanging on his arm, happy for a moment away from home.

The Newark riot lasted five more days with Abbot Hoffman getting into the act by calling for "Food for Newark Spades" to be donated at a specified time in Greenwich Village's Washington Square Park. Abbot and his cronies collected about seven or eight cardboard cartons of canned food and brought it over to Tom Hayden who was in Newark, heading the Newark Community Urban Project, facing at that time the terribly difficult decision of whether or not to join the federal government's War on Poverty program. The war on poverty is now, of course, over. Poverty won.

Anyway, Hoffman later exploited to his benefit these few cartons of canned goods which nobody ate, but used as missiles when they ran out of bricks. He claimed in several press conferences that he and his comrades were "Diggers" and that "Diggers are niggers," and, therefore, they smuggled in ". . . seven truckloads in all" to their ". . . underground soul brothers SNCC and NCUP." By using the name "Diggers" which the press had long associated with "Free Food," Hoffman changed a few boxes of Campbell's soup cans and several truckloads of trippers sightseeing the "riot" into "seven truckloads" of loaves and fishes which they ". . . had a ball passing out!"

The last night Emmett stayed at the Chelsea Hotel in New York, he was talking with Danny the Riff and some of the Grateful Dead people about a "Trip Without a Ticket to Europe" to be completely "free" and unexploited by the media. It would not be for sale! There happened to be a reporter for the *Village Voice* in the room at the time, the late Don McNeill, and he wrote an article entitled "Trip Without a Ticket to Invade Europe" with no one's permission and blew the whole thing out the window. The avarice of film companies like Warner Brothers made it impossible for the

trip to happen for "free" by blocking most of the financial possibilities. Years later they would cop the idea and make an obnoxious film with a fat disc jockey and a bunch of no-account, lame pan-handlers, entitled *Medicine Ball Caravan* which, as one reviewer put it, "added up to no experience."

Emmett returned to San Francisco sick and tired of having been so long away from the city where he belonged. But very few things were happening to increase his gladness at being back among familiar faces doing his work with the Free Food. One thing did happen, however, that was enough to make him think that things weren't all that bad and even gave him a bit of optimism. Coyote had finally gotten down off the fence, resigning from the Mime Troupe to actively join the Free City Collective as a full-time brother, instead of simply remaining a part-time, lend-a-hand man. What made him decide to choose to play for keeps, only he knows. But when he'd made his decision, he didn't just come around. He came full around, and Emmett was back in time to embrace him.

Coyote had found a middle-aged woman who'd inherited an old hotel that she didn't know what to do with. It was a fifty-year-old, 482-room, huge place that used to cater mostly to prizefighters, like Jack Dempsey, but now was a waterfront flophouse for itinerants called the Reno Hotel. Coyote knew exactly what to do with it, as did his partner at the time, Golden Gloves Davey, a college-graduate boxer and stout worker: they were going to make a free hotel out of it. They intended to renovate the rundown building and redecorate it all in a modern, funky style including in it a free theater, movie house, restaurant and hospital. The woman who owned the hotel was thrilled with the idea and set her lawyers to draw up a nonprofit corporation to cover the turnover of the Reno to the Free City Collective. Unfortunately, their enthusiasm about the possibility of a well-run, free dwelling was not at all shared by the city hall bureaucrats and various police agencies who denounced the planned project as a "bed of evil" and pressured the fine woman into boarding up the hotel and terminating her role in the "free" venture.

It was a heavy disappointment for everyone connected with the Free City Collective, but especially for Coyote and Golden Davey, who thought they'd succeeded in solving at least a portion of the overcrowding dilemma of the Haight-hipster community. They both worked extremely hard to get the undertaking going and gathered large crews of carpenters, electricians and all sorts of skilled

persons to reconstruct the Reno when the police forces and city hall powers said no. Of course, they based their veto on the absurd argument that the existence of a free hotel would draw "hippie undesirables" to the city of Saint Francis. Naturally they neglected to mention that San Francisco was already overflowing with more than one hundred thousand "hippie undesirables" who had no permanent or temporary place to reside, except the downtown jail.

The members of the Free City Collective were disgusted, but rather than vent their animosity for the fat cat establishment by blowing up a bank or two, or by protesting with demonstrations and press conferences, they returned to their work. They all knew what no one had to tell them: reactionary terrorism or a few childish tantrum marches would only temporarily relieve their own private frustrations with the so-called government, rather than help the people.

It was at about this time that Emmett began his "Free Food Home Delivery Service" and left the daily, *Panhandle*, 4:00 P.M., free feeding of the street folks for the women to cook and men like Tumble, Butcher Brooks and Slim Minnaux to deliver. Emmett's idea was exactly as he announced it in the *Free City News*, a service that took over the daily newspaper role of the Communication Company, incorporating the same machinery and people. *Free City News* was an enlightened, efficient and graphically superior news agency operated solely by members of the Free City Collective, which meant practically anyone who wanted to work and wasn't kidding.

It was a truly informative and beautiful newspaper. So beautiful, in fact, that the research department of the Gestetner Corporation, from whom the mimeograph machines had been stolen, couldn't believe that their equipment could produce such technically fine and attractive color combination graphics; which was probably why they didn't call the cops. Instead they politely asked the publisher of the *Free City News* to let them subscribe to the paper, or, at least, mail them a copy of everything that was printed and drawn with their machines. They were astonished that Billy Batman, who put together several of the most beautiful issues, and Golden Gloves Davey and House-Be-Nimble, who kept the news service from simply becoming a brilliant one-shot review, were using their Gestefax stencil maker to *paint*. It blew their minds!

The announcement that Emmett published in the *Free City*

*News* was only a beginning, but it really started things off right and in a hurry. It read:

### FREE FOOD

LION MEAT      SOUL VEGETABLES      BLUE CHIP DAIRY GOODS

*Everymorning Delivered to your Commune.*

FRESH FISH      RIPE FRUIT      SOLID GREENS

Everyevening Feed the Brothers and Sisters in your House.

*IT'S FREE BECAUSE IT'S YOURS*

Give Your Address and the Number of People in the Commune to the Behind the Counter Cousin at the Psychedelic Shop.

. . . MUST BE DONE NOW . . .

At first Emmett found himself delivering only to communal houses filled with young people who came to town looking for what they couldn't see back home. But that was only for the first few days. After some of those matriarchal black women and welfare mothers who hung around the Trip Without a Ticket free store heard about it, as well as some of the young Chicano women who were into the activities of the Mexican-American Mission Rebels — the predecessor group to what is now known as La Raza — after those women heard about his Free Food Home Delivery Service, Emmett was given a whole bunch of names and addresses with the number of children and adults in each household marked clearly on a whole lotta slips of paper.

If he had any intention of sliding along, gradually and calmly developing his operation, these women didn't want to hear about it. They wanted it to happen all at once, now! And if he didn't come through, like he was making out he would, Emmett was going to be called to answer by these women who didn't want to hear nothing about how much time anything takes, but wanted what he himself had said was theirs, and they wanted it today!

"You say that 'it's free because it's yours,' don't you?! Well, I want mine! 'N we all wants ours! Just give us what belongs to us, 'n listen to your own poetry! We wants the food!"

Within ten days of his announcement, Emmett found himself all alone with a list of over a hundred names, addresses, and sizes of families living in slum tenements — from the black Fillmore ghetto all the way across town to the Chicano Mission district ghetto. He

looked at that list, and he knew he either had to throw it down the sewer right away or come across for those mothers who used their children to call his hand. He decided to play out his hand, simply because he dealt the cards to himself.

As soon as he committed himself to backing up his own words, the enormity of the task became more than obvious. After a six-day week of stealing and delivering meat on Monday and Wednesday, vegetables on Tuesday and Friday, and dairy products on Thursday and Saturday to Viola on Webster Street with eight kids, Bertha on Lily between Buchanan and Laguna with ten, to the Jasons on Seymour Street with nine, to Baby Jesus on Washington with nine, to Paita Bye on Waller with fifteen, to Carmen on Mission and 22nd Street with eleven, to Ligette and Ward on Ellis Street with nine and six, to Terrell on Hayes Street with seven, to Carlos Cavaze on Treat Street with eight, to the Aurora Glory Alice commune on Cole with nine, and on and on, with ninety more names of families with people to feed — after that week, Emmett understood it was going to be sixteen hours a day, six days a week for as long as he could do what he said he would.

The Free Food Home Delivery Service became not only the most difficult thing Emmett had ever done in his life, but also the loneliest. Seldom would anyone ever accompany him on the daily, except for Sunday, day-long runs. He did most of it all by himself. Whenever someone did help him out, it was usually one of the women, but only a few, and even they would rarely stick it through with him from dawn till dusk.

Even though it was, without a doubt, the most essential aspect of their survival as a communal group, there was just something about the operation that made it unattractive to most everyone within the Free City Collective. It wasn't the tremendous burden of the work, or the length of the hours, or the likelihood of arrest and jail that made the Free Food operation undesirable. It was the thanklessness, the unromantic, unrewarding exhaustion of the cheerless, dismal anonymity which was the basic premise of "free" and the very essence of "Free Food." Anonymity is what made the food "free" and kept the "Free Food" coming right to those families' doors. Kept it coming for not just a week or a month, but every working day for a straight nine months. Kept it coming to people who didn't even know where it came from. They just had an idea, and most of them simply thought Emmett was a delivery driver, salaried by some rich man who wanted to ease his conscience by giving away a little food.

It was the nearest Emmett has ever come to making himself insane, remaining lonely in a way that few men ever have a chance to be lonely.

He not only had to ride with the fact that most of the people to whom he delivered the food thought of him as just a hired driver; he also had to contend with the incredible phenomenon of having his own Free City brothers put him down, bad-mouthing him, and begrudging him even the slightest bit of credit for having accomplished anything, much less acknowledging that he put the food on their table over which they discussed his shortcomings! It had him crazy! Crazy, because he knew he was doing it to himself. He didn't have to continue the Free Food. He didn't have to do any of those things! But he did, and that made it a matter of choice. Though he *really* didn't need the food himself, he somehow, deep inside himself, needed to free the food for those people who needed it. And in that sense, he probably needed it more than they did. He definitely needed it more than he ever needed anything else.

And so, Emmett remained an anonym to most people and allowed those close to him to drive him nearly out of his mind with their maddening insults to his sense of brotherhood. Some members of the Free City Collective resented his rigid insistence that everything be carried out anonymously, while anyone who wanted to could and was taking credit for "free" things they'd never done and words they'd never spoken or written or thought.

The Summer of Love was mainly the result of such a lie. The Haight Independent Proprietors' Human Be-In lie and its result bore witness to what would be in store for a nation that allowed its children to be lied to by comical, fake-radical politicians whose masquerade they nurtured by giving them profitable access to the mass media. The adventure of poverty by young white people in love ghettos throughout the country, like the Haight-Ashbury and the Lower East Side, was pleasant fakery for most of them. But in the same way that real poverty has always given birth to real revolution, this feigned poverty of the adventurous would breed a false-bot-tomed, jerry-built revolution in which the adventurers would continue their make-believe and be followed by the rock-concert lumpen, tired of their own voyeurism.

Of course, the "Summer" really ended before it ever started, but the sound of the tolling bell only began being heard in that last week of August when one of the most beloved men on Haight

Street, 35-year-old Hells Angel, Chocolate George, died in a collision with a car right in the middle of the block and in front of the very people who really liked him for his Cossack general's appearance, his Russian fur hat, and his overall fearless, friendly attitude toward everyone, except would-be tough guys or bullies whom he crushed. His funeral-parlor wake was attended by truckloads of street people, and he was buried with an impressive honor guard of two hundred of his Angel brothers from all over the state on their bikes, and with two quarts of chocolate milk in his coffin, so he wouldn't get thirsty wherever he went. Afterwards, the people had a party in Golden Gate Park where ten thousand gathered to wail Chocolate George goodbye, and a memorial band composed of members of all the rock groups played "Didn't He Ramble!" Emmett arrived with the Free Food pickup truck full of a half ton of shaved snow ice covering a thousand cans of beer. The beer was drunk and the ice used for a snowball fight in August. Then it was over, and he was gone, and it wasn't ever gonna be the same again.

Soon after that, another important Haight Street figure and friend of Emmett's was reported missing until his body was found in a sleeping bag beneath a cliff by the Point Reyes lighthouse where it was thrown by the person or persons who murdered him with a 9-mm., P-38, automatic pistol for the money in his pocket. Super Spade was known to carry a lot of bread around, and that night he supposedly was holding onto \$50,000 to pay for a load of grass. But the simple armed-robbery-murder theory wasn't the way most people who knew him thought Super Spade died. They preferred to think he'd been snuffed by Eastern Mafia hit men who were sent out by the syndicate to get rid of anybody who could be an obstacle to their eventual takeover of the Haight-Ashbury territory. The only thing wrong with that bit of speculation was that the Mafia doesn't sell marijuana, and that's all Super Spade ever did. His murder, however, and the subsequent rumors of imminent mob control of the Haight caused a whole, new emigration of older hipsters to the countryside in search of some utopian dream that wasn't there.

There followed a whole string of senseless murders which usually involved some form of torture or bodily mutilation. The first of these was naturally headlined in the press as the "Psychedelic Murder," and the killer was caught driving a car with the cleanly severed, trimly stitched arm of the victim lying in the luggage area behind the back seat. Another was described by the papers as a "Sadistic Orgy Killing," and it was. A nineteen-year-old girl was

dragged from her Haight-Ashbury apartment by seven men and three women who stripped and stomped her, scrawling obscene graffiti-slogans all over her nude body with lipstick, before they kicked her head in.

Then the news of the "First Longhaired Hippie Bank Robber" was headlined on the front pages and had everyone laughing, but also bitching that ". . . if the guy had to be the first, why the hell didn't he really impress the motherfuckers, instead of only getting away with twelve hundred and ninety-five dollars? Shit!" Beneath smaller headlines on the back pages there were stories about how the Haight was changing from a place of smiles and the "comfortably poor," to a normal, tension-filled, terror-stricken ghetto in which the peaceful "flower children" were no longer safe in the wake of increasing violence and simmering hostility.

The Summer of Love ended on the thumbs of thousands hitchhiking someplace else, like Charles Manson, or on the welfare rolls for those who wanted to stay in Frisco and stretch their adventures in poverty as far as they could take it. The David Smith Medical Clinic closed again for lack of funds and want of publicity, and the truth of the Haight-Ashbury seemed to be making itself known now that the "flower children" had gone back to school. It just wasn't what it used to be, "the old Hashbury," one columnist noted, and the cops knew it. More than anyone, they created the overall harder reality of what was left of the "Psychedelic Community" with their harassing "haul-ins" and "sweep-ups," and they were going to get exactly what they deserved. The police commissioner screamed that it had become "a cesspool," right before the first bomb exploded near the park police station and the "law and order" candidate, Alioto, was elected mayor of the city.

The Hun, picking up on an opportunity to produce some good guerrilla theater, organized an appropriate street event for the strangling Haight, entitled the Death of Hippie. There was an orderly funeral procession of pallbearers carrying a coffin filled with hippie paraphernalia such as beads, flowers, hair, and so on, and followed by a large crowd of veiled mourners. The wooden coffin draped in black crepe paper was placed on top of a pyre and set aflame while a bugler played taps and ushers handed out black-bordered remembrance cards to the assembled which read:

*Once upon a time, a man put on  
beads and became a hippie — Today*

*the hippie takes off his beads and  
becomes a man — a freeman!  
Leaving behind the final remains  
of "Hippie — the devoted son of  
Mass media and  
the boundaries are down.  
San Francisco is free! Now free!  
The truth is OUT, OUT, OUT!*

A full description of the Death of Hippie production was carried on the front pages of most newspapers nationwide, and even the underground press couldn't resist calling "Freeman," a "Freebie." But the Hun's event did accomplish something of no small import. It influenced the two brothers and co-owners of the Psychedelic Shop to close it up forever, leaving a sign in their front window advising whoever that "Nebraska needs you more."

Soon after the "hippie" street population thinned out a bit, gangs of young, diddy-boppin', black bloods from all over the city began vamping through Haight-Ashbury seeking out "flower children" as prey. But most of them had already gone, making the women of the community the only easy marks for the black youths' blind reactionary acts of rape and robbery against anyone white. Their targets were always the weak, helpless and harmless girls who still thought of flowers as lovely and were attacked simply because they were accessible in the low-income neighborhood. This made the men of the community plenty fucking angry, and there was a series of fights, stabbings and shootings, until it looked like the whole goddamn thing was going to erupt into a race war with the "longhaired, shaggie honkies" led by the Frisco Hells Angels on one side against the "back-stabbin', women-killin' niggers" led by some cats from the Fillmore who identified themselves as "Black Panthers." The cops intended to stand on the sidelines and wait for everyone to beat everyone else to death or at least into exhaustion, before they moved themselves in for the overkill of both sides.

Emmett could see the righteousness of a massive assault on the bloods who were prowling the neighborhood, but he was confused as to who the Fillmore "Panthers" really were. So he called the party's Oakland headquarters and talked about what was going down with Bobby Seale and David Hilliard who put everything in perspective by revealing that those Fillmore dudes weren't Panthers at all, but just some paper cats running around, trying to mau-mau some loose change from the bearded, white, liberal, beaded mer-

chants and rip off whatever else they could from the hip community. They promised to make everything clear to their black brothers and sisters in the next publication of their well-read newspaper, and also issue a warning to those young blacks who were causing all the trouble. The Panther party did this because they wanted to avoid a racist confrontation between their people and the longhairs, not because they were protecting the “hippies” who were perfectly capable of defending themselves by now.

The Black Panther party’s statement was printed the following week and picked up and republished on the front pages of the city’s newspapers. It was the only reason that open warfare between the two peoples didn’t occur. The phony Panthers who were strutting around the Haight stopped after they read this: “Warning to so-called Paper Panthers — stop vamping on the hippies. They are not your enemy, black brothers. Leave them alone or the Black Panther Party will deal with you!”

It was around the same time that the inevitable happened to the man who’d originated and maintained the Black Panthers and who became a dynamic heroic figure to the young people of his community as soon as he began standing up to the intimidation of the Oakland police department. To those black youngsters, Huey P. wasn’t just another “bad” brother off the block — he was a “bad” brother who not only was unafraid of the cops, but openly defiant of them. Every time the kids saw him, they asked him one question over and over, again and again: “When you gonna off a pig, Huey P.?!” “Yea, Huey P., when you goin’ blow one o’ them oinks away?! When you goin’ to snuff one o’ them motherfuckers, huh, Huey P.? When? When? When, Huey P.? When?”

The kids were a chorus, chanting the same refrain whenever he appeared anywhere. A refrain from a song that was burning with rage inside of him, ever since he realized that men who brutalized other men weren’t men, they were animals. They were pigs! And one night, two members of that species appeared behind the car he was riding in and began to harass him, using the power of their uniforms as a badge, a license to insult the humanity of a human being, just because they felt like it and just because he was the uppityist black nigger they or the country had seen since Malcolm X.

When they pulled the car over and told him to get out, he did. They had guns in their hands. Huey P. had a book in his, a bound copy of the Constitution of the United States and the Bill of Rights. One of them shot Huey P. in the stomach, and then Huey P. some-

how killed one of them and wounded the other. At least that's what they said happened and what most people believed, because of the way Huey P. had sung his song and the way the young black people's chorus had chanted that one phrase, "Kill the pig! Kill the pig!" until there was practically no one who wanted to believe that he hadn't actually done what they said he'd done in the manner they insisted he had. Almost no one; and possibly even including Huey P. Newton himself.

By then, everyone who was into anything in the streets of the Haight-Ashbury was packing some sort of heavy caliber weapon; either a blade like a machete, or a sawed-off rifle, or simply a pistol. Everyone! Emmett drove around with a piece beneath the dashboard of the Free Food pickup truck. He'd fixed up a tight little rack under the glove compartment to hold his .38, and it fit perfectly and was always there, firmly braced, but forever ready to be put to use in the defense of his life, liberty or pursuit of happiness.

One day a strange thing happened which afforded Emmett a golden opportunity to scare the living shit out of a man who might have been and still may be elected President of the United States. It was late in the afternoon, and he had just finished delivering most of the Free Food with only a few more stops to make before he completed his rounds, when he turned south of Buena Vista Park and drove down to Broderick Street, where there was a giant crowd gathered in front of Huckleberry House, the referral center for run-aways. The street being blocked by the throng, he pulled over to have a look at what was taking place.

As soon as he stepped from the pickup, he heard someone calling to him from atop the front stairs of Huckleberry House, insisting, "Emmett! Emmett Grogan! Come on up here! Come on!" It was one of the ministers and leading officials of Glide Church which administered the referral center, and Emmett did what he was told and went up the stairs and inside where he was introduced, with the usual reference to his being a "legendary myth," to none other than the then Governor of Michigan, George Romney, and his pert, little wife Lenore, both of whom were touring the country to test the water for his upcoming campaign as a candidate in the Republican primary elections for President of the whole goddamn country!

Emmett was impressed when George Romney told him that he'd been hearing about his fine charitable work among the poor and misguided youth who found themselves alone and hungry and away from home on the streets of Haight-Ashbury, and he had the utmost

respect for the alms-giving services that Emmett and his fellow "What do you call them? Oh, yes, Diggers!" were doing for the young people of the nation who strayed to San Francisco.

A coincidence popped into Emmett's mind, and he couldn't pass up the chance to see if he could pull off a fabulous score—the kidnapping of the governor and his wife. In the most sincere and charming tone of voice he could muster, Emmett informed George and Lenore Romney that coincidentally, at that very moment, there were more than one hundred Indians from his home state of Michigan eating in the park with the "hippies," and it would be wonderful and extremely thoughtful of the governor and first lady to stop by and visit with the people from home. He didn't have to say anything about what good publicity it would be for the folks back in the Midwest. The good governor had already weighed its value, and Emmett watched as it registered with a click of his eyes and a cluck of his tongue.

What happened next, Emmett didn't exactly expect, but immediately picked up on it. The governor threw his arms around him and said with a smile, "Emmett, suppose *you* take me and my wife over there to meet with your people and the Indians from our state. What about it?"

"My truck's right out front, Governor, and I'd be more than happy to oblige. In fact, sir, it'd be an honor."

The three of them moved quickly outside, and George Romney helped his wife, Lenore, into the cab of Emmett's Free Food pickup, just like a midwestern farmer would've helped his wife into a pickup truck, all dressed up for Sunday and on their way to church. Maybe that's when Emmett decided not to do what he didn't, and then again, maybe not.

Besides the three of them, everybody else was confused; the state troopers, the city cops, the FBI, the reporters, the Methodist ministers, everyone, and the only thing they all could think of doing was to go along with the three, in the flatbed open back of the pickup truck. They all started climbing onto the rear of the truck at once. There were over a hundred of them, all fighting for a place to stand, with the reporters pushing and shoving each other but remaining very careful to avoid nudging any of the FBI men, who were already standing up straight in each of the four corners of the truck's rear. They had everything covered.

The half-ton pickup was just about to collapse under the weight of the maddening crowd, when Emmett yelled to the governor to

“please tell all them suckers to get off o’ the truck, Governor, sir, ’cause it’s the only one still running good ’nough to deliver the Free Food, ’n they’re gonna break it down for keeps!” George Romney didn’t hesitate for a moment. He stood right out up there on the running board and told all them guys to “get down out of this man’s truck, immediately! Can’t you see what you’re doing to it? He needs this pickup more than any of you need a ride, so get off, ’n get off now! You hear me?” Then he waited until every last one of them got out of the vehicle, including the heat, before he sat back down in the front seat, slammed the door closed, and put his arm ’round his wife, Lenore. And maybe that was when Emmett decided not to do it.

A man in a blue suit and sunglasses popped his face into the window on the driver’s side and asked where they were going. Emmett looked at the governor, and the governor looked back at him, asking, “Where *are* we going?” Emmett answered, ‘Golden Gate Park. We’ll meet them there!’

Emmett must have been at least two or three blocks away when the security man realized that Golden Gate Park was a very, very big place and turned back to ask “Where in Golden Gate Park?” only to find that they had already gone with no one following them or anyone knowing where they went except him, and all he knew was that they were going to Golden Gate Park which is thousands and thousands of acres square and extremely easy to get lost in, and practically impossible to find someone in if you have no idea in what direction they’re headed. The guy got sick, and hysterically hurried the Greyhound coach carrying the governor’s entourage of reporters to Golden Gate Park where he dispersed the cops on motorcycles and in squadrols throughout the huge area, ordering them to search every goddamn inch, “But find the governor!”

Emmett had purposely not specified where in Golden Gate Park, because they didn’t drive to Golden Gate Park. At least, not what was considered by most to be the Park proper, but was known as its Panhandle. It was to that long strip of green ground that extends about a dozen blocks from the park’s entrance between the two main avenues in and out of town, that Emmett brought George Romney and his wife to meet not a hundred Indians from Michigan, but one Indian, who was or claimed to be a hundred years old, and about five hundred stone-street-freaks and crazies who didn’t like the governor very much.

It was only a short, ten-block drive from Huckleberry House to

that place in the Panhandle where the Free Food had been eaten every day at 4:00 P.M. for over a year by then. But Emmett didn't go directly there. Instead, he swung around in the opposite direction to make sure none of the cops or the Greyhound would find or catch up to his '56 green Chevy pickup truck, because he wanted to be alone with Governor George Romney and his petite wife for a while or maybe even longer than that, but definitely for as long as it took him to display what he knew about power.

It only took Emmett a couple of sentences to stop the governor's enthusiastic attempt to appear sincerely concerned about the plague he considered Haight-Ashbury to be and to halt the stream of hollow questions that were sure to follow.

"Governor, do you always take these kinds of risks?"

"What do you mean?"

"I mean, you don't know me. Nobody knows me. And yet here you are with your wife, being driven in a pickup truck by me without even knowin' where you're goin' and with no one following us to make sure we ever get there. You see what I mean?"

The governor abruptly turned his head around to look through the cab's rear window back along Oak Street to see if what he just heard was true. And it was. There was no Greyhound bus and no cops anywhere behind them or even within sight.

"Technically speaking, Governor 'n Mrs. Romney, I've just kidnapped both of you. Don't worry about it, though. I ain't gonna do nothin' but talk to you for a minute 'n try to explain something that I think I ought to. Then we'll go eat some corn on the cob with your home folks, okay? Good. Now listen careful, 'cause we only got a minute or two, 'n don't interrupt me until I finish, because I want to say it to you."

Emmett shot a look at the two of them and saw that they were no longer smiling, and the way both of their faces were set told him that they knew whatever happened next was entirely up to him — which was the thing Emmett wanted to show the governor about power.

He talked plain and clear for two solid minutes and one red light about how there will sooner or later no longer be any need for politicians like Governor Romney, because the people, meaning those people who didn't already know and needed to know more than anyone, were going to realize, understand, be educated to the truth, the fact that politics wasn't supposed to be the business of just a few who claimed to be representing the many. It wasn't supposed

to be a business! "Politics is life! All our lives, 'n not no profession like you guys make it out to be, 'n want to keep it, so you won't lose your jobs!" And he went on to explain how and why the professional politicians' days were numbered and the games they played in every country in the world, except maybe one, were going to be phased into extinction.

"You see, what you got sitting next to you here ain't just a man, a plain old homo sapiens; he's a political animal. And a political animal is anyone who knows whatever the score is and still refuses to submit to someone else's rule. Anyone who wants to live his own life, and be the only one to control the way he wants to live without messin' over anyone else's right to live the way they damn well want, and vice versa. Now in order to become a political animal, you gotta understand that politics isn't just everyone's business, it's every one of our lives, and *it's never been anyone's vote!*

"After learnin' that, then you have to figure out how you can get hold of enough power to live your life the way you want. And you can't get that kind of power by making a whole lotta money, or by stealing a whole lotta money, or by joining a club that allows you to transcend your blues once a week, or by getting yourself into public office where you can exercise control over the way others live their lives. No, that's all make-believe. It does satisfy quite a few people, but it's never gonna be able to satisfy a whole lotta young people who are just now growing up, and a whole bunch more whose fathers and mothers haven't even met yet. And that goes for all the races, all over the world.

"We're gonna get the power to live our lives the way we want through revolution. And not the same kind of revolution like it's always been, where the few rich people are killed and their property taken away and redistributed among the ones who get there first. Ours is going to be a revolt against power and against leaders and against property. We want it to be free, autonomous, and classlessly equal! All of it! And how we achieve that will be entirely up to you and those like you, because we only believe in defending ourselves when attacked, and we don't want anything from you, except to be left alone! *We* meaning those people sitting on the grass out your window, over there."

Emmett pulled the truck into a space alongside the Panhandle and told Governor George Romney and his wife, Lenore, that they were now where they should be, and he had nothing more to say, except "Let's go 'n eat some corn!" The man and his wife stepped

out onto the grass and began walking towards the seated crowd, but before Emmett himself got out of the truck, he tugged his revolver from its brackets and called for the governor to return to the pickup for a second. When he did, Emmett pointed to the .38 lying on the seat inside the cab and asked Governor Romney if he'd forgotten something.

"No . . ."

"Well someone did, and it sure looks like they're not fooling," Emmett said, as he led the governor back to his wife and toward the hundred-year-old Indian from Michigan and the five hundred or so people who were going to keep the governor and his wife in the state of near panic that Emmett had induced. He decided, however, not to exaggerate their panic by holding them, say, for the exchange of unquestionably political prisoners like John Sinclair, a Detroit poet sentenced to ten years for one marijuana cigarette and his radical, political leadership, and many, many others, too numerous to list. Emmett didn't feel like it.

As soon as Emmett moved the governor and his wife into the center of the still-seated circle of a thousand faces, he introduced them, got someone to get each of them a cob of hot, buttered corn, and left them standing there, all alone, to be terrified by the intense sincerity of the contempt that each of those young, surrounding faces had for him, Governor George Romney, and for her, his wife Lenore. The two of them were forced to stand there for twenty minutes heavy with abuse and accusations regarding "his" and "her" roles in the continuing Vietnam genocidal war, and in the police riot in Detroit, and in the Algiers Motel executions, and everything else that the political animality of those young people told them the governor and his first lady were responsible for, or had participated in.

A squad car noticed the scene and radioed to the others that they'd found Governor Romney. The Michigan state police with their siren blaring led the Greyhound bus down Oak Street to the spot in the Panhandle where the shouting and waving of clenched fists had reached the point where it looked like there was going to be a hanging with somebody having already gone to get the rope. The governor's aides arrived none too soon and whisked him away without so much as a goodbye, but with about a dozen joints that kids shoved in his coat pockets, hoping for god-knows-what to happen.

Emmett hadn't seen any of that go down, but heard about it later from Slim Minnaux whose photo was in all the papers during that

week, standing tall above the seated crowd pointing his long outstretched arm and a stern finger at Governor George Romney, his face all on fire and his mouth shouting, "*J'accuse! J'accuse!*"

Emmett hadn't seen any of that because he drove away after leading the good governor and his first lady into the eye of the storm. He left them there alone because he felt he did all he could by delivering them to the Panhandle and, more important, because he had to complete the rest of his rounds to the customers of the Free Food Home Delivery Service.

The pressure that Emmett placed himself under as the Free Food delivery man remained constant, the agony growing more painful whenever his loneliness became almost unbearable and he had to face the fact that all of the psychological and physical punishment he suffered was self-inflicted. He knew it was going to be a hand of solitaire as soon as he picked up the cards and began dealing them to himself. But he never figured on the deck being stacked against him like it was.

There were moments of relief, but they were brief and few and far between. Natural Suzanne came back from El Rito, New Mexico, and set up a place for the both of them in the rear of a vacant storefront in the Mission district. It was good for Emmett to have someone to return to after a full day, driving through the streets of the entire city usually alone. Before Natural Suzanne had made it back to San Francisco, Emmett had been sleeping wherever he ended up on any given night. Those nights were sometimes almost as tiring as the days he spent on the road. So when she arrived, Emmett was very glad to see her and welcomed the chance to pick up where they left off.

The one other significant respite that occurred happened a few months later. Emmett was asked to come East by some people who were connected with San Francisco's Glide Church and some New York foundations who wanted to steer money into the Lower East Side and East Village communities. They wanted Emmett and the Free City Collective's advice on how such a project should be set up and what directions it should take.

Emmett leaped at the chance to get away from picking up, stealing, and delivering Free Food for a while. The women and one or two of the men, like Slim Minnaux, Butcher Brooks and Golden Gloves Davey came through and said that they would keep things going while he was gone. Nobody particularly cared to go East with him, though, because of the same, old, prevailing attitude among his

brothers that Emmett was on a “star trip,” and he would cop all the glory for himself once they got to New York. This conclusion of his brothers was legitimate in terms of Emmett’s powerful monster ego, but it had no validity at all in point of fact. He had completely honored his vow of anonymity. That wasn’t what bothered them, however. What had them always on edge about Emmett was that he had the power to make himself a public hero any time he wanted to, and they just didn’t want to believe that he wouldn’t.

Apparently, Tumble thought seriously about those same things which were torturing Emmett’s mind to insanity, and he decided to go to New York with him. The deal was that they would both watch each other’s back and share the burden of doing what had to be done there. The only mistake they made was in bringing along a gun. They should’ve brought two.

Jerome Rubin, the Cleveland sportswriter turned Berkeley radical, had already joined up with Abbot Hoffman in New York to form the fabulous duo that was going to get them both top billing on the radical vaudeville circuit. About the same time Rubin arrived in the East, Hoffman received a phone call from Emmett telling him to stop using the name “Diggers” as the title of his act and advising him to find another one, which he did with Rubin, Krassner and their wives, and with the help of a camp, memory lane, Eddie Cantor-Busby Berkeley film called *Making Whoopee!*

The decision to telephone wasn’t Emmett’s alone, but was reached by most of the people in the Free City Collective. It was based on an outrageously selfish, thirty-page pamphlet that Hoffman had written while he was employed as one of Mayor Lindsay’s aides. The pamphlet was entitled *Fuck the System*, and Abbot was enormously proud of himself for having tricked the city into printing it.

The contents listed the various places where and how adventurers in poverty could have gotten anything from free vegetables and meat to free buffaloes, if the pamphlet hadn’t been written. You see, instead of actually doing any of these things to get something for nothing, which he heard about like anyone else who lives in a poor district, Hoffman wrote them down on paper for his own self-aggrandizement as a “Oh, look how hip he is!” hipster. He wrote down the addresses of all the places that poor people in New York City had been hitting for food and other stuff, ever since they existed, and he made it all into a joke. He made a joke out of the way people who didn’t choose to be poor got what they needed once in a while to

make their lives a little easier. He made a joke out of what Emmett and his brothers and sisters took seriously and actually did sixteen hours a day, every day for two years, working to serve the people, of whom they were a part. He made a joke, and those who didn't need any of the things he listed thought it was all very funny, and they laughed and gave Abbot the applause he was searching for. But if he had written a pamphlet like that about where and how people in San Francisco got what they needed for free, the joke would have been on Abbot Hoffman, and he would have been killed just like any other snitch.

Since they were given some money to cover their expenses by those people who wanted their advice, Tumble and Emmett decided to get a large double room at the Chelsea Hotel instead of flopping at someone's pad. They no sooner checked in and entered their room, when the phone rang. The voice on the other end told them that there was a meeting scheduled for later that afternoon in a loft on the Lower East Side, and that everyone whose names the two of them had previously suggested to the man would be there, as well as a few others. After they hung up, Emmett and Tumble went to sleep. It was only eight o'clock in the morning, and they had been up all night on the plane, discussing what would be the best solution for the problem of directing financial energy into the East Village.

At 3 P.M. they arrived at the Second Avenue loft and were greeted by a Methodist minister from San Francisco's Glide Church who showed them upstairs and into a very big room filled with many men and a few women, most of whom didn't like the idea of the two of them coming from the West Coast to tell them how to take care of their business at all. Others remembered Emmett from his last visit East and didn't like him very much. And he didn't like them a whole lot either.

Emmett spoke first and flatly stated that whatever money eventually came into the hip community should be used for "popular," rather than "public," events. "The money should be thought of as energy, and used to create popular alternatives, such as changing the slum environment by getting it cleaned up and painting visuals on the vacant sides of buildings. Now, the point of a popular alternative is that, if there are enough of them around, they will turn the people of the neighborhood on to their own power, and they'll begin to fight for the right to live, instead of quietly dying!"

Tumble said that the money, however it's put to use by the hip

community, should only be used within the area of the Lower East Side and never outside the neighborhood, "to, say, protest the war or anything else for that matter. Let someone else put up the money for those kinds of events. Let them that own all of it pay for the marches to go exorcise the Pentagon. You keep whatever money you get from these foundations at home, here on the East Side, and use it to produce changes. Changes, not in newsreel footage, but in the way people have been made to live around here! Changes for the better! It's already for the worse!"

Then Emmett took the proposal that he and Tumble had drawn up on the plane, and laid it out for everyone in the room, including those whom they excluded from what they called the "Ten to Fifteen Group." It was a list of fifteen names of men and women who Tumble and Emmett knew were considered, by their East Village peers, capable of handling the kind of energy that sums of money would bring to the area. Emmett read off all fifteen names and explained how the money would flow through the tax-deductible front of the New York City Mission Society before it came around to them and was placed inside whatever type of free money structure they chose to develop among themselves.

When he finished and was satisfied that he had covered everything, Emmett tacked up the paper outlining all that he just said and walked out of the meet with Tumble. As far as the two of them were concerned, all was said and done. The realization of the proposal was entirely up to those people who were sitting in that Second Avenue loft and considered themselves leading members of the community. Apparently, those community "leaders" didn't feel much like doing any leading, because they never took any individual or collective action on the proposed free money structure. Even though there were half a dozen men with signed checks in the inside pockets of their vested suits standing against one of the side walls representing the foundations that wanted to hand the bread over with no strings attached.

Maybe these "leaders" are still sitting around on their asses up in that loft, bullshitting about how "unhip" it is to take money from establishment funds. They could afford to do that. Of course, they never thought of tipping off those who don't have any qualms about taking money from strangers so that someone could have used it.

That night Emmett and Tumble had a heavy falling-out because Emmett borrowed Tumble's gun when he went for a walk alone. At least that was what ticked off the almost violent argument between

the two men who came on like brothers to everyone else but themselves. What it finally came down to, though, was the old “star trip” number. Both their strong, powerful egos clashed because a team of groupies who hung around the Chelsea slighted Tumble to get next to Emmett. The two of them played “dozens” for a good fucking thirty minutes. It was incredible, but real, and Tumble was right and he split to the airport, catching the next flight back to Frisco, and Emmett, once again, was alone. He got loaded, and around dawn there was a knock on the door to his room. He opened it, half hoping to see Tumble, but it was the pair of groupies who recognized him from the couple of months they spent on the West Coast, they said, before he punched both of them in their faces, just hard enough to keep them from ever saying hello to him again.

The next evening Emmett was still upset about Tumble’s leaving. They had both acted like mugs. He turned on the television set to listen to the six o’clock newscast, while he washed and shaved. He was drying himself off when he heard it. The 4:30 movie of that gray New York afternoon was still on the TV screen, and he heard a corny line of dialogue he was going to remember. “The only reason friends pat you on the back is to find a place to break it.”

Emmett left the tube on to play to an empty room and rode the Chelsea Hotel’s slow-poking elevator to the lobby, where he bumped into a woman he knew, and they went into the adjacent El Quixote bar for a drink. They had two, and before he finished his second Southern Comfort, the woman had him red-hot mad with the news of a book that Abbot Hoffman was compiling for publication. According to her, it was all about how Abbot and his Costello friends were everything and did everything that Emmett and his once Digger, now Free City Collective, brothers and sisters were and did and were still doing.

Emmett was stewing with steam over his drink like an out-of-town mark who’d just been taken for all he had. Then he got a flash. He remembered that giant stack of papers he gave to Abbot almost a year before. The pile of papers that Emmett, Coyote, Tumble and, most important, the Hun had written — that were published by the Communication Company in San Francisco and given away free throughout that city.

It was that pile of papers which supplied Abbot Hoffman with all the superficial information and hipster phrases that enabled him to act like he was one of the died-in-the-wool originals. The Hun’s pieces were particularly valuable to Hoffman because they gave him

the key to explaining how everything he did was theater — brilliant, guerrilla theater in the streets.

Emmett hopped into a cab and was knocking on the door of Hoffman's ground-floor apartment at St. Mark's Place within ten minutes. His wife, Anita, answered and was glad to see Emmett, but told him Abbot was in Boston giving a lecture and trying his best to get himself arrested for some misdemeanor or another. Emmett decided to play it cool and try to find the papers that had to be somewhere in the railroad flat. He rapped for a moment with Anita whom he didn't dislike in the least, when the phone rang. It was her husband.

When she finished talking, Emmett took the receiver and asked Abbot how everything was going and listened to the childish enthusiasm of a lightweight who could hardly wait to get himself arrested for jumping over the turnstile in the subway or something.

Emmett was seething, but didn't let on to Abbot. "Oh, by the way, man. You remember those papers I gave you early last spring? Well, I want to give them to Carol what's-her-name, so she can reprint them for the Angry Arts folks. You still got them. Where are they?"

The reply he heard he half expected. Abbot told him that he didn't have them anymore. Somebody took them home to read one night and never brought them back, and he couldn't remember who it was. He went on to say that Emmett could look around the pad if he wanted, but they really weren't there any longer.

Then Emmett blew it and laid it on the line. "Listen, Hoffman, I've been hearin' that you're writing some sort of a book, and I wanna tell you, if you print or paraphrase any of those pieces, especially the Hun's stuff on theater, without saying that you didn't write those words, we're gonna make you answer for it plenty, understand. And we're not going to consider it a misdemeanor either!"

Hoffman came back with words to the effect that it was all "free", wasn't it? So how could he or anyone else steal "free"? Emmett explained as calmly as he could that guys like Abbot could steal "free" and had been doing that ever since he was given those papers, because he made believe that he was what they represented, and what the people who wrote them worked at all the time — "Free!" Abbot answered by saying that he *was* "free" and that everything he had *was* "free" and nobody could steal anything *from him*, because it was all free!

Emmett knew by now that the papers were safely tucked away someplace else and that he wasn't going to get them away from

Hoffman. So he decided to demonstrate to Abbot how something that's "free" can be stolen and how it feels to have something that's "free" taken.

He asked Abbot whether he was sure that he was "free" and whether everything he had was really "free." Then Emmett mentioned some things around the apartment, like the typewriter that was in front of him and the record player, and Abbot replied that it was *all* "free," further remarking that Emmett could take anything he wanted. "It's free, because it's yours!" he said.

Emmett hung up and walked to the front room where Abbot Hoffman's wife, Anita, was sitting on a large, cloth-covered mattress that doubled as couch and guest bed. She was watching a movie on television and hadn't heard the telephone dialogue between Emmett and her husband which was good, because she would've thought it was ugly, and it would've upset her. That's the way she was at the time.

Emmett got himself a can of something from the refrigerator and watched the movie and talked with Anita for a while, before he took what he had to take, to show Abbot Hoffman how something "free" could be stolen and how it felt to have it taken.

The next morning Emmett made a reservation on an evening flight back to San Francisco and took his last walk around the Lower East Side for what he knew would probably be a while. He loved the city of New York and all its different neighborhoods, particularly the section of the Lower East Side south of the Houston Street dividing line, because it still contained the Old World flavor, hundreds of tongues flapping in a hundred different languages. He didn't like the northern section of the neighborhood since it was renamed the East Village.

He was walking along what used to be called the Yiddish Broadway, but was now only Second Avenue, looking at the refreshing arbor in the tiny park fronting St. Mark's-on-the-Bowery Church, when he bumped into one of them. There were five of them, and Emmett could see by the way they were all decked out in funky denims with the lame colors of their club stitched on their cut-away jackets that they were sidewalk bikers: guys who stomp around like they belong to an outlaw motorcycle gang, but don't have any bikes and more than likely never had. They just make believe.

The one he bumped into stepped back and stared at Emmett for a moment, saying, "Hey, man, I know you!" The guy also looked

familiar to Emmett, who decided something that made him reply, "Yea, I seem t' know you, too. But I ain't gonna brag about it!"

"Hey, fellas, you know who this cat is? He's Emmett Grogan! The big, bad motherfucker himself! *The* Emmett Grogan — the fastest gun in San Francisco 'n probably in the whole wild West! Ain't that right? You supposed to be the baddest, ain't ya?"

Emmett knew that it was Billy the Kid showdown time and that he was gonna get got anyway, so he grabbed the punk who was doing all the jawing and ran him backwards, bashed his skull open against the cast-iron fence and threw a punch at the one coming up on his left side. It never landed. The piece of lead pipe landed, though, on the top right side of his forehead, and Emmett went down, but not completely out, leaving him with enough sense to cover up his head and face with his arms to block the engineer boots that were kicking at his skull, fast and hard from every which way. One of the round steel toes rammed clean into his balls, taking all the mickey out of him and also any chance his body might have had to scramble up and get him away from the trouble he was *now* hopelessly in.

He was just about to go under when the pounding of the kicks stopped, and he heard a lot of shuffling noise. He didn't look up until his hearing told him they had all run away. The dude whose head he cracked was still slumped against the fence, but a pair of black shoes suddenly blocked his view, and the blue pants bent down at the knee and a voice he didn't look at asked him how bad he was hurt and what were they after.

"I'm okay, just a little sore, officer. They were after my money, I guess."

"All right, the ambulance'll be here in a moment to take you to the hospital where they'll fix you up. You wait here, understand? I'm going after my partner who's chasin' 'em down Ninth Street."

The cop handcuffed the guy who started it all to the cast-iron fence and ran back to his squad car, burning rubber up Ninth Street after everybody else. Emmett heard other sirens coming from a long way off, and he figured he'd better get the fuck up and out of there before they got to him and he ended up staying in New York City for a very long time. The way the dude was slumped against the fence over there told him that it might be more than just a hassle he was in for if he stayed. So he pulled himself up to his feet and hailed a cab going crosstown to the West Side.

The driver dropped Emmett off in the vicinity of the Chelsea. If the prick lying against the fence was really serious, the cabbie could only tell the cops the address of an Eighth Avenue IND subway station which was what his trip sheet read.

He made sure the cab continued uptown before walking the block to the midmorning-empty bar connected to the Chelsea, slipping through it to the hotel's staircase unnoticed, and on up to the room. He turned off the television and phoned a doctor friend who came by within twenty minutes. The double lacerations on the top right side of his head took quite a few stitches to close, and his face was turning all black and blue and was already swollen, but it wasn't all that bad. After all, he hadn't been stabbed, and he considered himself lucky.

It was his friend's off day, so Emmett picked up the phone and asked Pernnell, the Chelsea's bellman, if he'd get them a bag of ice cubes, a bottle of Comfort and a couple of glasses. They drank away the afternoon with reminiscences, and Emmett's friend drove him to the airport where he caught his flight back to San Francisco, sleeping all the way home.

Tumble's return alone had opened a permanent chasm that was going to keep Emmett firmly divided from his once-were brothers, probably forever. Natural Suzanne was waiting, though, and she told him all the nitpicking gossip that went down after Tumble came back by himself. After a while Emmett didn't want to hear any more of it and stopped her with a "Fuck it! Fuck all of it!"

He picked up where he left off with the Free Food the next day, and it was the first time he didn't *really* want to do it anymore. He was sick and tired and wasted by the rift between him and the other men, as well as some of their old ladies in the Free City Collective. Sure, a lot of it was his own damn fault! Emmett knew he had a monster ego, but he always kept his vanity personal, never letting it get beyond the private bounds of the Collective. What the fuck did they want from him? Couldn't he be crazy? Wasn't he allowed? He never blew the covers off any secrets by making himself *public* like they did. He was just *popular*, and that's what probably got them all twisted about him. Everything he did was popular! He had the most popular act going in the invisible circus of the Free City Collective, and they were scared he was going to make his popularity public and cop all the chips! So they begrudged him even the pleasure of

their company and left him alone, like only other men can leave another man alone.

Then one day the devil came to see Emmett in the form of a recently returned Chicano soldier from Vietnam who brought a gift with him. The present was just a small part of what he said he brought back to the States and had already sold for a whole lot of money that he sort of felt guilty about and wanted to remedy somehow. The only way he could think of doing that was "Here!" and he gave Emmett almost half an ounce of 90 percent pure heroin. The last thing he said before he split forever was, "It's free!"

Emmett stood in the thin hallway that led to the side doorway of his storefront crib, looking at the tiny, aluminum-foiled package in his hands. When he raised his eyes, there was no one standing in the doorway, and the vacuum that remained made it seem almost as if no one had been there at all. He closed the door and went into the kitchen where he opened up the aluminum package, and as soon as he laid his eyes on the flat mound of dull white powder, he knew he was going to use every grain of it all by his lonesome. Alone, just like he'd been doing practically everything else for what, all of a sudden, was much too long.

For the first few weeks, everything went along all right. He got out of bed at dawn, took his wake-up fix in the bathroom and coasted through the day, making his Free Food deliveries and returning back to his Mission district storefront pad at dusk where he headed directly for the john to get high again. Natural Suzanne noticed that something was wrong with Emmett immediately. He stopped drinking the usual two or three nightly quarts of Ballantine Ale to get the sweat back in him; he hardly ever ate; he was always unusually tired, often nodding right out and sleeping till morning; he lost his sense of humor, and never smiled; and he no longer made love with her as he used to each night before they fell asleep and each morning when they woke up.

"Emmett, Emmett, what's the matter?"

"What's the matter? I got syphilis! That's what the matter. Leave me alone!"

It went on like that for a while longer, until the morning finally arrived when Emmett couldn't get out of bed to make his rounds. Natural Suzanne was already up in the kitchen making the coffee he seldom drank anymore, and he called to her. She came and knelt down on the floor-mattress bed and listened to her man talk about

how tired he was and how she was the only one. He gave her the keys to the truck and the list of names and addresses with the number of people in each of the families written in a circle alongside every name.

“It’s Tuesday, so today’s vegetables. You’ve done it with me, ’n you know how it’s all supposed to go. Get a couple of sisters to help you, ’n maybe even one of our brothers who’s not too busy doin’ his own goddamn thing! You don’t have to do everyone on the list, just those with the asterisks next to their addresses. They need it the most, and our Collective. Okay? Hurry up, ’cause if you don’t get to the Produce and Farmers market quick, Synanon ’n them nuns’ll beat you ’n cop everything. Thanks, sweetheart. Thank you.”

For the rest of the week and from then on until the city and state governments put a stop to it, most of the women like Natural Suzanne, Lacey Pines, Fyllis, Nana Nina, Vicki Sparks, House Jane, Almond Judith, to name a few, and some of the Free City men, Slim Minnaux, Little Robert, Clearwater, Coyote, Butcher Brooks, House-Be-Nimble, G. G. Davey, Tumble, Strong Vinnie, to name a few, took over the Free Food Home Delivery Service and kept it happening for as many as they could. After a while, however, it became impossible for them to complete the entire route for a whole lot of obvious reasons, such as their lack of familiarity with it, and they condensed it to those families who were part of the Free City Collective or close to the work they were doing. At least some of the people were still eating. But even that ended in the spring, when most of the Free City Collective, in an attempt to stretch the long, dull winter out of their systems and to demand that the city and state do what *they* had been doing, began to perform a daily guerrilla theater production of poetry readings, agit-prop skits and song singing at lunch hour on the front steps of City Hall.

It went on every day for weeks and was called “City Hall Noon Forever!” — thoroughly entertaining the civil servants who came out to spend their lunch hours in the sunshine of the adjacent park. It ended abruptly however when the Hun and several others demanded to read a not unreasonable proposal to Mayor Alioto or his assistant, Michael McCone. The cops moved in, clubs swinging, and arrested forty of the male and female participants in the joyous Free City Collective event on the insistence of Municipal Judge Albert Axelrod who accused one of the Thelin brothers, owners of the then-closed Psychedelic Shop, of violating California Penal Code 650-A,

which means committing the offense of appearing in public with one's face partially covered with a bandana. The nineteenth-century law had been enacted against those who had intent to conceal their identity, like members of the Ku Klux Klan. Thelin was only anticipating the cops' use of tear gas.

The arrest was banner-headlined, "The Poetry Bust!" and the newspapers printed the Free City Collective's sensible proposal in its entirety:

### PROPOSAL

*San Franciscans, in the interest of eternity, and out of respect for their Mayor, will recommend the following course of action to that office this afternoon.*

1. That city-owned buildings remaining empty be restored to the people for reconstruction, embellishment and refurbishment, so that those people might live there freely.
2. That all foodstuffs and material in surplus not accounted for in current welfare distribution be returned to the people for redistribution "free" through ten autonomous neighborhood "free stores" whose rent shall be paid by the city.
3. That presses and trucks be made available for the dissemination of "Free News" throughout the city, so that the people will come to know one another and make channels of access available to each other.
4. That the city provide resources for autonomous neighborhood celebrations of the city, the planet and their own free beings.
5. That parks and other public spaces be returned to the people of San Francisco. The Mayor's office is invited to share in that vision. City-wide celebration of Summer Solstice will mark the entrance of FREE SAN FRANCISCO into eternity.

"Welcome Home!"

Emmett was totally against the City Hall Noon Forever event, arguing with the Hun that the only productive result would be the reprinting of the proposal in the newspapers, and that wasn't worth the violation of the Free City Collective's never-ask-or-protest-for-anything rule. Furthermore, Emmett argued, the establishment powers were bound to retaliate for making such "popular" ideas "public."

No one was listening to Emmett after he stopped delivering the Free Food to the people and folded in his hand before playing out all the cards he dealt to himself. So, even though they knew he was probably right, the members of the Free City Collective opted for

the guerrilla theater event, if for no other reason than it was more fun than actually assuming the freedom to do the real thing. The authorities did retaliate by ordering the Produce and Farmers' markets to stop supplying the collective with fruit and vegetables and also legislating all sorts of new regulations on the distribution of Free Food which were impossible to comply with. The only free food they could scrounge up after the city hall deal went down forever was just enough to feed themselves and seldom anyone else. And that was that.

The amount of scag Emmett used each day increased along with his tolerance for the drug, and it wasn't long before someone pinned him nodding in public and the word rapidly spread throughout the city, and eventually from coast to coast, about what everyone began to call "Emmett's problem." He was a junkie, and everybody he knew wrote him off like a bad check. It was as if he betrayed them all, and in a way he had, but no more than he betrayed himself.

The stuff from Nam was gone before he knew it, and Emmett found himself with a motherfucker of a jones! After using up that pure horse, nothing he could cop on the street could get him straight. It just took his sick off, and it was costing him eighty to a hundred dollars a day simply to do that. He got the money in the same way all down junkies get the bread they need: any way he could. Soon he was being blamed for every rip-off that occurred in the Haight Community, and all at once, all the people he had known and who loved and admired him, but never told him, didn't like him anymore. In fact, most hated him, and some were so angry at what he was doing to them and to himself that they tried to physically hurt him. A few of them actually did. The only person who showed pity to him was Shig at the City Lights Bookstore in North Beach who lent him money once in a while, until it got to be too much even for him, and all Emmett could ever say was, "Thanks, Shig. Be seein' you."

Finally it got to be too much for Emmett, and he checked himself into Mendocino Hospital where they said they would detoxify him with methadone. It would have worked, except that they only gave him a small amount of the synthetic opiate for four days — a very short way to come down, very fast, especially for a man with a monster, gorilla habit like the one Emmett had on his back. It didn't work, and on the morning of the fifth day, Emmett's nervous system was rattling itself to death in a vicious Saint Vitus's Dance all its own. He called Natural Suzanne who had been for months



Coyote had taken over a fifty-dollar per month house with his blond-haired Louisiana woman, Sam, and a whole lot of other people. Emmett drove there alone because Natural Suzanne had finally become sick and tired of their loveless relationship and was making up for what her old man had been unable to give her. The last thing he said to her when she was forced to split to save the youth and vitality of her less than nineteen years was, "Have a nice life, Natural Suzanne. Have a nice life." And he meant it with all the sincerity he could ever mean about anything.

Coyote's ranch was a stone heavy spread where only heavyweight men and women came from the city to do nothing that wasn't them. Some rode in on choppers, others in cars and trucks. A few walked the mile from the front gate to the house. Nobody ever tiptoed, and no one was a stranger. Everything was always going on, and it was a free-for-all. A man silhouetted against the falling sun, churning up the earth on the side of a hill with the rat-tat-tat 45-caliber bursts from his Thompson submachine gun. A woman giving birth in the green, high grass reflected in a hundred watching eyes and in the sound of a child's first liberated cry. Musicians who made millions playing for ears that paid to hear, and musicians who never made anything at all, jammed their hard, mellow souls together and filled the place with the sound of whatever points they were trying to get across in the music that never stopped.

The ranch was a bayou of heartaches and good times, where people overworked each other in a devil dance that made their bones beg for another chance before they gave in. It was a sunup-to-sundown refusal to guard the truth and a shifting center where no one's imagination would leave them alone. A place where anyone who knew the address could come to live or die, get married, find each other or themselves, or, like Emmett, kick a habit and return to finish what he started out to do. It was called Olema, and it's not there anymore, and Richard Brautigan didn't have to mention it in the poem he wrote about how Emmett Grogan left his habit there.

DEATH IS A BEAUTIFUL CAR PARKED ONLY  
*for Emmett*

Death is a beautiful car parked only  
to be stolen on a street lined with trees  
whose branches are like the intestines  
of an emerald.

You hotwire death, get in, and drive away  
like a flag made from a thousand burning  
funeral parlors.

You have stolen death because you're bored.  
There's nothing good playing at the movies  
in San Francisco.

You joyride around for a while listening  
to the radio, and then abandon death, walk  
away, and leave death for the police  
to find.

Still weak and in a sag of wondering which way his body was going to go next, Emmett decided it was time to document what they had all tried to accomplish together as the Free City Collective. They held what turned out to be their last formal meeting as a family and planned the one-shot review magazine for which a young, stand-up Los Angeles man handed Emmett forty-hundred-dollar-bills-cash energy to help get it compiled. The collective chose a slick detective-magazine format to say what they had to say, but since the cost of such a glossy, highly stylized review was beyond their limits, they had to settle for simple newsprint and go along with seeing it distributed and sold for thirty-five cents in exchange for forty thousand "Free" copies which were theirs to give away.

The cover of the document was titled "The Digger Papers," and none of the contents therein were copyrighted, so that anyone might reprint anything without permission. On the outside back cover was what many people who knew him thought was the Hun's most brilliant and poignant statement in art. It was a black-and-white reproduction of a six-by-three-foot, blue-and-white poster of two Tong assassins, calmly biding their time, leaning against the corner of a brick building. Above them hung a sign with the Chinese character from the I Ching that spelled revolution, and written below their feet in black letters was the slogan 1% FREE. The Hun designed the original poster with a friend called Red-Cock Don and with several others posted them on walls throughout Chinatown and all over the city, to the consternation of the Chinese and the wonderment of everyone.

Most of the information and news that was broadcast between the front and back covers of the Digger Papers was written in poetry, except for what became the most important piece of the collection

for those who really wanted to know how to organize and maintain a Free City. That was written in straight prose by Emmett.

#### THE POST-COMPETITIVE, COMPARATIVE GAME OF A FREE CITY

Our state of awareness demands that we uplift our efforts from competitive game playing in the underground to the comparative roles of free families in free cities.

We must pool our resources and interact our energies to provide the freedom for our individual activities.

In each city of the world there is a loose competitive underground composed of groups whose aims overlap, conflict, and generally enervate the desired goal of autonomy. By now we all have guns, know how to use them, know our enemy, and are ready to defend. We know that we ain't gonna take no more shit. So it's about time we carried ourselves a little heavier and got down to the business of creating free cities within the urban environments of the western world.

Free Cities are composed of Free Families (e.g., in San Francisco: Diggers, Black Panthers, Red Guards, Mission Rebels and various revolutionist gangs and communes) who establish and maintain services that provide a base of freedom for autonomous groups to carry out their programs without having to hassle for food, printing facilities, transportation, mechanics, money, housing, working space, clothes, machinery, trucks, etc.

At this point in our revolution it is demanded that the families, communes, black organizations and gangs of every city in America coordinate and develop Free Cities where everything that is necessary can be obtained for free by those involved in the various activities of the individual clans.

*Every brother and sister should have what they need to do whatever needs to be done.*

#### *Free City:*

An outline . . . a beginning

Each service should be performed by a tight gang of brothers and sisters whose commitment should enable them to handle an overload of work with ability and enthusiasm. "Trippers" soon get bored, hopefully before they cause an economic strain.

#### *Free City Switchboard/Information Center*

should coordinate all services, activities, and aid and direct assistance where it is most needed. Also provide a reference point for legal aid, housing, machinery, etc.; act as a mailing address for dislocated groups or individuals and guide random energies where they are most needed. (The work load usually prevents or should prevent the handling of

messages from parents to their runaway children . . . that should be left up to the churches of the community.)

#### *Free Food Storage and Distribution Center*

should hit every available source of free food — produce markets, farmers' markets, meat-packing plants, farms, dairies, sheep and cattle ranches, agricultural colleges, and giant institutions (for the uneaten vats of food) — and fill up their trucks with the surplus by begging, borrowing, stealing, forming liaisons and communications with delivery drivers for the leftovers from their routes . . . best method is to work in two shifts: morning group picks up the foodstuffs and the afternoon shift delivers it to the list of Free Families and the poor peoples of the ghettos everyday. hard work.

This gang should help people pool their welfare food stamps and get their old ladies or a group to open a free restaurant for people on the move and those who live on the streets. Giant scores should be stored in a garage-type warehouse equipped with freezers and its whereabouts known only to the Free Food Gang. This group should also set up and provide help for canning, preserving, bread baking, and feasts and anything and everything else that has to do with food.

#### *Free City Garage and Mechanics*

to repair and maintain all vehicles used in the various services, the responsibility for the necessary tools and parts needed in their work is entirely theirs and usually available by maintaining friendly relations with junkyards, giant automotive schools, and generally scrounging around those areas where auto equipment is easily obtained. The garage should be large enough and free of tripsters who only create more work for the earnest mechanics.

#### *Free City Bank and Treasury*

this group should be responsible for raising money, making free money, paying rents, for gasoline, and any other necessary expenses of the Free City Families. They should also organize and create small rackets (cookie sales, etc.) for the poor kids of the ghettos and aid in the repair and maintenance of the machinery required in the performance of the various services.

#### *Free City Legal Assistance*

high-style, hard-nosed, top-class lawyers who are willing to defend the rights of the Free City and its services . . . no honky, liberal, bleeding-heart, guilt-ridden advocates of justice, but first-class case-winners . . . turn on the best lawyers who can set up airtight receivership for free money and property, and beat down the police harassment and brutality of your areas.

### *Free City Housing and Work Space*

rent or work deals with the urban gov't to take over spaces that have been abandoned for use as carpentry shops, garages, theaters, etc., rent whole houses, but don't let them turn into crash pads. Set up hotels for new arrivals or transients by working out deals with small hotel owners for free rooms in exchange for light housework, porter duties, etc. Big warehouses can be worked on by environmental artists and turned into giant free dance-fiesta-feast palaces.

A strong trio of serious business-oriented cats should develop this liberation of space within the cities and be able to work with the lawyers to make deals and outmaneuver urban bureaucracies and slum landlords . . . one of the main targets for space are the churches who are the holders of most real estate and they should be approached with a no-bullshit hard line.

### *Free City Stores and Workshops*

nothing in these stores should be throwaway items . . . space should be available for chicks to sew dresses, make pants to order, recut garments to fit, etc. The management should all be life-actors capable of turning bullshitters into mud. Important that these places are first class environments with no trace of salvation army/st. vinnie de paul charity rot. Everything groovy. Everything with style . . . must be first class. *It's all free because it's yours!*

### *Free Medical Thing*

should be established in all poverty areas and run by private physicians and free from any bureaucratic support. The Free City Bank should try to cover the expenses, and pharmaceutical houses should be hit for medical supplies, etc. Important that the doctors are brothers and do not ask to be salaried or are not out to make careers for themselves (witness Dr. David Smith of the Hippie Free Clinic in San Francisco who is far from a brother . . . very far).

### *Free City Hospital*

should be a house converted into bed space and preferably with a garden and used for convalescence and people whose minds have been blown or who have just been released from a state institution and who need the comfort and solace of their own people rather than the cold alienated walls of an urban institution.

### *Free City Environmental and Design Gang*

gangs of artists from universities and art institutes should be turned on and helped in attacking the dank squalor of the slums and most of the Free City Family dwellings . . . paint landscapes on the sides of tenements . . . fiberglass stairwells . . . make crazy. Tight groups of good painters, sculptors, designers who comfortably construct environments

for the community. Materials and equipment can be hustled from university projects and manufacturers, etc.

#### *Free City Schools*

schools designed and run by different groups according to the consciousness of their Free Families (e.g., Black Man's Free School, Anarchist's Creative Arts School, etc.). The schools should utilize the space liberated for them by the Free City Space Gang.

#### *Free City News and Communication Company*

providers of a daily newspaper, monthly magazine, free Gestetner and printing notices for other groups and any special bulletins and propaganda for the various families of the Free City. The machinery should be kept in top condition and supplied by any of the various services. Paper can be scavenged at large mills and cut down to proper working size.

#### *Free City Events . . . Festival Planning Committees*

usually involves several Families interacting to sponsor tours for the kids . . . Balls, Happenings, Theatre, Dance, and spontaneous experiments in joy . . . Park Events usually are best set up by hiring a 20-foot flatbed truck for the rock band to use as a stage and to transport their equipment; people should be advised by leaflets to bring food to exchange with their neighbors; banners, props, balloons, kites etc., should be handled by a committee; an electrician should be around to run the generator and make sure that the PA systems work; hard work made easy by giving responsible people the tough jobs.

#### *Cooperative Farms and Campsites*

the farms should be run by experienced hands and the Free Land settled on by cottage industrial people who will send their wares into the Free City. The farms must produce vital food for the families . . . some free land that is no good for farming should be used as campsites and/or cabin areas for Free citizens who are in need of country leisure, as well as kids who could use a summer in the woods.

#### *Scavenger Corps and Transport Gang*

is responsible for garbage collection and the picking up and delivery of items to the various services, as well as liberating anything they think useful for one project or another. They are to be responsible for the truck fleet and especially aware of the economic strain if trucks are misused by tripsters.

#### *Free City Tinkers and Gunsmiths, Etc.*

will repair and keep things going in the houses . . . experienced repairmen of all sorts, electricians, and carpenters. They should maintain a warehouse or working space for their outfit.

### *Free City Radio, TV and Computer Stations*

demand Free time on radio and TV stations; demand a Free City frequency to set up your own stations; rent computers to call the punches for the revolution or use them in any constructive way possible.

On April 6, 1968, two days after Martin Luther King was assassinated standing on a Memphis motel balcony, Lil' Bobby Hutton, the first rank-and-file member to join the Black Panther party, was shot down dead with his hands on top his head, essentially because he refused to strip himself naked like Eldridge Cleaver and his other Panther brothers did before they walked out of that basement and into the mercilessness of the Oakland Police. The insurrections that swept through the ghettos of America that spring weekend were in response to the cowardly way in which both men were killed while unarmed, symbolizing for the nation how most men who are both poor and black usually die in a "gun battle" with the police. Later on, some of the students at Columbia University were to take over that institution for five days in a revolt that promised to change the manner in which things were run around there, and demanded employment for minority workers on all construction jobs that took place on school-owned property.

Only superficial changes occurred in the ghettos and at Columbia on account of the so-called "riots," except that all of the construction crews at the university are now made up of minority workers who are very busy tearing down housing that the people of the Morningside Heights and Harlem communities desperately need and replacing it with university buildings. Emmett knew that nothing but a few good news stories was going to come out of all the "rioting," but he wished all those involved "luck" just the same, especially a Columbia student named Mark Rudd who looked like he needed something real bad, because he sure didn't have no brains.

Around the same time Emmett went over to Oakland to speak with Black Panther Party Chairman Bobby Seale, and Chief of Staff David Hilliard, giving them a couple thousand copies of the Digger Papers which had a "Free Huey!" advertisement collage by Natural Suzanne on the inside back cover. The Papers were later distributed among Panther party members and throughout the black community. The conversation among the three men was crisp and to the point. Emmett outlined what he did and asked the two party leaders what they needed, besides money, that he could possibly get for

them. They began discussing a plan they had to start a Free Breakfast for Children program that would put some nourishment into the normally empty bellies of black kids before they went to school. It was a good idea, and Emmett was glad to hear that the Panthers were seriously intending to serve the people in other ways besides providing political education — the only thing Eldridge Cleaver ever considered important.

Without letting on to the Panthers, Emmett accumulated within a few days enough powdered milk, cereal, eggs, etc., from those same sources he tapped when he operated the Free Food Home Delivery Service. Just after dawn he arrived at the Black Panther party headquarters in Oakland and unloaded the breakfast food, stacking it along the wall in the driveway next to the Panthers' storefront premises. He left without anyone seeing him, except the police surveillance squad in the building across the street. Dave Hilliard arrived a bit later that morning, to do the type of organizational work that few men are capable of doing well, he found the stuff and the Breakfast for Children Program that was never going to end was begun shortly afterwards by the Black Panther party.

Emmett spent the next few weeks carefully distributing the 10 mg. methadone pills he had stashed throughout a good deal of the addict population in San Francisco, by using a complicated system of dead-letter drops to protect himself from arrest and prosecution. Each packet contained fifty pills, and all of them were stashed in different "drop" locations, and only one packet was allotted to each addict he contacted. It was a one-to-a-customer policy, except none of it was for sale, it was all, like the man said, "for free!"

The junkies are probably the only minority group in the United States that doesn't have its own "Liberation Front" to fight for their human and constitutional rights to be treated by the medical profession as diseased patients, instead of by police agencies as fiendish criminals. Emmett wasn't particularly concerned with *how* the free methadone was used by the addicts who connected for it. He knew some of them would sell it for heroin or simply use it to reduce their level of tolerance for scag, enabling them to get high again for a while, or use it when there was no dope available on the streets, or to supplement their habits. But he also knew that others would use the medication to kick — and that, plus the knowledge that, for a brief moment at least, the absurd, unnecessary desperation of addiction would be gone for a handful of strung-out men and women, was well worth the insane effort and dangerously diffi-

cult skullduggery he put himself through to make it happen for what was really only a second.

It was immediately after Emmett completed that Free chore that William Bendix was replaced in the leading role of America's favorite pastime of "Kill the Umpire" by Sirhan Sirhan, who fired a bullet into the brain of Robert Kennedy with almost exactly the same demeanor and in much the same way as Saigon's police chief fired a round from his revolver into the temple of a Viet Cong suspect and commented afterwards on television that "Buddha will understand." Sirhan Sirhan had Allah on *his* side.

The chicken also came home to roost in the cold hype and media scam of the Haight-Ashbury, when it became the only truly racially integrated neighborhood in America to riot in July, '68. It all began with the cops, of course, who tried to arrest two brothers on suspicion of selling LSD, and it ended three nights later after what the newspapers headlined as a "Fiery Riot." The truth of the matter was that there were about two thousand people in the streets, most of whom were either just watching the five or six guys who were doing all the rock-, bottle-, and fire-bomb throwing, or trying to stop them with such sophisticated statements as, "Violence is the last resort of the incompetent!" But three nights of that large a crowd, and that small a group of violent activists, was enough to smash every shopwindow on Haight Street and burn out the Bank of America building, before the squad of tactical cops got wise and launched a sweep in two directions, quelling all the action and emerging from the contest victorious.

After that, most of the Haight Independent Proprietors threw in the towel and boarded up their stores for good. As it turned out, many of the Head shops and hippie boutiques that closed had been owned by a corporation with a Nob Hill dentist for chairman, which only used the bearded longhairs as managers for their storefront.

Another result of the "Fiery Riot" was that the media began to include explosives as a part of the terms of hipsterism, while also looking back longingly to when the district was the home of the flower generation. The epilogue to the Haight "riot" came from a group calling itself the Haight-Ashbury Neighborhood Development Corporation, which proposed a hundred million dollar plan to resuscitate the district with an ambitious face-lift to make it the most attractive business area in the city, hoping to hide all the ugliness with the paint of success.

*Bonnie and Clyde* was big at the movies, and Hoffman and Rubin were making Yippie! on radio and TV, trying to get the young and foolish to go to Chicago that August to play "Crowd" in a piece entitled *Law and Order*. Those two geriatric longhairs were raising the underground to the height of its alternative shuck with a make-up title for a make-believe number that was to be the Yippie Festival of Life Convention in Chicago. Even though Emmett was in New York while the YIP propaganda was manipulating lame middle-class kids into its pseudo-street culture, he simply refused to believe that anyone real was going to fall for their obvious scam, and he went up to Woodstock to visit with the man who invited him there.

Bob Dylan was exactly unlike what Emmett Grogan expected him to be.

Emmett was in Europe during those first years that Bob talked the music and played the news to his starving generation, and broke the hearts of every American poet with his singing of the song. Of course, he heard the records overseas, but it wasn't like listening to those same albums in the country where they were cut. By the time, Emmett finally came home and settled into things, it was already "Blonde on Blonde," and he just temporarily didn't know. He found out later without having to tramp through the green, hard-sell, crystal swamp of positively Fourth Street, image-persona, media hustle.

Now Emmett was sitting on the second step of a warped wooden flight of four front stairs that led up and into the funky, screened porch of a pine-walled cabin where a film editor, who used the name Al Gable whenever he seldom took a credit, lived with his wife, six hound dogs and two dozen cats. Bob was sitting on the same step, and in him Emmett saw a man who somehow made it through that swamp and settled down alive on the other side. A man who had a wife and five kids and simply played music for a living. A plain and easy-dressed man, complicated only by the hearsay. A physically small man who was strong for his size and not fat at all, but wiry with coached stringy muscle and shoulders that stuck out wider than you'd think. A man with a lot of friends, but afraid of those who weren't, just the same. A man who kept a matchstick in his mouth to keep from smoking and who was sliding with the knowledge of growing older and leaving the brassy, punk snide of his younger-than-that now behind him. Dylan was clean.

They talked soft and casual for as long as it took them both to find

where the other was at. Then Bob told Emmett about a place he'd been to, not too long before, and about what he saw there and how it looked. What impressed him most was the gravestones planted all around on top of this old-time, boot-hill cemetery. It wasn't the shape or age of the headstones or the way they were carved. It was the words that were chipped into their rough, flat surfaces that impressed him; not on account of their particular wisdom or peculiar wit, but because they were there at all. Bob wondered whether they were the last words of the persons buried beneath them.

Probably not, but it got them both talking about last lines they'd heard of some people saying — just before the little dirt road exploded into dust, and roaring up it and pulling onto and across the crabgrass toward the two of them was a pink Lincoln Continental convertible with the top down, two passengers, and Gregory Corso driving. The pink-lemonade topless limo skidded to a stop along the slick, dew grass, and America's number one "Gasoline" poet leaped out of the driver's seat and over the front door with a nearly empty pint of Swiss Colony wine splashing in his left hand and sticking forth his right to shake hello, saying, "How ya doin', *Robère*? Heard you were here, Emmett, 'n came down from the farm t' see you! This is my woman, Bel, 'n you both know Julius Orlovsky, right? What's happenin'?"

Bob was silent. Emmett mentioned that they'd been comparing famous last lines, when Gregory halted him. "Last lines, heh! Well I don' know about what anybody else has to say but me, see. An' I'm gonna tell you somethin'. I already got my last line stashed for when the time comes to use it! How's that for being prepared, huh?! An' I went to jail instead o' the Boy Scouts! You wanna know the way I want it to be? I'll tell you!

"I wanna be layin' in a bed, see, with all my friends around me. An' when I got just a little more time left, hardly none at all, I want one of my friends to lean over 'n ask me, 'Gregory, you *lived* your whole life, 'n now that it's almost over, Gregory, tell us. Tell us what it was like, Gregory.'

"That's when I props myself up on my elbows 'n look at all o' them waitin' to hear what I got to say, 'n that's when I tell 'em what it was like, boy. I tell 'em! I tell 'em! *It was nowhere!*"

Emmett enjoyed the country pleasures of Woodstock until the leaves began to turn and the air became crisp with autumn. He spent the kind of time with Bob that they both needed to get to know each other better. They went to listen to music together and

did some walking and talking. There was a screening of the very funny, personal film Bob made about one of the last times he took to the road, touring England as *Dylan*, the on-the-make kid in a mysterious, Hitchcockian train where nothing happened and no one was allowed more than a taste of anything. It was entitled *Eat the Document*, and Emmett laughed at what he felt had to be one of the most honestly hilarious movies any man ever had that special sense of humor to make, about whatever he once had been.

Then there was the Band, and listening to them play together and their "Big Pink" debut album, which was going to let everyone in on the well-kept secret that they were the best. Their music taught Emmett that if anything was ever going to be really good, it was going to be a long time coming; and that San Francisco was, by far, not the only place where something was happening.

Afterwards Al Grossman said, "Anytime," and he doesn't talk that way to many people. So Emmett answered, "Thanks," before he said, "Be seein' you," and ran to catch the plane that would take him to Chicago and another man from whom he would learn a few more things he had to know.

Fred Hampton was waiting for him at the Illinois Chapter headquarters of the Black Panther party on West Madison Street. The Panthers had just come above ground in Chicago, opening their office only a few days before, and Emmett was the first man who wasn't black or a Panther to walk up the steep, narrow staircase and into the long, barren room which the dozen sober faces who watched him move were willing to defend with their lives.

After Linda Fitzpatrick and Groovy were murdered in New York, a "hippie" detective squad had been assigned to circulate through the Lower East Side area in hippie clothes in an effort to protect the "East Village flower people" from the niggers and spics. This knowledge was just as common among Chicago's low-money people as it was among those in New York. That, plus his middle-of-the-back-length hair and the stone-corny, fraudulent activity of the Yippies who had just made fools and suckers out of most of Chicago's hipsters, were more than enough reasons for the black men and women in that office to be cold-eyed wary of Emmett Grogan, no matter what sort of references the Party's Central Committee phoned in about him from Oakland.

So Emmett stood in the middle of the empty room alone, conscious of the glare of the surrounding eyes, but understanding why they felt that way toward him. He was waiting to meet the man he

came there for, who was now busy taking care of some other business in a small cubicle of a side room.

Emmett had money in his pocket. Money that film editor Al Gable arranged, during his negotiations with an Illinois movie company about making a film to show why the hard-poor and heavy people of America stayed away from all the protests of the '68 Democratic National Convention. Emmett insisted the money was necessary to insure the cooperation of the southwest black neighborhood that was the Panthers' turf in the making of the film. The money wasn't really necessary for that purpose, but it was badly needed by the Panthers to function, now that they were above ground and out in the open, and Emmett thought they would be able to put it to good use. The film that was eventually going to come from this initial meeting would be *American Revolution II*, and Fred Hampton would use the making of it as a medium for forming the Rainbow Coalition, a political alliance among the Black Panthers, the Puerto Rican Young Lords, the group of Appalachian whites known as the Young Patriots, and the unaffiliated, young, white street radicals who considered the singular newspaper, *RISING UP ANGRY*, their speaking organ. Fred's ability to overcome each of these groups' prejudices towards the others and his successful formation of the enormously strong Rainbow Coalition would prove how very powerful and, finally, dangerous a man he really was to the Illinois status quo. And they would kill him.

A muscular young blood who introduced himself as Odignga, chief of security, escorted Emmett into the tiny side office and left him, closing the door from the outside. Emmett then found himself being offered a chair by the solid, two-hundred-pound, bulk-muscled black man sitting on the opposite side of an old, battered, flat-top desk piled high with papers. He sat down and immediately felt at ease in the presence of this totally joyful and obviously fearless man.

Fred Hampton had the large, big-boned face of a plain, young, hard worker who only used one simple tool to do what it was he needed to do. The clarity in his bright eyes and the sharp definition of the muscular dimples in his thick-skinned cheeks told you right away that the tool he used was his brain. Emmett liked Fred because he had none of that East-Coast-West-Coast, mau-mau, noble savage, nickle-dime, nigger-flip jive about him. He was straight goods all the way, and he had just turned twenty years old around the time Em-

mett met him, and he already seemed to know that he was going to be dead when he was twenty-one.

Emmett handed the money over to Fred and told him what kind of a deal was going down with the film group. Then they got to talking about how you could really smell the way the money is made in Chicago, from the pungent odor from the back-of-the-yards district where the animals are slaughtered for their meat. The scent is always hovering over the entire city, keeping the people in line and walking the straight and narrow for the wages they earn, but are made to believe they're being given.

Suddenly there was some hollering and a noise that made both men look up just in time to see the door fling open and a giant, big-bosomed, black woman come crashing inside the tiny office. She stopped in front of the desk and without even giving Emmett a glance asked, "Is you Fred Hampton?"

"Yes, ma'am . . ."

"Is you chairman o' these here Black Panthers?"

"Yes, I . . ."

"Is you for the people, all the black people?"

"Yes'm!"

"Is you ready t' serve the people?"

"Yes'm!"

"Well, we ain't got no goddamn heat! It's gonna be ten below after it's dark, 'n we ain't got no heat 'n no hot water! Now, what I wanna know is, you sittin' there tellin' me you fo' the people, tellin' me you ready t' serve the people! Well, *I'* one o' the people 'n ain't none o' us gots no steam heat, never mind water in *our* buildin'! Now, if you all those things you say you is, 'n we the people, what you gonna do 'bout gettin' us some heat, brother? What?"

"What's the address of the building, ma'am?"

"What you gonna do, call the health department 'n ask 'em t' send an inspector 'round or sumptin'?"

"No, ma'am, me 'n my brothers are goin' to get you the heat you need t' live through these cold, wintry nights. An' never you mind how, but t'morrow mornin' you gonna hear the steam whistlin' inside your pipes, 'n your radiators is all gonna be sizzlin'. When the people in the buildin' start askin' who done got the heat turned on, you be sure t' tell 'em all, mama, that it was the Illinois Chapter of the Black Panther party that done did it! 'Cause we here t' serve the people 'n not just talk 'bout how nice it'd be if we did."

That night around twelve or one o'clock, Chairman Fred was in the basement of the thirty-unit slum tenement building where the superintendent was doing his job, saving the landlord a little extra money by letting about three hundred people nearly freeze to death in the dead-of-winter cold of their apartments. One of his Panther brothers knocked on the door of the cellar flat, and when it opened they could see the red-hot, potbellied stove warming the super's place like a piece of toast. The man who opened the door was just standing still, his eyes frozen on the gaping barrel of the enforcer Chairman Fred was holding against his nose. The superintendent was just waiting to obey the orders that Chairman Fred gave him. "Stoke up the boilers, nigger! It's cold outside."

As soon as the people in that building heard and felt the heat steaming up, there was no way for that super or any other superintendent to shut it off for the rest of that winter of '68-'69, and no way those tenants were ever going to quietly acquiesce to the cold during any other winter thereafter. That's how Fred Hampton served the people, and that's why Fred Hampton died for the people. He was a teacher but he only made speeches on weekends.

John Huggins and Bunchy Carter had been shot dead in the lunchroom of U.C.L.A., and the spring was trying to break apart the solid wall of winter when Emmett returned to San Francisco, only to find out too late that he made a mistake in ever leaving Chicago. Everybody in Frisco still had a heavy attitude towards him, and nobody would believe he wasn't still using horse. So he resigned himself to the fact that it was all going to stay that way and even tried pushing it further beyond his reach by hanging as loose and as bad as he could without becoming corny.

He hustled a man he didn't need to hustle out of more than a thousand dollars cash, and a wise man named Pete, who was going to teach Emmett almost more than anyone had about himself, helped him buy a Harley-Davidson '74 and chop it down into a low-slung, extended-front-wheel, quality scooter.

Emmett rode that scooter up and down California's coastline and back and forth to San Francisco no matter what the weather. He came to love that bike of his, like a man could only love his horse. Most times he rode that red fandango along the open road alone with the air burning against his face and pushing him to jack the throttle and weave the bike in and out, between the square, eight-cylindered machines bought on time spent in thrall. Sometimes he would ride with a buddy or two, and they would get ripped with

wine the chicks were always made to pay for, and roll in the laughing blood they caused themselves or anyone else to lose. A few times — too few — he was invited on runs with the club, which made him understand that he really hadn't seen all there was to see in being "1% *FREE*," once more.

Emmett went to Los Angeles for the umpteenth time, but he didn't go alone. He was with a slender, soft, milk-skinned blond of an always-by-your-side-when-you-want-me, good woman named Blanche who wore a mink coat and hardly anything else at all. The moment he decided to stay in that town awhile, he already stayed too long. Two years to the hour of the day that George Jackson was going to go down in the San Quentin prison yard with a bullet in his back, Emmett was arrested driving a car. The cops charged him with having kidnapped and robbed a man at gunpoint, someplace else. It didn't matter to them that there was no gun or money in the car or that the guy who actually pulled the caper only a few minutes before was described as being short with black hair. Nothing seemed to matter to them, except getting Emmett booked and locked up in the Hollywood police station where a few of them used him for exercise.

Early the next morning, he was cuffed to a chain around his waist, shackled, and brought downtown for arraignment on the nonbailable kidnapping and other charges. Then he was transferred with many other prisoners to the Los Angeles County jail where he was separated from them and taken upstairs to a tier of six-by-ten-foot cells, each occupied by a single inmate. Although the rest of the jail was comprised of larger cells which usually held four or five prisoners and more on weekends, this section only had cells built for one person. Emmett recognized it immediately as the high power module of the L.A. County jail. There were no low riders in this section, just alleged capital offenders, four-time losers, and those considered violently dangerous. As a guard escorted him to his cell, shaving mirrors began popping out from between the bars of each cell so the inmates could see who was coming down the freeway.

Emmett lay on his bunk and thought about the word "module," remembering he had heard it repeated often a month before, when Neil Armstrong stepped out of the lunar module and onto the moon, but failed to claim it as territory, thus voiding the concept behind every national boundary in the world, and theoretically making imperialism obsolete. "Module?" Emmett thought. "Mod-

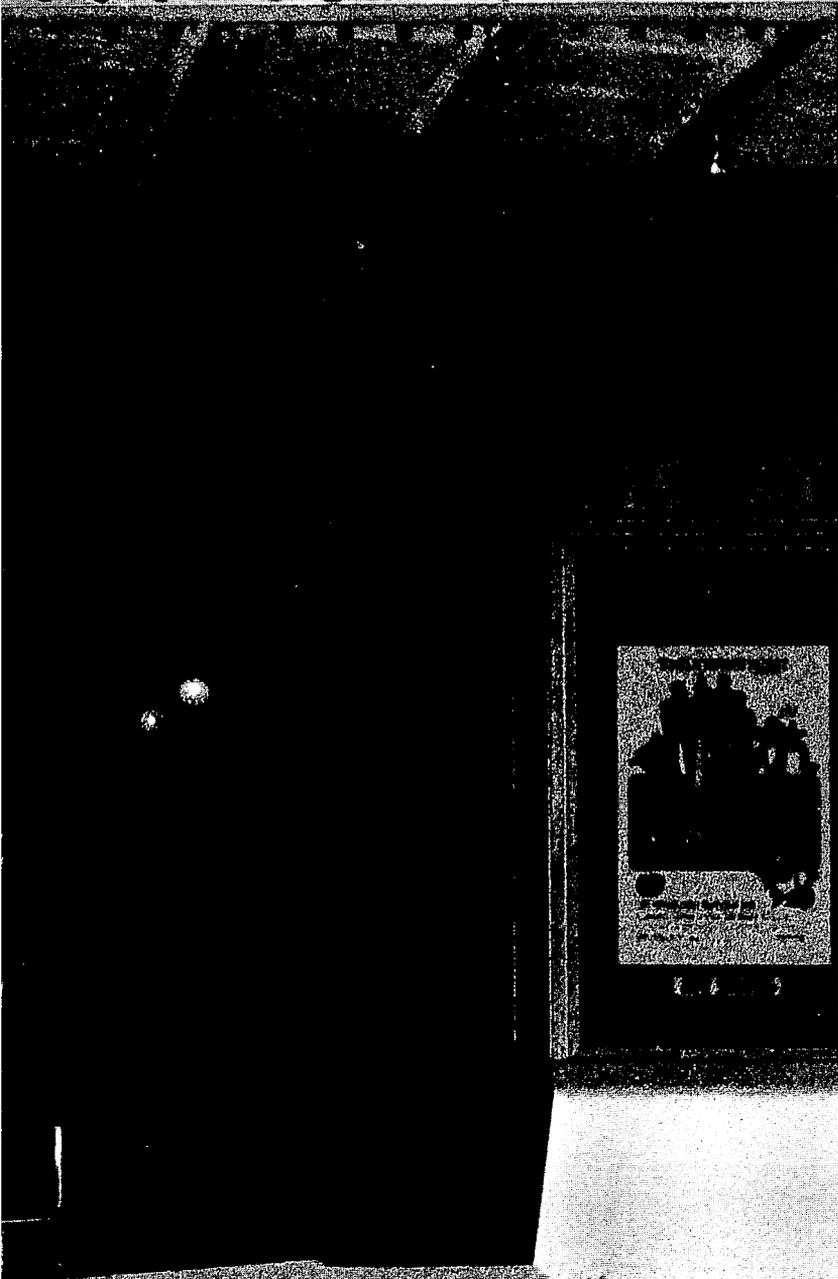
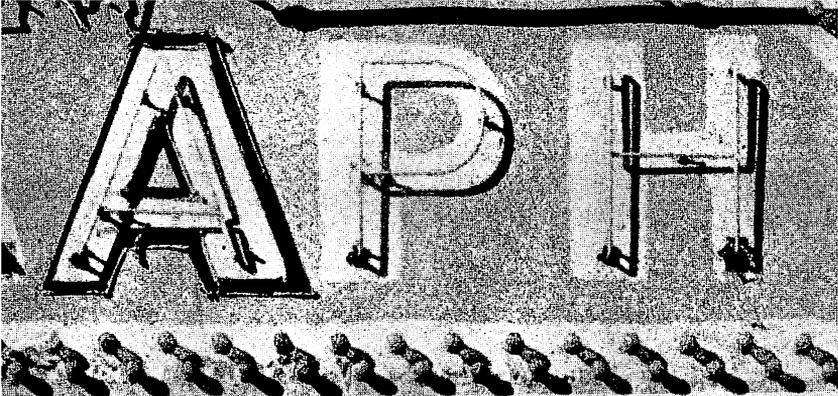
# BIGG



WYAY

NOW SHOWING







ule?” over and over, before he picked up a five-day-old newspaper lying on the floor and looked it over to pass a bit of time, reading the headlined story about the peace and harmony of the Woodstock Festival and how there’d been over four hundred thousand people there who still believed in the flower children’s philosophy and practiced what they preached, making it into a beautiful event for everyone.

“Flower children, my motherfuckin’ ass! If it hadn’t been rainin’ so goddamn hard all of those three days, somethin’ more than mud pies would of been made there! Who the fuck they think they’re kiddin’?”

Emmett didn’t know that the cops had found the address of the house in Los Angeles where he was staying. They got it off the back of an envelope where he wrote it along with his new telephone number. He also had no idea that the coppers invaded the place, arresting Blanche, her three young daughters, and a friend of hers who just happened by to visit, charging them all with possession of marijuana. He discovered all this a couple of days later when Brownie, a good, stand-up, Colorado woman who moved to L.A. from San Francisco with her old man to get into the film industry, told him about Blanche and her kids. It was thanks to Brownie and her husband that Blanche finally got cut loose on bail along with her friend and got her children released into the legal custody of her parents. Both of them also did all they could for Emmett, even though they, as most San Franciscans he knew way back when, didn’t particularly like him very much anymore.

Emmett took the news about Blanche and the kids getting popped really bad, and it made him sick because no matter how you looked at it, he brought it down on all of them, and now the children were taken away from their mother which was disgustingly wrong and made him sick. A short time after, there was more news — this time it was good, but not good enough to offset the bad that had already taken place.

The United States Supreme Court decreed that the merely technical kidnapping law for which Caryl Chessman had been smothered in the gas chamber nearly a decade before was unconstitutional. Therefore, that charge against Emmett was dropped and bail subsequently set. The bail money was raised by Natural Suzanne, Lacey Pines, and Fyllis, who came to southern California to help Blanche get Emmett out. The money came from people whose names were in Emmett’s little phone book. Since no bondsman would ac-

cept even a one-hundred-thousand-dollar house as collateral because their insurance companies were told that Emmett was a bad risk, the total bail had to be posted in cash, and it was by people scattered throughout the country and for reasons of their own for which Emmett was grateful.

It was definitely the wrong time to be in Los Angeles with the heat running all around, looking for the Sharon Tate-La Bianca killers. Yet it wasn't that kind of heat that had Emmett sweating out his stay. After he was released on bail, Emmett was arrested at his house and on the street on several different occasions on suspicion of practically anything. Several police agencies were now beginning to combine their efforts to piece together the jigsaw puzzle which Emmett Grogan had purposely created of himself. They knew they were onto *something*, but whatever it was they really didn't know. They just had a hunch. So they kept picking him up for questioning in an attempt to uncover the picture hidden within the folds of paper they gathered from all over the world which they knew was bound to become clear sooner or later. Fortunately for Emmett, it came later.

The preliminary hearing in the case of *State v. Grogan* occurred during the same week the Chicago Conspiracy Trial began in Chicago. Emmett's brilliant young defense counsel, Mr. Barry Nakell, considered that fact, and they both decided to keep all the proceedings of his case quiet and private, not even notifying the L.A. *Free Press*. They thought it best to approach and attack the entire matter as a straight beef, leaving all the political implications untouched, unless the prosecution brought them up, in which event Attorney Nakell assured his client, "We'll bury them!"

At the preliminary hearing, Attorney Nakell thoroughly impeached each of the so-called witnesses who identified Emmett only after he was pointed out to them in the courtroom. The final capper came when Emmett's good friend Max, who taught black adults in Watts how to read and write and had never been arrested for anything, testified on the stand that one of the so-called witnesses had, earlier in the day, talked amicably with the defendant about courtrooms in general, asked him where he came by his leather Cardin jacket, and accepted several cigarettes, obviously not recognizing Emmett as anyone he ever saw before, until he returned from having lunch with the prosecutor and arresting officers with whom he discussed a forgery case he had pending against him.

The judge still bound Emmett over for trial, but it didn't matter.

Nakell surprised the prosecution by waiving a jury trial and simply giving the youngest black judge sitting on a California bench the manuscript of the preliminary hearing along with a brilliantly comprehensive brief he wrote about the lack of any evidence and the thorough weakness of the case which he insinuated the state had fabricated against his client. The district attorney's office was caught with their pants down, and they demanded more time and all kinds of continuances to counter the slick, tactical defense. The judge replied that they had had enough time and adjourned for the day.

A week later, the newspapers were full of stories about Charles Manson and his family's arrest and the Weathermen's so-called "days of rage" in Chicago where they trashed a few windows of downtown stores, and lots of windows of poor, elderly pensioners living out their last years in boardinghouses that just happened to be scattered throughout the wealthy Gold Coast neighborhood.

At ten o'clock one morning of that same week, Emmett went into an empty courtroom to refuse a motion of dismissal of his case from the district attorney, before accepting the judgment of his honor who found him "not guilty" of anything.

A few hours later, after sincerely saying "Thanks, be seein' you," to twenty-nine-year old Barry Nakell, Emmett was riding his bike along the California coast highway back to San Francisco alone and into Altamont for which he had laid the groundwork with the Rolling Stones, their road management and the Grateful Dead, while he was awaiting the conclusion of his case.

Emmett rode to Altamont on his chopped red Harley fandango '74. He went there knowing what might happen to the rock concert lumpen, simply because the weather was good. He also went there knowing which side he would be on. He jumped his scooter up and over a dry, brown hill and into the giant crowd that had gathered for the last of the best "Free for Alls!"

Fred Hampton had been murdered in his bed while he slept two days before, and something he once said was rolling around inside Emmett's brain ever since he heard the news. It was the kind of phrase that wasn't easy to shake, and Emmett kept hearing it to himself all that day — "I'm too proletarianly intoxicated to be astronomically intimidated!" And the weather was too good for things not to turn bad, especially since they were for "free."

A long while later, Emmett was going to explain to the New York *Post* columnist, Alfred G. Aronowitz, just why and how and what he was responsible for, at that last California festival ever to be "free":

"In 1890, fifteen years after Custer's mistake, the Ghost Dance was introduced to the Sioux by the Paiute seer Wovoka. It was a religion which promised the return of the buffalo and the disappearance of the white man. The Sioux were enthusiastic advocates. With equal vigor, however, their dream was destroyed by the massacre at Wounded Knee where thousands of Indian men, women and children fell at the hands of the United States artillery. Since that disaster, the Sioux have never recovered. And the straight goods is that the Altamont Festival of December 6, 1969, remains the only workable criterion for uprooting the Ghost Dance. Nobody wants to save what's best left dead." This is a quote from a heavy article that has been appearing in the American and European underground press during the last ten months. No one knows much about the guy who put the piece together and he likes it that way. His name is Emmett Grogan and last night I sat and talked with him and this is what he had to say:

"It was my fault. It was my fault because in October '69 I poorly represented the people of the Bay Area Community when I invited the Stones to a party which we were planning to throw in Golden Gate Park. My right to represent anyone had been negated by the lying, cheating, scheming, rip-off-artist reputation that I was tagged with in certain circles of professional musical swells, as well as a few other places.

"It was my fault that during the pre-concert discussions, I was ego-blind to the fact that Jagger and Company had no intention of fulfilling our agreement that the people of the community construct and control the free festival while the Stones simply show up on one of the planned multiple stages whenever they felt like it and play just like any of the other 'name' bands that were going to be there.

"It was my fault that they not only didn't take me seriously but that they also didn't take the people seriously or even think that we were capable of getting it together by ourselves like we had done thirty times before.

"It was my fault because I returned to San Francisco from Los Angeles and pumped everyone up about the wailing, 'free because it's yours!' party we were gonna have. A party which I said was gonna knock the despair and depression of the winter of '69 right on its ass.

"It was my fault that I didn't contact Allen Klein and advise him to tell his nephew and his friends to back off, when I realized that Ronnie Schneider was doing a 'trick the tricker' on us by saying that Golden Gate Park was too small (meaning that it was too big for a star-stoned-Mick-showcase) and the issuance of the permit for the use of the park was blocked.

"It was my fault that I didn't tear the lower lip off the punk who was leaking information to a San Francisco reporter who galloped around on a white horse and wrote inciting columns prior to the event

which, more or less, demanded a disastrous chaos to salve his Wild West bruise and which inadvertently predicted Jann Wenner's *Rolling Stone* rag's yellow-journalistic smear of the people instead of the business.

"It was my fault because I didn't try to stop in any way that I could, the four hundred thousand people who were specifically convened to appear as extras in someone's idea of a home movie, promising that a percentage of the take from the film's profits would go toward a permissive-loony-bin-of-a-playground for the adventurers-in-poverty freaks, instead of toward reality which is Haight Street and Hunters Point in San Francisco and Uptown in Chicago and the Lower East Side in New York.

"It was my fault that the California Hells Angels who came to drink beer, have a good time and party with the community like they've been doing for years, ended up hassling to protect a trembling stage for a pussy who loves to provoke audiences into childhood hysteria and who thought that he was appearing before a flock of teenyboppers and flower children, rather than before a crowd of four hundred thousand men and women who discovered a long time ago that flowers die too easy. Even if they have thorns.

"It was my fault that several groups in the Bay Area came to distrust me because my silence duped them into thinking that the Altamont affair was sanctioned, when actually I should have blown the covers off of the fiasco weeks before it was allowed to take place and make suckers of us all.

"It was my fault because I permitted hip San Francisco chauvinism to dictate my silence into a belief that a good time would be had by all, even after the adequate Sears Point site had been vetoed when the professional sharks of the Filmways Corporation demonstrated that the business acumen of Schneider was that of a minnow and forced him to play out his dead hand of solitaire at a barren racetrack in the town of Livermore which no one even knew was in California.

"It was my fault that the Workable Lie which was the Rolling Stone Concert at Altamont wasn't seen clearly until, as Sweet William says, 'Everything it ever was, is all being sold.'

"And to the people to whom I was totally irresponsible, all I can say is *mea culpa*.

"And to all those false-bottomed-hipsters and the short-change-artists who like to deal dead hands and who like to think that they run things around here, *un bacio d'morte*.

"And Meredith Hunter dying like a sniveling maniac instead of like a determined man — that was his fault."

It was the first month of the 70s, and just about thirty days after Altamont went down forever, replacing Woodstock in the hip lexicon of expressions, when Emmett Grogan began to feel he had

done all he ever would in California with its people, at least for "Free!" anyway. He had been running free up and down and back and forth across the entire tapestry of the state and it all remained just as unknown to him as when he started back in '66. Now, every instinct he depended on told him it was time to split and leave it all behind, before it did just that to him.

He was anxious, but not fearful, of the future, and he wanted to get hold of the soundest, most truthful information, so he could devise himself a plan for that next unavoidable step he knew he was going to have to take into the unknown. There was no way for him to stay where it had become familiar, because all those old ways had proven themselves to be deadly. The West had become his home, and he pushed it as far as it could take him without dying. He understood that there was a time to die, but also that his time hadn't come as yet. He decided to head back to where it all began, when he was supposed to have been a boy. He decided to return to New York and Brooklyn, and he was going to walk all the way because he wanted to listen carefully to whatever sounds America was making. Everything he ever heard anybody say about America was true. This time around, he wanted to hear what America had to say, and the only real way for him to do that was by walking through it alone.

He left not a moment too soon. The various police agencies finally fitted the pieces of the jigsaw puzzle together, and they came up with a picture of a man named "Emmett Grogan." It wasn't all that clear, so they badly wanted to find and talk with him. FBI agents questioned some of his friends, and those who put up some of his bail money in Los Angeles. Plainclothesmen in San Francisco picked up his sister who had been in that city for almost a year, interrogating her with their hands about the whereabouts of her brother. In Chicago, they asked around, but kept coming up with the empty-handed "nonexistence" line. In New York City, agents steadily harassed his parents, dropping hints about how Scotland Yard wanted some answers from their son, but always assuring them that it was just routine, until his exasperated mother asked "Which routine? Which routine?" One FBI man even left a note for his father which read, "Sorry I missed you. Please call my office tomorrow. Best time 8:30 A.M. to 10:00 A.M., or 4:30 to 5:00 P.M. AGENT JOSEPH WALSH, FBI."

Emmett didn't know any of this when he walked away from San Francisco, leaving it all behind. He just had a feeling, a feeling that it would be better for him to be hanging sheetrock in Davenport,

Iowa, and thinning out trees in the thick, overgrown forests that skirt the Canadian border, than to be nailed to the chauvinism of San Francisco with someone constantly explaining that "the best is always yet to come, so just do your thing, and you'll be king!"

The moment he took that first step out of what no longer was his home, Emmett knew he'd made a righteous move and that he was on his way to making it real once more, compared to not.

His legs carried him through the absurd wave of do-nothing terrorism that began and ended with the explosion of the bomb factory in the wealthy Greenwich Village townhouse. They took him past Eldridge Cleaver's threat of "race war," if white radicals failed to rally to the defense of Bobby Seale, and on by the subsequent May Day weekend held to protest the chairman's "railroad" trial in a town where some Broadway shows close before they get to open in the Big Apple. He didn't even stop to take a look at those shot at Kent and Jackson State or the ones missing in the jungles of Cambodia. He did, however, pause for a moment in bewilderment at Huey P.'s release, just to figure what it might mean, now that Fred Hampton was long dead. Finally his legs brought him back to "Go" and a humid, hot summer that was lightened up a bit by a blond mouthful of a woman who was simply another day in another week.

Then Pearl died, and Emmett watched Nixon squash the prosperity that spawned the country's counterculture, causing the hard-hat, blue-collar guys to beat on marching students, in hope that the President would grant some grace to labor in the economic wage-price freeze. He didn't, though, and neither did they have to stomp down the college kids who already reconsidered and subdued themselves to the yoke now that jobs were scarce.

And so, Emmett saw it all come down to money once again. On the street he heard that it had cost twenty-five thousand to bust out Leary from the San Luis Obispo minimum security farm, and that Cleaver put him under house arrest in Algiers because he didn't come through with the ten grand he promised him. Later, after three of the twenty-one Panther defendants had jumped bail from their trial in New York, two of them allegedly returned to liberate money by taking the wages from some of their black brothers and sisters, humiliating them by forcing them to strip naked in a Harlem after-hours social club where they were trying to forget their jobs as chauffeurs and domestics.

After the split became forever in the Black Panther Party, Cleaver really showed himself to be nothing more than crazy by threatening

to kill all and anyone, no matter who, and finally offing one of his own brothers in Algeria who, he boasted, “. . . was only the first to be buried in the Panther graveyard, leavin’ plenty room for more!” Just another low-riding mug who, like all mugs, started knifing his brothers in the back when he got himself in a jam by leaving the country he couldn’t handle — in the same way he couldn’t handle women.

Cleaver finally parodied himself by holding an absurd press conference in Algiers to announce his imminent return to America where, he said, he was going to organize “urban guerrilla units” patterned after those in Latin America, Quebec and Northern Ireland. Their deeds would include political kidnappings “of such a nature that they will receive nationwide and worldwide coverage, as well as other exploits that we will openly and proudly admit throughout the Pigs’ news media!”

Later that same day, H. Rap Brown was shot, apparently, in a gun duel with some New York cops after he and three St. Louis black men allegedly stuck up the Red Carpet Lounge, robbing all the nonwhite patrons and some kids who were having a penny-ante dice game outside the bar. Some people would say that sticking up saloons was a revolutionary act. It wasn’t, and probably no one knew that better than H. Rap Brown. Apparently, Cleaver doesn’t know it, even though the conviction of *his* Black Panthers, Richard Moore and Eddie Josephs, who pleaded guilty to the robbery of the after hours club, gave proof to the lie of his announced “threat” of organized urban guerrilla warfare in America.

Emmett listened to the black, brown and white people on the streets of New York that day, as they reacted to Cleaver’s statements with angry contempt for his false-bottomed threat against the “Pigs!” In the end, they all seemed to know that whenever the deal finally went down for Eldridge Cleaver, he would prey on his “own people” and, just like the other two brothers of *his* Panther faction, would call it a “political act” instead of simply another street crime committed against the poor. The low-money people didn’t like it very much, and neither, Emmett suspected, did such legitimate, stand-up, serious organizations as the FLQ, the IRA and the Tumpamaros.

Huey P., Bobby Seale and David Hilliard, however, stood in front of the men and women who chose their side, and that major faction of the Panther party finally began to get down to what it was all about by serving the people through fulfilling their needs, rather

than filling their ears with words. Emmett watched the change and was glad that it happened the way it did, heightening the contradictions to the point of no return.

The money theme kept beating its rhythm into Emmett's mind, forming a pattern that became a medley of riotous melodies from the ghetto insurrections to the student uprisings to the prison rebellions which for him became the most important — the Attica massacre spelling it out for those who, until then, just didn't understand.

He thought about the word Attica, which was the name for that part of Greece which encircled the ancient city of Athens. He saw the analogy between the city and state of New York. Most inmates in that Attica state penitentiary were city slickers being guarded by hokey, upstate appleknockers in the same way the law-abiding citizens of the city of New York are legislated against by country-boy "representatives" who have no *real* idea about the problems of running an urban environment.

Emmett decided to concern himself with what was once known as urban blight, now as urban abandonment. He knew that in New York City thirty thousand to forty thousand dwellings were abandoned each year, in Philadelphia twenty thousand, and much the same, in St. Louis, Chicago, Detroit, Oakland and San Francisco. There was a section of Brooklyn called Brownsville which he chose as a plausible spot to maybe do it. To send out a general alarm to all those wandering, heavy hipsters who learned the trade of how to live their lives, and invite them all to converge on Brownsville, occupy it, reconstruct it as a community and try to do what most of them had sought to do in other places without making all the same mistakes. This time as a really postcompetitive, comparative collective community.

Emmett knew who they were by now, and he thought of them as eagles: "Individuals, families, communes, gangs, who are bound together by the blues life. The ones that throw it all away. They're everything anyone wants to be. They're the cream of the streets and their frame of reference is a style of life and death that has been censored from history and condemned to hearsay since man learned to read and write. They are the ones to survive the plagues, the ones in this country who are not in an illusory bag and the ones who get more than the oakey-doke without askin'.

"The best music — the best of everything that is expressive of all this country's got to give is by and about them.



ONE WAY

ITALIAN SHOES



“The blues are finally a people who are going to take care of business.”

Emmett knew it would work and that something like that had to work if the cities were to be saved. To be saved in an ideological age where ideas lived a greater life than man and words were juggled in a gigantic hoax and where he needed more than the skeleton to make the vision walk. He needed to lift off something that was neither beauty nor truth, but only a plaster false face, if he was to be one of the only ones to discover the grin of the skeleton.

The only ones were those that had reached their own rock bottom and got up. They always got up. They searched for brothers and sisters, not friends. They did not play the role of crowd in remakes of the *Law & Order vs. Riot* movie. They didn't sell their vision — to sell their vision would have been to pretend it was theirs. They didn't put themselves on, fall guy. They were wise to the educated fools who look to confront fake situations where pretensions can be made to self-defense. They killed who had to be killed. They were sick and tired of being sick and tired. They dug that the goin' up better be worth the comin' down. They deceived deception with truth. They were spreading the cheeks and kissing the little brown asshole of democracy. They dealt with all real things in all moments of agony and joy. They didn't waste their efforts in games which kill time, deaden awareness and brutalize feeling. They did not let themselves be suicided by a Judas-goat society. They were no longer lonesome for their heroes. They took care of business. They did not nickle-dime bomb make-believe numbers. They did what was necessary (not unnecessary) to end the desperation of illness, hunger, nakedness, addiction, poverty, eviction, jail, oppression and the money conspiracy which decimated the streets and backwoods. They were all innocent. They were felons. They were good at it. They did not intend to spend any more time in penitentiaries. They did not use the courts for redress. They were silent about almost everything. They remembered Michael Collins and what his comrades had done to him. They did not own it. They loved. They were the offspring of mid-twentieth-century broken consciousness. They were beyond the possibility of defeat. “They, that unnamed, ‘they.’ Well, nothing moves a mountain but itself. And they — I've long ago named them me.”

Then Emmett Grogan sat down to write a book for all the heart-broke lovers he left behind awaiting release. And for Kenny Wisdom and his suntan.

