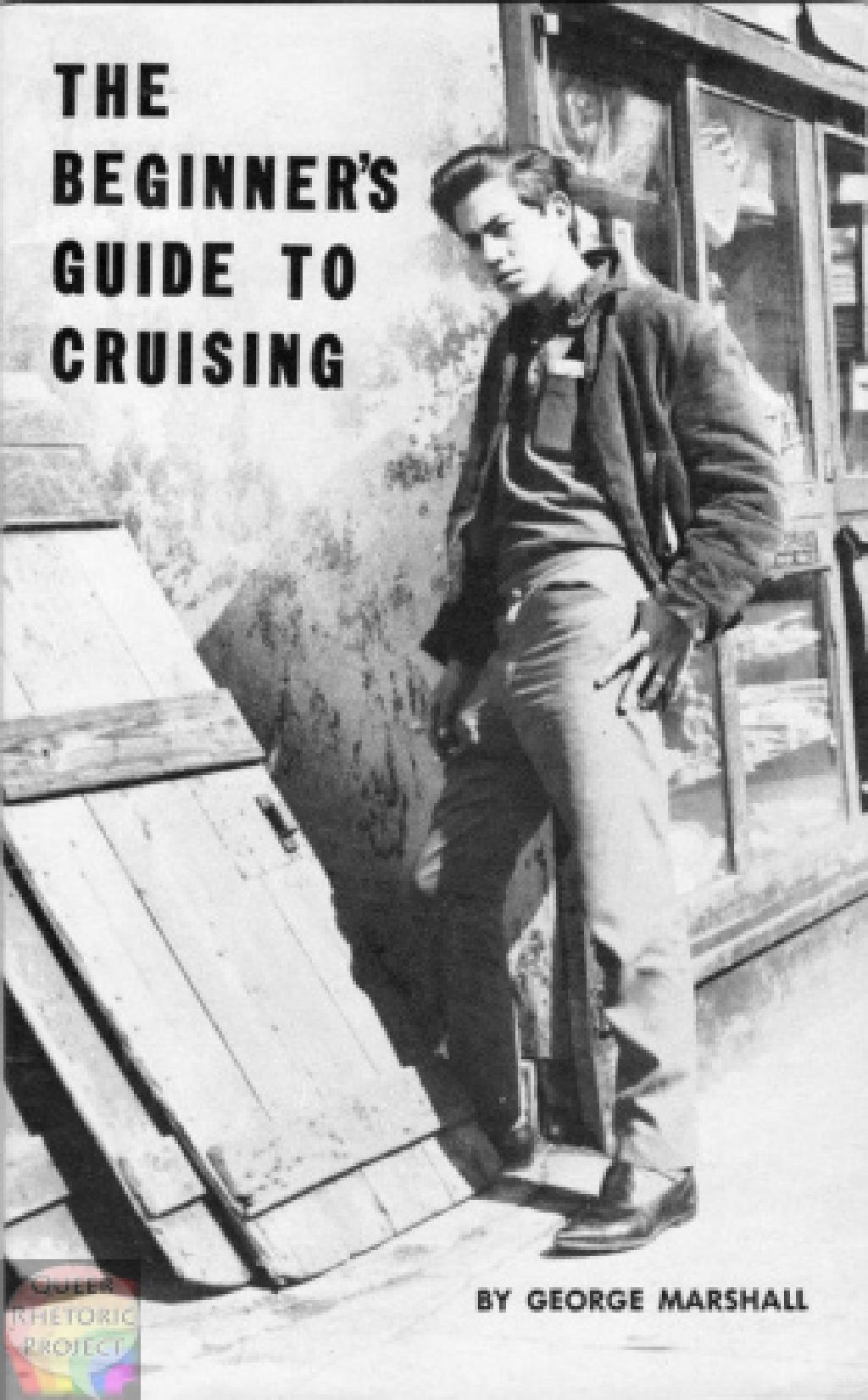


THE BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO CRUISING



BY GEORGE MARSHALL

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Chapter I TOOLS AND EQUIPMENT

It is just no good trying to do anything unless you have got the proper equipment. The do-it-yourselfer would be lost without his tools, and the would be cruiser is in no better case.

What then must one have? Apart from the obvious gay attributes I would say that he needs time, freedom of action, a garconniere, some money, the gift of gab, imagination, self-control, a certain amount of cruelty, a bit of acting capacity, discretion, some taste — and that's about all. You might have noticed that I have left out some of the characteristics which are generally linked to the conventional idea of the cruiser: he need not be tall, handsome, young, impeccably dressed; nor possess suave, courtly manners, extreme wealth, wit and intelligence. They all help, of course, but fortunately they are not as important as the more modest assets listed above.

Oh! I almost forgot to say that the cruiser must like gays. But like them really and truly, enjoy their company and not just use them to bolster his ego or to show off. Gays are very sensitive and will very soon smell the insincere rat.

Let us now analyze a little more closely what the cruiser must have.

Time

The fact that to be a successful cruiser you shall need a lot of time will, I know, come as a shock to you. But there it is. It is an inescapable fact and it had better be faced.

Gay, more than straights, tend to be bored. And if you can dedicate a good chunk of your time to taking them out, accompanying them on little errands, keeping them occupied and amused, you will have won half of your battle. A gay may be kept by the most handsome, brilliant, most passionate man, but if the man is too busy creating new hair styles, mastering a new ballet step or memorizing the latest folk song so that he can hardly find a few hours in the week to dedicate to his mate, it is extremely likely that he will fall into the arms of the first cruiser who has quite a lot of time on his hands. I have seen it happen dozens of times, and so probably have you. This applies particularly to those cities where gays as a rule don't work. The working gay is more difficult to seduce than the idle one.

If, as is probably the case, you don't have too much time available you can resort to the trick of the "indirect presence". Although the actual time you can spend with him is limited, you must make him feel your presence; remind him of your existence as often as possible. Frequent phone calls, letters or just a scribbled note, items of clothing and little presents judiciously spaced over the week will help. Ask him to watch a certain TV show or go to a certain play which you would have liked to see, but which you must miss because of your work, and then give you a report. Ask him to read a certain book, as you would like to know what he

thinks of it. Ask him to try and find you a material suitable to cover a certain chair, or a print to stick in the entrance, etc., etc.

- These little things will not only satisfy his vanity—by implying that you rely on his judgement and good taste—but will also keep you in his mind.

Freedom of Action

This is not quite the same thing as having time. For instance, you might be a man with a lot of leisure, able to dedicate all your afternoons and evenings to cruising gays. But if one of them rings you up at eleven o'clock—never before, I hope—telling you he would like to see you immediately, and if you feel that he is particularly in need of consolation and sympathy and you cannot, because of your commitments, make it, it's just too bad. In the afternoon his mood might have changed and you will have missed the golden opportunity.

Likewise you should be ready and capable of leaving town, even for just a few days, at practically any moment. Obviously it's no use whispering passionately in a gay's rosy ear of how wonderful it would be if he and you could run away from it all and spend a few days in New York, Montreal or the nearest hotel, if after that you have to reach for your agenda, consult it carefully and add:

"What about from the fifteenth to the eighteenth of September?"

You should be able to pounce at any time, to turn up unexpectedly and, as it were, out of the blue just when he is staying with an old aunt in a provincial town, and your secret service has informed you that he is utterly bored. In given circumstances the most beautiful and haughty gay will welcome the arrival of a middle-aged, balding, plump friend as if he were a fairy Godmother.

Cruising, unlike Russia's economic development, cannot be planned on a five-year or even on a five-week basis. It must be invented and improvised from day to day.

Timing is an extremely important factor and freedom of action therefore very valuable. Naturally not everybody can chuck or change his job just for the sake of gays. But it would be wise to keep all this in mind when you are about to set out to conquer a gay you particularly like at a time when you are particularly busy. In the strategy of love the offense must be continuous and sustained. If you think you can conquer a gay on the installment plan—approach him and make the first advances now, consolidate your position in two months' time, and reap the harvest after another couple of months—you are mistaken. Once the attack is launched it must be pressed to conclusion as rapidly and determinedly as possible. Otherwise you had better postpone it.

The Garconniere

The very fact that the English language hasn't a word to in-

dicate a place designed expressly for making love is significant. The European young man tends to live with his parents much longer than his Anglo-Saxon counterpart. (I know many middle-aged bachelors in Italy who stay with Mummie and Daddy and are still called Signorino by the servants and by ridiculously childish nicknames by the family and friends.) And the European cruiser tends to be more frequently unfaithful to his mate—though one is led to believe that American cruisers in particular are doing everything in their power to catch up.

To complete the picture I will say that gays have much less freedom in Palermo say, than they have in New York; and that, while registering in an English hotel as Father and son (while in reality they are Warner von Breslau and Pierre de la Fuente) is child's play, in Italy and Spain you must produce your passports or other accepted identity cards, to your companion's great annoyance and embarrassment.

The consequence of all these restricting factors is that the French cruiser was compelled to invent the garconniere, and that his Italian and Spanish colleagues have adopted the institution. While in a European country the garconniere is an almost essential item in the cruiser's equipment, in the Anglo-Saxon world it can be mighty useful too.

The choice of a garconniere is very important. It needn't be big, nor expensive, nor luxuriously furnished, nor especially decorated. Overdoing it might defeat its object. I remember the case of Marco B., a very wealthy Milan industrialist who got himself the most splendid garconniere in Rome. It had thick pile carpeting, pastel shades on the walls, subdued lights, slightly pornographic water colors and drawings, including a witty Cas, a bar, a superb stereo with four or five loudspeakers concealed in the walls and in the ceiling, and a huge, gilded alcove with an enormous Louis XV bed surrounded by mirrors on all sides. One day he succeeded, after a long time, in luring a gay of great beauty and great taste into his den. The young man walked in, looked around, reflected a moment, blushed, turned on his heels and left saying:

"I've never been so insulted in my life. Goodbye."

My friend hadn't said a word, but the garconniere had spoken for him, proclaiming much too loudly and blatantly the scope it was supposed to serve. But be careful not to go to the other extreme. A too monastic, drafty, uncomfortable, dirty or shabby love nest can put off the best disposed of gays. Practically anything reasonably pleasant and cozy will do.

The main quality a garconniere must have is discretion. It must not be too central but also not too difficult to reach. An adulterous gay cannot spend too much time commuting. Should it be situated in a large apartment building, try and find one that can provide the gays who come to see you with an excuse for visiting it: the block of flats should contain a milliner, a hairdresser, a psychoanalyst, an Institute of Persian Poetry, a Yoga School or what have you.

A touch of the romantic would also help, such as a view over the rooftops (they'll think themselves Mimi in "Bohème"), a garden

or even a small roof garden. Painters' studios usually make very good garconnieres and this is why, for instance, nearly all the painters have been turned out of the colorful via Margutta in Rome and replaced by shoals of lascivious but more affluent industrialists.

Money

Not frightfully important, as already stated. However you will need a reasonable amount of the stuff to keep yourself presentably dressed, to take him out, to buy him presents and to go off on an occasional jaunt if necessary. If you happen to be on the rich side, and if trade promises to be fairly brisk, you should seriously consider the idea of investing some capital in a garconniere.

The question of presents will be dealt with more thoroughly in another chapter.

The Gift Of Gab

Gays admire strong silent cruisers but are more often seduced by the loquacious. They love to talk and be talked to for hours on end. What to tell them to arouse their interest and mollify their heart will be explained separately further on. It's a technique that can be learned and developed.

Here, as we are merely dealing with what a cruiser must have, I will just underline the capital importance of the cruiser's tone of voice. A shrill, high-pitched, squeaky voice can utter the most subtly phrased, apt, ingenious, divine compliments without cutting any ice. On the other hand the flattest platitudes, an extra-boring dissertation on the comparative advantages of different physique magazines uttered in the dullest Oxford or Webster dictionary manner, if uttered in a low, melodious, self-confident, considerate, passionate voice can awaken in your gay listener an interest, a sense of security and well-being. It can even make some sexual chords vibrate in unison, so that you will have got to first base without even realizing it.

Take singers. In private life they are silly creatures (there are exceptions of course), and when they open their mouths to sing, either in a folk or variety show or a night club, they utter incredibly idiotic tosh. But gays love them all the same, just because of the voice.

In the course of this elementary handbook on cruising I am never going to advise you to do setting-up exercises to develop your muscles or increase your stature, nor to go to expensive tailors, nor to dye your hair or undergo any beauty treatment. In other words I don't want you to change your personality. On the contrary I will try to teach you how to be spontaneous, an extrovert, how to exaggerate your qualities and defects, how to be more yourself than you usually are. But in this question of the voice I must make an exception.

The voice is so important that should you happen to have an unfortunate one, I strongly advise you to do something about it.

Practice on it, take it down on a tape recorder and listen to it to discover and correct the defects, even go to the extreme of taking dictation lessons. It will be money well spent. I would go even a little further. Having a limited amount of cash to splash (it happens now and then to the best of us) I would say it is more worth investing it in a voice-improvement scheme than in a garconniere. For what's the point of a garconniere if it's likely to stay empty?

On the other hand, should you live in a foreign country, don't bother too much trying to polish your accent. A broken accent sounds exotic and it can appeal to gays.

Imagination

This is a bit more difficult. If you don't have much imagination, there isn't much you can do to acquire it. But still you can try and exercise it, and above all study and copy those who have one: the writers in the first place. Read a lot, try and draw imaginary parallels between the situations in a novel and those in the real life that surrounds you, place yourself in the position of a fictitious hero and try to imagine what your actions and reactions would be. A mental process a la Walter Mitty can help if it doesn't stay confined to day-dreaming, and if you can extract out of it hints for a romantic approach to gays.

Gays adore the unusual. Apply your imagination to tell them unusual things, give them unusual presents, take them to unusual spots, make love to them in an unusual way.

Naturally, one must never overdo it. An old, discarded locomotive is certainly an unusual present, but don't think it would be very much appreciated. A tour of the Paris sewers by boat is certainly an unusual experience, but hardly the spot to tell Pierre or Alex that you adore him. Being made love to on the top of a tree could no doubt be an adventure out of the ordinary, but I doubt that many gays would really enjoy it.

Self-Control

This I will explain more thoroughly when I shall deal with the "minus-one" principle. At the present stage I will confine myself to remarking that a successful cruiser must never lose his head completely. To be able to control the gay he must first of all be able to control himself. It is extremely difficult in certain circumstances and with certain gays, I quite agree, but it must be done if one wants to avoid the risk of seeing the roles reversed: of the cruiser becoming cruised.

Cruelty

I am referring principally to mental cruelty. The inclinations of the Marquis de Sade do not interest us. The cruiser must keep the gay in a state of perpetual, even if mild, uncertainty and worry. He must be made to feel that he has not yet acquired a complete hold over him, but that he might do it in the end. His pride will

be stimulated and he will swear to himself that he will succeed where other gays have failed.

To be able to apply such strategy the cruiser will have to be evasive, unpredictable, moody: he will have to submit the gay to hot and cold sentimental showers, to alternate rather frequently periods of great affection with others of relative indifference. Inevitably he will be made to suffer and this is why a certain amount of cruelty on the part of the cruiser is necessary. But this theme too will be developed more precisely when we shall get to the "minus-one" principle.

Acting

The ideal man does not exist—in the sense that not all gays, thank God, like the same type of man. Some like him gentle, and others prefer him brutal: some treasure the shy one, others revere the bold: some love mature men, others relish the young: some fall for the brainy type, others fancy the silly: some gloat over the romantic, others prize the cynical: some care for the introvert, others delight in the extro: and so on and so forth.

It is obviously impossible for one single man to have all these qualities and defects. The accomplished cruiser, therefore, must first of all make a quick appraisal of the gay he is stalking and try to understand what type of man he prefers. Then he must make a decision:

(A) If it is clear that the gay likes his type, then naturally the solution is simple. He can just go ahead without bothering to act.

(B) Equally simple, if not so pleasant, is the solution in the case he realises that the gay's ideal type is at the opposite pole of the cruiser's personality. He'd better give up immediately as no amount of acting, pretending or camouflaging will get them to the Equator, nor even the Tropics.

(C) Between A and B there are lots of intermediate situations which must be left to the intuition and the discretion of the cruiser. In other words he must decide whether the gap between the gay's ideal man and the man the cruiser really is can be filled. If the answer is in the affirmative, the acting capacities must be brought into action. Without ever completely travestying his true personality, he must enhance the characteristics that appeal to him and disguise or attenuate those that he hates. Some acting will again be essential when the "minus-one" principle is applied.

Nearly all actors, you may have noticed, are good cruisers: and, vice versa, very often good cruisers have outstanding acting abilities.

Discretion

As soon as your reputation as an "homme à garçon" is established, gays will be attracted to you by curiosity. They will try



to get friendly with you to pump you about your adventures with other gays. They often will do this without any other second intention. And if the gays with whom you had affairs happen to be friends of the one we are talking about, the attraction will become almost irresistible.

My advice in this case is one and one only: utmost discretion. Shut up like a clam, don't let a word, a hint, an indirect and faint admission ever escape your trebly sealed lips. Lie if necessary, and deny even the most obvious evidence. This will help you in two ways.

In the first place you will form the reputation (and in the right quarters, that is among gays) of being discreet and reliable, of not going around babbling and boasting about your conquests, of letting sleeping mates, lovers, fathers, mothers, brothers and chaperones lie. The gays will feel more secure and will readily risk an adventure with you.

In the second place the details of your love affairs, being left to imagination and gossip, will acquire legendary proportions and increase your lover-status.

Taste

Again a difficult one. One is either born with a natural inclination towards good taste or one has acquired it gradually by being brought up and living in the right environment. Failing these two assets one can try to acquire good taste by observation, study, imitation. But it's hard going.

Gays are natural aesthetes, and as a whole they resent the vulgar, the gross, the gaudy, the harsh, the crude, the cacaphonic. Fortunately they are also emotional rather than rational, and once a man has succeeded in winning their heart over, they will forgive and forget a lot of things. They will even sometimes interpret the offenses committed by their man against good taste as endearing eccentricities.

But don't be too sure and don't overdo the eccentricities. There are limits even to a gay's love-distorted viewpoint.

If you are not sure about your flair for clothes, better stick to the conventional. A dark gray suit, black shoes, white shirts and a one-tone subdued tie can never go wrong. If you know nothing about furniture, carpets, paintings, better call in an interior decorator. If you absorb your calories from cans or in drug stores, try to find out something about wines and about the intricacies of a French menu before you take him to a smart restaurant.

Good manners are in some way related to good taste. Here my advice is very simple: go through the whole bloody drill and don't be afraid of overdoing it.

The preceding advice is almost superfluous for the American cruiser, who by and large is extremely well-mannered. But I have known several Continental cruisers who have lost some mighty juicy bits for having forgotten their manners, especially with American gays who are utterly spoilt in this respect.

To this, as in all things, there are exceptions. Among the

younger Village generation of New York — and of the via Margutta in Rome, of the Munich artists' quarters, of Chelsea and Bloomsbury in London, of the Left Bank in Paris, and their equivalent in other cities all over the world — good manners are bad form.

And now that we have seen, even if a bit vaguely and incompletely, what a cruiser must have, I would like a few serious words with you. Before you embark on the difficult, risky but fascinating career of cruising, you should search your conscience, indulge in quite a bit of introspection and decide what kind of cruiser you are going to be. Although there are practically infinite varieties, they can all be grouped into two main categories: the Casanovas and the Don Juans.

The Casanova type falls in love quickly, totally and desperately with all the gays he cruises or tries to cruise. The fact that he forgets them rapidly and that he can carry on an affair with two or three gays at the same time, does not alter the fact. He is enthusiastic, generous, altruistic and has for the gays a feeling of admiration, tenderness, gratitude and even, in his strange way, of respect. In his tactics he is rash, impetuous and often tends to bungle things. He lies, of course, but most innocently, as at the time he tells his lies he really believes in them . . . well, nearly. He can accept defeat.

Don Juan is even more obsessed by gays than Casanova. But he really doesn't love them. He only loves himself. He seeks in them the satisfaction of his lust and above all of his pride. He cannot accept defeat. He is more skilled, more subtle, more, I would say, scientific in his approach. He feels no pity, no consideration, no respect for his victims and even derives a sadistic pleasure from their sufferings. He lies in cold blood.

While Casanova can be happy and make his gays happy, even if only for short periods, Don Juan makes them unhappy and is himself always unsatisfied. He only enjoys the conquering and not the conquest. As soon as he has had a gay, and Leporello has written his name down on the famous list, he becomes bored with him and starts looking for another one right away.

The case of Don Juan is an extreme one. While Casanova (and Oscar Wilde) actually existed and related his adventures and feelings with great candor in his memoirs, the existence of Don Juan is historically debatable and he is, as we know him, a literary character, the symbol of a mysterious force which compels men not only to chase gays, but also incessantly to defy both God and the Devil.

I would advise you to stick to Casanova.

Chapter II THE CHASE

All right: now you have seen to it that you are properly equipped — garconniere, the long green, the right personality factors. Now you have everything ... but the gay. And that's not a hell of a lot of fun, is it?

Let's face it — to be a successful cruiser, a gay is vital. Where are they to be found? Everywhere. The problem is picking one who is:

- (a) Capable of being cruised and
- (b) Worth cruising.

Item (b) is worth thinking about a bit. We have all met young lads whose clothes—often electric blue slacks with a tight crotch and rear—and manner proclaim that they are up for grabs. Such can be taken home and so to bed with little bother: but also with little reward for the true cruiser. As I pointed out earlier, sex is not the sole aim of cruising: the hunt of a worthy quarry is the main thing. Taking advantage of such a situation as this is not cruising, any more than wringing a chicken's neck is hunting—both are, so to speak, merely meat for the pot.

There are also the absolutely glorious-seeming creatures who may be pursued, and finally possessed, only to turn out to be extremely dull in all ways once they have been captured—trivial in conversation and unresponsive in bed. These are a touch more worthwhile sometimes, as you have at least had the pleasures of anticipation plus those of a successful campaign. If the lad of your choice, though a washout, is a movie star or member of some other group held in high esteem by your peers, you also gain a certain prestige.

But the cruiser's ideal is a gay who can be had (though not too easily) and once had is, one way or another, fun. Again, what kind of fun depends too much on individual taste to be discussed profitably at any length. The one pretty universal criterion is that he ought to be capable of enjoying the sexual act—with you. In addition, freedom of action, the gift of gab, money, imagination, self-control, a certain amount of acting capacity, discretion, and some taste are not bad to have at all.

Now, how are you to spot such a paragon? That is not as difficult as is avoiding the wrong ones, and I shall now list some types which should be shunned by the predatory male: anyone who is not impossible is worth pursuing, at least to some extent.

(1) Stay away from the lad who is always superbly dressed—not merely tastefully got-up, but dressed in high fashion. He is interested in himself and in his impact on other men, not in you.

(2) Dread a sub-category of this type: the tight-slacked, but only reasonably well-dressed gay. For a good look at him, stroll through Times Square. Observe the tense face: the rigid twin spheres of the backside: the serpentine play of the crotch. This man is bitter and close to having no sexual feeling at all. It is my theory

that the main aim of this constriction is to remove all physical feeling from the wearer (as soldiers' tight-fitting uniforms are designed to turn them, as much as possible, into automata): Heaven help the luckless fellow who tries to turn that tide.

(3) Shun the lad in white shirt and a pastel pair of slacks. Everything might work out just fine all the way through the whole affaire: but if it winds up badly, you will have no chance whatever against him in court. Gays with white shirts and black slacks (especially severely tailored ones) will tend to stay out of court.

(4) The gay with a Cause is to be avoided. He may yield to you — particularly if you think you're being very smart and offer to help the Cause—but he will very likely make a point of it and tell all his friends.

(5) Don't try anything with the drunk gay, the drug addict, or pitiable types in general (this includes those with mates or boy-friends who have these problems). Such waifs, however innocent or helpless they may seem, are almost always on the ball when it comes to using What They Have to attract interest and short-term aid, and you will invariably find that you are involved in lots of considerations that you never had in mind when you started.

This is a good place to mention a General Rule for Cruisers: be polite, be gallant, but stay the hell away from chivalry.

If you will reflect a moment, you will doubtless discover other types of gays whom you would not bed on a bet (or on a bed); feel free to add your own categories. In any case, the time to decide on who will and won't do is before the hunt is up. Once some combination of circumstances—twilight, Spring, alcohol—has set you after a totally unsuitable type, it is too late to reason. Before you find yourself peering into his chotch . . . admiring his buttocks . . . trying to make an impression . . . that's the time to tell yourself: "Not worth the bother".

As far as positive signs of worthwhileness go, there are not many: a good-tempered look, a pleasantly physical walk, a quiet interest in the things you like, an air of not unhappy tension, are some; there are some who feel that a total lack of undershorts or jockstrap is a good index of both availability and a good payoff; but half the time it merely means that the boy has a rash—and a boy with a rash is in no mood for body-contact sports.

Now we come to the question of availability and to the key word:

Study

You must study your quarry, his habits, his habitat and his mentality. You must find out whether he is busy or has nothing to do, whether he is rich or poor, whether he is free or restricted (by a jealous mate, a hawk-eyed mother, stiff working hours, etc.), whether he is bossy or docile, romantic or practical, happy or sad, active or lazy, clever or stupid, high or low-brow, sensual or frigid and as much additional information about him you can possibly gather in a short time.

What are the circumstances in which a gay is more easily cruised?

Generally speaking, I would say in extreme times. When he is frightfully bored or enjoying himself madly, when he has suffered a great sorrow or is experiencing a great joy, when he has scored a terrific success or a dismal failure. These strong emotions throw him off his guard and balance, and afford him, even if only half-consciously, with an excuse for doing what he ought not to do. This is why gays become very loose in times of wars, revolutions and during the Munich or Rio carnivals or the Seville Fiesta.

The experienced cruiser, therefore, should keep an eye on the emotional conditions of the gay he is after and be ready to pounce at the right moment. Lightning conquests of otherwise unobtainable gays have been achieved like this.

I would advise you not to be deterred by obstacles which, in the rational mind of a man, might appear insurmountable, such as great differences of age, of social status, of culture, color, religion, nationality, politics and the rest. Gays are not only irrational but they are almost irresistably attracted by the forbidden. Frightfully conservative in many ways, conventional in their opinions, devout or even bigoted, unadventurous, level-headed, puritans, they become anarchist, revolutionaries, dare-devils and heretics in love matters. Danger excites them rather than restrains them. The obstacles become added inducements.

The cruiser, therefore, should not only disregard obstacles, but in certain cases and with particularly passionate and rebellious gays, use them to his own advantage by exaggerating their importance.

So far we have been considering what types of gays are more easily cruised and in what circumstances. As a whole, whenever possible, we have been pulling down obstacles and trying to enlarge our field of action.

But now, alas, the time has come to restrict it and restrict it rather drastically. There is a category of gays, and a fairly large one for that matter, the cruiser had better leave entirely alone. A category that defeats the most clever strategies and the most cunning tactics. A category in front of which Oscar Wilde, Tab Hunter and Steve Reeves wrapped up in one single person would be doomed to defeat: that of the stupid ones.

Mind you, I'm not saying that a stupid gay cannot be cruised. Far from it. What I'm saying is that he cannot be cruised professionally. You might succeed purely by chance. Your art will be completely wasted on him for the very simple reason that he will not understand it. For what is the point of luring him into your garconniere with a subtle stratagem, of setting the stage carefully, of creating the right atmosphere, of offering him the best French champagne, of presenting yourself under a romantic light, of carrying out a scintillating conversation — what is the point, I say, if when you are about to complete the most brilliant remark you ever made in your life, he will interrupt you and say:

"I don't like this fizzy lemonade. Haven't you got a beer?"

Stupid gays are not only impervious to the cruisers opening gambits, tricks, ruses, psychological appraisals and approaches, but they can be positively dangerous. I am not exaggerating.

Have you ever seen clever, important, interesting men hopelessly in love with completely idiotic gays or mates? Absolutely fascinated and subdued by them? I bet you have. And have you ever asked yourself why?

To conquer a gay, as the word itself indicates, does not only mean to take him to bed. The cruiser aims at asserting himself over him in more than one way: he wants to influence him mentally, convince him of his own ideas, make him acquire his own tastes, in brief he wants to mold him as a sculptor does his clay.

It can be done with intelligent, sensitive, receptive gays, but not with the stupid ones. And so it happens that for the clever man the stupid gay can become a permanent challenge and almost an obsession. The more he eludes him, the more he wants to get hold of him. One day he thinks that at last he is getting somewhere, the next he realizes that he's back where he started.

It's a continuous struggle, a chance that never ends and a game which the stupid gay wins without any effort by just being himself.

My advice, therefore, is to leave them alone. Pity, however, as there are some mighty attractive ones among them.

Chapter III THE APPROACH

In these days of marvels of speed such as jet planes, time has come to be of enormous importance. While in days past, months, years, even a lifetime could be devoted to the pursuit of a gay, it just won't do now. The would-be cruiser has a living, as well as gays, to make, and he can't afford to take much time off from the one for the other. Also we live at a faster pace, and very few men indeed would be content to let one affair last for many years — off the old, on the new, if I may so phrase it, is the watchword.

Therefore, the aspirant cruiser must pay particular attention to his approach. The right one saves time and (so far as mortals may order these matters) commands success.

The main principle is: Make an impression. It may be a perfectly rotten one or you may appear as the noblest of all men; but one way or another you have got to see to it that the gay takes notice of you. A gay who knows he's met you and can't recall anything about you, is not a likely candidate for anything worthwhile. If you can do nothing else on meeting a gay you'd like to make out with, arouse his hostility; this will be gone into a bit further on.

The first type of approach to be taken up is that to a total stranger. Now this, of course, violates most of the principles in the preceding chapter — but there are gays whom you see and just have to make a try for and the hell with good counsel.

Not only will I understand you and excuse you, but will try to give you a few useful hints.

The best approach is the unusual and the personal. Trite, standard phrases used by provincial cruisers such as, "Got a match?" "Care for a coffee?" "Mind if I walk with you?" "Would you tell me where Times Square is?" are definitely out. The lad you are addressing has probably heard them a hundred times, his conditioned reflex will be one of annoyance and he will automatically classify you an unimaginative pest. You must find something better.

But how, you might ask, can one apply a personal approach if the lad is a total stranger, if one knows absolutely nothing about him? Quite often, if you exercise your power of observation, you will discover some clue that will put you on the right track. The clues will never be the same and the approach, therefore, will have to vary accordingly. All I can do is give you a few examples which will convey the general idea. Practically speaking, you will have to improvise a new approach every time.

But before I do that I'll warn you never to try and engage an unknown gay in conversation in front of other people — in a crowded bus, underground carriage, a cafe, a busy shop or street. It's the most tactless thing you could do, as most gays consider it improper to let a stranger talk to them. (We aren't talking about hustlers). They may want to, but not in front of witnesses. Their pride will take the upper hand over their curiosity (and the implicit compliment) your attempt will have aroused.

Here are a few examples:

THE CULTURAL APPROACH. You have noticed that the gay you are cruising is carrying or reading a book. Have a look at the title and at the name of the author. Follow him and when he gets to a reasonably deserted spot (not too deserted, as he might get scared) tell him:

"Excuse me, but I couldn't help seeing you were reading *Lord of the Flies*."

And before he has time to say "Go to hell" or "Mind your own business," you add:

"Well, this is quite a coincidence. I was just going to buy a book for my father, and this is one of the books I had in mind. Do you think it's suitable for an old man of conservative taste? Do you think he will enjoy it?" (The movie might be more to his taste).

Eight times out of ten he will give you a civil answer. You can ask him a few more questions about the book and continue the conversation. The important thing is to do it in a very normal, almost casual way, as if there were nothing strange in the fact that you are chatting together.

MORE CULTURE. "Is it true that the Liszt sonata for piano and violin you are carrying under your arm is so beautiful? I know it's very famous, but by a strange coincidence I have always missed it at concerts. But if you tell me it's worth it, I'll buy a record."

THE ARTISTIC APPROACH. You have spotted him coming out of a building which houses a ballet school. You ask him:

"Tell me, is old Misha Korupskaja still running the show? It's ages since I have seen him."

"I don't know what you are talking about," he replies. "Misha Who?"

"Very sorry," you say, "but don't you come from the ballet school?"

"I certainly don't."

"Well, I'll be damned. It's very odd. I could have sworn you were a classical dancer, and a good one for that matter. Your build, your figure, the graceful way you walk, almost gliding on air, reminded me of Tchaikovsky's *Swan Lake*."

Cultural and artistic approaches are strongly recommended as they constitute an indirect compliment to the gay's intelligence and good taste, and they automatically lift the pick-up to a higher plane.

Not always, naturally, will you be lucky enough to find a link between your prey and the world of culture or art. But you might discover some other, more modest, clues that will allow you to adopt another method.

THE SWEAT AND SOAP METHOD. He might be carrying a pair of running shoes or a set of barbells, or you might have spotted him coming out of the local YMCA. Spend a couple of dollars on a YMCA membership immediately.

While in the cultural and artistic approach your attitude was that of ease and confidence and you addressed him as an equal, as a member of the same fraternity, here you will have to eat

humble pie. You'll hesitate, fumble, stutter (if you can manage to blush, do so, but that's probably asking too much) and, generally speaking, you will behave like a hopeless, helpless, naive, inexperienced amateur appealing for help from the "Sweat and Soap" expert. It is only by your intense desire to improve your physical well-being that you have managed to overcome your shyness and embarrassment and have thrown yourself at the mercy of the Great Authority. Only he can get you out of your predicament.

He will feel flattered, he will become authoritative, patronizing and didactic; he will consider you completely harmless. But don't let him live too long in that illusion. In your second encounter you must throw your mask away and extract your lion's claws. He will get the shock of his life. It's all to the good. He will be puzzled and piqued, he will want to reassert his authority over you and use his muscular charm and gymnastic tricks in order to do so. Let him.

In the preceding examples you were able to establish some sort of personal link, however vague and phoney, with your quarry. You had some clues on which to work, a synthetic scenario on which to mold your acting. But very often such clues simply don't exist. Here you are and there he is. A complete stranger and no way of knowing what the right approach could be, what could make him tick. To overcome the difficulty, experienced cruisers have evolved a number of impersonal, overall tactics. I have chosen two of the most effective.

THE HONEST, CARDS-ON-THE-TABLE APPROACH. "Son," you say, "I can quite see that you are not the type of boy who stops to talk to strangers on the street. Neither do I like or approve of this sort of thing. I have never done it before in my life. But it's really your fault. There is something about you that compelled me to do it. I know it's no use and I will not insist. Nor will I tell you who I am. But I will beg of you a great favour. Please give me a hint, an indication, however vague, that will allow me to know in what circles you move, what kind of places you frequent so that one day, maybe, I shall have the fortune of being properly introduced to you."

Needless to say, that if he falls for this phoney line, in fifty per cent of the cases you will be able to establish a direct contact without much further ado. The point has been made that he's not a pick-up, and that should be enough to appease his pride.

But if, out of naughtiness, stubbornness or upbringing, he refuses to have anything to do with you until you have succeeded in getting properly and formally introduced, then I would advise you to get on with the scheme. Follow up the hints he will have given you, discover who he is, dig up some common friends and arrange to be invited to some party together. And if you can manage to get hold of and get friendly with his mate, brother or current lover, without him knowing, so much the better.

Imagine the scene when he is ceremoniously introduced to you. You don't bat an eyelid, you pretend not to recognize him. And he, to hide his peccadillo, his moment of weakness, will do

exactly the same.

An atmosphere of complicity, of secret fun, will thus have been established between you two. He will admire you for your ingenuity in finding the right contacts, he will be grateful for the trouble you have been taking to meet him again. Furthermore, gays being quite rational in their irrationality, he might even find an excuse for betraying his mate, brothers, lover with you by thinking: "It's his (that is the mate, brother, lover) fault. He should never have introduced him (that's you) to me."

THE FALSE RECOGNITION APPROACH. This you can use only if you have a face of brass and some acting talent. You rush up to him, your arms stretched out, a wild idiotic grin on your face, exclaiming:

"Henry, my darling! How nice to see you! After all these years!"

He will recoil in mild surprise and some disgust.

You pretend not to notice either reaction and ply him with incoherent questions, leaving no holes for the answers:

"When did you arrive? Where have you been? How is our Johnny? Where are you staying? Let's have dinner together."

Sooner or later, depending on the quietness of his reactions, he will stop your stream of words and inform you coldly that he is not Henry at all. For a brief moment, during which you will scrutinize him more closely, you will still pretend not to believe him. He is Henry and he is trying to tease you.

Finally you give in. You utter profuse apologies, you explain that the resemblance is absolutely extraordinary, you ask him if nobody before has ever mistaken him for Henry, you tell him what a wonderful guy Henry is, how much you missed him, how happy you were thinking you had found him again, how unhappy for having lost him again in the space of a few minutes, how grateful to him anyhow for having unwittingly evoked such happy memories.

If you spin your story with sufficient dexterity, the lad in question will become interested in his alias, flattered that you think so highly and so emotionally about somebody who is just like him, and the ice will be broken.

The difficulties that category (A) presents are compensated for by the fact that, once you have succeeded in making contact with a totally unknown gay and persuaded him to meet you again, the affair has already been placed on the right footing. He realizes that from the moment you saw him you felt an attraction, he is quite aware (although he might try to hide it even from himself) that your intentions are quite dishonorable, and by agreeing to see you again he has tacitly admitted that he doesn't quite dislike you and that you stand a chance. Keep up the quick tempo, take advantage of the romantic atmosphere created by the first approach and you should do all right.

There is a variant of this I have heard of. An itinerant Jock Strap salesman, vacationing in Passion Pits, Nebraska, saw The Gay in a hotel lobby. He rushed over to him and cried: "Why didn't you answer my letters?" He, being all he had hoped for

from first glance, replied: "You left off the return address—what's the matter, you afraid the cops would find you?" And they walked off, arm in arm, to an absolutely superb couple of weeks. If you can carry this off, you are topnotch.

Category (B), that is when you know who the lad is but have not been introduced to him, is naturally much more easy, inasmuch as it will be easier for you to find out something about him that will allow you to make the first approach both personal and unusual.

Suppose you have discovered that he knows somebody you know too.

"Mr. Queen", you say, "you don't know me. But just imagine for one moment that our common friend, dear old Peter, could be here. What would he do? He would certainly introduce me to you. The mere fact that he sits at home nursing his hernia should not, I think, deprive me of the pleasure of making your acquaintance. It wouldn't be fair. What do you think?"

You might not discover a common friend but just a few details about his life. Practically anything will do. Is he a physique model? Well, naturally, you buy all the magazines and you would like his advice. Has he got a brother called Norman? Here it goes.

"Mr. Queen, excuse me, but are you the brother of Norman Queen?"

"Yes, of course."

"What a wonderful coincidence! I'm a great friend of Norman. He told me so much about you. I'm So—and—So."

From here on your main worry will be to steer the conversation away from Norman and concentrate it on his brother. Only after you have established a minimum of understanding and confidence between you and him will you confess that you never set eyes on Norman in your life. But you were dying to know him and you resorted to this trick. He will forgive you.

All the other ruses recommended for category (A), such as the cultural, artistic and Sweat and Soap approaches, can be successfully applied also to (B).

Category (C), that is when you are formally introduced to a gay or meet him at a party, is both the easiest and the most difficult as far as the first approach is concerned. You will have no trouble in getting to talk to him, but with the noise, the confusion and the competition of other males, you will run the risk of passing unnoticed or of being classified as an uninteresting character.

But you would certainly not pass unnoticed if you followed literally the advice given by old Vatsyayana in his Kama Sutra. He wrote (and I've amended his words slightly):

"Whenever they do meet, the man should be careful to look at him in such a way as to cause the state of his mind to be known to him. He should pull about his moustache, make a sound with his nails, cause his own ornaments to tinkle, (my ornaments don't tinkle — they flop) bite his lower lip and make various other sounds of that description. When he is looking at him he should speak to his friends about him and other lads, and should

show of him his liberality and his appreciations of enjoyments. When sitting by the side of a male friend he should yawn and twist his body, contract his eyebrows, speak very slowly as if he were weary, and listen to him indifferently. A conversation having two meanings should also be carried on with a young boy or some other person, apparently having regard to a third person, but really having reference to the lad he loves, and this way his love should be made manifest under the pretext of referring to others rather than to himself. He should make marks that have reference to him, on the earth with his nails, or with a stick, and should embrace and kiss a young boy in his presence, and give it the mixture of betel nut and betel leaves with his tongue, and press its chin with his fingers in a caressing way. All these things should be done at the proper time and in proper places."

Apart from the fact that nowadays it is a bit difficult to make our ornaments tinkle (unless you're a Queen), that betel nuts are hard to come by and that scratching with your nails your Dulcinea's initials on the pavement of Park Avenue could prove a bit awkward, the tactics suggested by Vatsyayana are more likely to land you in the giggle-shop than in an alcove. But still, having rejected 90% of Vatsyayana's advice, we can consider the remaining 10%. For instance he is quite right when he says that "the man should be careful to look at him in such a way as to cause the state of his mind to be known to him."

Eyeing a gay in the right way is a minor art that all good cruisers should try to master. The eyes have an eloquence of their own: they can express admiration, desire, wild passion, jealousy, hatred, scorn, amusement, irony, indifference, boredom. Latin lovers are particularly skilled in this game. A Sicilian gentleman once confessed to me that he actually used to stand in front of a mirror practicing amorous glances. But this I consider carrying a thing a bit too far.

The main advantage of letting your eyes speak to a gay you have just met, is that you can tell him things you would not dare to put into words nor to express with more forcible actions.

The "hide-and-seek trick" is warmly recommended to provoke the gay's interest. Here is how it works. You glue your eyes on him, you stare at him with undisguised admiration. As soon as he returns your glance, you will quickly avert your eyes and pretend to be looking in another direction with an expression of indifference. He will be puzzled and will start thinking:

"Is he really staring at me, or am I imagining things? And why does he look away when I look at him? Possibly he has fallen for me in a big way, but for some reason doesn't want me to notice it. What could it be? I must find out."

The eyes, although important, are naturally not enough. You will have to engage him in conversation and establish some sort of link between you two. I shall explain how to talk to gays and what are the topics more likely to win them over in the following chapter.

At this point I merely want to point out the necessity of finding out very quickly where his interests lie. You might be lucky

enough to know something about him which will give you an opening. But more often you will find yourself confronted with virgin territory (if you'll pardon the expression). You will have to explore it quickly and efficiently. Put feelers out, try several subjects, abandon them immediately if you see he doesn't respond and, above all, try and offer him lots of leads, make him tell you what he thinks and feels and take it up from there. A gay, especially during the first approach, might be made to think that you are a brilliant conversationalist, full of unusual and bright ideas, while in reality, when you boil it all down, you have just confined yourself to saying "Yes" and "No", to laughing, grunting or raising your eyebrows at the right moments.

But although my advice on how to talk to gays will, I hope, prove useful, there is always the chance, alas, of a flop. You realize that you are getting absolutely nowhere, that he doesn't laugh at your jokes, doesn't react to your compliments, that he gets animated when talking to somebody else and bored stiff when your turn comes. Is everything, then, lost?

By all means no. The time has come for a drastic and courageous decision. You must resort to "the antagonizing trick."

You will abandon all flattery, all attempts to ingratiate yourself to him. On the contrary, you will contradict everything he says, you will needle him, tease him in a malignant way, try to catch him out and make him look foolish. Your outspokenness will border on rudeness and sometimes attain it. The scope of the operation is to make him hate your guts. And you must make it quite clear that you, in your turn, hate and despise him. An open declaration of war.

But what is the point of all this? Where do we go from here? Well, it is really all very simple and strictly based on gay psychology.

I presume, for your own sake, that the lad who has so clearly and so rashly rejected your attentions is handsome, clever, witty and as a whole highly desirable. He has legions of admirers at his feet and he is not used to being insulted, contradicted, made fun of or despised. You will represent a blotch on his otherwise brilliant record. He will not forgive you but he will not forget you either. You will become an exception, a living contradiction of the Laws of Nature, a heretic, a rebel and a renegade.

And then, when you meet again (your only main worry will be that of arranging, unobtrusively, a second encounter), you slightly change your tactics and enter the second phase. It consists of carrying on with the same nasty, antagonizing attitude described above, but with a few well-calculated and well-timed slips. You admit reluctantly that he has said something right for once, you let a covert, indirect compliment almost unwittingly escape your lips. In the third round, while still keeping up the pretense that you both hate each other, you gradually increase the dose of flattery. Coming from an enemy it will be trebly appreciated. And he—no longer indifferent to you—will notice the change, he will start thinking that you are really not so awful as he originally thought. Whatever small qualities you possess will

come as a surprise to him and appear magnified.

And when, after having sufficiently mollified him, you will tell him that you love him, that you cannot understand how it happened, that you fought very hard to repress such emotion but that it was no use, he will feel extremely proud, relieved and even gratified: the Universe will have fallen back into its proper shape, his defeat will have been cancelled by a difficult and therefore even more resounding victory. Hatred will finally turn into love.

An important rule to observe in the first approach is to give it an immediate follow-up. Don't let things slide, hammer the iron while it's still hot. The lad you are after must not be made to feel that this was just a chance meeting and that he might never see you again. Naturally you will not be able, at least not always, to create in him a foreboding that he might become your bed mate. But what you can and must create is a feeling that having met you will mean something, however trivial, in his life: that you will become a member of his circle of friends, a drinking partner, an adviser on clothes, somebody with whom to swap physique fotos, somebody with whom to discuss Yoga or Zen, somebody who will find a mate for his Siamese cat.

A pretext must be found for meeting again and the date fixed there and then, as near in time as possible. Any pretext will do (and if you had a good chat with him and found out about his interests, you will have only the embarrassment of the choice) but there must be one. And why? Because, in the great majority of cases, in the course of the first approach, you will have been unable to establish enough attraction for each other, enough understanding or complicity to date him without a reason. If there is a pretext, however flimsy and even phoney, he will be able to accept without any loss of face.

The ability of the good cruiser, in all the various stages, is that of making his capitulation as easy and natural as possible.

These recommendations apply mostly to what might be called the working cruiser — that is, a man who has a job which obliges him to keep regular hours, and so must confine his cruising to what is appropriately called "discretionary time," sandwiching it in, so to speak, to the business of making a living. There are still people, however, who have the leisure for more elaborate projects: painters, writers, the unemployed, and whoever these fellows are you see hanging about in Greenwich Village, North Beach, Soho, the quartier St. Germain, and Palma de Mallorca.

I knew a free-lance photographer once who found that his professional services were so little in demand that he could devote at least the daylight hours to the pursuit of gays and devised a truly ingenious method of approach. At a local discount house he invested \$35.00 in a vacuum cleaner normally selling for \$50.00. Armed with this, he presented himself at an apartment house in his area and began working his way from the top down.

After some rebuffs, he pushed the bell at one door which opened to reveal a handsome gay clad (if you can call it that) in a rather gaping bathrobe.

"Sir, you almost certainly have a marvelous vacuum cleaner," said the photographer, inspecting him closely. "Yet I feel it would be to your advantage to allow me to demonstrate mine."

In short order he had demonstrated his vacuum cleaner, with attachments, and proceeded to other congenial demonstrations. In that one morning alone he successfully compassed the cruising of three gays! Subsequent days of this pursuit were equally fruitful (if, once again, you'll pardon the expression).

My friend had successfully planned on the fact that a kept gay alone at home may well be sufficiently bored and lonely to be receptive to advances, particularly from someone who is unlikely to be around long enough to create any confusion in his "marriage". He also found that the novelty of the situation tended to bring out what might be termed a certain inventiveness in the lads, and confessed himself astounded and a touch humbled at the vividness of the fantasies of perfectly "ordinary-seeming" gays.

It is of some interest to note that he also took orders for two vacuum cleaners in that same first morning; and that subsequently about one in four of the pleased gays would buy a cleaner as well. He charged \$40.00 which was, you will recall, ten dollars below list price, but five more than he had spent; and thus was he repaid handsomely for all his efforts.

This is interesting as an example of a "package deal" for cruisers, in that approach and consummation are almost simultaneous. The obvious disadvantages are the necessity for a certain deceit, extreme endurance, and the unlikelihood of the approach leading to any kind of longlasting affair.

Chapter IV A WORD IS WORTH A THOUSAND PICTURES

Gays, as we all know, are very fond of talking. The good cruiser, therefore, should also be a good talker.

I have already explained in the first chapter the fundamental importance of the tone of voice. That is, I have already dealt with the form. The time has come to tackle the substance. What should you tell gays in order to attract them and bind them to you?

First of all remember that gays have three different sets of talk:

- (1) Things they discuss with other gays: health, money, bed-mates, clothes, gossip.
- (2) Things they discuss with cruisers: art, books, music, politics, love, pseudo-philosophy, general interest subjects, religion, jokes, gossip.
- (3) Things they discuss with straights and which represent a mingling of (1) and (2) — that is (1) subjects treated in (2) style and vice versa.

Naturally, the three compartments are far from being watertight and far from being complete. The subjects intermingle and overlap and there are hundreds which have been left out. I only wanted to convey a general idea.

(Category 1) talk, besides being rather boring, might, but only in the very beginning, catch the gay's attention and interest. But if you carry it on you are bound to disqualify yourself. Gays have a romantic conception of The Cruiser. You must live up to it. You cannot lower yourself to the conversational level of Miss Screaming Nelly sitting at the next table.

(Category 3) talk is much too subtle and involved. It could be useful, but unless you have a particular disposition (which would in the end defeat the goal of this book) it would be rather difficult to acquire and master.

For all practical purposes only (2) talk interests us.

The whole point, at least in the beginning, is to try and keep the conversation on a fairly high level. According to a well-established tradition gays like to think that the man they have fallen or are going to fall in love with is particularly clever or interesting.

When it comes to love affairs, they want the cruiser, somehow, to be intellectually superior to them. And if he isn't, they pretend he is. You will have noticed how very often and with what glee gays who are about to betray their partner or lover decry him. He's mean, brutal, selfish, unfaithful, frigid, and what have you. But you will never find a gay who will accuse him of being stupid.

I have met dozens of extremely clever gays mated to perfect idiots—and so, I'm sure, have you—and never once have I known one of them to confess that the man was a simpleton. On the contrary they try to find all sorts of excuses for him. "He's very shy, but if you knew him better you would find he is quite clever." "He is frightfully clever at his job." "He is a bit out of touch, but really had a very good education." These are standard phrases you will hear repeated again and again. The fact is that a gay might have fallen for a man's curly hair, bank account, title, flashing smile, biceps or anything else you can think of, but he doesn't want to admit it. By making the man more clever than he really is, he consciously or unconsciously raises his own standard.

This being the situation, the cruiser must take advantage of it. He must create the impression, however erroneous, that he is very clever. And to do this he must talk.

If you are not by nature a brilliant conversationalist you must, at least, pretend to be. It is not too difficult. All you have to do is to practice on a limited number of topics and a few stories. Choose some subjects of general interest, preferably ones that have some connection with your profession, background, country or home town and which therefore are likely to crop up in the conversation. Study them thoroughly; try and find some unusual, amusing angle or interpretation, sprinkle them with bon mots, avoid at all cost being pedantic and don't get too involved. Once you have succeeded, often by trial and error, in putting together a reasonably entertaining dissertation, try and memorize it. You don't have to learn it by heart, but almost. You will find that this, instead of cramping your style, will allow you to deliver your stuff with greater ease, as if you were improvising. And if now and then you will hesitate a bit, pretending you were trying to find the right word or expression, the effect of spontaneity will be enhanced.

You will also find that the interruptions, the comments, the counterarguments your little lecture (and make sure it stays little) will provoke will very often be the same. This will give you a chance of preparing a store of brilliant repartees.

You should practice on a number of such topics—the more the better, but half a dozen will do—chosen on different intellectual levels so that you can pull them out according to your audience.

The same applies to real-life stories. You should have at your disposal two or three very amusing, very dramatic or very strange stories that happened to yourself and which will place you in a good light with the gay to whom you are telling them. These too must be rehearsed, improved, embellished, memorized.

Be very careful not to fire your ammunition all at once. It is no use dazzling a gay you have just met with your wit and brilliance if, in the course of the second encounter, you will be unable to tell him anything interesting at all, or at least not up to the standard you yourself have set. Normally, sooner or later, he will be bound to find out that you are not the genius he thought, but then it will be too late. Too late for him, I mean.

But the system, I must warn you, can also be dangerous. If you don't happen to have a very good memory, if you tend to for-

get whether you have already told the same story to the same gay (or in the same company) you run the risk of passing for a crashing bore. Rather than do that, forget all about the advantage that can be gained by a lively conversation. Assume the role of the strong silent man, of the mystery man, of the timid, shy creature longing for protection and motherly love, or even of the sexual maniac. Anything will be better than being branded as a repetitious, pedantic bore.

The cruiser should have a good repertoire of gay jokes. But he should be careful not to overdo it. Straights can spend hours telling each other jokes and wisecracking. Gays after a while get fed up with it. Have you noticed that gays hardly ever remember or tell jokes? The standard joke of the gay who always butts in at the wrong moment and spoils his mate's story is based on actual experience.

Also remember that gays have a different sense of humour. They prefer the simple, direct, often old-fashioned joke, with an erotic undertone. They don't appreciate the too subtle or complicated joke, nor the surrealist one (the former category includes the shaggy dog, the asylum and the horror stories). If you happen to have a devastatingly funny, brand-new, very sophisticated joke, don't waste it on a gay during a tete-a-tete. Wait for the moment you can tell it to a group in his presence. He will be more impressed by your success than by the joke itself.

Before we abandon the theme of the convivial, desultory or cocktail party conversation, that is—what to tell gays in the presence of others—I think I ought to teach you the "complicity-by-words trick." It is very effective and well worth knowing. The idea is to create a kind of secret code which only you and he understand. Something extremely simple will do. I shall give you a very elementary example.

Suppose that at a party you have managed to corner your quarry and to have a brief, private conversation with him. You have noticed a rather strange gay and either he or you have commented, let's say, that he looks exactly like the horse which won the last Derby. Just a casual, fleeting, silly remark which made him laugh. Somebody else barges in, and your prospective prey is dragged away. A little later you meet again in a different group and the Derby-horse-gay happens to be present. You skillfully switch the conversation to horse racing, and you shall then be able to make some amusing or biting allusions that only he and you will understand and appreciate. You will have complicity, a secretly shared fun, a sort of togetherness with the gay you are after, which in due course could produce, as a dividend, a much more substantial complicity, greater fun and complete togetherness.

The above, of course, is an extremely crude specimen of the "complicity-by-words trick" as it refers, necessarily, to an abstract and purely theoretical situation. In real life, at a real cocktail party, dinner party, dance, outing or any other social occasion in which you meet a gay you like, there will inevitably crop up (life being a permanent comedy in which we are at the same time

actors and spectators) a situation, an incident, a topic, a discussion that will allow you to apply the "complicity trick" with much more adroitness, cogency and effectiveness. It's just a question of getting the idea and the knack of it. With a little practice, the trick should come to you almost naturally.

Up to here I have been giving you a few hints on how to talk to gays at a first meeting and in the presence of others.

When you are alone with him, the tune will naturally change. What to tell him will depend to a great degree on the particular strategy you will have decided to adopt to cruise him, strategy that will be explained thoroughly later. What to tell him will spring automatically out of the plan of attack you will be pursuing.

However, should you, at any time, happen to run out of verbal ammunition to fire at a gay remember that there is one subject of which he will never tire: himself. It is, as a matter of fact, the Queen of Subjects.

Tell him what you think of him, what you thought of him when you first met him, how you subsequently modified your opinion, what other people think of him, what he really is and what he ought to be. Make him talk about himself, about his experiences, aspirations, likes and dislikes. And once you get to know quite enough about him, but not before, idealise him the way he would like to idealise himself. And flatter him all the time, but remember that the best flattery is the hidden or indirect one, the one that can take the form of a casual remark or, even better, of criticism. We have already seen some examples of hidden and indirect compliments in the Cultural Approach, the Artistic Approach and in the False Recognition Approach.

Flattery through criticism works like this: you must find fault with some minor traits or details in order to show your appreciation of some qualities of which you know him to be inordinately proud. Example:

"Why the hell must you gays dress like that? I'm not saying that your new suit is not nice. It's very chic, as a matter of fact, and must have cost you the earth. But the coat is too low and it hides your buttocks. Have you ever seen Tab Hunter in a bathing suit? He has exactly your type of buttocks."

Or:

"Sometimes I wonder why I keep seeing you, why I keep wanting to be near you and taking an interest in what you are doing. You drive me absolutely crazy with rage. You haven't enough self-confidence or perhaps you are just too damn lazy. If you relied on your intelligence, if you cultivated a bit more your natural talent (in acting, singing, writing), you would be a terrific success."

This might annoy him considerably; he might answer back rather irritably, and your relations might become temporarily strained. But he will brood over it; he will realize that your high opinion of him overrides by far the criticism. He will want to discuss the issue with you at great length, to offer explanations and he will come back to you.

And remember, in your flattery, to give him something he doesn't already have. Praise his defects rather than his qualities. His qualities have already been praised thousands of times and he has become blasé about it. The praise of his defects will surprise and delight him.

You should tell a clever, not too handsome gay that you like him for his looks, you should tell a bleached blonde that you have fallen for his brains. Tell a mean gay that you admire his generosity, a short one that he is a bit too tall for your taste but that you like him all the same, a clumsy lad that you are very impressed by his aplomb and ability to cope with any situation.

I have seen it done quite recently to a rather formidable gay, tall, statuesque, handsome, clever, tough, cynical, extremely competent professionally, financially independent and quite capable of looking after himself in the most difficult circumstances. The type of gay one would have said, who is practically uncruisable, who picks up a man he likes and then discards him remorselessly when he has had enough of him.

Well, he is now eating out of the hand of a friend of mine who tackled him with a, for him, unusual strategy. He assumed a protective manner, told him he understood how difficult life must be for a lonely, helpless gay, he offered him his advice and his support. Although he is much more clever and successful than my friend, he swallowed it hook, line and jock strap. His attitude made him feel a sweet little thing, even physically tinier, and very effeminate: all things he was probably longing to be, perhaps unconsciously, for some time.

Another good subject, which annoys straights but goes well with gays, is yourself. Gays don't like abstractions, but concrete, personal topics. And what more concrete and personal than the man who is talking to him and who evidently has fallen for him? So tell him all about yourself, your life, your projects, your feelings, your thoughts, and let him, but with some caution, into your secrets.

Most good cruisers are extroverts and the circumstances in which extroversion manifests itself most clearly is in talking. I know it is rather difficult to change one's character and I am not asking you to do so. But try and remember this when talking to a gay you want to cruise and especially when talking about yourself. Relax, let yourself go, tell him anything that crosses your mind and don't be afraid to broach personal, intimate subjects. You might find it embarrassing in the beginning, but with a bit of practice, the success you will meet and the encouragement you will find on the other side should help you a lot.

Dreams, the occult, the supernatural are also subjects I can warmly recommend. Throughout the ages gays have been attracted by witchcraft, black and white magic and by new and outlandish religions. The Sabbat was a typically gay institution. Even today fortune tellers, faith healers, mediums and similar quacks derive from gays a large portion of their income.

I'm not suggesting that you should start dabbling in the occult. But if you are good at reading the hand, fortune telling

with a pack of cards, mind reading, graphology, etc—even only at a parlor game level—it might help.

But what I do recommend is that you should acquire some vague notions of psychoanalysis. Psychoanalysis is a serious science, or so I am told, but the way gays look at it and the way it is often practiced it has become a fashionable, high brow way of finding good excuses for gay behaviour, with a touch of the magic added to it.

A bit of psychoanalysis can come in mighty handy in cruising. Gays dream more often than straights or at least, which amounts to the same thing, they remember their dreams better, are more impressed by them and love to discuss them. Get a gay to tell you about his dreams and then proceed to interpret them for him in a psychoanalytical fashion. It will impress him no end.

You don't have to go too deeply into it. Just flip through a couple of simplified books on the subject and you shall be able to talk about the unconscious, the subconscious, repression, transfer, sublimation, the Oedipus complex, the oral stage (very important to gays), the anal stage (a must subject), sexual symbolism and such like hocus-pocus. Stick to good old Freud, who concentrated on sex, and skip the ingenious but distracting variations of Adler and Jung. After all you too are concentrating on the same thing.

Psychoanalysis, besides being fashionable, can provide you with an easy, smooth, face-saving opportunity of talking sex to a gay and finding out his requirements in this field. From theory to practice the step can be very short.

A good substitute for talking is writing. Gays simply adore to receive letters, especially love letters. They are just as proud of them as the Red Indians used to be of their scalps. They treasure and keep them forever, often at great risk to themselves (and you). My advice here is quite simple. Don't write any letters.

Telephoning is something between talking to a gay directly and writing to him. For many gays the telephone has a great attraction and you should make lavish use of it with both local and long distance calls. Ring them up at the most ungodly hours and from the most unexpected places with the most flimsy excuse or just to say good-night or good-morning. They will find it rather romantic and will even forgive you for having awakened them.

Many gays prefer to carry out a flirtatious and even risqué conversation by telephone rather than in the presence of the other man. They are, as I've already said, very sensitive to the tone of voice, which can have on them a strong erotic effect. Besides, the distance gives them a sense of unreality and at the same time of security, which can lead them to admissions of their innermost feelings and to make promises which, with the cruiser present and ready to take them at their word, they would be too shy to do.

Chapter V

THE ATTACK

We have seen so far what the cruiser must have, how he chooses his gays, how he approaches them and what he tells them. We have advanced quite a bit on our path and we have already laid the foundations on which to build.

The time has now come to get down to our business in earnest. In other words we must decide what plan of attack we must apply to the particular lad we are determined to possess. We have already established a certain amount of friendship or, at least, some degree of interest. Now we must head for the bed.

Every gay is in a world of his own and, consequently, as I shall never tire to repeat, each time you set out to cruise one you are faced with an entirely new problem. There is no foolproof system which works with all gays.

However, experienced cruisers have noticed that certain strategies work better on certain types of gays. A thorough, scientific, German way of approaching the subject would be to classify the various types of gays (by race, nationality, religion, age, education, status, environment, profession, temperament, I.Q., previous experiences, sensuality, color of hair, pigmentation, metabolism, sedimentation rate, the Rorschach test und so weiter) and prescribe for each type a specific line of cruising. It would be a monumental task, as the possible combinations of the various factors that make a gay are probably more numerous than those of the Irish Sweepstakes. You certainly cannot count on me.

I am tackling the problem the other way round. I have selected a few of the best and most usual ways of going for a gay, systems that have been tested with success in the field, and I shall outline them briefly. In some cases the technique itself will indicate to what type of gay it should be applied. In other cases I shall try to specify in which circumstances and with what kind of gays they work best. But, as a whole, you shall have to decide yourself.

And, please, don't take my advice too literally, don't stick too strictly to the rules. Cruising is very elastic, never a pedantic affair. The various techniques are just a vague indication of a line of conduct. They can and they must be modified, improved as you go, attenuated or emphasized, mingled, superimposed and adapted to circumstances. Anyhow, here we go.

The Let's-have-fun Technique

One of the easiest and the most pleasant. To be applied to superficial, scatterbrain, extrovert gays. Summer holidays, winter sports, cruises, carnivals, fiestas are the natural soil on which

The general idea is to avoid any kind of depth, to skim and skip. Make it quite clear that you like him a lot but that you don't love him. And that you don't expect him to fall in love with you

either. No commitments of any kind on either side. Make him realize that when the affair will, very shortly, be over, there is going to be no follow-up. You shall not try to see him again nor do you expect him to do so.

Don't tell him too much about yourself and, particularly, don't ask him too much about himself, about his family, background, relations, etc. He will prefer to stay, as far as possible, unknown.

What you can and should hint to him (without forgetting the atmosphere of levity which this particular technique requires throughout) is that you are happily mated or somehow sentimentally and satisfactorily tied up to another gay. But why? There are three reasons:

(a) Gays in love matters, prefer the difficult to the easy. If he knew that you were unattached and, as it were, at a loose end, he wouldn't be as pleased and flattered by the attentions and interest you will be lavishing on him. It is always satisfying to one's ego to beat a rival, even if unknown.

(b) The fact that you are already committed offers him a guarantee that you will not become a nuisance once your brief affair will be over.

(c) In 95% of the cases he too will be mated or have a steady lover. To know that you, by going to bed with him, are betraying somebody else will place you on an equal footing. This will help him in drowning a feeling of remorse, if any, and will encourage the light, slightly cynical mood in which the affair must be conducted.

Talk about your affair as little as possible, but try to be with him as often as possible, keep him busy, take him to shows, parties, nightclubs and do your best to amuse him. Give him frequent presents but all of a small, noncommittal nature: a new book, a small piece of clothing, a tiny souvenir of no value but with an amusing significance, and the like.

The You-are-a-bitch Technique

A bit similar to the preceding one. But here the accent, rather than on fun, is placed on sex. Again no commitments, no sentimental ties, but, on the contrary, a mutual understanding that you both like to make love to each other and that's that. To be applied to superficial, unromantic, hard and, naturally, highly sexed gays.

Make no attempt to bring love into it, to idealize your relation, to find excuses of any sort to justify your and his behaviour. With particularly sensual and cynical gays you can even underline the sordid, animal like character of the affair. He's a bitch, you know it and you treat him as such. He'll like it.

You can also make him understand that you hate him for the lust he arouses in you and that you despise yourself for not being able to resist it. But the physical attraction he exercises on you is much too strong, you can't keep away from him, you are kind of obsessed.

No need to spend too much time with him nor to ply him with

little attentions. Your role will be that of an unromantic character on whom he cannot rely for anything except for sexual satisfaction. No presents as a rule, but after he has already been to bed with you, perhaps a few gifts of a sexual nature: drinks to consume when you are together, a pastel shirt, frivolous under-shorts, physique magazines, a shaving lotion you like him to use when you are making love.

The Broken-heart Technique

A well-tested trick often used by cruisers of a naturally melancholy disposition. Works on a great variety of gays, including the tender, the sentimental, the motherly, the proud, the compassionate, the naive. Recommended in difficult cases. The only snag is that it's not much fun.

It is played on three different notes of a gay's keyboard of emotions:

- (1) Compassion
- (2) Jealousy
- (3) Pride

Your approach to your quarry will be very cautious and gentle. You will try to endear yourself to him in all sorts of little ways, see him fairly often, flatter him discreetly, show that you enjoy the pleasure of his company. But at the same time you will remain a bit aloof and distracted and make him understand that you haven't fallen in love with him. Behave with as much melancholy as you can possibly display without becoming a depressing bore.

And then, one day, when you have established enough friendship and understanding between you, you tell him your lachrymose story.

There is a terrible tragedy in your life. You were madly in love with a wonderful lad and he died. Your heart is broken, your feelings are spent, you know that you shall never be able to love another gay in your life.

As for himself, the gay you are talking to, you like him a lot, as a matter of fact you prefer him to any other gay you know, you find his company soothing and you are very grateful to him for your beautiful friendship. He needn't worry that you might spoil friendship by falling in love with him and becoming a nuisance. Love for you is a closed chapter. No gay in the world can revive in you the passion you had for the dead one.

His first, almost physiological impulse will be that of consoling you, for such is a gay's generous nature. But being, as we have assumed, a gay difficult to cruise, he will check himself.

But if you keep meeting him fairly often, if you keep your pleasant friendship going, you will become for him a living chal-

lenge on two counts. First of all his pride will be irritated.

"Here," he will think, "is a man who says no gay can make him fall in love. Not even me. I'll show him."

Then there is that challenge of the "other gay." It is, in this particular case, a very subtle challenge. He cannot hate him because the poor thing is dead, but the element of jealousy will still be present as this mysterious unknown entity still monopolizes all your affection. He cannot emulate him, as he will know about him only what you will have been telling him sparingly. The difficulty of overcoming the obstacle will make the victory even more desirable.

Most of the feelings, thoughts and reactions I have described will take place in the gay's subconscious, but will not be, because of that, less powerful. If you play your hand carefully, success should not fail you.

The technique I have just outlined is a refined version of a more general, broad and crude approach which consists in behaving as if you were extremely unhappy (for any old reason you think of) and appealing for the gay's compassion. This too very often works, but the variation I have evolved with competent advice is much more effective.

Some acting capacity is required unless you are by nature a sad, gloomy character. Which I hope you are not.

The Impossible-love Technique

Another tricky one which should be resorted to only in difficult cases. Recommended for rebellious, antagonistic, naughty, slightly perverted gays.

The first idea to convey is that a love affair between you two would be mad, absurd, dangerous, immoral. In other words inconceivable.

The second idea is that you quite realize all this, but you can't help being desperately attracted to him.

The third idea is that there is a kind of fate that draws you together, a mysterious hand of destiny which thwarts all your most determined and honest attempts of keeping away.

I can think offhand of a dozen obvious almost natural obstacles in the way of your love:

1. You are a priest.
2. He is a monk.
3. He is the lover or mate of a close relative of yours.
4. He is the brother of your boss.
5. He is the lover or mate of your best friend.
6. He is the son of a clergyman.
7. The colors of your skin differ.

8. Your two countries are at war.
9. He is very wealthy and you are very poor.
10. He is straight.

Cases like that don't occur every day. And so, more often, once you have decided that the impossible-love technique is the best for a particularly difficult case, you will have to create the obstacle or to exaggerate the importance of a minor, already existing one. If the gay in question is the brother of or sentimentally attached to a man you know, to Joe Smith let's say, then the easiest way is to pretend that you are frightfully fond of good old Joe, that you have terrible qualms, that you couldn't possibly do a thing like that to good old Joe, while in reality you hardly know him and couldn't care less if good old Joe were dead or alive. And if you and Smith were in the army, at school or in the Boy Scouts together, invent the legend that he once saved your life. He will not deny it.

If you are a mature cruiser and your prospective prey is on the young side, then the place of good old Joe can be taken advantageously by the lad's mother. You pretend that you admire and respect the mother very much, that you feel kind of morally responsible for his purity, that you have terrible qualms for betraying so badly the trust she has placed in you by letting you take him to a ball game, for having taken him to a gay club instead and for having, in the process, fallen in love with him. The rebellious, antagonistic, wicked little thing (and all that he must be for the technique to work) will only be too glad to prove his dear mother wrong by encouraging your advances.

But let's proceed systematically. Once you have established the principle that a love affair between you two is quite out of the question, you must show to him that the attraction he exercises on you is irresistible and that it defies the law, your conscience, moral, social, religious conventions and barriers. You can do it by words, by action or by both. You blurt out that you are mad about him, you make a sudden grab as if you were going to attempt to embrace him, but you check yourself in time with a great, visible effort. You then apologize profusely and beg him to forget what you have told him and what you have done. You swear you will never do it again and that you shall avoid him in the future.

Naturally you have no intentions of keeping your promise. A study of his habits will allow you to bump into him again frequently as if by chance. You then explain your presence by some coincidence of a rather extraordinary character. After two or three such meetings you hint at the hand of fate.

The appeal of the forbidden fruit (my pardon), the implicit flattery of the irresistible attraction he seems to exercise on you plus a touch of "destiny against which it is useless to fight" form a very effective combination which proves successful in many cases.

The Salami Technique

A very long process to be applied only in very difficult cases and to very stubborn gays on whom other methods are likely to fail. It requires a lot of tact, skill and patience.

After the end of the Second World War, elections were held in the countries of Eastern Europe occupied by the Red Army, such as Hungary, Poland etc. The Communists, as a whole, received quite a small percentage of the popular vote. The rest went to Socialists, Liberals etc. Coalition governments were formed in which the Prime Minister was usually not a Communist and in which the Communists had to content themselves with a few Ministries and Undersecretariats. But a couple of years later the Communists had established absolute control over all the Ministries, disbanded or absorbed the rival parties, killed, imprisoned or banned their leaders. How did they do it? By applying the "salami technique." It was the Hungarian Communist Party Secretary, Matyas Rakosi, who gave it this name.

"When you want to get hold of a salami," Rakosi once explained to his collaborators, "which your opponents are strenuously defending, you mustn't make a grab at it. You must start carving for yourself a very thin slice. The owner of the salami will hardly notice it or, at least, he will not mind very much. The next day you carve another slice, then another still. And so, little by little, the whole salami will pass into your possession."

The salami technique applied to gays works exactly on the same principle. If you suggest to him abruptly to come to bed with you, all you will get is a fist in the belly and the end of your acquaintance. You must lead him towards it gradually and almost imperceptibly. You must induce him to make one tiny concession after the other. Each of such concessions, in itself, will mean nothing. Added together they will represent his total capitulation.

Suppose, for example, that he refuses to visit your garconniere. You don't insist, but at some later date you arrange for him to come with a group of friends (start sowing some seed by trying to get him interested in some problem of interior decorating you have or pretend to have, in some records you know he would like to hear, etc.). Next time get him to come along to the garconniere with some excuse (you came out without your wallet, you think you forgot to turn the gas out, etc.), and promise it will take only a minute. Stick strictly to your promise and make it twenty seconds if you can. The notion that he has been there alone with you and that nothing improper or embarrassing happened will have been established. Next time find some plausible reason, and mention it in a very casual way, for him to stay a bit longer (deciding who was right in a discussion you had about *The Lord of the Flies*). Again behave absolutely correctly and give him a feeling of false security. After that he will be unable to refuse further invitations without feeling ridiculous.

Proceed in the same cautious, gradual way in your physical and intellectual relations. Give his shoulder a friendly squeeze,

drape an arm over it for increasingly longer periods, start caressing it absent-mindedly and progressively increase the area. As for "petting", start with the hand only, later give him a brotherly slap on the rump, then a hand on the leg and getting nearer to the crotch. Tell him you feel very tired and, while sitting next to him on a sofa listening to a record, pretend to go to sleep. Turn round in your sleep, as if to get more comfortable, and place an arm around him in an affectionate, unsexy way. Unless he is a hopeless case he will not resent your innocent, instinctive gesture and will not be cruel enough to wake you up and push you away. The principle that he has been lying in your arms will have been established.

Don't scare him in the beginning by declaring your love nor shock him with risque, sexy talk. If you do it tactfully and again very gradually, you can overcome his shyness, his prejudices, his complexes and drag him almost inadvertently onto erotic topics. In due course words and actions should combine to bring the final result.

As you see it's a very slow, painstaking process which can be spoilt at any time by a faux pas. It works only with shy, repressed, timorous, a bit hypocritical, very petit-bourgeois gays, because those of a more ardent, courageous, open, passionate nature would soon get fed up by all your dillydallying and would either give you the green light at a much earlier stage or tell you to go to hell.

But is it worth it? Well, this is for you to decide. It all depends on how much you like salami.

The Face-savers

You might have noticed that, in most of the techniques I have outlined, provisions have been made to supply the gay with a good excuse for surrendering. The face-savers are essential instruments in a cruiser's tool box and their use should be properly mastered and never underrated.

One of the easiest, most obvious and most frequent face-savers, especially with Anglo-Saxon gays, is drink. Get him plastered and he will be able to tell himself, and probably you the next day, that he did what he did because he didn't know what he was doing.

With Latin and Middle-Europa gays booze doesn't work so well. First of all they haven't got the habit of drinking to the same extent, and secondly and consequently they consider that to give in to a cruiser while being 'under the influence' an aggravating, rather than an extenuating circumstance.

Generalizing even further, I would say that drink works as a face-saver with easy, superficial, vulgar, neurotic gays. To a lesser degree it works with bohemian, artycrafty, very young gays and with those who lead a strenuous, nerve-racking life such as movie and theatrical actors.

With rather difficult and high class gays alcohol can hardly be considered a face-saver. And as these are the gays we are

mainly aiming at, the cruiser should not rely on it too much. Better and more subtle motives should be supplied and situations and atmospheres created in order to make it more easy for the gay.

More good excuses which have worked for centuries and are still going strong even in our hard, rationalistic, cynical times are those of a poetic, intellectual, artistic nature. They work not only as a sentimental-erotic stimulus, as many gays are truly sensitive and responsive to such things, but also as face-savers, as a gay will not be ashamed of letting you make love to him if he can say that he was carried away by refined, elegant, aesthetic emotions.

Gays have always had a soft spot for poets and many great poets have been great cruisers as well. Naturally one cannot turn poet at will, but at least one can try to impart a poetic slant to one's relations with a gay. Many people, and quite rightly in my opinion, would feel ashamed of doing it in public. But you can do it in private and be quite sure that most gays will appreciate it.

The mollifying effect on a gay's heart of a starry night, of a beautiful sunset, of the moon reflecting on the sea are too well known; no need reminding the cruiser that he should take full advantage of them.

Music is also highly recommended. A very attractive gay writer told me that he found the overture of "Tristan" the most powerful inducement to making love he had ever experienced. What goes for a sophisticated gay writer would probably cut no ice with a bartender or a cab driver. It's up to the cruiser to decide whether he should use as a background music to his performance Scarlatti, Bach, Wagner, Ravel, Gershwin, Cole Porter, Belafonte or the Beatles.

Near-rape

Among the face-savers we must not forget to include near-rape. Wholesale rape, as I've already said, is out of the question — being beyond the boundaries of cruising. According to the Oxford Dictionary to seduce means to "lead astray, tempt into sin, persuade into surrender of chastity." In leading, tempting and persuading there is always an element of inducement rather than compulsion.

But a bit of violence is, in certain cases, not only indicated but necessary in the gay's own interest. Which cases? I would say whenever the gay has already fallen in love with you, or at least is very sympathetically inclined, when he already feels a strong sexual urge and is already convinced that that's the way it's going to end sooner or later but, out of fear, prejudice, upbringing, convention, conviction or stubbornness, he still can't bring himself to do it willingly and spontaneously. At this point a swift, determined physical attack to overcome his last-ditch resistance is required. Afterwards he will be grateful to you for two reasons:

- (1) You will have allowed him to do what he was really

longing to do.

(2) You will have supplied him with a justification for his behavior. His self-esteem will remain unimpaired.

Near-rape, however, can be very tricky. Although a certain amount of physical exertion is indispensable, it remains fundamentally a psychological problem. The point is to decide whether the time is ripe for such a drastic action: whether he is really fond enough of you, and whether his sensuality has been brought to the right degree of ebullience.

Before you strike, you must be sure you will succeed. Sure that the violence can be confined to a reasonably gentle framework, that the fortress is ready to surrender and that your well-meaning assault will not degenerate into a furious, senseless, humiliating catch-as-catch-can. There are not many things as ridiculous as a cruiser who has tried to take a gay by force and has failed. There are few things as dismal as a red-faced, puffing, sweating, dishevelled couple looking at each other in silent and embarrassed hatred after an abortive assault. And so, if in doubt, it is much better to abstain from the near-rape gambit or postpone it to a more propitious moment.

If possible try and carry out the attempt in a light, playful, laughing mood. This offers two advantages: in the first place, if his resistance becomes too stubborn, you can stop in time, pretend it was all a big joke, remain friends and try another line: secondly, many gays, when they get the giggles, become very weak and this can facilitate your job.

Another tricky moment of near-rape is the short time immediately after sexual satisfaction has been achieved. The cruiser tends to be pensive, withdrawn and detached. The gay on the contrary is more likely to gush out with emotional pledges of eternal love or fall into a state of remorse, self-incrimination, accusation of the cruiser and tears (heaven forbid). In both cases the cruiser's best tactics is to create a diversion to relieve the tension and to minimize the importance of what happened.

Anal Virgins

Near-rape brings us, almost automatically, to the question of anal virgins. I think we all agree that a large percentage of gays don't participate in anal intercourse. What should one do if this is of prime importance to you? There are three possibilities:

(1) Don't force the issue. If by taking the lad's anal virginity, you are likely to ruin his emotional life forever or to cause him serious pain, trouble or complications, then, I think, it would be only fair to abstain. After all we have assumed that you are the Casanova and not the Don Juan type: that you are out to give as well as to take pleasure and not only to satisfy your lust at all cost.

(2) Go ahead. If you feel that, because of his environment, anal virginity doesn't mean much for the lad, that it's a passing phase and that, if you are not quick enough somebody else will

pluck the flower from under your, as it were, nose, then I see no reason why you should refrain. In such cases anal virginity should not prove too big an obstacle. The trick is to treat it as something very trivial. Make the lad understand that you find it rather funny, although a bit annoying and demode, for him to be so eccentric. Make him feel slightly ashamed, but without antagonizing or teasing him too much, of being an anal virgin. In your role you are a man of the world, you are ready to overlook his slight imperfection which, after all, can easily be put right.

(3) Compromise. If "deflowering" a lad might cause a lot of emotional trouble and if, on the other hand, you like him too much to leave him alone completely, then the best thing is to come to a compromise. Take him to bed all the same but respect his anal virginity. He will probably be proficient in one or more other methods that more than compensate for his one "failing."

Chapter VI THE MOMENT OF TRUTH

Whatever particular techniques of the ones mentioned in the preceding chapter, or of your own invention, you apply, the "moment of truth" is bound to strike sooner or later. In the jargon of the Spanish corrida the moment of truth (which really lasts only a few seconds) is the crucial moment when the torero, having exhausted his repertory of figures, having shown his skill and daring and having dazzled, bamboozled and tired the bull out, is about to plunge his *stoque* between the neck and the shoulder of the beast to sever the nerves below the spinal cord.

The same thing happens in that special, more gentle and bloodless corrida which the cruising of a gay amounts to. The time will come when you will want to reap the harvest you have sown, to collect the dividends of your maneuvering, efforts and skill, when you, like the torero, will want to make your kill.

Later on we shall be studying together how to give to and obtain from a gay the optimum of sexual satisfaction and how to keep him in love with you. All this, however, will be completely useless and will stay purely theoretical if you should fail when the moment of truth strikes. Mind you, I am not saying that it will happen frequently, since if you have played your cards properly, your quarry should be practically in the bag. But still the moment when you go all out, when you launch the final attack to make the fortress surrender, is extremely important. A failure at this crucial stage can mean the ignominious end of your whole campaign or having to start all over again with heavy odds piled against you.

This is why you must load everything you have in your punch, why whatever technique you have been following must now be brought to its climax. This is the moment when your acting abilities, your self-control, your cruelty, your gift of the gab, your charm must be turned full on.

Be very careful to choose the right time, the right atmosphere and the right mood. There are of course exceptions, cases when you must act very quickly, on the spur of the moment as it were, to catch the fleeting, golden opportunity. But as a rule, I would advise you to arrange and stage the decisive *tete-a-tete* with the greatest care.

Give him and yourself plenty of time. It is no use launching the final attack if either he or you are openly or furtively glancing at your watch or if there is the danger of the offensive having to be called to a halt halfway through.

Give him an occasion as pleasant and as stimulating as you can possibly contrive; a good show, an amusing party, a trip to a beautiful spot, a delicious meal, an exciting nightclub, etc., should usually precede the attack. Try and choose a romantic, aesthetically correct background for the showdown.

Give him a sense of security. Make him feel sure that nobody will overhear your declaration of love, that nobody will see you fondling him or, even worse, interrupt you while you are trying to undress him. Only with a very few, very reckless gays does

danger act as a stimulant rather than a deterrent.

It is not at all easy to find a good spot. As we are talking about the moment of truth, of the moment when the gay is about to fall but has not yet fallen, we naturally assume that your relationship has not gone as far as to allow you to make clearcut and open arrangements for love-making, such as booking a double or two single communicating rooms in a hotel, stopping at a motel or the like. Here is where a garconniere comes in mighty handy. Failing that—either because you can't afford one or because you are operating outside your habitual hunting grounds — a motel, a sleeping-car compartment, a tent, a trailer, a wood, a boat, a cabin on a ship, will have to do. Here I can offer no specific advice. It depends so much on the country you are in, on local customs and facilities, on the weather, on the type of gay you are with, on your financial possibilities, that I am leaving it entirely to you (as I so often do when I get on a sticky problem) to find a solution.

The automobile, for many decades, has acquired a fundamental importance in the history of gay love-making. For the cruiser to own and to be able to drive a car has become almost a condition sine qua non. In Italy the rapid development of the car industry, vastly superior to that of any other industry, was mostly based on an erotic foundation.

But, you may ask, is the car the right place for the moment of truth to appear ? Not really, but very often, in the absence of something better, it will have to do.

And now a very important point. When I talk about a decisive tete-a-tete, I don't necessarily mean that you should possess him there and then. If you succeed, so much the better. But the decisive tete-a-tete can be classified as victorious also if:

(1) Owing to various negative circumstances (not enough privacy, time running out, some unexpected interruption, the gay's intention of prolonging the siege, etc.) you were unable to take him, but you got out of him an open admission that he is willing to let you make love to him and a definite date and place has been arranged for the next, conclusive encounter.

(2) You were unable to obtain a formal pledge of future love-making, but all his behavior and the degree of his sexual excitement have given you to understand that he is quite willing and ready.

In both cases you should try and push the sexual intimacy—fondling, undressing at least partly and making your future intentions quite clear both by deed and by word—as far as the circumstances and he will allow. This is not only to arouse in him a strong urge, but also to commit him and to abolish as many barriers of prudery as possible in order to prepare him for the next round.

The second hypothesis—which is rather frequent—has in itself an element of danger. You must be very careful to avoid letting your next meeting end like the preceding one, that is with nothing definite accomplished. He might get used to it, take you for a "petting partner", for somebody fairly pleasant and fairly harmless

out of whom moderate sexual pleasure can be derived without danger of sentimental complications. This will not do. Cruising, in its initial stage, must be a continuous, relentless crescendo. And so if, for instance, the meeting in which he clearly showed that he has fallen for you, took place in a car or in the dark corner of a theatre, make sure that next time you are together there should be a bed or a sofa handy.

Very often the decisive tete-a-tete will coincide with the first "feel". Nowadays the first feel hasn't got the importance it used to have in the "old days". Gays love being fondled, and the parting feel after an evening spent together has been reduced to the level of a hand-shake.

However, somehow the first feel has remained a kind of symbol of the beginning of a love affair. Therefore, the "day after the first feel", and we shall agree to interpret such an expression in a very wide, comprehensive way, is a day which can have for the cruiser a considerable importance.

The principle is to show him your appreciation and your gratitude in a big, romantic, spectacular way. Send him the most expensive piece of clothing your finances can afford. Ring him up to tell him the "sweetest" thing that crosses your mind. I know you are really longing to do it. So do it, by all means ... but don't be too hasty.

If the decisive tete-a-tete took place, let's say, the evening before, don't ring him up first thing in the morning nor dispatch your gift as soon as the stores open. Let the whole morning go by without giving any sign of life. Same for the early afternoon. Give him time to think, to wonder, to worry. He will feel irritated by the lack of your news, start thinking you are a bitch with awfully bad manners, wondering whether he did the right thing by falling for you when apparently you don't seem to care two hoots about him and just take his surrender for granted. His pride will be offended, his self-esteem shaken. Consequently what a relief when later in the afternoon and on the verge of the evening, when he was already giving up hope, he will receive a splendid-furous gift, followed at a judiciously spaced interval, by a passionate phone call.

I have mentioned earlier that the best place for your decisive encounter is your garconniere. This is no doubt true and it's the easiest, most practical solution (unless he has his own garconniere, which is even better but extremely rare). But it has its drawbacks. It can often happen that the gay will think:

"Well, here I am. Because of the very fact that I came, I am sure he thinks he can make love to me right away. And if I surrender too easily he is bound to think of me as a pushover. That I am not and I'll show him."

Accordingly he might behave very formally, reject a caress he would have readily accepted in a wood, in a boat or in a car. An atmosphere of embarrassment, coldness, even of slight hostility can easily descend on the premises.

To avoid this I have three tricks to suggest:

(1) If you think he is the passionate, impulsive, generous type don't give him time to think, to talk, I would say not even to breathe. As soon as he enters your den grab him about the shoulders without even a word of greeting, hold him tightly, fondle him fondly.

(2) If you know that this *Sturm und Drang* approach would not work, then behave in the absolutely contrary manner. Be even more formal than he, avoid all mention or even hint of anything connected with love matters, keep up a lively, superficial, cocktail party chatter about any subject that crosses your head. Sit or stand as far away from him as you can without making it too obvious. All this will give him a sense of security and disarm his difference.

And if you keep it up for half or three-quarters of an hour (not much longer I would say) he will start thinking:

"Well, this is funny. He doesn't seem to have the slightest intention of trying to make love to me. Surely he didn't ask me to come here just to talk about the Beatles. Is he by any chance a straight? I thought he had fallen for me in a big way. Was I mistaken? Doesn't he find me sufficiently attractive? Or does he respect me too much?"

His curiosity will be awakened. His vanity piqued. His self-esteem shaken. And when you change your tactics (unless, as it sometimes happens, he does it before you) and bring the meeting on its "natural" amorous course, he is bound to feel relieved and pleased.

(3) For some reason everything is going wrong. You haven't been given a chance to make an attempt at love-making or, if you did, it was nipped in the bud: the atmosphere has remained chilly. The time has come to employ the "small disaster trick". You deliberately create an accident which will cause a diversion and liven things up.

Suppose, for instance, that you got to the stage when you sit here and he sits there and you can hardly find anything to say to each other. You suddenly get up and say: "Let me offer you a beer," and before he has time to refuse politely and take his leave, you disappear in the kitchenette. You open the beer and pile on a single tray the bottles, glasses and a large bowl of pretzels you have bought for the occasion. You re-enter the room, pretend to stumble and down, crash-bang, comes the whole bag of tricks. The beer will start spreading on the floor, the pretzels will lie among the debris of the glasses. The bigger the mess the better.

You will look dejected, contrite, helpless. You will murmur as to yourself:

"That's my luck . . . I was counting so much on this encounter . . . I don't think I have any more beer . . . please excuse me . . . you must think I'm a fool . . . I'm sorry . . . wait . . . I'll clean it up in two seconds."

Unless he is a creature with absolutely no feelings, his motherly instincts will be aroused. He will feel sorry for you, he couldn't possibly leave you now that you are, even literally, in the jam. Your clumsiness and your dismay will look funny to him, but also a bit moving. He'll help you mop up, show you the proper way of doing it, rummage your kitchen to find more beer, see if he can concoct something to replace the pretzles. In short he'll take over completely.

The ice (as well as the glasses) will be broken. After a few minutes you'll both be laughing about the incident, all formality and embarrassment will have disappeared, replaced by a new camaraderie, and in the majority of cases your next attempt to fondle him will be rewarded with success.

I know it sounds silly, but it works. The moderate expense of replacing the broken glasses can be well worth it.

Chapter VII UNDRESSING

Ours is a clothes-conscious age. Indeed, many magazines which used to go in rather a lot for pictures of young ladies with nothing on now devote most of their space to photographs of gay young men dressed in whatever is supposed to be IN next season. However, there is one place where fashion and elegant raiment still have no place — the bed of love. Since this delightful spot is generally approached with both partners clothed the question is, how to get undressed?

This is really a "first-time" problem. Once you and the young lad have come to know each other really well, routine develops. But the first trial, even if the understanding that 'This is it' is there, is fraught with delicacy. The cruiser may think that success is assured once agreement has been had, but for the gay the process of cruising goes on all the time—and can be called off at will.

The most obvious way is to undress him yourself. Callow youths who have gained the ability to undo a fly onehanded in fevered petting sessions tend to favor this, but it is a mistake. A modern young gay consists of: 1 suit (trousers zip or button down front), 1 shirt (with or without tie), 1 undershirt, 1 jock strap (or whatever other means of support he employs), 1 pair of shoes: 1 gay. No cruiser can handle all this.

The best way is to depend on your knowledge of psychology rather than on nimble fingers. The idea is to get the gay to co-operate, to place him in a position where he will feel almost compelled to complete the work you have started.

I shall begin with a very simple example. Supposing you have been lying on a sofa both completely dressed; you have been petting and you feel the time has come for something more substantial. Instead of starting from the jacket, the shirt or the trousers, you slowly run one hand over his chest, side, hip and down the leg to reach his foot. You gently slip one of his shoes off and place it on the floor by the sofa where he cannot reach it without getting up.

The other shoe you leave alone and also leave it to him to make the next move. By this simple, apparently trivial action you will have created a rather interesting situation. First of all you will have established the principle that you have started undressing him, and you will have done it in the easiest possible way, taking the line of least resistance. He cannot protest for what you have done without feeling extremely ridiculous. A shoe, after all, is only a shoe.

In the meantime you will have placed him in quite a spot. What shall he do now? Get up and limp around the sofa to retrieve his missing shoe? Evidently not. Remain as he is? No again, as gays have an innate, very strong sense of aesthetics and symmetry and he will feel ill at ease with one shoe on and the other shoe off. He will end up by slipping the other shoe off himself.

Ah! Another principle will thus have been established and

this time by him and not by you which is more important. The principle that whereas you have started undressing him, he is continuing to do so on his own.

Proceed likewise with all the other more worthy garments. If he is wearing a suit and you have managed to slip his trousers off, he will remove the coat on his own, as a tweed or woolen coat looks impossible worn over a jock strap. Similarly, if you have managed to take off one of his socks, leave it that way. For symmetry's sake he'll take the other sock off as well.

Logical, practical motives for shedding his clothes, suggested at the right time in a matter of fact tone, can also help.

"It's frightfully hot, love. You'd better take your sweater off."

"Look here, your coat is getting terribly crumpled. You'll look a mess when you leave. Here, let's hang it over a chair."

And then believe it or not, there are still, although they are very rare, gays who refuse to let you make love to them completely naked. They seem to think that a shirt or jock strap represents a kind of vestige of their respectability and they hang on to it for dear life. This of course will not do. You might allow it the first time just to smooth things out and show your magnanimity, but later on they must come off too. The best way of doing this is to apply the same technique suggested for anal virgins. Show a slightly ironical, puzzled surprise for such an eccentricity and you should be able to pull both the trick and the jock strap off.

More experienced gays prefer not to let you undress them completely but to look after the last stage themselves. Let them. Show them where the bathroom is, supply them with a clean towel, all in the most natural possible way and with the utmost economy of words so as not to make them self-conscious. The gay will be grateful to you for leaving him alone for a few minutes to rearrange his hair and check his equipment.

In such cases you can be pretty sure that he will emerge from the bathroom completely undressed or with just a symbolic garment which will be readily discarded, and this will give you time to get ready to receive him in an equally Adamic attire.

There are, however, cases when both he and you will have to get undressed in the same room and in each other's presence. The situation poses a few problems. While a gay who undresses himself or gets undressed by somebody else represents a pleasant, aesthetic, exciting spectacle, the same cannot be said for the average cruiser. Our suits, although rather drab, are no doubt dignified. They become less so when we start undressing. A cruiser, just to quote an extreme example, can look supremely ridiculous if he takes his trousers off and remains in his shoes, socks, suspenders, pants, waistcoat, jacket, shirt and tie. Suspenders and braces are ridiculous in themselves and so are pants reaching below the knee. The cruiser should not wear them at all. After all, trousers can be made so that they stay up on their own or with the support of a belt which looks aesthetically neat; socks can be bought with elastic woven into the fabric.

Then there is how a cruiser should undress under the eyes of

a gay. First of all he should remove his jacket and if he happens to wear a vest, remove that too immediately. Then off comes the tie and he undoes the first or the first two buttons of his shirt. He then undoes his cufflinks, or unbuttons the cuffs and—optionally—rolls up his sleeves, as a shirt with an open neck looks better this way. A pause is consented at this stage for more petting or to carry the job of undressing the gay a stage further.

After that he removes his shirt (which he can now do easily, quickly and elegantly as most of the buttons have been previously undone) and—again optionally—his undershirt, supposing he is wearing one. Another pause is allowed if necessary.

He then takes off his shoes and socks (to still have your socks on when your trousers come down would not do) and—almost finally—his trousers. Optional interval. If you have already discarded your undershirt you will have remained in your shorts, otherwise in your undershirt and shorts. In the second instance remove the shirt before the shorts.

Chapter VIII HOW TO MAKE LOVE

And now let's talk a bit about sex.

Theoretically, and although it might sound paradoxical, the cruiser need not necessarily be an expert lover. After all, and especially for the cruiser of the Don Juan type, once he has managed to take a gay to bed he has already accomplished his mission. He's been cruised and that's that.

However, he might want to keep him, at least for some time, before embarking on another adventure. Few things can be as effective for this purpose as giving a gay complete sexual satisfaction. Furthermore there is the pride of one's trade, Art for Art's sake.

I feel a bit embarrassed, I must say, in writing this particular chapter. But not, as you might think, because of the subject I have to broach and of the old convention that one should not talk too clearly and too openly about gay sex. My embarrassment is of a different nature. It is that of an author who is afraid of telling the obvious, the trivial, the too well-known. That of seeing in his imagination an imaginary reader closing the book in boredom and petulance at being told things he knows much better than the author. As an old saying has it, "Don't teach your grandfather to suck eggs," however that may apply.

I must make a start somewhere though, and shall assume that my reader knows who does what, and with which, and to whom—at least in the ordinary course of things.

These basics aside, here are the main problems that come in sexual congress.

(1) Timing. Gays in general reach the point of climax later than cruisers. The classic result is that the gay lies awake, gritting his teeth while the cruiser snores satedly. This won't do. Some gays will put up with it for a while, but they will eventually make you pay dearly. It is reported that some Asian Cruisers can carry on for six hours at a time. This is beyond most of us, but fifteen minutes should be a minimum to try for.

Prolonging the sex act is difficult, particularly if the preliminaries have been exciting. One of the best ways is to cool—but not douse—the fires by thinking of extraneous things. Contemplating a dangerous interview with your boss or working the multiplication table works well for some. The danger is that, in worrying if you'll be fired, or trying to figure 19×19 , you may forget what you're about with humiliating results to all concerned. Balance and practice are necessary here.

The other half of the timing problem is to bring the lad along with you. Most are so constructed that anal copulation is unlikely to have any powerful physical effect on them. Fun, yes: skyrockets, no. It is vital to spend all the time possible preparing him, with French kisses, caresses, etc, etc. If you keep this firmly in mind, you will be able to tell when to go on to the next step: the lad will, one way or another, make it pretty clear.

(2) Is simultaneousness paramount? A point on which I am in

disagreement with most authors and authorities is that the climax should necessarily take place at the same time. This is undoubtedly a very good and a very nice result to achieve. I would even go a step forward and state that in the initial stage of your love affair it is the only recommended system and the only goal for which you should aim:

But later on, once you have reached a good mutual understanding, when you know that you can rely on each other in sexual matters, when you are looking for new excitements, for novelties, for the unusual, for spices to add to the "normal" fare, then I think you could and ought to start experimenting with ways of making love in which the climax of pleasure is reached separately at different times. This is, after all, a proof of unselfishness and also an intellectual rather than physical way of enjoying vicariously the pleasure you are giving to your partner.

And here a minor problem arises. Should the cruiser or the gay be satisfied first? As a rule I would say, Gays first, for two reasons: one psychological. In the first place gays get less exhausted physically by love-making. Should the cruiser have reached orgasm first, he would then not feel too eager to carry on. In the second place gays are, in love-making, more generous. Once they have had their pleasure they will do their very best to reciprocate.

But this is only a very loose, general principle. In practice you will have to find out case by case which is best.

(3) Don't stop at anything. Man differs from animals because of his superior intelligence. This is universally recognized and man is justly proud of his immense achievements in the fields of science, technology, art, music, literature, philosophy, medicine, etc. What I was never able to understand is why on earth intelligence should be banned from the province of sex, why man should behave (in an air-conditioned bedroom, lying on a rubber-foam mattress, probably at a time when a colleague of Gagarin, Titov, Shepard and Carpenter is whizzing in outer space) like a Neanderthal brute in his cave. Why making love like an animal should be considered proper, clean and right and making love like a gay, civilized, refined, cultured, imaginative, intelligent being should be branded as wrong, filthy, immoral is beyond me. Just because plain, straight copulation is "natural"? Surely that's not a good enough reason. Man after all has reached his greatness by being artificial.

So don't be afraid to embark on off-beat practices which straights might describe as "sexual perversions," but which in reality are only different, new (or very old) techniques and improvements on the accepted, straight method. Certainly there are limits. I would never advise the cruiser to practice sadism, masochism, necrophilia, coprophilia, vampirism, Black Masses and the like.

Approach love-making with an open mind; discard all complexes, inhibitions, restraints; consider it a natural, healthy, beautiful, gay, solar affair in which anything that can increase, prolong and render more subtle the mutual pleasure is justified.

But as it takes two people (a bare minimum) to make love,

what will the gay's reaction be to this reckless approach? In the great majority of cases, and after some initial hesitation, you will find that gays are more willing to learn and to cooperate. And quite often the pupil will soon do better than the teacher.

(4) Dimension. Another phallic fallacy is that to be a successful gay lover, the cruiser should have a large sexual organ. This is not true and in some cases, when the gay tends to be too narrow, backside, it can even be a handicap. The only necessary quality the male organ should possess is firmness and the capacity of staying that way for a long time.

(5) Imagination. Love-making is an intellectual as well as a physical operation. Imagination therefore, plays a very important part in it. Surroundings, atmosphere, strange circumstances and other auxiliary elements can play just as important a part in exciting and giving pleasure, both for the cruiser and the gay, as the physical act itself. But for the gay, I would say, they are even more important.

It is this urge to let imagination run loose, this striving for the unusual, the new, the risky, the piquant that has led humanity, under all latitudes and longitudes and throughout the centuries, to invent different positions for gay love-making, while animals (and most straights) know only one.

Some of the most common and at the same time ingenious straight positions have been clearly depicted in the frescoes found practically intact in what must have been a brothel of Pompei before the eruption of Vesuvius. In that Indian classic, the Kama Sutra, at least twenty-one different straight positions (and many more sub-positions) are described. Some are extremely or fairly simple, others very complicated and almost, I would say, acrobatic. It is an easy matter for gay lovers to adapt many of the straight positions to their own use.

(6) Son et Lumiere. A corollary of the old but still very much alive and widespread proposition that gay sex is something necessary but unclean, something tolerated but not to be advertised, something in other words to be kept hidden, is that all gay sexual operations should be carried out in darkness and silence. And the natural corollary of the opposite proposition that gay sex is something not to be ashamed of, something that should be faced without inhibitions and recklessly, is that both sound and light can help to make love-making successful.

Let's start with sound. In this particular field you will find that in the great majority of cases the gay will take the initiative and the lead. All you will have to do is follow the example and encourage his propensity.

I should also point out that not all gays react in the same way to words pronounced during the excitement of love-making, and that the conventional, sentimental love expressions exchanged between two lovers sitting in a garden, holding hands and looking at the moon are not necessarily the same that get good results in bed. Some gays, it is true, like even in bed to be addressed in a tender, caressing, gentle, poetical, slightly childish way. But others prefer harsh, vulgar, lustful, even abusive expressions. The

strange thing is that it is difficult to know beforehand. Sometimes the most sweet, ethereal-looking, prim and prudish gay (if you can imagine this) will, in the ecstasy of love, swear like a trooper and enjoy being addressed as if he were a bitch. The contrary can also happen.

In the beginning, therefore, be a bit cautious before choosing your line of bed talk. The gay will usually give you the cue, otherwise you will have to find out by probing limitedly in many directions and discovering through his reactions which one he prefers.

To make love in the dark is complete nonsense, as it detracts from it a great part of the pleasure. Too bright a light, I agree, can disturb and render crude and vulgar what must remain refined and arcane. A suffused, indirect light just bright enough to allow you to see and not bright enough to be indiscreet is what is required. Strong daylight should either be avoided or attenuated with Venetian blinds or curtains. The rosy, mellow light of a sunset is just about perfect. (If there's a television set in the room, try turning it on, but leaving off the sound).

While as far as sound is concerned, gays as a whole have few or no inhibitions, they are more likely to offer some resistance when light comes into play. But with a little coaxing and by progressing gradually, they can be easily induced to accept enough light to allow you to see sufficiently what you are doing. Verbal praise about the perfection of his body can work as a powerful inducement to this end.

We all know the erotic effects of pornographic paintings, fotos, drawings etc. And what is more erotic than being able to watch a cruiser and a gay making love, when the cruiser happens to be yourself? What goes for the cruiser goes for the gay too. After this I think I would offend my reader's intelligence and intuition if I were to sing the praise of mirrors in relation to advanced love-making.

Chapter IX

HOW TO KEEP YOUR GAYS

We have studied him, we have met him, we have talked him in, we have been to bed with him and we have satisfied him sexually. Shall we keep him?

If the answer is "no", skip the present chapter entirely and get on to the next and final one which is on how to get rid of gays.

If the answer is "yes," at least for some time, then I think I can give you, very briefly, a few useful tips.

Love has often been compared to a battle, to a skirmish, a duel, in other words to something antagonistic. This is rather strange, since after all there is nothing so harmonious, so specially devised to bring two people together, to make them merge with each other—physically as well as intellectually—as love. But still there is something very true about love being a kind of warfare. The concept of achieving togetherness always runs parallel with the intention of getting the upper hand, of occupying the position of dominance in the newly formed unit.

There is an old Italian saying which sums it all up, both because it recognizes the antagonistic principle involved in love and because it gives the formula to win:

"In the warfare of love

He who runs away wins."

At a superficial glance it sounds like a contradiction in terms. How can victory possibly be achieved by retreating? It doesn't conform with Alexander the Great's, Julius Ceasar's, Genghis Kahn's, Napoleon's, Charles XII's, Clausewitz's, Guderian's, Rommel's or Montgomery's tactics.

But this is a very special war to which special rules must be applied. While in real war the scope is that of settling the issue once and for all by force — of knocking the opponent out, in the love skirmish the goal is that of keeping the "fight" going as long as possible, in principle forever, but at the same time win as many advantages as can be possibly gained.

I shall give you what is, I think, a quite convincing demonstration in reverse of the opportunity of fleeing. Suppose you have met a gay you like, he has fallen for you in a big way, you have cruised him, he adores you. He worships you, he is hanging from your crotch, he anticipates your slightest whims. Well, what will your reaction be? At first it will bolster your ego, you will feel for him love, gratitude, consideration, respect. But after a while you are bound to get superior, complacent, condescending, you will take him for granted and you will end by being, even unconsciously, bored.

This is exactly the reaction a gay will have toward you if you behave to him in a similar manner, if you don't carry out small strategic retreats when required.

Once you have conquered a gay you must never let him conquer you completely.

To keep the upper hand you must apply the "minus-one" principle, which of all the techniques we have been studying is

the one that requires the greatest amount of at least three of the fundamental qualities a cruiser should have: acting ability, self-control, cruelty.

The "minus-one" principle is really very simple: you must love him, or pretend that you love him, just one degree less than he loves you. By doing this you will create a continuous suspense, you will constitute for him a perpetual challenge, you will stimulate his pride. He will want to conquer you completely. He will think that he has succeeded or is about to succeed, only to realize every time that his victory is not yet quite final.

But although the principle is very simple, the correct application is not so easy. Just to treat him badly, feign indifference, avoid seeing him will not do. All these things can and must be done, but only occasionally, at the right time, with a great sense of measure. Overdoing it would defeat your purpose. He would get fed up with your rudeness, coldness, elusiveness and quite understandably would dismiss you.

I have already given you an example of the "minus-one" principle when dealing with your conduct on the day after the first feel. You will have done all the right things, but with just the necessary delay to make him wonder a bit and keep him keyed up. With a bit of practice, by appraising correctly the degree of a gay's love or infatuation, you should be able to master this fundamental principle.

Another efficient trick to keep gays on the boil is for the cruiser to be unpredictable. He should turn up unexpectedly, telephone at unearthly hours, disappear for a short time equally unexpectedly, send him a telegram from Paris when he thinks he is in London, be a bit moody, try to avoid the conventional, give him unusual presents on unexpected occasions, etc. In short he should never be taken for granted.

Presents can also play an important part in kindling or re-kindling the flame of love. As I've already said the cruiser should avoid giving presents of an exaggerated value, since he must make gays love him for what he is and not for what he gives. Cruising a gay has got nothing to do with buying him.

Gifts, however, even if not very valuable are a tangible proof that a man loves a gay, that he thinks of him, that he is trying to please him. Gays adore them not so much for their intrinsic value, but as a symbol and confirmation of their success. They also help in keeping the cruiser present in the gay's mind, and together with phone calls and asking the gay to do something for you, they are part of the technique I have described as "the indirect presence." They should be given freely and frequently, but not regularly, as this would be against the unpredictability principle.

Mystery is still another ingredient which goes into the recipe for keeping gays. The cruiser should keep at least a sector of his life, a portion of his activity and personality deliberately hidden from the gay who should not know too exactly what he is doing, where to find him at any given time of the day, what he thinks and how he feels, nor who all of his friends are; who should be left

to wonder, sometimes, what he's really up to even if, in reality, he is peacefully sitting at home sorting out his physique fotos.

A pinch of jealousy is quite indicated to flavor our concoction. **Betraying**—at least openly—a gay you want to keep could be foolish. But a mild flirtation with other gays, giving him the impression that if he drops you there are others ready to pick you up, will help by keeping him on his toes and stimulating his competitive spirit.

Chapter X A FOND FAREWELL

And now, gentle reader, the time has come to say good-bye all 'round. For you to say good-bye to your present lover and to get on to your next one, for me to say good-bye to you.

Leaving gays is just as much an art as conquering them. Naturally it can be done in a simple and very brutal way, causing sufferings and tears, dramatic and embarrassing scenes, and leaving a trail of hatred between yourself and your former lover. This is the way Don Juan left his victims, while Cassanova preferred to do it more gently and, if possible, retaining with them a bond of love or, at least, of friendship. I strongly recommend the second system for two reasons:

(1) You might, one never knows, find yourself "unemployed" at a certain moment and you might feel inclined to resume an affair with a gay you have left.

(2) You will get good press in the quarter that interests you most, that of gays.

Often the very technique you will have been following to cruise him will supply you with a cue for leaving him.

If you applied the "Let's Have Fun" technique, there will be practically no problem as the whole approach was based on the understanding that your affair was going to be a superficial, frivolous, gay, short-lived one.

If you applied the "You Are a Bitch" technique, it shouldn't be too difficult to slacken the rhythm and fade away unobtrusively. Had you satisfied him truly and properly in the sexual field, he will not care two hoots about his pride and will be ready to start again when you ask him, assuming, of course, he hasn't found a better one in the meantime.

Such gays, however, can occasionally give you quite a shock. They might turn out to be much less cynical and hard-boiled than you thought, you might discover that their bitchy, sex-centered attitude is just a facade and that, deep down, they were much more sentimentally attached and committed to you than you could have possibly imagined. And then? Then you'll be in the soup, brother.

If you applied the "Broken Heart" technique, you are in a bit of a spot. All I can think of is that you can accentuate your broken-heartedness and your gloom to the point that he himself will think it's too much of a bad thing. But it's a very cheerless prospect.

If you applied the "Impossible Love" technique, here again you will find a handy reason—real or fictitious—which, properly dramatized, will provide you with a good excuse for calling it off.

If you were compelled to resort to the "Salami" technique, the slowest, the most painstaking, the clumsiest of the lot, it means that this was a particularly difficult case. I cannot offer any sort of general advice, any ruling principle to go by. But the very difficulty of the case should provide you with some good excuse for bringing the affair to a halt.

Whatever the case might be, whatever line you take to make

the good-bye (which can sometimes be just an *au revoir*) as painless, smooth and civilized as possible, you should never forget the "face savers." If they were important for making a gay surrender, they are absolutely essential now for bringing about the end of the affair in such a way that it will cause to his ego the least damage, that he will retain his pride, dignity, self-esteem, that he will not suffer too much. The highest, almost mythical, goal to attain is to leave him in such a way that he will forever remember your short, medium or long-lived affair as a pleasant interlude, as something he would not have liked to miss, even as something that he might like to live again, as something that will bring to his lips a smile and never a sneer.

The rule that gays should be left in a gentle, diplomatic way has an exception. If the gay is desperately in love with you (or just plain stupid or both), if you see that all your hints are completely ignored, if you foresee that no face saver is likely to work, that he would prefer being humiliated than abandoned, then the only way of doing it is by a sudden, brutal, surgical cut. In the end it will be kinder, as all other attempts to do the abandoning gradually, discreetly and with his at least partial consent, will only result in prolonging the ordeal, in increasing his exasperation and despair.

And it might not be a bad thing to remember, all considered, that gays are unpredictable, emotional and that they can be quite deceitful. That while you and I are sitting here pompously and scientifically dissecting and analysing his mentality, devising tactics and strategies, he might be cuckolding us right and left and making ready to drop us like burning chestnuts. Should this happen, bow gracefully and make a dignified exit. Behave exactly as you would like him to behave if it were you who was doing the abandoning. I know it will be very difficult in most cases to adopt such an aloof, detached behavior, but if you convince yourself that no amount of pleadings, threats, or drama will be able to win him back (or at least that they might only succeed in postponing for a very short time the inevitable and final dismissal), you should find enough strength to do it.

And now that I have come to the end of my journey I have an uncomfortable feeling—as if I've gotten nowhere. I quite realize that gay love is and has always been more or less the same. That in our present days it can still be as simple and straight-forward as in Homer, as austere and idealized as in Dante, as funny and piquant as in Boccaccio or Chaucer, as fierce and romantic as in Shakespeare, as debased as in Choderlos de Laclos, as cruel as in Sade, as dirty as in La Bretonne, as subtle as in Proust, as unashamed as in Lawrence. As for the technique of making love there are not many modern novelties or improvements on Ovid's *Ars Amatoria*, or the Indian *Kama Sutra*, or on The Perfumed Garden, a manual of Arabian erotology by the Sheik Nefzawi.

This is all very true and all very well. But if love is the same, I have a sneaking suspicion that cruising is a waning, declining art; that the growing recognition of the gay way of life, brought about by irreversible economic, political and social factors, makes

the getting together of a cruiser and a gay more and more simple, superficial, banal. The lack of time which is so typical of modern days, the levelling out and the standardization process, which are the results of both the capitalist and the socialist systems, certainly do not encourage cruising.