

The Disruptor

To get over the drollness and dullness of the day, Walter would build a fantasy; then looking out his window he saw the military nature of their Government. Sadly he saw it was all impossible.

His house on Newbridge road, was enclosed by other houses of the same gender. There was no movement, except up and down the same road the others used. The people went to the same places, and returned, at about the same time, defeated as the day before. What became obvious however, was their insistence on No Other Way. What appeared to be a Government propaganda campaign. Walter shuddered - unwilling to bear an incomplete nightmare - a daylight horror. Even annihilation looked good, if it would speak out of the unsolved and illegal Longing. He was not a part of this world; had only lived here a few years; and thus still like a tourist.

He paid rent, and frequented the neighbourhood grocery store on Birmingham Street, greeting - in a quiet way - the always quiet proprietor, and picking up some items. Then paying for them with small change, as each item was accounted for; small coins paid it all. To see the government he resorted to the paper, also available there; but a drugstore further down lent him books and magazines, so he knew it all by what was missing. Almost-old ladies, always in some drab dress, and disagreeably proportioned, still hung out their laundry to dry across their back yards - sending (it almost seemed) signals to some stranger, or merely decorating their house posteriors with underwear banners and streamers.

Although he'd worked several times over the years, his money supply was going down, and he as yet had no job. Something strange appeared to be evident, he found, instead of finding work, of being told it was impossible. He wondered where they learned it, but felt the spite and hatred of their all-consuming intolerance. He noted their trivial intelligence schemes as they pumped him for signs of his own unsuitability; they worked for that moment....

When the World Power of Government came down on him, and with all its spies running around him, he finally took matters in his own hand. A fine wooden case held the pistol, gleaming silver and fairly shining. Then his Disruptor blazed, searing a hole through steel and wooden doors, from secure places to vaults, as he searched for the material and the plans. He needed to know who the Government was; as well as secure his own safety and well-being.

His landlady, Mrs. Buchnel put in an appearance every so often; an old lady, in her fifties she seemed quite finished, or infertile. She would comment on how fine the day was, pleased somehow to stand outside, in bare hallways and exert her right. She would guess through his words whether he would pay the rent again, how good for it he was. Affable when she left, he wondered if she too worked for a foreign power - the Government. But looking about his room for more money, he realized that all she wished for was more paper - to be taken down, someday to the Bank, or the Grocer; all of whom held the strings of her future. She had no ulterior motive....

Silver and blue, shining, the Disruptor gleamed in his hand, as he looked down on it, fondly. His mind received the quality of engineering that had gone into this ultimate tool. (at least for this place, and this century). He praised, enjoyed, the many unseen workmen who had conceived and justified - i.e. designed - this instrument. It would be vital, to require it; to Use it.... And to propagate a virgin truth of his species with it. The species' ultimate property, or spirit, could yet be developed through it - they were Clear, established; a nation of worthy people. Now many were grey (as others before them had become) and had gone, back to their life-fold; believing that it was the All they needed: the Self, or the body, or the race of many, understood by the difference and fight of the One. They were departed now from this planet, having considered it, and worried it, and then gotten on with a greater matter; but piqued and desiring to make it on his own, Walter - his earth name - had come here alone.

Many years ago he's come here, to see the green Earth; and when he had looked

down from outside of its atmosphere, desiring only to get closer; then he's found it, and lived it; and now at last, it appeared he was leaving it. Their arrogant multi-faceted systems were rooting him out. And Who was it? Who was there? When heavy machinery passed blocks away, he felt a tremble in his hand move over to his heart. He'd lose his contact; yet was that sound meant for him? Heavy military equipment. Singly, secretly, he could still baffle and outrace the best - leave the rest. But he wondered - who was he, who was his tormentor, the government's appointed agent?

He rented the shack, in the backyard, and began uniting his material. A plastic-faced window gave him a view of the empty yard with not even a tree to show its grace. He often stopped, gaining a loss, by looking into, disappearing into, the empty quiet of the wilderness between the house and the shack. There was something there. A low, almost-destroyed fence surrounded the yard. He wondered if it had always been that way, fallen down; a queer symmetry, built to tilt, perhaps oblivious to order.

One night the silence baffled him, but at its worst he found he couldn't sleep, and he went out to the shack, to organize, and eventually build his ship. The trees in the neighbour's yard, and the silent early hours, seemed condescending to his purpose. He could feel the Universe, and it was gentle with him. He wondered if the landlady - so obviously old - would run out of rent some day?

On another day his gun blasted through another door. He continued to store material, and later to use it: constructing carefully from the ground up, to keep the Earth authority from his plan. But he thought: even they couldn't guess how successful they had been. He had given up trying to see through walls. He was leaving. Components were being assembled. He was building a....

In the years he's been here he had regarded one house, down the street with a certain secret fascination. It started with its color - tan paint; which didn't appear at all to be smeared on like all the rest. Sentiment; something was proposed in its artistic economy. Sleepy one day, almost forgotten, he had noted a strange man,

with part of a family, standing around the yard. And there, between the family, all lost together, was that special quality, that knowledge which shone in their eyes, and in their mind beyond.

'They're close' he thought once; but soon forgot. The Government wasn't close at all - if the family were still allowed to live.

Still, he battled with the Earth race; getting one package after another assembled. They were close; their repres-

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sion stolidly working to break him out. And it was so tough a battle, that he forgot it, and saw instead that the loneliness which had been outside, in the vacuum of the yard, had crept into him. A silent music, or a magnetic angel directed him to the house across the street, where that man lived. But it didn't matter; he seldom noticed its address - put away entirely the notion of making an appointment there, preferring to feel its flux, as it soared out through the world and into his muscles, giving them the nobility of strength.

One day it was too much - the emptiness - and he arrived and knocked on the door. The man answered and noted with his eyes that he'd been expecting him. Walter went in, forgotten - for he noticed the 'I've'. The sentiment of one, and of another, as All. The man's wife greeted him, as he was shown a chair. Even the wife was a study. She was thin and a little pale, but transiently beautiful. Her tight cheeks, firm mouth, seemed to be alive with direction.

They talked of what they could: Hans, for that was the man's name, and Walter, where did he work, and so on. The man had no job, it turned out, and scraped and squeezed where he could.

'Lately its been getting harder and harder....'

As if something was there interfering: a Fortune, a Fate... or a Government? He pondered. Was it natural; was it simply that? And he knew it wasn't. Hans went anywhere in search of forgotten work; a bit someone else may have left undone, and still could find no place. They talked on - Walter's thoughts alive, till they knew they were helping each other.

When he left he felt he had accomplished something; had made at last that fatal and long sought for contact with the eternal Earth - what his teachers had said must occur wherever chance has

being to express, all of his own. A longing inside, which hopelessly defied physics, as it defied the state and its own ego.

The family, the three young children, spoke of him of an intelligence, of a rationality, that was universal, and swelt within their consciousness. Of how their group was, of how small was the one. Mounting debts, and a vision of hunger (which was so terribly indecent in their society) were driving them; and growing worse, yet more defined. In the weeks that followed he saw their situation go from bad to worse. Suddenly, easily one day, it had become possible for him to intervene: somewhere, some way, in the twilight he had joined them; gone under them; was not with them.

Walter had no trouble finding a certain job; he was on the production line, and when a few more weeks passed, he gave half of his pay cheque to Hans. He had worried about Hans, whether he would understand, or be suspicious, or see Walter's true, but real ulterior motive: that they had a real common enemy; that Hans was to be, an Ally. But he understood, and took the money. They were both spacemen, aware of an eternal and ever-present vacuum.

But there was such a vacuum between worlds, he told Hans; as there was between individuals here. And he explained the beauty of naked worlds, before politics reared up. A startled look appeared in Hans's eyes, as he realized he had seen it, had touched it. Like water; an empty kind of water - this was all space was; and the scales seemed to drop from his eyes, as he realized the mystical reality that had passed for truth all his days. From that moment on, there seemed a new brightness in Hans, as he wondered: could he? Could it be? That there was a way; and there was a freedom from the Government. Strangely he needed to do something new, quite new, and a new kind of vegetation - barrenness - fascinated him.

Finally, when he had no luck with the Government, when nothing changed itself to right, Hans asked - "Is it possible - for us...; for me, to settle this new land; where nothing is, but that which is?"

The new land felt to him to be so forgotten - clearly female - emptiness simply could not be evacuated of emotion, for life. The new purpose, interested even his wife, who could not guess that it was well-founded.

But this left Walter with a problem. All these people; could they now just leave? It seemed not, now that he knew they were real, but....

They would call his planet - the Red Planet - for assistance; and his ship was virtually complete. But was it right, to just leave this earth behind them?

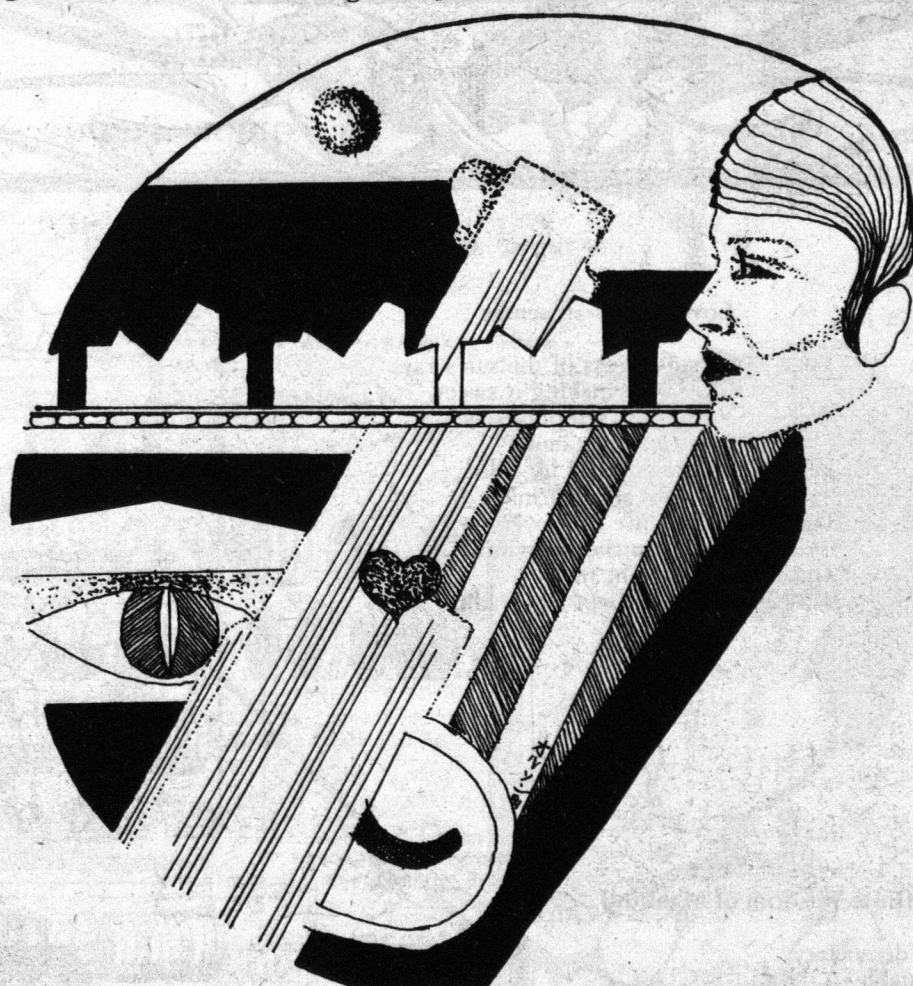
A moment he thought, a day he thought, and then he sent his message, acutely aware the Government might be able to read his message, but without fear in him. There was determination in its place.

"The children, or their children, must return," he cautioned Hans.

"The Government must become aware," he said, of moments it could create in a person's life. Hans nodded. They wouldn't simply leave, yet they could not stay where there was no hope; where there was no hope of ever living in, or finding, trust: the start of creation.

The Red Planet came closer - the starting point for their new life - and Walter wondered what made him think and even say such a horrible thing. Clearly it was the most eccentric energy undiscovered: trust. From an earth machine, with a billion heads, and not one heart. But the child beside him, with wide-open eyes, seemed somehow to know. His eyes would only open to see, at the least, his parents' paradise.

Harry Lippert



fashioned a life. He said goodbye, with a smile, and went across the street to his work.

He realized soon, that poverty - the poverty that affected Hans - was mature - a motive he himself needed for operating. He could not look away, or forget - a plight he knew was his alone. Inside, even as an alien from beyond the Earth, he was a hopelessly dependent life form; looking to be fine or sufficient somehow. He had a