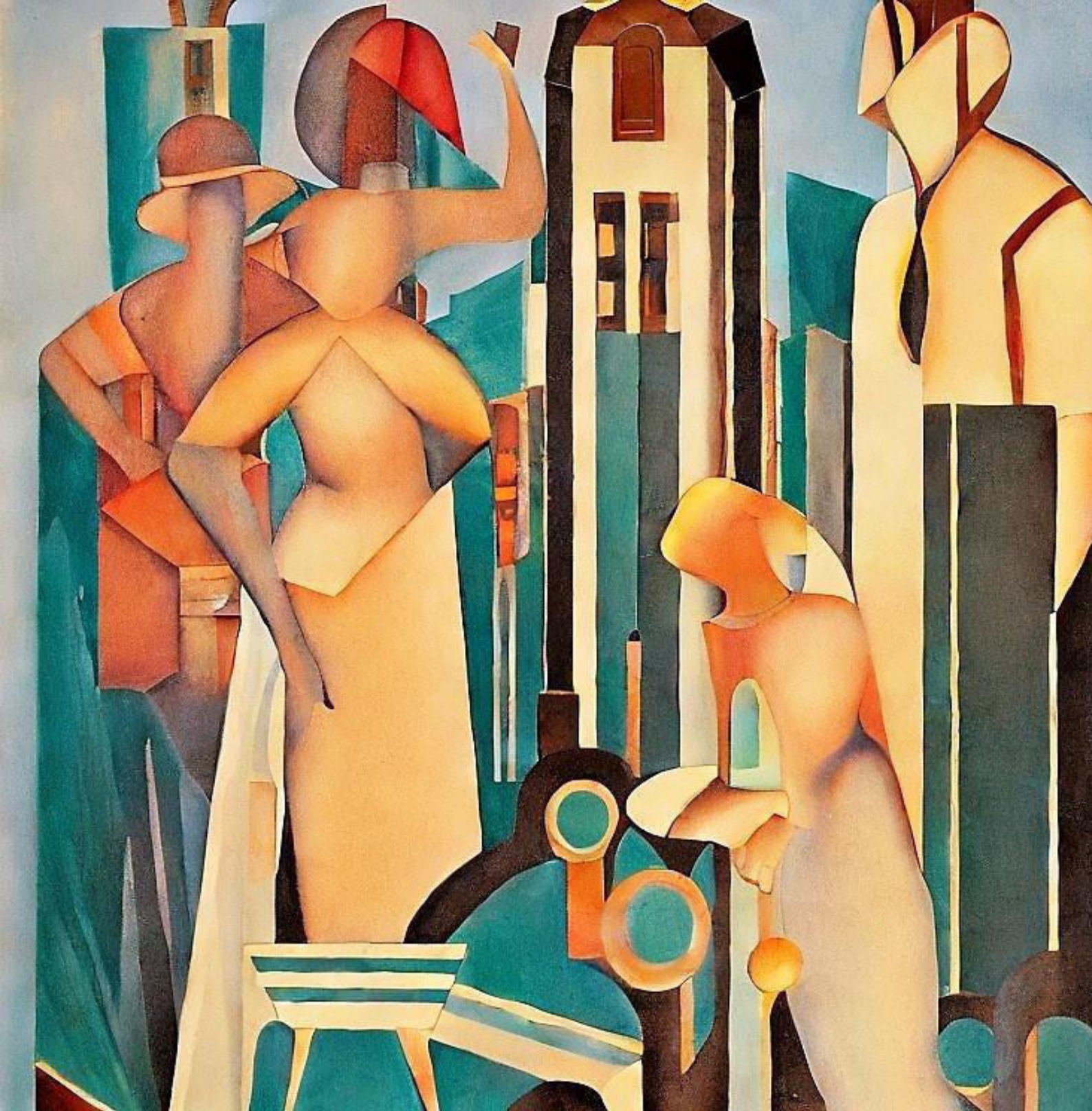




Whim of the trivial

Luis de Orueta

The author begins by saying that, before he was born, he lived with his parents (of course) and ends his story 86 years later with an evanescent farewell. In the interval: a life of no importance. So why tell it? For lack of a better answer, he reminds us of a certain phrase by Goethe in the second part of Faust:

We immer streben sich bemüht

Der können wir erlösen

Those cares that end up in nothing include dreams as disparate as turning half of Castile into a forest, to feeling affection for slide rules, trams, and paper theaters ... The subject of this biography goes from appointing presidents of public companies to failing at brain-hunting interviews. He admits that a better glimpse of the future is not enough when it is expressed in an inopportune and unsolicited manner. The triviality of the story is redeemed thanks to a slight seasoning of humor and some philosophy in the style of Petrarch:

Si vedrem chiaro poi come sovente

Per le cosa dubbiose altri s'avanza

E come spesso in arno si sospira

Whim of the trivial

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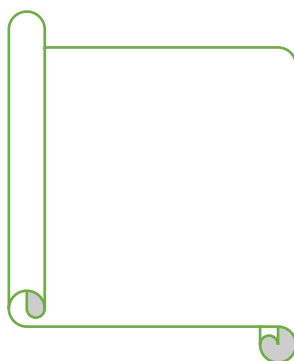
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Madrid, 2023

Whim of the trivial



(memories)

Luis de Orueta

Madrid 2023

But, on the contrary, the book is more perfect by wanting the chapter, than having it, as I shall demonstrate to your reverence in this manner - I question by the bye whether the same experiment might not be made as successfully upon other sundry chapters...

ΩΩΩΩ

(Tristram Shandy, Sterne)

Chapter I

Two girl friends

Months before I was born, I lived with my parents (of course) in Alcántara Street in Madrid. My grandfather had been vice president of Hidroeléctrica Española and was dead three years since. He had left a widow with six children, a pension, and land rents in Segovia. To collect them traveled from Madrid his son Luis, who spent the night at the Hotel Comercio and from there he managed as best he could to reach the farm and collect the money. Sometimes he went accompanied by Inés (Agnes), professor of Literature in a Madrid institute, who was kind of in love with him. But Inés committed an error when introducing him to a pretty friend of hers in the plaza mayor of Segovia, city where lived Maria Eugenia, daughter of Eugene, colonel of the Regiment. Result: Luis (my father) and María Eugenia became engaged and got married.

Separation

When I was finally born, the civil war separated Madrid from Segovia by an impassable line, as it can be read on *For whom the bells toll?* Some thought the

conflict would be short-lived. My father was obliged not to move on account of his position in the same Company, which allowed him to maintain the family and take care of us. My mother, on the other hand, thought of me and of the next creature she was expecting. It was hard having to depart, but the fact is that my mother and I moved to France without hindrance, and from there to Segovia to live with her parents. My sister was already born on the street *du Soleil*.

The coal power-plants

When the war ended, the hydroelectric Company decided to send Luis to Sama de Langreo to direct the construction of two power stations, which were sorely needed, because of the impoverishing restrictions. Surely, my father wouldn't have minded living in the coal basin, but María Eugenia secured another, less industrial, home. Without much time to think, they rented a villa at number 40 Uría Street in Gijón. I remember nothing about that place, except that I entertained myself in looking at passers-by through a hole in the rusty garden gate, a very trivial remark, the way I like them.

A wicker table

My sister still recalls that in Uría Street there was a wicker table and that one day they gave us some kind of food that I had had enough of. It seems I went under the table, and then got up, throwing glasses and plates all over.

The Cuban house

Since you have started reading this book, I must tell you what *La Cubana* was like. It was, for it exists no longer. At the time when my parents sold it, the houses of wealthy *indianos* were not protected. On the contrary, their pretentious style had ceased to impress the people of Asturias, who seemed to have fun demolishing them, one after another. *Cubana* called that one its first owner, and the name can still be read on its iron gate, reminiscing that the house was built in 1886. In the photographs of the epoch, the garden appears with tropical plants, barely visible. When we arrived, they had already grown so much that, despite the house being very tall, the trees surpassed it in its corners. Other trees grew almost horizontally and showed very strange bark, which could be unrolled as a kind of fabric, looking like sack. There were also two persimmon trees, forced to hold a simple swing. So simple that we had to remember bringing a cushion to cover the sitting area of the rope. The fact that this detail remains in my memory is because there used to be persimmon fruits fallen from the tree and it was almost impossible to play there without getting stained. And those stains, we were repeatedly told, *are very difficult to wash*. The same problem with the gigantic mulberry tree.

The South

I have many memories of the time of *La Cubana*. Some odorous, such as the scent of ducks when you took them in your arms from the pond, or the smell of the water reservoir in the loft when I entered to see how much water was left in the huge container. Other

melancholic. For example: I felt sorry for the inhabitants of Oviedo, because they had no beach. Not just grief, but capital compassion, was what I felt the first time we left Asturias heading South. Those parched lands, the villages where we stopped and the heat inside the car, they made me feel quite astonished.

Aldeallana

We were going to a hamlet called Aldeallana, whose earth the geographer Pascual Madoz does not hesitate to qualify *of the poorest quality*. For that matter, one might add that it was full of stones. Planted next to the threshing field, a curious house awaited us full of expectancy. Grandpa Seraphim had it built because the Colina farm, which was the good one, with river, little church, and farmhouse, went to his brothers Francisco and Alfonso. Judging by the look of ours, grandfather must have hired the same masons who built the railway station of Otero de Herreros, which was similar, only higher.

The gas engine

We made the trip to Aldeallana in a square car. I liked all cars, except ours. Which wasn't ours, but of the electricity firm (our father called it *the Company*). At the place where once stood the luggage rack, there hanged two rusty boilers to produce gas. Because of their weight, the front of the car looked raised and tired. It was driven by Ernesto, disagreeable with my sister and me. In some villages we had to stop because of the car and Ernesto felt important pretending to fix the engine.

The vineyard

When we arrived in Aldeallana it was night and we had to use candles. The next morning, we went out to the field through the windows. We started walking holding umbrellas and didn't stop until we reached the vineyard, because its greener color made the land more attractive. We saw trees of a new kind, called oaks, and some wolves underneath which were not wolves, but pigs, not pink, but black. We crossed the bed of a dry brook and began to climb the slope of the green plants. There hung round fruits that looked like grapes, but they could not be, because they were black. We took some home. We were told that there were grapes with that color. We tried them and decided to go back to fill our bellies, but they wouldn't let us because the black grapes weren't ours. They belonged to the farmers. Everything belonged to the farmers, except the hermitage and the house of the umbrellas, the candle holders, and the outward looking windows, inviting us to the fields.

The farmers

They lived inside the hamlet and consisted of two families who did not speak to each other, so as not to have problems. The Gila upstairs and the Otero downstairs. Surrounding the house there was a patio and around it, the bakery, a forge, chicken coops, pigsties, and sites for cows and oxen, different for each farmer. There were also horses, donkeys, dogs and two stables for many sheep with mangers and straw corners. And carts. It was an enclosed space, with two gates, one facing East and North, the other. Without was the wine press. Even

though all things were theirs, I was a little sorry for the farmer's way of life. Only Gerardo Otero lived quite well. He had servants and made cigarettes with a machine. Hilario Gila had no servants because his sons were many and he didn't need more laborers. Besides, his horse, *Whitespot*, was more charming and meek than Gerardo's.

The abarcas

Hilary's sons and Gerardo's servants had in common that instead of wearing shoes they used *abarcas*. Abarcas were made with sections of car tires, pierced with leather ribbons. They could be purchased new. Before putting them on, the laborers surrounded each foot with fabric taken from sacks, when broken from too much use.

Aunt Antonia

In fact, the person who ruled in the house below was not Gerardo Otero but his mother-in-law, Antonia de Frutos, aunty Antonia. She had skirts like those of the meninas of Velázquez and a bun topping her hair. She spent many hours by the fireplace, caring of the stew. In a corner of that part of the house she placed a fine whip, with a small rattle at the tip. The cats in the yard liked to approach the fireplace where she cooked. She was fond of them because, thanks to their protection, the mice did not invade the cereal granaries, but, when she saw that there were too many, she got up with difficulty from the stool where she watched the soup and went to the corner of the whip. She only had to shake it to make it sound and all the cats disappeared, stampeding,

tripping over each other. Afterwards, they returned little by little.

Other kind of toys

One of the laborers gave it to Gerardo Antonio. It was made with a knife, and it was an exact a miniature of an oxen yoke, with leather ropes to tie it to the horns.

The knives

Gerardo Antonio had a knife of his own. At home, I had difficulties in explaining their need. Yet, without a knife almost nothing could be done. It was not the same to eat a slice of watermelon directly to the mouth instead of cutting a bit and picking it with the knife. One could easily cut an acorn in pieces and give them to the girls. All men had theirs. Some knew how to throw them to the trunk of a holm oak where they stood nailed very straight. Finally, I got one, which I wished had been a little larger.

Donkeys

The water was stored in clay jars. Donkeys could carry four, two on each side of the *albarda*. To fill them up we had to go to the well in the dry stream, quite far away with the daughters of the farmers. They climbed on top of their donkeys and moved slowly with their legs dangling. My sister and I looked at them with envy, so much so, that sometimes they would dismount and let us have a ride.

The threshing trails

Between the hamlet and our house was the threshing field. Two of them: one for Gerardo (the best) and another for Hilario, the least flat. There, the weaker oxen circled with less effort, pulling the threshing boards. Sitting in a chair like a throne, Ambrosia, the wife of Hilario, spent hours in the sun, guiding the oxen to turn around and around. All in black and with hat made of straw. The important thing here is that she said nothing if we jumped to the trail in motion, while being careful not to bother her. It was not the same as going to the merry go round in Gijón, but almost.

Inside La Cubana

On the way back, I felt the sweetness of living in Somió. Real life took place within the walls of La Cubana. On the outside, it was covered in ivy. The bedrooms were upstairs, with doors leading to an elongated balcony, supported by iron columns. I remember my amazement when we went up to see the rooms allocated to us. One had red painted walls and ceiling because it had been the laboratory where the Cuban developed his photos of Gijón, which can be seen in museums. It was to be my sister's, repainted white like the rest. Below, a mysterious place intended for guests, where only they could enter. In the dining room there was space for a pianola. And over the fireplace in the living room, my father put some bronze letters that said PAX VOBISCUM.

Natacha

As well as my father, played the piano Natacha. In the stool meant for four-hand scores I sat next to her.

Natacha's husband was Fernando, surnamed Caballero of Rhodes. One morning we were inside the car on the Infanzón way; my father was driving, Fernando in the front seat, and I at the back. On the left shoulder of the road walked a woman. The car reduced its motion and moved on very slowly. My father and Fernando spoke hush-hush, but I came to understand that it had been a long time since they had not seen such beautiful woman. I had my nose stuck to the glass, full of curiosity and a little fear. She looked at the car, then looked at my face, and pointing her finger at me, returned their look, smiling. The two men in front made a gesture of resignation before the car recovered its normal speed.

Soft bones

At that time a doctor told my mother that my bones were only half-made and I had to keep in bed for several months. When Natacha and Fernando came to visit us, she would go up the stairs alone to see me. She would ask me what I would like as a gift, and I told her comics, but she didn't understand and brought me fairy tales by Perrault, Grimm and Andersen. One day, Natacha appeared with her daughter Taluca (from *Nataliuka*). When I saw her, I became red like a tomato. That made the others laugh, and later they always sought to be present when Taluca and Natacha went upstairs to keep me company.

Manolito

Manolito was the new chauffeur, after Ernesto and Marino. One of the daughters of Ramón, the gardener, Socorro, fell quite in love with him. Socorro lived with

us as nanny of my younger brother, Guillermo (William). In the mornings we could hear her singing the couplet:

Manolo mío, Manolo de mis amores

And in the afternoons, the Cuban song:

Manolo mío, de niña tuve un amor

But Manolito was married to Olvido and they lived far away, in Sama de Langreo.

The Yacht Club

We saw little of our parents. Going to school we used the trams. In summer, when the trams carried two or three garden coaches, Socorro accompanied us to the beach with buckets and shovels. We didn't know how to swim, the water was cold, and the waves were scary. At night I heard the waves before falling asleep, which is impossible given the distance, but I heard them. From the sand where we played with other guys, one could see the Nautical club in the distance. There, our parents had fun with friends. When they came home in the evenings my sister could hear them talking and laughing, their voices mixed with the music. We left our bedrooms and at the top of the stairs we sat and had fun inventing sadistic tortures for each of them. The torments inflicted to Barbarina Cangas were the cruelest.

To school

When I turned four (in 1940) my father judged it was time for me to begin the attendance of a school. And he took care not to choose the one of the Jesuits. Recalling the date,

my father said he felt sad to see the puzzled expression on my face.

One peseta

I was half pensioner at the school. Bread was rationed and each student had to take his loaf of bread to the dining room. It cost one peseta and I received mine before leaving home, with the credit card. On the way from the school to the bakery there stood a store selling sweets and comic magazines. I thought that, if the peseta was mine, I should be able to decide how to spend it. The teachers saw differently. When their reconventions and scolding ended, I dared to ask, if, in spite of everything, I could keep my comic.

Trams

The garages were next to the school. They were very large and dark. I saw the sparks of the welder and came closer to the works where trams were being made. 'Child: what the hell are you doing here? 'I'm watching' When finished, they put a number to it. The 45. It was like a baptism. Sometimes, I would see it come out of the fog, in the mornings, when I went to school in it. It smelled new, from its varnish and paint. One of the least attractive things of Madrid were their ugly trams compared to those of Gijón.

The potholes in the road

From Segovia, the road to Aldeallana was dusty and had a lot of holes. Along the ditches you could see piles of earth and sacks of stones waiting to be placed within the potholes, by the road caretakers. The feeling of

smoothness and softness lasted some time and then the potholes returned undaunted. At least for me, they had some charm because they helped me learn how to drive.

Peacocks

The Company finally bought a half-good car, and I say half thinking about the front half. Manolito let me drive by his side when going to Segovia. Apart from the impression of seeing the aqueduct for the first time - the stones without cement and the devil in his urn – on the way back I pondered how nice it would be to have peacocks in Aldeallana like those hiding in the moats of the Alcazar, even if they would be useless.

The Moros River

One summer, the water from the creek well ran out. My parents rented a donkey to fetch water from the river of Colina, the neighboring farm. The trip lasted half an hour going and a half an hour back. Even though our presence had contributed to diminishing the water reserves, the farmers didn't complain, and we made trips together, each with our donkeys and jars. They said, to encourage us, that they had to go to Colina anyway, to wash the laundry.

The windmill

While we were having fun, my father dusted off an idea that came to mind when he sold La Cubana. He guessed that the new owners disapproved of the air mill that drew water for the duck pond and offered to dismantle it and take it to Sama de Langreo. The idea was to dig

a well next to the house of Aldeallana and plant the mill on top to have running water and forget about the donkeys forever. The story of what happened then deserves a separate chapter. Not now, I'll write it later and call it 'separate chapter'.

Crabs

Our trips to the river Moros added a new dimension to the summers, which were starting to get a little boring. Father decided to go angling. We bathed in the dam of the mill and met the children of the owners, Javier, Margari, Josechu, and Carmelina. They taught us how to fish crabs with special nets, accordion-shaped, almost transparent. Pulling a thread, they unrolled a cube like a lamp screen. At its bottom was a tinny rope to tie a piece of meat. It was all about choosing the best sites on the riverbanks to let the reels sink and wait for the crabs to come and eat the meat. Better at dusk. I felt also sorry for those crabs.

The old Jewish quarter

Our grandparents lived in a huge house. In the time of the Catholic Kings, it had been the home of a rich Jew named Abraham Senior. You could tell it really belonged to our grandmother's family because in the best part of the building lived her sisters. It boasted large stairs with a handrail ending in a glass ball with red spots. We almost never went upstairs because grandma told us that her sisters didn't like children. The grandparent's apartment overlooked the city wall and had a view to a small pinewood and to the mountain of the Dead Woman (it looked like one, expecting a baby). During the war, one day I stuck my head between two

irons on a balcony and they had to ask the firemen to get me out of the trap.

You belong to my heart

Speaking of accidents. In a villa near La Cubana lived the Nespral brothers: Jesúsín and Héctor. Jesúsín was older than me and he sang at School. Hector was my age. My parents took me to see Héctor at a Hospital, which was in Gijón, near *Big Church* of the Jesuits. When I saw him in his bed, he had an eye with bandages that surrounded his head. He had lost it from a pellet bullet shoot. I didn't know what to say. Then, a blonde lady took Hector's hand and began singing: *Solamente una vez/ amé la vida...* The times I hear this song, I remember Hector.

The Paillard

One day a truck arrived in La Cubana with a strange piece of furniture. It was a gift from Brown Boveri to my father. Imagine a bright wooden chest. You lift the lid and below it appears a radio to the right and a strange gramophone, on the left. It smelled like a mixture of wood, steel, bakelite and fabric. My mother put it next to a lamp that stood on a slim column. We had a lot of records of classical music that I knew by heart. Much before I was able to read, I could distinguish each one and put them in the wind-up gramophone. But this was different. That night my father called me and turned off the lamp. With the lid open, the light of the furniture made it easy to put the records on. They sounded different. Smoother, no needle noise. The treble

higher. The base deeper. That night I felt close to my father, filial and grateful.

Madrid

We had to go and live in Madrid, but I couldn't fit it in my head. I spoke to Manolito asking him to keep me at his home in Sama de Langreo. He told me he would ask Olvido, his wife. They agreed. For a moment my parents felt somewhat snubbed, but they ended up giving in and letting me go to live in the chauffeur's home. I had to say goodbye to La Cubana and to my brothers, but thankfully not to Asturias. My dog Loli had been hit by a car. Once in Sama, the daughter of Manolito, Angelita, gave me a book to read in bed. It was the novel *Maria*, by Jorge Isaacs. There I lived quietly, somewhat sad, but, glad to have avoided the sight of Madrid. Or so I thought.

Not on Claudio Coello Street

Ultimately, even I had to admit that staying forever in Sama was unfeasible. They hadn't even looked for a school for me. When reality prevailed, my sister and I were transferred to Madrid. We were supposed to live in the house of the *Mallenes* aunts, the same aunts of Segovia who were known for disliking children. They said it would be for only a little time. They were right, our father had to return to collect us instantly because we were crying too much (very concentrated).

The Davenport

There were other aunts, my father's sisters, who had no choice but to welcome us into their apartment in

Maldonado 20, a less intimidating dwelling. One of them tried to calm me down by offering her Davenport desk and her fountain pen, a really touching gesture, which I accepted and then couldn't go back to step one. The other aunt gave my sister her gramophone, with records of *Scherezade* and the *Verbena of La Paloma*. We stayed there for more than two years.

Ingrid Bergman

Not even during the summer did we see our parents. My godmother Inés had three unmarried sisters in the city of Huelva, who occupied two large houses, one full and one empty. There she dropped me one summer, only male among six women, counting on those who helped in the house. They worshipped a brother with good looks that had committed the unforgivable crime of getting married. And what was worse: they claimed that his wife sometimes dressed in trousers. In a square, called *Of the Nuns*, there was a cinema without a roof or walls, with folding wooden chairs and a screen that let street walkers see the film from behind. On that screen I saw Ingrid Bergman for the first time, and I say first because I came back several times, insisting that I liked that film very much.

Sacramenia

They were trying to prevent my godmother from taking over me. Hence, the following summer I was sent to a farm of my grandmother Dolores. There lived my uncle Ramón (against the opinion of his brothers) married to another Dolores, beautiful and born in Sacramenia. The house was attached to a ruined church,

part of a convent of San Bernardo's monks. The cloister had been sold and transplanted to America. Another uncle of mine made a law to prohibit those things from happening. But uncle Ramon was not guilty of the sale, which took place before his venue. Apart from taking care of the farm and pay rent to grandmother, he sang in the mornings in the bathroom. Aunt Lola asked me if I didn't sing. One afternoon that we were gathered in the courtyard, she insisted so much that I sang *I have to climb up to the mountain pass/ even if the snow will cover me*. When I finished, those present remained silent and thoughtful.

Tin soldiers

In front of the aunts' apartment, lived a family of Basque origin. They had a lot of tin soldiers. There were Infantry and Cavalry, plus cannons, forts, flags and tents. In the playroom they were placed in order of battle. With crystal balls the players tried to knock down as many enemies as possible. Soldiers and horses fell until the field was covered with corpses.

The Ghost

The neighbors next door invited us to spend few days at the monastery close to the limits of Aldeallana. There, friendly grandmother Maria gathered children and grandchildren who respected her little because she was almost deaf. One night I was woken up to see the ghost. There was a full moon and from the windows of the monastery one could see a corner of the hill with its many bushes. It was summer, the night was quiet with no other noise than our whispers. The expectation was great. But no trace of the ghost. Hold on! They told

me when I was about to go back to bed. Hold on! And suddenly, it was there. Among the bushes a snow-white figure moved and hid. It disappeared and reappeared. We were very worried when Aunt Marita emerged shaking her hands behind our backs and commanded us back to the dormitories. The next day we learned that the ghost was Fernando, one of the cousins. And that he was punished. They discovered him because his bed sheet was missing, as he kept it hidden somewhere.

Kary

Finally, my father found a flat in Madrid. I have believed the excuse of looking for one all my life, until recently. Commenting on the strangeness of the case, my sister explained. During one of her many trips to Paris, she visited the home of Kary, the seamstress, who remained her friend from childhood. No one could know better what happened than Kary, an impartial observer of the family.



Cubana was the name chosen by first owner



Made the mistake of intruding
her friend Maria Eugenia to Luis



The trees were overgrown



Chrysler Imperial



A wicker table



Alejandro Suarez, Francisco Franco,
Juan Antonio Suanzes and Luis de Orueta

importan 91 millones de pesetas.

Resuelto así el problema eléctrico para todas las minas de Langreo, se ayudará a las demás centrales y hasta podrá cederse algo a la Hidroeléctrica del Cantábrico y a Viesgo. Mientras Franco recorre las tres nuevas centrales térmicas y estrecha la mano del ingeniero director, don Luis Orueta, el ministro de Industria y Comercio, señor Suanzes, sonríe con razón muy satisfecho.

A la hora en que telefonase el Jefe del Estado visita la fábrica de la Sociedad Ibérica de Nitrógenos, otra victoria

Innauguration of the
Lada power plants



Barbarina



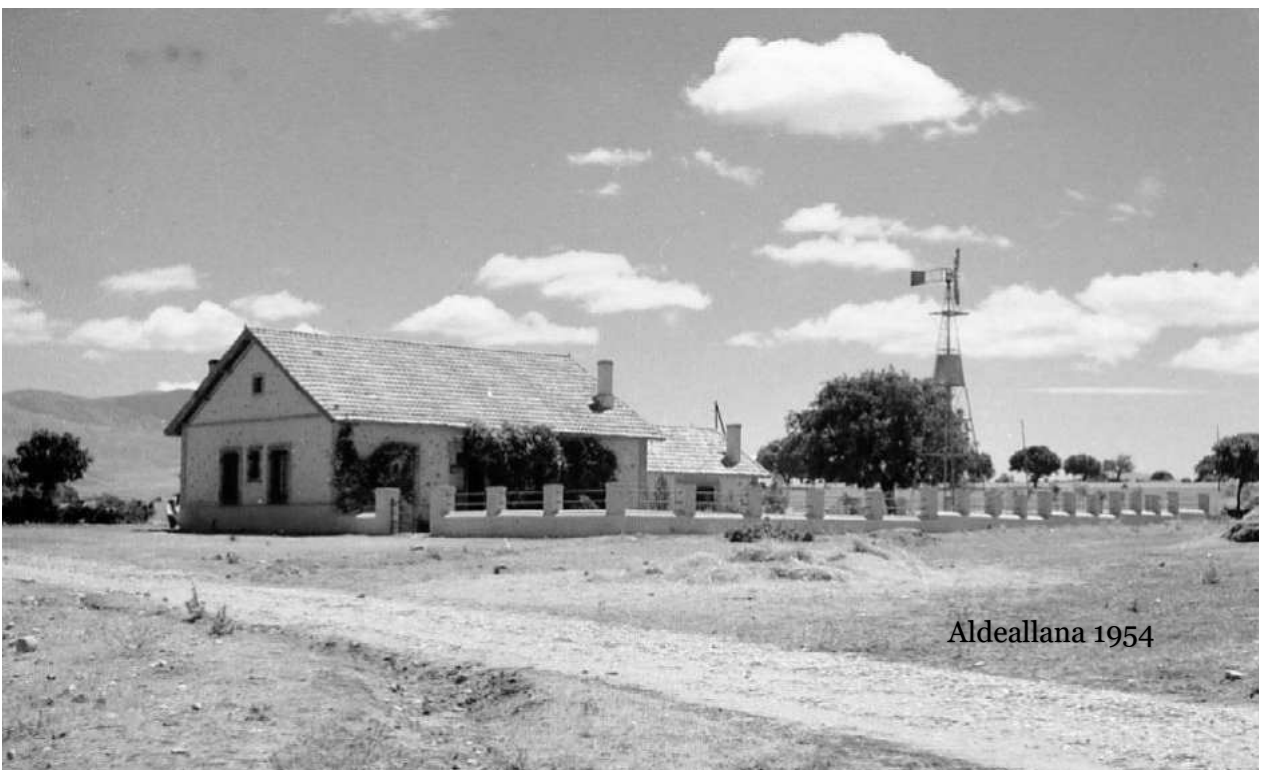
Natacha



The house of Aldeallana, as my grandfader built it



Abraham Senior's courtyard



Aldeallana 1954

The old gate of La Cubana



Chapter II

The reapers

My parents had reappeared. In Aldeallana preparations were made to celebrate the arrival of electricity. Guests would come from the adjoining farms, who were grateful to my father for their easy interconnections. Coming from Bilbao we expected Pedro Montero and his wife Luz (light) Landaluce. Not only because of her timely name, but because Peter was a good friend of my father. And very Basque. He looked like Pio Baroja, bald and wearing a beret. The couple used to drive down to Aldeallana in a Fiat Balilla, also square, upholstered in blue velvet. They were slow to arrive, and it was decided to come forward and seek them just in case. The two cars met halfway and returned together. Montero explained that they had had a wheel puncture, in front of a field where there were reapers doing their hard task under a burning sun. They watched Montero cursing and kicking the wheel and felt amused at his misfortune. Noticing their attitude, he turned to the reapers, saying, "Why instead of looking, don't you try to come and help?" And one of the reapers shouted, "Never mind the nuisance. It can be fixed...reaping!"

And what happened next?

They helped him. Pedro Montero had a bad temper and said bad things about Spaniards, but he wouldn't miss his summers in Castile. And every time someone complained about any mishap, he would say: "That can be fixed... reaping".

On your knees

Finally, the Hurtados and I were going to the same school. Before then, my godmother had put me in another that stood in front of her house of Pardiñas street. The bad thing about that school was that they punished you for what others did. Instead of bothering to find out the guilty ones, they put us all on our knees with our arms stretched and palms up, holding some books. With the change of school, punishments improved a lot. In the El Pilar school, they were cleverer at identifying suspects. And, above all, penalties were more bearable. The commonest: walking around the patio. So many times. Twenty, thirty, forty, according to the seriousness of the transgressions. The worst punishment was having to go to school on Thursday afternoons, instead of going to the movies like other human beings.

Thursday afternoon

Don Victorino phoned home to say that I was punished to attend school next Thursday afternoon. He explained to my parents that it was a collective punishment, absolutely needed, in payment for what had happened. It had snowed. Some boys when leaving school and in the street, had thrown snowballs flying

in the air in search of unwary faces. Not unusual and very forgivable. But someone, not yet identified, had taken the initiative of leading a group of throwers to the gates of the Ursuline convent (the one in front) and made it impossible for the girls to come out. Then, mother superior went inside and phoned Don Victorino.

An Ursuline

I regretted not having been present on such a great occasion. I was told in detail that Thursday afternoon. My way home from school was the least common among classmates. Most were going down street. Me, up. For that reason, I did not know the existence of some notable Ursulines. The name of the most famous was Lourdes and, though she did not know it, she had a spiritual husband in our class: Eugenio Sánchez Guzmán. In those days, I was also unaware of the existence of another Ursuline, not less remarkable, so that the life of him, who this is writing, went on normal and carefree.

The Pleiad

Not so carefree, because worrisome was not being part of The Pleiad. A secret Society formed by the tallest in the class. They met somewhere outside the school and their main aspiration was to have a better time than the rest of us. They weren't aggressive, but they were despondent and haughty. One of them, apparently more affordable, José Ignacio de Gabriel, seeing that I tried approaching the sect, dissuaded me with the nickname

Whiting. I was horrified and renounced for ever to any gregarious reveries.

Our desks

They were our second movable possession, after one's bed. They had the common incentive to all hiding places. And the risk of being punished to go round many times because of talking. The number of laps increased if the speech had been accompanied by smiles or laughter, due to the susceptibility of our teachers. Risk, therefore, but also opportunity. It came during written exercises. Unlike oral questioning, in which the interrogated person was alone in the face of danger, in written exams there was room (in the sense of it could happen) for the contribution of others. As in all forms of coexistence, one part uses to be more able than the other at contributing to the common good. I had for a short time an omniscient and angelic companion, named Chávarri. His closeness was noticeable in improving my math qualifications. Of this generous Chávarri I can say that, perhaps impressed by the prohibition of speaking in class, he continued that strange practice by joining a Carthusian monastery.

Forgeries

Don Victorino read the grades every week, starting with the worst. Each alluded to had to stand as we heard thoughtful comments about his performance during the last seven days. In the end he received a sheet of paper... They had different colors. The best ones were red, the worst green, the majority: blue. To parents of each student what mattered most was a ratio in the upper margin

where the numerator indicated how many students had had better grades than their creature. Some parents received that weekly message without decorum. A foreseeable conduct which led to a lucrative forgery of required parental signatures. The laboratory was at Tomás Ramirez's house. He used two flasks that erased unwanted figures, dates and/or signatures. Then he imitated the acceptable ones, while sticking out the tip of his tongue.

A free magazine

Its title was *I am a Pillarist* and was published by the alumni of the last course, without any support from the school. Such display of liberality on the part of *The Levites* (as the teachers were known for their Jewish attire, hat included) was greatly acknowledged and celebrated. The ownership of the paper changed every year, by appointment from the magazine director. In the course 1951/1952 the post was held by Carlos Mingarro, who few days before leaving for the University approached me and gave me the name of a bank account wishing me good luck in my new assignment. I didn't know him. He didn't know me. No explanations. He must have been a bit of a racist because his last words were that I had *a Berber profile*.

Seaford

My father didn't want me to inherit the disadvantage of not speaking English and arranged for me a summer stay in a private house in Seaford, Sussex. London was then a city blackened by smoke from its chimneys. The carriages of Victoria Station seemed coaches attached to one another without an aisle. I had read Cecil Roberts's

novel and felt privileged to be just there. Getting to Seaford required a transfer in Lewes. The house where we took lessons was named *Cliff View* and reminded me of the movie *The White Cliffs of Dover*. There lived the Lawson family who provided for hired teachers. One of them, more sensitive than others, took pity on us for the hunger that we were going through and moved me to another house.

A scare

Among the students in the new home, it caught my attention a young Belgian girl named Florence, three or four years older than me. My admiration was shared by another Spanish student, Ildefonso Astarloa. A day of the week we had the afternoon free and the three of us wanted to go to London. On the way back we missed the last train to Seaford and decided to take the one that only reached Lewes. We chose an empty apartment. After two or three stations we tried to turn off the light. We couldn't find the on-off button, and so I stood up on the seat and unscrewed the bulb. The light went out, sure enough, but the train also stopped running. We poked our heads out of the window and could see the cars in front illuminated up to our compartment. The remaining cars were in the dark. And we also saw an inspector who approached our window walking through the countryside.

Another scare

In Lewes, they finally left us alone, and we continued our trip on foot. The small English roads can be exasperating in their horror of the straight line. At a level

crossing, we thought that, since that night there were no more trains from Lewes to Seaford, we could continue the journey walking along the rails. It was going to take time, but summer was there in full moon, we were young, and Florence felt uplifted by the feelings she inspired in the two Spaniards. A few kilometers before arriving, a dead-end barbed wire could be seen on each side of the station. There, a night guardian invited us to accompany him to the Police, where we were informed that British trains receive the electric current through the rails.

Autumn

The starting point of the last course began with a call from the priest Farrás, director of the school and substitute of Don Victorino, who continued as deputy director, accepting God's will in a sporty manner. Farrás, unlike Don Victorino, was not enthusiastic about the merits of tolerating an independent magazine. *Soy Pilarista* had been founded in 1944, eight years earlier. Farrás suggested a merger with the official paper of the school, no need to bother about money, and himself as benevolent director. Until then he had seen me as a docile person, tolerant and abhorrent of conflicts. My refusal must have surprised him. Then he changed tack and seemed happy by merely suggesting the name of my number two, still vacant.

Javier Muguerza

So, I had to accept Muguerza, president of the Congregation of Holy Mary, a selection of alumni more pious than the rest of us. During religious solemnities

he proudly carried a sky-blue band across his chest. He lived in Zurbano street, with his mother, a war widow and hence very right-wing. Only child, he studied hard in a rather dark room, lit by a flex lamp, and surrounded with all kinds of books. He understood literature, painting, poetry, and politics. He mastered physics, mathematics, and astronomy. Only, he was insensitive to music. Not inclined to falling in love. You could see that he was an intellectual. What neither the priest Farrás, nor his mother suspected was that he was a Marxist intellectual.

Alighieri dixit :

Aparuit jam beatiudine vostram. She did not walk alone, but with two friends, as Henry Holiday, the English Pre-Raphaelite, paints her by the river Arno. *Per una strada de Firenze, in mezo a due gentili donne* (Matilde and Inés, this time) . *E nella secretissima camera dello cuore cominzió a tremare fortemente, e tremando disse queste parole*

Ecce deus fortior me, qui veniens dominabitur mihi

And he added:

Heu, Miser! Quia frequentier impeditus ero deinceps

D'allora inanzi (from then onwards) *Amore mi comandava molte volte che io cercasse per vedere questa angiola giovanissima; onde io nella mia puerizia molte volte l'andai cercando., e vedeala di si nobili e laudabili portamenti che certo di lei si potea dire quella parola del poeta Omero. “Ella non pareva figliola d'uomo mortale, ma di deo”.* Alighieri dixit.

A Photography

Insisting many times that I should follow her to see ... So much so, that once I entered the portal of her house and I told the doorman that I was a friend of hers and couldn't remember the floor she lived in. It was the fourth. I got on the elevator and knocked on the door. A woman, dressed in something resembling a nurse's uniform, opened. I said I was coming to visit the *señorita* who was a friend of mine. Instead of her it was her mother who appeared. She told me that her daughter preferred not to see me. When I was about to leave, my expression filled her with curiosity. She made a sign with her hand and said: "Wait". Then she went to pick something and returned with a very small envelope. She said: "Take this instead" (page 40f).

The voice due to you

These verses from Pedro Salinas (a quote from Garcilaso) were my companions in melancholy evenings. Muguerza argued that Guillén was a better poet. Not Nicholas, but George. And that one of the best books of contemporary Spanish poetry was his *Cántico*.

The orgies

The hyperbole came from Antonio Requena, at seeing the glasses of wine and the sausages that my mother prepared for us at the break of the concerts. They took place in our flat, the music emerging from the Pallard, lately modified to replace 78 r.p.m. records by longer playing 33 LP's. Always on Thursdays. I had distributed each new program beforehand at the school, with notes marking the

soloists, orchestras, and conductors. One of the attendants was Andrés. Andrés Ruiz Tarazona, a distinguished member of the authentic Pleaid, who thus became the link with my copied version. The much-sought complicity would last forever.

The *guateques*

One of the advantages of having a sister of almost my age was that her friends were almost the same age as mine. Conversely, the advantage for her was that my friends were a little older than she. The realization of these blessings led to a series of *guateques*, which is a voice of Venezuelan origin and Francoist chronology. My sister and I kept account of this modality of matchmaking. The repetition of meetings made us notice how capricious the god Eros is, who seems to have fun acting against all that is predictable, reasonable, and delightful. On the contrary, he rejoices in combining opposites, loves putting obstacles to easy matches and fosters disloyalty.

Fridays of the National Orchestra

Subscriptions to the concerts of the National Orchestra in the Palace of Music were then, along with the Saturdays and Sundays at the Monumental Cinema, the only options to hear live classical music, available in the capital of Spain. My father took me to the seconds, and I added school friends, as a continuation of the orgiastic musical pedagogy. The Fridays of the National, were reserved for my mother, who had a good ear, and *La Bohème* as her favorite opera. However, there were times when she didn't think

much of the program. On those occasions, my father handed me both tickets and normally I asked Andrés to join me in the seats of the Palacio. One of the rejected concerts offered a Mozart symphony in the first part and Mahler's fourth symphony to complete the session. I remember that before leaving home my father told me: *You hear Mozart's symphony and that's it. You need not stay at Mahler's.*

Mahler's Fourth

The idea of wasting half a concert was something Andrés didn't quite follow. He told me that, if I didn't mind, he'd rather stay. I tried to dissuade him with arguments taken from the prevailing consensus against post Wagnerian music, which, in Mahler's case, added the aggravating factor of sounding rather *kitsch*. Nevertheless, we stayed. At the end my comment was "Did you notice those violins in the 2nd movement, half a tone out of tune, on purpose? And what do you make of ending up a symphony with a children's song?" But Andrés never finds anything wrong. He always looks at the positive side of things.

The Lady of the Night

There came a time when my brothers and I said to father that spending all summers in Aldeallana was a little boring. After that remark, the summer of 1954 we left Madrid somewhat late in the Dodge of the Company, heading towards an incipient Benidorm holiday destination; the three in the back very happy, those in front more circumspect. We arrived at night. Our lack of habit was such that we had no hotel reservations.

We chose one that looked good. Was full. We went to another one that wasn't bad. Also: full. We had to descend to worrisome levels. Nothing. Were hungry. My mother said 'Luis, we have to look for a restaurant' But Luis was thinking of Aldeallana and came up with a small revenge. So, he said: 'Better go to Malaga' 'Now?' 'Yes, now' 'Luis, for God's sake!' We woke up to the sight of Malaga, which could be seen intermittently in the infinite curves while descending from the mountains. It was dawn. We stopped at the Caleta, in front of a hotel with a sign *Las Vegas*. Opened the doors of the car to stretch our legs. And the strong aroma of the *Lady of the Night* flowers filled our nostrils.

A hotel which exists no longer

In the Las Vegas hotel there was a swimming pool, something new in the family imaginary, but the next day we had to leave because my father complained that they took hours to serve breakfast. Very close to that hotel lived an unknown aunt Concha, who recommended that we move to the Pinar hotel. Would it have a pool? Aunt Concha only knew that in that hotel Rainier of Monaco and Grace Kelly had spent their wedding night. Yes, it had a pool, although one had to cross the main road to get there. Nearby was a village named Torremolinos, with a square adjacent to a meadow where at night you could dance to the rhythm of the of the Italian orchestra of Renato Carosone. The square was at the top of a street with fishermen's houses. One of them was for sale and my father had us come inside to have a look. From its terrace, we saw, far below, an almost deserted beach, which we found ridiculous compared to the one in Gijón.

Electricity

In the new hotel there was a totally unnecessary tennis court. Concerning certain topics, my family seemed anchored in the nineteenth century. For the Orueta tribe, Electricity, understood as a mythical entity, origin of light and movement, made Politics and Sport secondary matters. As for Religion, the closest thing to a paternal belief would be contained in *L'Évolution Créatrice* or in the pages of Teilhard de Chardin.

Voices intemperate

My father distinguished himself from his friends in that he was a supporter of paying taxes. I only remember hearing voices intemperate on one occasion when he was arguing with Fernando Caballero de Rodas. When I asked my mother what the reason was for those angry words, she answered: “they are discussing about Taxes”.

The Fascist Poet

Regarding fascism, my mother had been the muse of Dionisio Ridruejo in his *First Book of Love*, which I still preserve with his fiery dedication. The other Francoist person close to the family before I was born, was a friend of my godmother and minister of Education: Jesús García Mina, a godfather whom I never saw after my baptism.

More friends of the Pleiad

In that year of 1954, Electricity prompted my father to contact Alejandro Serrano's father. Alejandro was a

prominent member of The Pleiad. Domingo, like my father and grandfather, owed everything to goddess Electricity, which was like saying they owned nothing to anyone, an independence which they transmitted to their children. Fortunately, at school the teachers didn't interfere beyond a light Catholicism under the luminous advice: *Truth will make you free.*

Socialism

In 1955 truth appeared a synonym of Socialism. Muguerza was a social communist, like another classmate: Sánchez Dragó. At the University, my friends of the Pleiad and myself chose to follow the wake of political leaders like Carlos Bustelo and the Solana brothers. That trail led one night to the dungeon in the cellars of Puerta del Sol, from which Carlos's mother managed to extricate both of us.

National Radio

One morning, my father and I were on our way to Aldeallana listening to the car radio set on the classical music program of Radio Nacional. Like other times, we amused ourselves guessing the composer and, if possible, the work and the player or players. This time the music was especially difficult for my father. As for me, I knew I had heard it before, but it could not possibly be Mahler's *because I was liking it.*

Esau ignored

Our meals at home did not lack an air of solemnity, a bit in the style of the founding fathers. But with a noticeable lack of *esprit gourmet*. 'You have to eat

everything' was the eleventh commandment which retains validity. However, one day, facing a dish of cod fish, I dared to ask: 'Why'. The answer, like others concerning good education, had to do with the right behavior, when invited to another home. I tried to point out that the code could be less right if one was not invited anywhere and preferred not to eat. Wrong. It would be a lack of courtesy to the housewife. My mother felt curious to know what the exceptions would be. Before we dared to answer, my father suggested that we chose only one, each. I mentioned cod. My sister cauliflower (sic). And Guillermo: lentils.

El Escorial

One way to avoid Aldeallana in summer was to be invited by our friends. For some reason my mother had stopped talking to godmother Agnes, and the summers in Huelva were over. Stays at the Maldonado's monastery were not repeated because we no longer lived in Maldonado with our aunts, but in Lagasca 100 (today 102) with the García Palencia as neighbors. They also studied in El Pilar school, and we walked together along the street of Juan Bravo towards Castelló. On a corner there was an empty lot where we played football. This is uninteresting, but the point is that during the summer I managed to get invited to their house in El Escorial. And, to avoid the generic talk, I'll mention the BMW 326 convertible, black and white, a mythical German car inside which my new friends father took me on the road to Corunna.

Cooing underwater

And, without leaving El Escorial and summers shared with friends, it is necessary to mention the house of Manuel Domínguez, my desk partner at school. Recalling those happy times, let me tell you that there are two distinct Escorial, the one above and the one below. The one on top contained my friend's house. The lower one: a large swimming pool. And, between the two, a rather long slope. Dominguez and I went down to the pool almost daily. Instead of splashing with other people, we disappeared under the water, and we stayed in there like sharks, holding our breath. It wasn't like looking at the pictures and drawings of *La vie Parisienne*, but in El Escorial little more could be asked for.

Feryn

On Serrano Street there was at that time a record store with the name Feryn. As records were a bit expensive, the owners built comfortable cabins for clients to listen so long as they wished to their selections. Every month my father gave me the 300 pesetas required to buy one, trusting my preferences. At one of the counters offering new entries, I noticed the fourth symphony of Mahler, conducted by Edward von Beinum. Interesting. Dared I? 'Truth will make you free'. When Andrés saw the record in the bag, he couldn't understand.

Carol

In the summer of 1955 I returned to England, to continue my learning of English, at 35 Connaught Road, Seaford, Sussex. The house belonged to Noal, a family

of diminished economics, due to the indolence of Rachel husband, an alcoholic car racing sportsman. He had to sleep confined in the garden's hut. Most students were French or Belgian. We went to Mass on Sundays. Back, in the choir of the church, hymns were heard, a very British custom, also among Catholics. At the end of the Service, I was curious to watch the faces of the singers. One was Carol's.

Franco

Curiosity about Franco's Spain was undoubtedly what prompted Rachel Noal to propose it as a topic of conversation during one English lesson. I said that the Franco theme was a bit like bad weather in England, a condition against which it was often necessary to take refuge. Later, I added with malice that, thanks to bad weather, England was green. I also said that at the University my friends were all socialists. 'And you?' 'Me too, but a little less'.

Bulls

Mrs. Noal in another conversation exercise asked me about bullfighting, not without advancing how sorry she was for the bulls. I told her that she should be even more sorry about the bullfighters. 'Why?' she did ask. 'Because they are political prisoners. Among the public there are police officers pointing at them with guns, forcing them to get closer to the bull. If they do, the get their sentences reduced' Rachel looked at me in the eye and frowned with half a smile. I did the same. And that was the end of it.

Tuberculosis

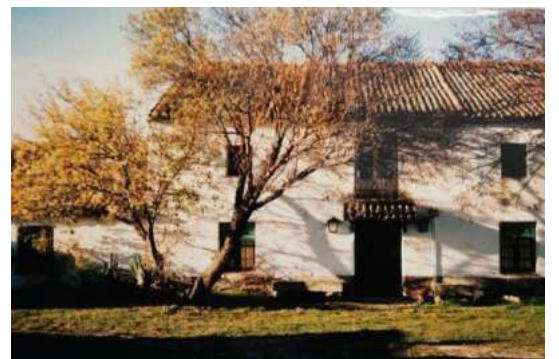
Back in Madrid, I knew that Alejandro had made it possible for me to serve the mandatory military service at the Airfield of Burgos, a copy of the real Air Forces Academy, prepared for students of the Faculties of Law and Pharmacy. A medical examination had to be passed. The result of mine was awful, diagnosing tuberculosis. My father took it easy, but my mother worried. She went to a famous specialist, named Peña, who repeated the tests and recommended not to put me in a Sanatorium, but to install a sofa bed in the dining room and stay at home with minimum contact. He suggested a diet consisting of canned sardines, and York ham & Burgos cheese sandwiches.



Gate of the house of Abraham Senior



The ursuline



Gate and manor in the hamlet of Aldeallana



My sister Piti

GUATEQUE

On top

Adolfo Huarte Mendicoa
 Antonio Requena
 La ursulina
 Andrés Ruiz Tarazona
 Milagros Valdés Leal
 Rafael Fonseca
 Carmen Renard
 Matilde Ruiz Apolinario
 Pilar Garre
 Manuel Colás O'Shea
 Alicia Delgado
 Margarita Morris

In the middle

Jaime Garre
 Paloma Giménez Altolaguirre
 María Eugenia Orueta

Seated

Tomás Zumalacárregui
 Fernando Crespo
 Luis Orueta
 Enrique Silvela





Seated: Alejandro Serramo, Pili Ramirez, Andrés R. Tarazona, Traude y Rubén Caba

Below: Carol Martin



The Paillard

Chapter III

Tomás Zamora

In addition to being Course Delegate at the University, Tomás was a very special companion. His ability to absorb sensations was filled up with those that came from the classrooms, secretariat, corridors, bar, professors, and janitors of the Faculty of Law. He lived with his father in a bright and cozy apartment on Calle del León. Among his father's belongings was not the least appreciated a Renault 4/4 that Tomás never used, not out of respect for property but because of not knowing how to drive. This shortcoming was more than compensated with many skills. He excelled at imitating Don Leonardo, Professor of Procedural Law.

Professors

Like other illustrious Leonardos, Prieto Castro did not pass easily unnoticed. His appearance resembled the image and manners of Vittorio de Sicca, reinforced by a slow voice and syllabic accentuations of musical nature. Tomás ended up adopting Leonardo's diction as his own. A professor with a similar surname, Castro y Bravo, had as his main mission in life to discourage one half of his alumni from continuing their studies.

Such a demanding task required Germanic persistence and equanimity, which he had. A similar task was undertaken by the professor José Castañeda in the second course of the Faculty of Economics. I failed both subjects in the respective months of June, thus ruining a couple of summers. But I have to say that seventy years later (I am 86) both subjects are the only teachings that I remember well. Of Iglesias, professor of Roman Law, I retain his explanation of the clause *inventory benefit*, which a girlfriend of his complained he was applying to their relationship. From Castañeda, the notion of the importance of the last penny in fixing the price of a product, although some experts recommend a preference for the one but the last. Accounting professor Fernández Pirla, hid an inferiority complex due to the too commercial nature of the matter. To disguise it, he often resorted to abstract and metaphysical glossary. Only many years later I came to understand that *Assets* being good and *Liabilities* being bad, yet an apparent blessing like ‘Own Resources’ had to be treated as a liability.

Students

The first groups at the University were formed with old friends from the same school. For Tomás Zamora, the University would have had almost the same interest without students. But, since we existed, his attention turned to influential surnames: Manuel Arburúa and Fernando Finat. The possibility of sharing experiences with them arose when he found out that both alumni were due to perform their mandatory military service in the Air Forces. Tomás managed to join the same

recruitment list and immediately set himself to find out who else was going to the chosen militia.

Carol in Viñuelas

My convalescence was pleasantly surprised by a letter from Carol saying she was coming to Madrid. She had responded to an ad from a Spanish family requesting the presence of a babysitter for two small children. In my father's family there were precedents of weddings with governesses. So, there was curiosity to know what Carol would look like. The first time that I saw her in Spain was at the door of a villa with garden on the corner of Serrano Street. It was her first afternoon free. Next week she waited for me outside the castle of Viñuelas.

Chum talk

Carol and I talked a lot. Maybe words replaced facts, with disadvantage for life in general. We caught ourselves laughing at a phrase or an expression. Now, remembering some of them, it is as if she were in front of me. 'Do you understambo?' 'Whose hand is this?' 'Our eyes make a cross' 'Let's trot home'.

Heading to Burgos

I didn't honor sufficiently Carol's presence. Several elements colluded against. On the one hand, she was secluded in the house of the Dukes of the Infantado. On top of that, her mother found out about my tuberculosis, and was worried about our meetings. And, when, finally, she knew that I had been cured, the military service interfered precisely during the holiday

season. My mood in the 4/4 of Tomás Zamora's father, heading to Burgos, was a mixture of melancholic longing for our separation with relief for having overcome the illness. Inside the car, Tomás was impatient because his father was determined not to exceed 50 km / hour and we were being overtaken by all sorts of cars and trucks. I told him that the later there, the better.

Villafría

At the entrance of the airfield gate there was an ornamental stone proudly showing a condor head embedded. In the interior, a three-store construction could be seen, in U-shape, which left the central gap as a space for the Arms Square. The left side of the U was that of the sergeants; the right one was for the *cursed*, (new recruits) and the middle one for officers. Tomás and I were among the cursed, no less reprobate than His Highness Infant Alfonso de Bourbon, who had just arrived in a *Simca Aronde*, accompanied by his mother, Emmanuelle Dampierre. The atmosphere was festive. The officers seemed determined to make us feel that life in a military academy could be more exciting and funnier than our petty law imparting aspirations.

The swimming pool

Some parents did not fail to observe a large pool with three trampolines, the middle one quite high. I heard one of them comment to his preoccupied offspring: 'Aren't you lucky'. But the innocent pool didn't take long to resemble gallows. The days of marching, after forty kilometers on foot, we rested some minutes near the

base. Then, at a brisk pace, the column entered a path that led inexorably to the trampoline of the pool. Just like some French nobles lost their composure at the view of the guillotine, so, some aspiring gentlemen, who could not swim or who had vertigo, resisted climbing up the steps. It was up to the one behind to play executioner and, once up, if the prisoner did not jump, give him the push of grace. As they fell, four swimmers threw themselves from every corner to take them out and place them on the ground to dry up. The nights I had to act as *imaginaria* (watching the bedroom until dawn) I could hear some cries and unintelligible muttering, from visions of the swimming pool the following Thursday. On Wednesday, the infirmaries were filled up with gentlemen showing wounds and requesting dispensation from attending the swimming pool.

Songs

At sunset of each day, it was necessary to form in the Place for the parade to the airfield for the ceremony of lowering the flag. On the way there, we celebrated the end of the day with songs. In one of them *A bum girl took out her scarf when the train made pi-traca-traaa*. Her name: *Margarita Rodriguez Garces*. She was told to write often, taking care to put the address right, *pon, pon, pon*. Before we arrived at the mast, there was time enough to sing *La Madelon*, beautiful and complacent, who treated everyone equally, *from soldier to generaaaal*.

The Espolón in Burgos

Our bad luck, Carol's and mine, decided that, not even

on Sundays, could we see each other. Soldiers were told not to travel beyond a circle of five kilometers or else become fugitives, which is a fearsome title among the military. In return, most bars in Burgos were willing to receive our presence. For five to six hours the city became a Hispanic Besançon. We wore Sunday uniforms, with gloves, caps, black shoes, and red laces. Gone were the bots, the daily uniforms, and flexible caps. The main promenade of Burgos, called El Espolón, became dyed blue. We were not permitted to hold packages. We couldn't take anyone by the arm, not even members of the family. Neither could we remain standing in front of a bar counter; it had to be sitting at tables. We had to salute every time we crossed paths with someone wearing more gallons. The cursed to the sergeants. Sergeants to lieutenants. Lieutenants to captains. And the captains to the colonel. Hundreds, thousands, of salutes in a very limited space.

Ground service

The second summer was different from the first in that we were sergeants and slept in the Flight wing of the building. The day passed with hours of class inside two-wing parallel planes, looking rather vintage but perfect for lessons of acrobatic flight. Every night, after dinner, when we were about to get inside our bunks, some above and some below, the door opened. 'Gentlemen! Stand up!' And we stood up, motionless by the corner of each bunk, listening: 'On this day, August the...,day, 1956... the following gentlemen have been transferred to Service *on land*: Mr. so, and so; Mr. so and so, ...' I could imagine the Romans, when,

for some reason, they decided to decimate their troops. The desolation of some not yet pilots, made them hide their eyes with the palms of their hands. 'I knew it!' muttered some ones. 'When back in Madrid I will join a proper flying school... not this shitty place!!' cried others. We expressed sympathy 'My turn tomorrow'.

The solo days

On days of first solo flying releases, the planes with candidates flew by carousel (actually, a parallelogram) over the landing track where, a prominent T, painted white, marked the spot where the pilot had to make the wheels of the plane touch down, as softly as possible. The planes flew one after the other with a determination of ants, landing in a few meters and taking off again. When the moment came, the captain of one of the planes ordered the student not to follow the one in front, but to remain on land for him to disembark. Then, the student had to wait for permission to return to the carousel. The corporal of the red flag waved it with enthusiasm to prevent landings and make room for the applicant to enter the track and take off alone. That day, classes were over for the new pilot. Normally the captain used to congratulate him. My teacher spoke little. The morning of my release he simply said, 'Luis, you must have been terribly frightened, because you have made a landing so good as you will never be able to repeat in your life'.

Acrobatics

He was wrong. I've been afraid to jump on the foal in

Gymnastics at school. I have been frightened because of excessive luffing in gusty winds, and I have been afraid going to pick up the result of a biopsy. But not on the plane. The last part of the course we learned four Acrobatic movements. The simplest: the imperial, which is to make a horizontal 8. It was followed by the *looping*, which is made possible by placing the lever close to one's groin, and keeping there until the horizon appears identical to what it was when making the decision. Then the *Tonneau*, or barrel, which occurs by pulling the lever strongly to either left or right, and keeping it that way, while the plane spins and turns like a windmill, in which the wings where blades. And finally: the Spin. This is done by putting the lever down too much to the left or to the right. The plane moves upwards but loses lift and the wings do not support it. It begins to fall, surely in accelerated form. In class you had count to 12 seconds, before putting the lever in place and recover the horizontal. Past 20 seconds I would not have had enough strength in my hands.

The Flight Captains

Not all flight captains were as apathic as mine, named Villaseñor. On the contrary, they were cheerful and extroverts. One of them, whose name I don't remember, called several of us while we were chatting in a group and asked us to caress the edge of one of the lower wings of his plane. He smiled mysteriously, got inside the plane, and took off. 'What did he mean?' we asked ourselves. An hour later we saw him again. The spot of the wing that we had caressed showed obvious signs of having grazed the earth. That kind of

acrobatics was more proper of demons than of angels. And like the bully chap of Cervantes: he *put on his cap, looked sideways, was gone, and there was nothing.*

Tomás resigns

Like this aerial narrative, it seemed that it would last forever, but all things come to an end. Autumn was upon us and the earthen cursed returned to their Pharmacopoeia and its remedies and we returned to our books on how to impart Justice. During the first and second year of Law, the leadership of Tomás Zamora had been accepted without qualms, but as from the third, the primacy of nonconformist thinking was established. The official student union was overcome by a democratic one and a delegate representing us was chosen. I was happy for the nominee, our schoolmate Gabriel, but I felt sorry for Tomás. He was a good counselor and very considerate with my family.

Gabriel Tortella

The truth is that with his appointment as Delegate of Course in 1957 began a new chapter in the relations between students and Faculty. A chapter in whose pages the University appears as the first visible resistance to the Regime, and where the first arrest by the police took place, with jail sentences and entries in the Carabanchel prison.

Center: Tomás Zamora
and myself

My homage to the flag

Bücker and AISA



Separate chapter

(in praise of water)

The Mill

Paco, a son of Aunt Antonia, had a Pegasus truck and was the one who brought the pieces of the mill of La Cubana from Otero station to Aldellana, leaving them in front of the house. A few days later the assembler Taberna, friend of Manolito, arrived at the same station, from Sama de Langreo. The two were very happy to meet each other and that night they played cards at the table of the kitchen. The next day, Taberna came to see the well that had just been drilled a few meters from the house. His face implied that what he had to assemble was too much mill for so little well. The curb was solid granite and seen from afar it seemed that his presence was justified. But the sound of a stone falling into its bottom did not deceive. Finally, Taberna completed its work, he put a lightning rod somewhat lower than the wheel and the Mill became part of the landscape, as a first sign of modernity.

The cistern

To that first well we must thank for having so little water. Because its failure gave birth to another idea, more expensive but more beneficial. Recalling that the Romans and the Carthaginians were supplied with the water which falls from heaven instead of looking for it underground, my father calculated how many liters of water could be collected per year thanks to the roof of the house. The figure was disappointing, not so much because of the size of the roof, but because of the lack of clouds. Although the roof was not to blame, the only way to get more water was to increase its surface area. Now, if another roof was to be made, something would have to stand underneath. A library?

The library

There would also be room for a master bedroom and an aisle. On the outside we noticed strings marking the thickness of the future walls and their imaginary corners. Before the masons of Otero made their appearance, the bullock carts unloaded huge piles of stones, obtained between furrows of nearby plots that felt relieved from their weigh. In 1954 the enlargement was completed. The old walls had been coated with a layer of smooth cement and painted white, in Andalusian style. Inside the house, there were also reforms. A library lacking shelves where to put the books. From some unidentified source, a *spinette* piano arrived together with the cuckoo clock, andirons and other accessories for the fireplace, and armchairs that I recognized as Asturian. And books, kept until then in some unknow storage site.

Manuel Ovelleiru

So long as there was no electricity in the farm, the water from the cistern had to be pulled out of the well throwing a bucket carefully so that it should fall facing down. When it began to sink, it was to be uplifted by the pulley that rotated making a slight squeak. Then the jars were filled, seeing that the jet did not deviate if there was wind. Everything changed with the electric light. A small engine made the rope obsolete, while the curb would serve only for the cleaning of the cistern, when it was due. A deposit had to be installed in the attic, such as the one in La Cubana. Stairs would be needed, better if made of wood. And in matters of wood, who else but Manuel Ovelleiru?

The waiting hunt

He arrived from Asturias. He wore a blue jumpsuit like the one of Taberna. and we had to go to the station to bring his carpenter bench, a solid table, strong, powerful, that was installed outdoors in the shadow of the North wall of the house. Along with the bench came great number of joists and sheets of oak wood. Ovelleiru made the library, the staircase, fitted wardrobes, and put the beams for a new porch. Shavings sprouted from his brush that fell into the grass, and Manuel saved them up in a sack for the fireplace. When he finished working, he hung the shotgun on his shoulder and went to the hillside, for the waiting hunt. He almost never brought anything. But sometimes was lucky. and returned with a hare with white ears and peach colored body. Happiness made his face redden as he spoke in Galician: *I aimed at it, I shot at it, and I killed it.*

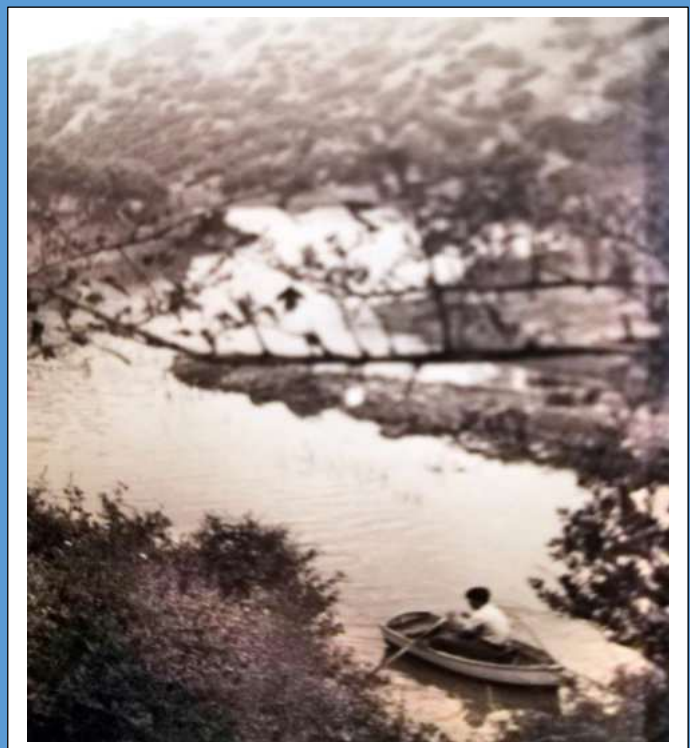
The reservoir

Although in summer it was dry, in winter the stream served as a channel receiving its water from the slopes. My father thought about retaining that water in a reservoir. The masons returned, many stones were carried to and from. Taking advantage of the dryness of August, the workers dug the foundation according to specifications of books opened on the desk of the office. The work was finished before the rains. In celebration, we saw Segovian bagpipers arrive, and waiters and girls dance to local airs and sing. They cleared their voices with wine from pochards. The ceremony culminated with the launching of a very small rowboat, baptized *Titanic*, though without the throwing of a bottle of champagne to her bow, for it would have torn it to pieces.

The bet

Many years went by. Twenty-five. This story was told to me, because I was living in Connecticut at the time. The renting farmers were gone. Gerardo had set up a new and successful gas station in Segovia. Hilario and Ambrosia were dead, and their sons were already married; some in Madrid and others in villages close. My mother, a widow, the *Lady of Aldeallana*, was managing rather well. One day she had the visit of some experts in lighting water wells, who took a walk around the land and returned saying it was worth trying. There were several promising sites. The most economical project was to drill next to the reservoir to take advantage of existing piping and engine. Cost depended on how deep the water was. 'What if there is

no water?' My mother asked. 'Surely, there will be' 'But what if there isn't'. Given that my mother was pessimistic, there came a counteroffer: 'We can do one thing: if there is no water, you pay nothing, but if there is, double price'. My mother agreed. They brought the drills and started prospecting. From the layers of earth that were coming to surface, only dry samples emerged. 80 meters. 90 meters. 100 meters. The exploration was about to be branded as a failure when some soil seemed wetter than the previous samples. The next day mud appeared. The technicians brought that wet earth for my mother to touch. It wasn't water yet, but it was close. I missed her smile when some children run from the drilling works to the house, screaming with a jar full of water. Days later we learned that it was drinkable and that there was enough supply for an entire village. My mother used to comment with melancholy how happy our father would have been if alive to enjoy such discovery.



Cistern, Mill, Dam
and Swimming pool



Chapter IV

Andrés

In the Faculty classroom we always sat on each side of two girls, one brunette and one blonde, who got better grades than us in the mid-course exams. The brunette was called Conchita Morales, alias Chiky, pale, haughty, with big eyes and a tiny mole on the face. The blonde, Merche Aranegui, more obviously attractive, combed her hair with pigtails. The two had many admirers during the lectures. Seeing us so close to them, other students envied us and so they should, because the simple closeness of their bodies made our mornings more cheerful and desirable. Little by little, Andrés began falling in love with Chiky, but Chiky was insensitive to his attentive looks. There was no way she would see in him other than a good friend. And Andrés was friendly with everyone. He was born blind to people's defects. It is not that he excused them, he simply couldn't see them. It is curious that this lack of perception has been compatible with his later career as a Music critic. Conductors, singers, soloists, choreographers and entrepreneurs of all kinds and parts of the world have felt enormous affection and

gratitude towards Andrés. His chronicles were written with well-chosen and well-argued praise, going straight to the wheat, even if it were scarce, and ignoring the chaff around it, abundant or not.

Rubén

One day Andrés introduced me to a writer whom he had just met in the corridors of the Law Faculty and made friends instantly in that manner of his, so easy. Ruben, too, was someone special. Physically he resembled the Italian actor Vittorio Gassmann, although Rubén never did exploit that coincidence, for he occupied himself in less frivolous matters. His father had been a writer and Rubén didn't want to be anything else. I must have seemed to him a good example of what that he didn't want to be. Unlike Andrés, Ruben looked at his surroundings with critical eyes, not without good reasons. It was remarkable that he only manifested his many disagreements with his silence. In that way, he like Andrés, never said anything unpleasant. When he spoke, half of the times was about Literature. My fear was that, when browsing books in the library of Aldeallana, he would complete an idea of what kind of family were we. To give two worrying examples: *The well planted* (woman), of Eugenio D'Ors, or *Lady Chatterley's lover*, may not have spoken much in our favor. Thanks to his advice I read Dino Buzzatti and Knut Hamsun. Fortunately, in our shelves was extant the *Bead Game* of Hermann Hesse, which, although optimistic, elitist, and futuristic, it was written by the author of *Demian* and of *Peter Camenzind*.

The Bustelo's

Carlos Bustelo and Rubén Caba had in common their patriotism, their opposition to the Franco regime and their friendship with Andrew. Not much else. Geographically, Rubén represented the nobleman from Extremadura, austere, chivalrous and seeker of enduring fame. Carlos, on the contrary, excelled in ironic wit, ambiguity (often associated with the people of Galicia) and a conception of the family as something sacred and deserving veneration. Carlos was a member of a clan, Kennedy style, with excellent information on Politics issues. The eldest, Francisco, was active member of the clandestine communist party. His sister Carlota was a Socialist, and Jipi -favorite of Carlota mother- remained as a spare item. Carlos radiated sympathy, didn't talk much, but, when he did, (almost always in a low voice) his words remained floating in the air, waiting to be unraveled offering the hidden message or the unexpected news. *Milota*, his sister, combined an Oriental air with black Andalusian eyes and a deep voice whose whispers would have charmed a misogynist like Francesco of Assisi.

Italian

We lived immersed in an Italian paradigm, which ranged from an autarkic economy, Mussolini style, of which the main exponent was the National Institute of Industry (after ENI) to a Neorealist visual culture, fond of contrast and trivia. Cinema and radio helped to maintain that appeal over all corners of the native subconscious. We Spaniards had adopted Italian actors and actresses as our own. Politically,

however, French influence prevailed, with *Le Monde* as the weekly gospel and J.A. Novais as its priest, tolerated by the Regime so long as he knew the limits.

The 600

Although my father was professionally anti-INI, in keeping with a tradition linked to the Electricity industry, he thought it appropriate join the list of applicants to own a Seat (Fiat) 600. The gestation lasted the same as if the letter would have been directed to the baby-bearing stork. And the arrival of the newborn contained an element of surprise and excitement. As if we were in the waiting room of a hospital, I waited hours crossing my fingers and looking at the ceiling. 'I would like mine green' said the one sitting next to me 'It seems today they are coming out blue' intervened a second applicant 'It depends on your luck; they can be anything' explained another. 'I wished mine would be white, but there are very few of those' sighed the fourth person in the room. We all had in mind an inaugural voyage. Mine was to Denmark.

A different country

The idea of getting to know Denmark was caused by saturation from our excursions in Spain in the car of the father of Alejandro, sometimes, and in our 600, the others. The variety of landscapes, cities, and towns which the Peninsula offers served as a balm to the wound of living in a country despised in Europe for its political system. I have a hard time remembering so many excursions: to Monasterio de Piedra, El Páular, Sepúlveda, Alcalá de Henares, Torremolinos,

Pedraza... It is curious that these two last destinations today sound like overpopulated places. Not then. In Pedraza, to give you an idea, you couldn't find a living soul. We saw a house with a sign that said: 'For rent' and Carlos Bustelo suggested: 'Let's have a look inside'. It was not the prettiest in town, but it had 4 rooms. We asked the price for a month, and the owner looked saddened. She hoped it would be for a year. 'And how much do you ask for a year?' 4,000 pesetas (at one thousand pesetas each). After a brief discussion, we made the landlady happy and rented the house for a year. As for Torremolinos, at that time the buildings of the Costa del Sol were no more than two floors high. The *Pez Espada Hotel* was under construction. In the village there was only one shop with a little bit of everything, a seafood restaurant and two pubs: The *Bar Flores* and the *Quitapenas*. And the mill tower (*torre molinos*) could be seen from a long distance.

Salome

Madrid lacked an opera house, and the Madrileños didn't seem to care a bit. In many respects, it was still a village. On the other hand, Barcelona had its famous *Lyceum* which, now with the 600, seemed closer. So much so, that Andrés, Alejandro, and I decided that we should go there to see a live opera. We chose one which we knew by heart: *Salome*, by Strauss. Little did we know that opera theaters were not like the cinemas in Madrid. To begin with, they did not play *Salome* more than a few days a week. To continue, one had to get the tickets well in advance. And finally, it was too late to buy *Salome's*. When we recovered from the blow, we

accepted going to Chinatown, instead. At the hotel they recommended a cabaret called *El Molino*. We saw the show and afterwards a very nice girl invited us to a cozy little hotel very near the stage. Alejandro and I followed her meekly. Andrew suspected something strange and did not want to join the Pickwickian group. *Tant pis*.

Looking for the North

Once the experiences of traveling in Spain were temporarily exhausted, it became imperative to go abroad. We took the Irún road with an individual contribution of 10,985 pesetas each (10 liters of gasoline costed 66 pesetas). Alejandro and I were driving, because Andrés did not have a permit, nor did he want one because, according to him, it was a very dangerous activity. We arrived very late to Paris and didn't succeed in finding a hotel, so we slept in the car until a few taps of the Police in the glass woke us up. In Brussels we instantly went to a cabin to communicate to Neukens the arrival of his Manchego cheese, on the part of a grateful student from our Faculty. He was happy and told us not to move. After no less than half an hour, he appeared with his wife and two daughters. He recognized us and told us to follow him in their large sedan. We went out into the open field and arrived at an ancient village called La Hulpe, a garden and a mansion. There we were entertained for two days, even to Spanish cuisine. Why did they treat us so well?

Barnacles

Claire Neukens explained to us that her father had a

feeling of guilt because of a Galician truck driver whom he hadn't thanked as much as he would have liked to. And to alleviate this guilty conscience, her father would pamper and entertain nice Spaniards like us. The fact was that years ago, traveling through Galicia he had come across a truck in a narrow bridge. Neukens believed that him being foreigner and driving a luxurious car, the Trucker would reverse and leave them room to pass the bridge. But the truck remained motionless. Mother and daughters begged Neukens not to get into trouble. But they knew how stubborn he was and were frightened seeing that the truck driver set foot on ground. Pierre did the same. From within the Belgian car, women observed excessive gestures and heard incomprehensible Spanish words. Little by little, the voices begun subsiding and the gestures became friendly. The scene concluded with a handshake and withdrawal of both vehicles. But it didn't end there: The truck driver invited the family for a drink...and a surprise treat. That day, Pierre Neukens tasted for the first time the *percebes* of Galicia, freshly extracted from the rocks of Finisterre. For a gourmet like him, the discovery was so amazing that he forgot to thank enough the Galician truck driver. That's why he tried to compensate with people like us.

Alfonso Aijón

We said goodbye grateful and boasting our good fortune. Claire, before leaving, left us the address of a Danish family, one of whose daughters she had exchanged summer holidays with. All the vicissitudes of the trip to Denmark have been immortalized in the expenses diary that Andrés kept throughout the

voyage and that his mother gave us typed down, back in Madrid. That is why there is no need to repeat things here and I will confine myself to our meeting with Alfonso Aijón. Nowadays he is known for being the creator of Ibermúsica concerts. In 1958 he was simply another tenant in a dwelling of a Hamburg in ruins. He was there mainly because of being Brahms's birthplace. We had known him through Carmen, sister of a member of The Pleiad, Javier Aguirre. Carmen played the piano and Andrés and used to visit their house to hear her interpret some *Novelettes* by Robert Schumann. Childishly, we associated her with Clara Weick. Among the friends of Carmen's conservatory, she recommended Esteban Sánchez, who looked like a reincarnation of Isaac Albéniz. And in the same group emerged the romantic personality and impulsive nature of Alfonso Aijón. Alfonso did not like Brahms, he idolized him. One day, chatting, I dared to say that I liked Mahler. It was like that short story of Andreyev's where, in the silence of a banquet, the voice of a guest is heard saying 'Black women please me' his words becoming a topic of lively conversation and he an interesting Socialite. Well, the trivia is that Alfonso wanted to know why, and I told him that Brahms was shy and reluctant in expressing his feelings, compared with Mahler. I expected a furious reaction, but he simply asked: 'Have you heard the *Rhapsody for contralto?*'.

Snow

Before reaching Denmark, the 600 already saw snow for the first time, a component of the landscape that did not disappear until we were the ones who

disappeared from that country. Our arrival at the Customs caused some astonishment, not just because of the tiny size of the car, but because we were neither Germans nor French. After astonishment came curiosity. We preferred responding to young women than to mature men. We did so in Paris with Anne Henk and again in Aabenraa, with Anne Nielsen, when we were befriended by her family and invited to lunch. Anne joined our expedition.

The Gram

We almost didn't want to get to Copenhagen and say goodbye to Anne. We were delighted with her company, but she had to work and the idea of an abduction, although exciting, did not materialize. Finally, we stopped in front of the house of Gram. The family consisted of five members: the parents Borge and Esther and the children, in this age order: Lene, Marianne and Bo. The history of the family has been published by Axel Bredsdorff as a line of the clan Hjardemmaal, a Danish saga whose fortune knew better times with corn plantations in the Virgin Islands (now Luis, you're rambling). Back to the children: Lene was blonde and reminded me of Marina Vlady; Marianne had brown hair, less Nordic looks, a subdued beauty. Bo was small and smiling. Andrés chose talking to him (by signs).

The return

We began our return trip less talkative than we were on the way up. Surely, we were trying to assimilate the encounters and sensations in a new concept which

could be summed up as *the North*. The rational, the quiet, the melancholic, the orderly, the wise, the tolerant, the different, the complementary. In writing this last adjective I stop to consider to what extent that trip opened the doors of the world of *The Complementary* in what was to become my life.

The ASU

Classes were back. At the University the wound of the national inferiority complex was no longer responsive to treatment with Bourgeois comforts. Budding prosperity demanded an equivalent political progress that Francoism could not offer. Rubén and Carlos participated in the founding of the University Socialist Association. In fact, it wasn't a legally constituted association; rather an Aggregation of students determined to overthrow the Regime, which they believed would be short-lived. It was necessary to bring together future leaders to occupy positions of government. And establish relations with parties of the European Left to help us in the process. Many of the surnames of its founders were reminiscent of politicians of the extinct Monarchy and early dictatorship of Primo de Rivera. That was not my case unless I got back to ancestors like Cánovas del Castillo or José de Salamanca. Other student names came from families that, during the Republic, had promoted the *Institution of Free Lecturing*. That really was my case, but I didn't know it. When in my octogenarian days I sit on a bench of *El Parque* de Málaga in front of the monument to Orueta ancestors, I wonder why, in my youth, I was not aware of their liberal and scientific legacy. Returning to ASU, a few members proposed to

establish a formal relationship with the minister of Education, Fraga Iribarne, and suggest to him the opportunity to begin the liberalization of the Regime, from within. He agreed to receive us in his Ministry. It didn't take long for him to respond. 'You are implying that this Regime is a dictatorship. You are quite right: it is.'

The Faculty of Economic Sciences

I participated with more astonishment than conviction in those early student movements. I saw contradictions and milkmaid hopes where others only perceived defense of the working classes and were preparing to reform their conditions from future posts in the Government. Fortunately, the faculty of Economic Sciences was not imbued with Fascist ideology, as might have been expected, nor with Marxist planning, as some classmates would have wished. The Economics that I learned were as European as those taught in the Sorbonne. In Madrid as in London, the parents of the economic science were Adam Smith and David Ricardo. Working in a company and paying taxes, in my father's style, seemed to me as European and respectable as dedicating oneself to correct the injustices caused by the system. Something like that must have been in the mind of engineer Fermín de la Sierra, when he was the first to lay the foundation of a *Busisnes School* in the purest American style, though camouflaged with the misleading name of School of Industrial Organization, which seemed to suggest totalitarian daydreams.

Arrests and exiles

Since Fraga did not relent, the ASU changed its innocent name of *Student Association* for the more revolutionary of *Socialist Group*, with nineteenth-century roots and tradition. Tortella, Sánchez Dragó, Mujica, Tamames and other lesser-known students, were arrested and imprisoned. The mother of Muguerza watched as his son was taken to the prison of Carabanchel. She and I would go there to see him, sometimes also with his girlfriend Conchita. We saw a calm Javier, who felt fulfilled. Prison brought him closer to an idea of himself above his custodians, whom he treated with affection and camaraderie. Those visits served to bring peace to the two women of his life. I, on the other hand, came back from them feeling worse and blaming myself for not sleeping in a cell of Carabanchel instead of playing the role of companion of Veronicas.

Two sorrows

Carlos Bustelo knew by heart the poem number 20 of Neruda (the one which precedes the *desperate song*) and recited it with delectation. *I can write the saddest verses tonight...* Carol, the poor Carol, decided that nothing was holding her in Spain anymore and told me she was returning to her country. *Writing, for example, the night is starry, and her stars shiver blue and far.* Around the same time, the Ursuline announced her engagement to a young man recommended by the priest Sopeña. There was, therefore, another desperate song with tango lyrics

and music, less resigned, more complaining and insistent. *I'm a stubborn question & Where was that sun, that didn't see you?* Beset by the two sorrows, I almost let go a few tears listening to Carlos:

Because on nights like this I had her in my arms.

My soul is not resigned to having lost her

Though this might be the last pain she causes me

And these be the last verses that I write for her.

The balloon

Military service was not over. Six more months of service of internship were due. I was assigned to a unit of the Cuatro Vientos aerodrome. Sometimes I had to spend the night standing on guard in one of the hangars. Once, just as dawn began, I watched in the distance a strange dark lump that moved about. I thought of the possibility of hallucinations, like when sitting in the edge of the hill, waiting for hares. With the arrival of the shadows, the stones in front began to move as if they were rabbits. This time there were not hares, but a car sliding in the middle of the track and carrying a trailer that I judged very suspicious and shouted to stop immediately. A driver came out of the driver's seat and opened the rear door to an old man who told me: I am general Alfaro. Salute properly! And without waiting he turned to the trailer and lifted the lid. I went back to the sentry box, grumpy. The story ends with the abandoned car in the middle of the track and the General and his driver flying in a balloon at medium altitude, heading towards a grove where that round the world voyage ended rather ignominiously.

The cup of cazalla

Each ensign had his squadron. They formed in the Square of Arms and from there we went away *preforming the instruction*. Moving a squadron is like driving a car or a plane. The only difference is that controlling the movable is obtained with one's own voice. It was important to observe that everyone moved the same leg as the rest. At a junction it was possible to ignore it, but it was more fun turning right or left. Suppose you chose left (thinking of the Bustelo clan) a few meters before arriving you should shout Left! Still nothing happened, until you thought proper to scream: Ar! At which point in time the soldier on the left pretended to walk without moving, and the one on the right increased the pace as fans do open. Veteran sergeants did not march next to the squadron. Instead, they chose a high place, like a bench, climbed on it and shouted very loud. I told them I wanted to do the same. Rather than answering, one of them took me to the cantina and asked for glass of cazalla (a strong dink). He admitted: we all drink one or two cups, before.

Torremolinos

Alejandro's mother and mine had made up their minds to buy a villa each, behind the Pinar Hotel. There were five more to choose from, all empty. Alejandro and I used to visit the Hotel's swimming pool. We climbed the highest trampoline. I would stand upside down clinging to his ankles, with feet above his shoulders, and back to the concurrence. From there we would dive

together achieving timid applause. Among those who did not applaud there was a Finn named Karry who lived in the hotel. At about five o'clock in the morning he was already sitting down in front of the pool. On his table only two objects: a glass and a bottle of brandy 'Principe', the cheapest make. He was blonde and admired by the friends of my sister, especially by Geva Carolus Barré, but Karry didn't seem to notice. Our home received friends of mine like Andrés Ruiz, Carlos Bustelo, and a Brazilian named Martin Polo. At the bottom of the forest of *Despeñaperros* it was customary to rest a little to regain strength and pee. The little garden without the restaurant was in darkness. Martin did not realize that in the middle of it there was a pond almost flush with the ground. He stepped on water mistakenly. Carlos commented that *O brasileiro* was behaving very foolishly, risking his life. *Con pericolo della sua vita*.

The AISA I-11B

I had already completed half of the flight time prescribed by making trips to Seville, San Javier, Granada, and Malaga, with a few hours still pending. I chose the Aerodrome-Club of Malaga. The Militia authorities had sent from Getafe a Bücker 131, like those of Villafría, not to abuse the Club's available aircraft. When I introduced myself at the base, with the idea of flying over the beach of Torremolinos, I was told that my Bücker was not possible, but that I could take any other small plane from the Club. They had no right to keep it, but they did so because the Bücker was more fun. In the hangars I could see some AISA planes. I had flown in *Cuatro Vientos* the model with tandem

seats, which allowed some acrobatics, but there they only had the 11B, with side-by-side seats, like in a car. To compensate for the robbery, I was allowed to fly with friends like Alejandro. I'm still seeing Juanita, his mother, looking up from the corner of her swimming pool, waving her hand in the air.

Readings

I extract from the *Centon* that I wrote when I turned 70, some books that I read as a teenager. Chosen, not because being the best, but because they impressed me most. (Note that in my 'Hundred' only one work per author is authorized) Here they go: *Time must have a stop*, by Aldous Huxley; *The end of the adventure*, by Graham Green; *The Red and the Black*, by Stendhal; *That lady of Bringas*, by Galdós; *Among the orange trees*, by Blasco Ibáñez; *Thus spoke Zarathustra*, by Nietzsche; *The Village of Stepanchikovo*, by Dostoevsky; *Sasha Yegulev*, by Leonid Andreyev; *The Search*, by Pío Baroja; *The steppe wolf* by Hermann Hesse; *The lightning that does not cease*, by Miguel Hernandez; *The House of Bernarda Alba*, by Federico García Lorca; *20 love poems and a desperate song*, by Pablo Neruda; *And the bridge is love*, by Alma Mahler Schindler; *Autumn Sonata*, by Ramón del Valle Inclán; *The bridge of San Luis Rey*; by Thornton Wilder; *The Tragic feeling of life*, by Miguel de Unamuno. I know, I know. There are many missing: But it's over for now. Finito.



With Andrés, Rubén and



Chapter V

Paris

Some prominent ASU members, such as Francisco Bustelo and Juan Manuel Kindelán left Spain and established themselves in Paris. Carlos Bustelo arranged for me to meet with them at one of the restaurants of the left bank. I made a poor impression on my friends. They could be compared to literary figures such as Sacha Yegulev. I was just a *trainee* in *Le Matériel Électrique* who lived on the exclusive boulevard of Courcelles, with the sole purpose of learning the running a large Company from within. Not the best credentials.

The hymn of the cherub

The apartment in Paris had been offered to me by the Trottier sisters so as not to lose their contract after too long absences. Every day I went to my work which consisted of translating into French texts in Spanish. I visited different departments. Some received me well, because they knew I was the son of a business acquaintance of *Monsieur Le Directeur* (Coquelin, by name) and

others not so well, for the same reason. I ate in a restaurant with music from *The Preludes* of Liszt which was never replaced by another. Letters from Carol and Alejandro reached my mailbox. I felt lonely and doubting that I could ever become like the managers who were put in front of me as a model. The flat was close to the Russian Orthodox Church. On Sundays I attended the ceremonies and let myself be invaded by the beauty of the music coming down from the choir. A passage from the long sequence had me especially hooked. It was the hymn of the cherubim, as one of the singers, Katia Romansky, informed me. I always saw her in a trench coat, wearing glasses and looking like Alida Valli in *The Third Man*. I decided she might be a spy. To remember her face, I have tried many times to hear again that hymn of the cherubim, without luck (it is not that of Tchaikovsky).

John Stansfield

He happened to be in Paris and visited me. John was one of the English teachers I had in England and, together with professor Ricardito, came a couple of summers to Aldeallana. He was very tall and dressed carefully. We admired his elegance. My sister, before leaving for a party, would ask: 'What do you think?' 'Wrong' 'John, you always find my outfits wrong!' 'Then, don't ask me' After a while she would return with another appearance. 'Better but take off that handkerchief'. John knew a lot about music. He questioned our unconditional admiration for Beethoven. 'Much of that was already in Haydn' I remember his answer when I dared to say that Haydn had not composed anything comparable to the Fifth

Symphony. 'Someday you will see that the last bars of the fifth symphony are repetitive. Haydn wouldn't have written them'. Wishing to correspond to our attention in Spain, John organized a car trip to Scotland together with an aristocrat, whose name was Tony Lowther. Before leaving for the Edinburgh Summer Festival, Tony gave me a leather edition (and golden borders) of *Paradise Lost*, that in his honor I have read cover to cover. In Edinburgh, we attended most of the concerts. John hoped that the opera *Ariadne auf Naxos* would become a revelation. Silly and impertinent, I told him I felt bored as a sheep. Now, sixty years later, *Ariadne* reigns as one of the musical works that I prefer. But my excuses cannot reach John, because I don't know what has become of him.

Wrestling on the boulevard

The Parisian adventure with Rafa San Miguel, a relative of mine, I have not forgotten. He had come to stay a few days and wanted to visit Montmartre and the Latin Quarter. Strolling at sunset through one of the Boulevards, we met a boxing court surrounded by trees and a lot of public. A few spectators were seated on folding wooden chairs, and others remained standing, but, seated or standing, all of them screamed and shouted most outraged. When nearer, we could see that on the canvas of the ring a wrestling match was fought and that one of the contenders wanted to gouge out the eyes of the other and was about to kill him. We were horrified that things like that could happen in France. We left and few minutes later saw an inviting gate. We went inside to a very comfortable saloon, upholstered in red, without people because it was too early. We

ordered a drink and asked if there was a show. There was, but later. After a few minutes we were approached by a young and friendly lady who seemed interested in changing our half empty glasses of wine for a bottle full of champagne. We thought it was a splendid idea and soon a great cordiality was established among us three. It turned out that she was Spanish, from Toledo. It was an unforgettable night. Rafa and I were extremely happy with the help of several bottles of champagne and the amenity of the show, a little risqué. At about four o'clock in the morning, the waiter hinted to us the intention to close and brought us the bill, with a smile. Short of sufficient cash, the club kindly accepted to retain the golden watch of Rafael and keep it until we came back whenever we wanted. Everything was happening *in the best of all possible worlds*, according to Leibniz. It was dawn when we found ourselves back on the same boulevard but in opposite direction. To our surprise the court and chairs of the previous evening were missing. A café located opposite opened its doors and the aroma attracted us to have breakfast. At one of the tables, we recognized the two fighters from the day before, laughing and chatting amicably.

The Americans

In 1958 the country's economic situation was bad. The autarkic model was in its final days. This time it wasn't the Jesuits who contributed with their solution to the country's problems but a congregation of fascist origin, whose members were distinguished by two virtues (a) excellent technical preparation b) blind obedience to the Organization. Aware that fascism was already dead and buried with seven keys in Europe, their only ideology was a kind of national Catholicism. Franco

hesitated before ceding the economic government to the Work, but his Galician spirit prevailed. The new rulers managed to attract the attention of capitalism. At home, dinners with executives began to proliferate. Mostly were Americans, who surprised us by their culture and excellent manners. Some came from Westinghouse. One of them, named Rex Whitnack, in his spare time wrote sonnets in Italian. One evening he gave me an LP with the piano quintet by Robert Schumann.

The End of Abundance

Such assiduity aimed at the purchase of the company where my father was general manager, and Javier Benjumea president. As a trivial remark I will point out that my father noticed that Benjumea washed his hands several times a day. In that habit he was like Isabel Salas, founder of the Malaga dynasty of the Livermore sisters. More important was the fact that, after the takeover by the Americans, my father found himself without a job. As a mining engineer he joined the Administration with an assignment in Salamanca. At home we noticed the difference. Neither company car nor driver any more. No more dinners. No concerts on Fridays. The change also affected some of the workers in the Company, who were dismissed and for the most part, they migrated to Northern Europe.

Aldeallana as shelter

One of the farmers, Gerardo Otero, had moved to the city, leaving half of the farm to its owners. My father took his place with assistance from Alfonso Gila, the son of the second farmer. He was recovering from the

moral blow, combining his stays in a Salamanca hotel with weekends in Segovia acting as a farmer. I insert here, as flashes of my memory, 1) the arrival of the single-cylinder *Lanz* tractor, 2) accounting books applied to livestock sheep and 3) prayers to Ceres, the goddess, to prevent May hailstorms.

The hens

One of the novelties that my father introduced in Aldeallana, he took from the father of Andrés Ruiz Tarazona. One must admit that in Franco's Spain chickens lived quite well, they moved at will, put their eggs where they wanted, and it was the humans turn to find them. They shared a rooster and argued a lot, probably about matters related to the rooster. The father of Andrés was one of the first farmers in Spain to found convents for chickens, with vows of chastity and obedience. He set up a poultry farm in Villalba, with the misleading name of *The Stork* and put a little house between the units. After a bit of investigation at La Cigueña, my father copied the idea. Then, for some unknown reason the father of Andrés disappeared from Spain, leaving the chickens rather helpless. Andrés had to move to *the Stork* and take care of them. His mother started looking for a job to support the family.

Andres's mother

Her name was Mercedes, and she was a typical *madrileña*, meaning witty and cheerful. From her, Andres inherited his good ear for music, not from his father, who was unable to repeat the national anthem. I remember that our conversations about classical music seemed to him

women's chatter. Still, he eventually condescended to buy a gramophone. Little by little Andrés got an extensive classical music collection of records, bought at El Real Musical, a shop near the Royal Theatre. In that very shop, Mercedes found a job as clerk and the goodwill of its clients, because nobody like her to advise the best choice of artists, with so much sympathy and knowledge.

A prank

The proximity of Villalba meant that Andrés was not too long alone. We went frequently to visit him at *The Stork*, with or without Fifi, to talk about music, literature and politics. I guess the stupid idea was mine. The next visit was to take place by night. At about eleven o'clock when Andrés was presumed sleeping. We began prowling in the garden, trying not to wake up the chicken. There was light from the moon. We took some bed sheets and threw them over our heads like ghosts. Some of us produced groans from beyond the grave to awaken Andres and finish the joke with laughter. But the house remained silent. 'Perhaps he has suffered a heart attack' 'Let's ring the bell' No answer. Now we were worried and repentant. Finally, some movement was heard. I tried an excuse. 'We have come all the way to warn you not to leave the keys in the door. Imagine if something happens to you and nobody can open' We never knew what went through his head during the hour that lasted the siege.

The North, again

In September I had an exam of Procedural Law at the

Faculty of Economics. A colleague who knew about our commented trip to Denmark suggested that I might return there with a scholarship. 'A little late for scholarships' I replied. 'That's why you must do as I tell you and very quickly. You just show up at Foreign Affairs office and say you'd like a scholarship for Denmark next year' 'Too early' 'No. The day before, I will have given up mine for this year, which will irritate them a lot because the Dane is already in Madrid. I'm sure they will give you mine if you say you can move instantly to Copenhagen' 'And why don't you go yourself?' 'Because my parents don't like a country as un-Catholic as Denmark, can you imagine!'

Lene

They did give me the scholarship. I spent a year in Copenhagen studying models of economic development, which at the time were fashionable. I found shelter in Hellerup grounds, in a room rented to a witch named Fru Cloos, not very nice but very ugly. To forget about her, I used to visit the Grams and go for a walk with Marianne; she was always interested in learning English. Her sister Lene did not live in Copenhagen, but on an island in the middle of the Baltic, where she worked as a journalist for the newspaper Bornholms Tidende. I started going during weekends and then my visits to the island expanded to include Christmas.

Bornholm

It is Danish territory, rest of the empire that was Denmark. Lene's parents were originally from a delicious village, Gudhjem, which means *home divine*.

Lene lived in the capital of the island, in a little house, fairytale like, with door and windows to a narrow street named *Rosengade* (of the rose). I was invaded by the illusion of having been born again, this second time as compatriot of Hans Christian Andersen. Lene went out to work and I stayed home combining the writing of my paper with the listening to Scandinavian music. Grieg, Nielsen, Buxtehude, and Sibelius, they sounded more and more familiar. Lene did not share that enthusiasm, so, when she came back, we talked about Literature and a little bit about Politics. She preferred History and above all: Poetry. She was exultant because her first book of Poems was about to become published. At Christmas the whole family came to Bornholm and occupied their home in Gudjhem, visible from anywhere because it was on top of a hill. I kept a safe distance, at noticing that her parents were less obsequious and somewhat worried. Or maybe these were only my apprehensions.

Copenhagen

In January I returned to the capital to renew my studies and try to leave a good impression at the University. (Say something trivial, please). Very well, I took the opportunity to undergo phimosis surgery. I remember that, when laying on the stretcher in one of the corridors, two nurses passed by and one of them looked at the paper card that was tied to a bar. I raised my head and noticed how she was winking an eye at the other.

News from Spain

In Denmark I received letters from Spain and learned,

for example, that Rubén and his German friend Traude were already engaged. Alejandro planned to marry Pili, his cousin. I also got the news that Milota, the charming Milota, was already Juan Manuel Kindelan's wife. He had returned from his Parisian exile. With so many courtships and weddings, it occurred to me to divide my friends in two groups in terms of hymen affinities: a) those loyal to the clan and b) those only faithful to the human species.

A wedding of species

My sister, who had been away in a Parisian summer vacation with Geva Carolus Barré, returned determined to marry a Frenchman. The fact of being Jacques the only son of the main shareholders of Baecque & Frères Bank paved a path that would end in wedding in the hermitage of Aldeallana. I saw my father happy organizing everything. Guests would come from as far as Paris. Photos were made which testify to the event, a very Segovian ceremony. The banquet, music and dance were entrusted to the innkeeper Candido, who could be seen smiling while cutting lamb with a plate in a garden full of tables with men smoking cigars and ladies wearing hats. And I? What was the matter with me?

Swedish girls in Spain

In 1959 young Spaniards in summer noticed a blonde hair more than a kilometer away. In those years Spanish girls were brunette and, in general, little given to love affairs. Their dour and cavalier air contrasted with the joy of foreign holidaymakers, eager to tan their

skin and selective in choosing a partner during the duration of their first contact with Franco's country. As a result, some young men were favored, and others were not. I had returned from my stay in Denmark accompanied by Lene, who was curious to know Spain. She came with the idea of visiting many cities and monuments. My godmother, who was pro clan and against species, felt somewhat alarmed. 'Are you two engaged' she asked, with her usual lack of delicacy. 'No' I answered 'We are good friends' 'Ya, ya' she replied, like the Marshaline in the last bars of the Knight of the Rose. Lene's interest in my existence was assumed to be perfectly interchangeable for any another male with Mediterranean characteristics. Still, when I watch Spanish films from those years, I feel embarrassed. To me, the vision of Swedish women in Franco's Spain seemed like little girls visiting a zoo.

Ti voglio bene

I wasn't in love with Lene, like I wasn't with Carol, or Milota, or anyone else other than the Dantesque ursuline. But the ursuline married somebody called Candeira, who had just become an architect and was recommended to her by the influential priest Sopena. Since, nevertheless, I did not go to live in the desert following Jerónimo's example, and tried to be normal, the Italian distinction between *Ti amo* and *Ti voglio bene* suited me well.

Fifi

Even Andres got married. He had met Fifi in our house in Malaga. In the difficult competition with the

Swedes, some Spanish girls more beautiful than average, attracted attention. Fifi, on her departures from the hotel, was accompanied by her mother at a distance not larger than four meters, and on the beach: two. To explain how Andrés met Fifi, dear reader, I must bring to your attention his interest in an American actress: Ann Blyth. We all had favorite actresses. Alejandro: Gene Tierney. I had three: Ingrid Bergman, Marina Vlady and, with brown hair, Pier Angeli. When I noticed the presence of Fifi on the beach of Torremolinos Ann Blyth and Andres came to my mind. I set out to address Fifi's mother with versaillesque manners to facilitate Andres's access to Fifi. But I was disappointed when he said that he didn't see in her any resemblance to Ann Blyth. Anyway, we agreed to meet the four of us at night in the dancing club *El Mañana* (funny, at night *in mañana*). Fifi and her mother were at one of the tables located around the dance floor. Andres drank a little more than precautionary and spent the night chatting friendly with Fifi's mother instead of approaching her daughter. During my military service in Cuatro Vientos Airfield, Andrés came to see me with his friend Pili Merino, and with Fifi. On one of those visits, Pili and I understood that we might feel more comfortable if we were to change partners, even if Fifi didn't look like Ann Blyth.

Penicillin

In August 1960 my parents were in Aldeallana and I left from there on excursions with Carlos Bustelo and Pilar Merino to various sites. Next one was La Granja de San Ildefonso, in Segovia. One morning my father had fever and felt very bad. The village doctor was called for, came, and decided to put a penicillin injection. As

soon as he injected it, my father went into a coma. I drove the 600 to Segovia and asked for an ambulance. In the village people didn't believe it. My mother and I moved him to Madrid, to a clinic in Príncipe de Vergara near María de Molina. There he recovered. It seemed that his fainting had been a false alarm. I remember him telling me that he had felt death and that 'it wasn't unpleasant'.

The end of many chapters

Seeing that my father was recovering I thought of the next planned excursion to La Granja and went there with Pili Merino, Carlos, and Teresa. I repented then of my selfishness, and I am still repenting. Because when I returned to Madrid, my father, our father, was still in the same bed and the same clinic. There were already family and friends in the hospital, and others were arriving. The doctors had urgently requested from the United States an anticoagulant for the thrombosis which was creating insensitive parts in his body... My mother didn't dare to ask for a confessor, but my father, wanting to please his sisters, let the chaplain in the room. And I heard him say aloud 'I am a great sinner' considering that it was enough confession. The next day the doctors admitted that the end was a matter of hours. I don't remember well how it happened. Only that I'm by the head of the bed, possibly with a helpless face, and my father telling me. 'Don't be worried' and then added another sentence such as 'Everything will be alright'. Then I left the room to make way for my brother (my sister was in Paris, about to give birth.) We buried my father in the village of Fuentemilanos under a large granite slab. After the burial I went back

to Aldeallana, to sleep there that night. Before going to bed I entered his bedroom to say good (though terrible) night to my mother. I looked at the book that was still on the bedside table: *Life of Julius Agricola*. Thinking that my father was lying in his grave while I browsed through the book of Tacitus, the curtain fell on my adolescence.



Tunet Gudhjem



Lene



Marta Orueta Walwork
Amparo Orueta Heredia
Atanasio de Luis
Juanita
María Eugenia Orueta

Luis Orueta Colorado
José María Laviña
Georgina Orueta
Sonsoles
Luis de Orueta Heredia



Parisian pamphlet



Carol sad

Chapter VI

Confused

After my father's death, there was concern because of the lack of fixed income in which my mother was left. The State pension was considered small. Someone in the Westinghouse company warned of the situation and the Board approved to add a part of what would have corresponded to my father as managing director. Looking at my friends progresses, I felt useless and burdensome. Andrés and Fifi lived on the income from the chicken farm. A first child was a now certainty. Ruben managed even better, with his job in a market research company where he was a director and shareholder. Alejandro was preparing himself to occupy the commercial direction in his father's factory of electricity measuring devices. My sister lived in Paris with her husband Jacques, and they too were expecting a newborn de Baecque. It was clear that the times of excursions and musical or literary evenings were over and done with. In this predicament I decided to run away. I proposed to Lene to join me in Paris with her cat *Pyspo* and use some of my savings for the rent of a loft. I made the trip by train, and we chose one room for the three of us in the quartier of *La Nation*, rue Fabre d'Églantine. To get to the bathroom, which we shared with other bohemians, we had to walk through a freezing

passage. Paris can be very depressing. We visited Deauville, Trouville, Reims, Rouen, and when we got tired of it all, we set course for Denmark, and I saw myself again in Bornholm. But nothing was the same.

The merchant of iron

I was restless and only thought about returning to Madrid and find myself a job. Looking at ads I contacted a Jewish merchant, named Nestor Jacob, who was engaged in the businesses of iron trading. Curiously, the company was domiciled in his luxurious home in the exclusive quartier of *Puerta de Hierro* (Iron Gate). There, Jacob asked me to write letters to clients. The first time I started writing at a table, with pen and paper. 'No, no!' 'You have got to use your voice' 'Dictate to her' 'She is here to transcribe what you have to say in shorthand and pass it to her typewriter!' It was all a bit humiliating, but I learned quite a few things with Nestor Jacob. He paid me 2,000 pesetas per month. To repeat a trip like the first one to Denmark would have required the salary of five months.

Dismissed

At Easter I went again to Bornholm and took two days longer than agreed with Jacob, due to problems with the return tickets. When he saw me again, he fired me, but not without advising me kindly that such liberties would harm me in the future.

Andalucian accent

My mother thought it appropriate to intervene and phoned Federico Martos, a mining engineer who had

been a good friend of my father and had a position in the Technical Secretariat of the Ministry of Industry. The offices were on Lista Street. My job would be to publish a monthly newsletter with translations of economic news of interest to the Ministry, taken from European newspapers and magazines. Spain, was at the time considering the pros and cons of being admitted in the EU. A secretary, called Amanda, and a copying machine were assigned to my corner of the hall. Working in the Ministry I became familiar with the uses and customs of public servants. Those on Lista street were friendly with me. I have good memories of Antonio, an Andalusian of Benacazón who couldn't get rid of his accent. When he spoke, he made a colleague, (pretty Lolita) laugh out loud while letting him court her without giving him much hope.

Malvarrosa

I had bought a Vespa with the idea of finding a place to live outside Madrid. In the suburb of *El Plantío* I came face to face with a small house which was for rent, with a tiny garden, standing on the corner of two streets. It reminded me of Rosengade, in Bornholm, but without the Nordic charm. There was little space inside to furnish it with. In my mother's house a neighbor had replaced her old triplet armchairs, and she gave them to me. (Mañeru, the family was called). The double bed had to fit a tiny bedroom. I found one of iron in a village. The largest expenditure went to the curtains, which turned that place into something resembling a home. The Vespa slept on the street since I couldn't bother raising it to the garden. I started living there by myself, but I cherished the idea of marrying Lene and sharing with

her Malvarrosa, garden, Vespa, armchairs, curtains, and bed.

The School of Industrial Organization

It belonged in the Ministry of Industry and had only been running for a couple of years. Joining its courses meant giving up the world of macroeconomics, where high rank civil servants secured for themselves a comfortable living, and hoping instead to be accepted into one of the multinationals that were beginning to take an interest in Spain. A diploma was obtained at the end of the studies, though its wording made it useless, because *Industrial Organization* was a disguised description of its real meaning: *Business School*, too capitalistic for the Nomenklatura.

Oliva is preferred

Among the classmates of the School, I remember Mario Oliva, Joaquín Díez Fuentes and Daniel de Linos. The director's office was occupied by Fermín de la Sierra, alma mater of the whole invention. Soon after obtaining my diploma, the opportunity arose for an interesting, and well paid, job. Simply, it consisted in moving from being a marketing student to being a teacher of marketing. Tout d'un coup. Daniel de Linos and his wife Pilar Escario (who had visited our little house in Malvarrosa) did hope that I would solve my economic problems. The School Cloister had only two nominations: mine and Mario Oliva's. They preferred Oliva's. Daniel de Linos and his wife Pilar almost felt as disappointed as I did.

Snow wedding

Since everyone married and had children, I thought I shouldn't be less. In January 1962 Lene and I became husband and wife in the chapel of a Catholic convent in Hellerup, a district of Copenhagen. Representing my family: María Eugenia, my mother and María Eugenia, my sister. It snowed. In Madrid I had prepared Malvarrosa with flowers to welcome Lene. We returned by train. When arrived at the station we were told that there had rained a lot in *El Plantío*. Sure enough, the house was totally flooded, the curtains wet, the armchairs too, in short ...a disaster. My mother offered to shelter us in Maldonado. With the arrival of the Spring, Malvarrosa dried up and we were able to take possession as if nothing had happened.

The Sorbonne

From the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, I received a letter offering another scholarship, this time at the School of Commercial Studies in France, with a professor named Alain Cotta. I (we) accepted. My sister had a French female friend, Claude, who was a painter and owner of a cozy studio at the top of a house of four plants on the coveted rue Jacob. She let us have it almost free, with a reasonable condition: she painted on weekends and would come for a few hours to work by her lectern. Lene put on a worried face. She was pregnant and disliked any threats to our privacy. I had expected that they could become friends. After all, we had made a lot of progress in comparison with the cache of Fabre d'Églantine, while continuing to enjoy Pyspo's affectionate company.

Ranis & Fei

Professor Cotta proposed that I work on two economic development models that had been published in separate issues of the *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, with the idea of incorporating the variables of foreign trade making a new, open, model. He was interested in its applicability concerning the former French colonies of Africa, and he was aware that in Spain the authorities were working on Development Plans, as a continuation of the Stabilization Plan of ministers Ullastres and Fuentes Quintana. The models in question were Arthur Lewis' original and the later combined version of Gustav Ranis and John Fei. Being closed models they did not contemplate what was occurring in Spain, where the more conspicuous transfer of factors was the emigration of workers (labor) abroad and the importation of foreign currency (income) from their salaries.

Change of flat

Claude came rarely to rue Jacob, but, when she did, she didn't ring the doorbell. The noise of her keys upset Lene, and eventually she asked me to move. I found an apartment in the posh *Septième*, but it was an interior floor and less fun. I didn't mind much because my work at the University was progressing and Cotta was satisfied. At the same time, Lene wrote and published articles on the news journals *Information* or *Bornholms Tidende*. But I wasn't happy in Paris and I'm afraid she wasn't happy either.

Letter from Daniel de Linos

In August I received a letter from Daniel with the cutting from a newspaper offering a job as Marketing Manager in a company, conditioned to fluent English as well as Spanish. The scholarship was still in force, but I had the feeling that this occasion was not like previous ones. The tone of Daniel's words, the advantage of the month of August, with Madrid empty on vacation, the word *marketing*, so little known at the time... I took a train ticket and left Lene alone in Paris, waiting for job and baby.

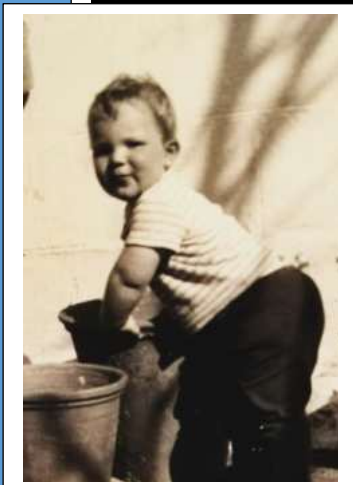
Rank Xerox

I was interviewed by Harold Sargisson, a big man, almost paternal looking, who barely asked me questions. He was impressed to learn that I had come all the way from Paris for the interview. He told me that his wife was French. What interested him most was making sure that I could justify with some document that I knew something about *marketing*. I lied to him saying that I had given up becoming a teacher at the *Escuela* for personal reasons. He didn't demand previous experience and I soon came to conclude that he couldn't care less. He was simply obeying London's instructions and did so without conviction because he didn't know what need there could be for such an extravagant job. He vaguely related it to the *advertising*, a notion that he cherished and felt expert about. And without more ado, he told me to join as soon as possible and that a manager from London would come to check my skills. I was confused by the announcement of a second interview. But he told me not to worry because the decision was his's and it

was made. His intuition was telling him that a person as scared as I was could hardly create him any problems.



Malvarrosa. (Before it was ochre color, looking more Danish)



Lars in the little garden of
Malvarrosa

Chapter VII

Two sailors

As you can imagine, in this chapter I'm going to talk about Rank Xerox and what I did in that company in the decade of the 60s. What little interest you may derive of my narrative is like watching a Spanish movie from that time. It surprises, the neophyte and vitalist atmosphere of Spain in those years. I'll try not to wander, but a bit of detour is inevitable. The history of the Spanish RX subsidiary begins in Cuba, at the time of Fidel Castro. The revolution, to ensure the non-contamination of capitalist ideology, intervened some film companies. The representative of the one with the gong man was told to leave the island. He returned to its offices in London and applied for another job. He couldn't ask for re-entry in the *Navy* because he had not left it of his own will. Two years earlier, the Rank Organization had signed an agreement with Xerox and opened branches in Europe. In Portugal lived an Englishman, named Frank Glibery, well connected with lord Arthur Rank, but showing poor business results, because, he said, in Portugal people didn't make copies. Willing to try

something similar in Spain, who could be better than *our man in Havana*, which you can imagine was Harold Sargisson? The other sailor in this story was Spanish, his name was Guillermo González de Aledo and had the same height and good looks as Sargisson, though considering himself superior in almost everything. The problem of sailors is that, over the years, not living on land and earning little is seen with different eyes than in the Academy. Guillermo liked the sea more in painting. His vocation was watercolors of seascapes. The idea of replacing Sargisson when he returned to London seemed perfect to devote himself entirely to his passion. That's how Rank Xerox Spain began. They rented one small office on Jacometrezo Street and the first copiers managed to reach Madrid.

Spanish peculiarities

When I started working, the Company had already moved to more commercial premises on the avenue of Bruselas. Its headquarters were to the left of the door of a block of flats. The department of Marketing was on the right, in a smaller space which they called *the Annex*, as if to say: '*The dispensable*'. (They opened another branch in Barcelona). The Madrid squad team had six salesmen distributed in territories, plus one for Banking and the Administration, which were entrusted to an aristocratic person named Mariano de Rivera y Forasté. The salesmen had no fixed remuneration. If they sold nothing, they earned nothing. In other countries that was illegal. In Spain, all salesmen were university graduates. In other countries that was unusual. In Spain, more machines were installed per month than the average

number elsewhere in Europe. That was quite surprising.

Annex Trivia

I didn't have a key to the Annex. Never mind, less responsibility. Yet every morning we had to go to Administration to ask for the key. It was my idea to perform this request to the music of a Spanish children's song: *Where are the keys, Matarile, rile, rile ? At the bottom of the sea, Matarile rile, ron!* Honorio Gayo, the head of Administration, lacked sense of humor.

Toilet paper

When those of us who worked in the Annex did something that seemed wrong to him, Honorio used to write a warning note which always began with the words 'It has been brought to our attention (the crime) so, please refrain from...(whatever). A little fed up, one day I wrote to my secretary Paquita the following: 'It has been brought to our attention that the occupants of the Annex make an excessive use of toilet paper, with what this entails of higher expenses for the Company, so please use it with moderation' Paquita looked up in doubt. 'Add: signed *Honorio Gayo. Head of the Administration department.* We forged the signature, and it was distributed. Some went to protest to Honorio. He didn't dare to report me to Sargisson. And there were no more notes of the '*It has been brought to our attention...*' type.

Antonia

She was *the* cleaning woman and had an annual contract, renewable at Honorio's whim. When she was done with the main area she came to the Annex and did her work silently. But as December approached, she used to interrupt her bucket and cloth activity and wondered: 'Sr. Orueta you are happy with me?' 'Yes, Antonia very happy' 'And do you think Sr. Gayo is also happy?' 'I suppose he is' 'And do you think my contract will be renewed?' 'Didn't he renew it last year?' 'Yes, but could you talk to the Sr. Gayo and find out? I spoke to señor Gayo and he told me that he preferred to continue with a temporary contract because Antonia would try harder. I replied that this trick was applicable to everyone else, not just Antonia. Many years later, at a meal after a meeting of the Board of Directors appeared Antonia pretending to clean. She informed me, very proud, that she was the head of the cleaning department.

A threatening contract

I already said that the enthusiasm of the salesmen about the idea of having a marketing department was not difficult to describe. While they kicked the streets and waited hours to meet with potential customers, the job of designing brochures and putting ads, was comparable to Intendancy in an army of Knights. I attended one selling call to immerse myself in the difficulties they faced. I observed that everything went well until the salesman presented the contract for signature. At that *moment of truth*, the matador lost the bull's ear after a great performance. That model

contract designed in London and enlarged by a lawyer friend of Sargisson, was very long. It explained to the dubious customer the enormous responsibility that he would acquire if he dared put his signature on it. I proposed another where the party who assumed responsibilities was RX in no more than half a page. It was approved against the opposition of the authors of the first document. I have to say that Sargisson was a brave man, so his discharge from the English Navy had to be due to another cause.

Ronnie

Harold had a secretary named Ronnie. I think she was with him from the Cuban years. She was secretly criticized for mixing where she wasn't called for. And her boss for listening to her. During the first year I seemed not to be much to her liking, but she changed when *noticing* that Sargisson didn't *notice*. (On this topic, I must admit that if someone said that I had been overinfluenced by secretaries, he would not be wrong).

Talking bills

The invoices necessarily reflected the number of monthly copies made on each machine. I asked Ramón Sobera to send me the listings and generate new ones with recommendations that began to be circulated to the sales force, advising the types of visits that each customer had to be made to, according to the counter of copies. If he did many, the salesman was allowed to install (and earn) a second machine. This idea was revolutionary because it appeared to

decrease the profitability of the company. However, I convinced Sargisson that the important thing was to fill the customers with machines (as one who sows wheat) and let copies grow in more and more places of their offices.

The miraculous list

The National Welfare Institute had computerized lists with all companies having more than five employees. There appeared: the number of managers, clerks, technicians, and workers, by class and type of work. How did I manage to get that document every year, it is something that I am not going to uncover. The important fact was that I could tell where to install machines, with the names of the companies and the exact address. To prove it I proposed furnishing a luxury show coach, with machines inside, and the idea was approved.

Luis Gonzalez Camino

I think I am not exaggerating if I say that our salesmen were terrified of him. He made them admit their shortcomings and gave them a deadline to correcting them or being fired. Luis forced them to attend meetings on Sundays at the office... he was unconventional and did not care about recommendations from the London office. When I presented him with the miraculous listings, he said not a word. Just asked me for a copy of the province of Bilbao, where we had no representation. He traveled alone, stayed a couple of days, came back with five contracts, and recommended an office in that city a.s.a.p.

The team

I know their names aren't going to tell you anything, but let me mention them, because in doing so I revive a distant past. They were: Mariano de Rivera, Eduardo Lafuente, Ivo Klecker, José Vuelta, and Virgilio Lopez. Of Virgilio it is said that after several visits to a would-be client who procrastinated, he noticed that his arms were muscular and challenged him to a pulse. Virgilio's thinness was deceptive, so the prospect accepted amused. No need to say that Virgilio bent his arm and sold the machine. Perforce, days went by and Virgilio couldn't get a contract. To break the spell, he committed himself to pay for something very expensive, for example: a swimming pool. In this way, the pressure of his wife made him recover inspiration and pay off the debt. Many months, the salesman income exceeded the salary of Sargisson. At signing the checks, the Head of the Accounting department, José María Huidobro, was taken away by demons. I told him to give thanks to the gods.

Borau

Determined to come up with new ideas, I had no qualms about comparing the invention of xerography with that of the printing machine. So, I wrote a script for a movie with two converging stories. The first told the progress of humans in the representation of ideas. The second staged moments of chaos caused by the loss of an important document in an office. It ended with images of a selenium drum housed in a xerographic machine which retained the lost text. José

Luis Borau, who had just released his acclaimed movie *Furtivos* (*Stealthy*) accepted amused to direct (and change a bit) my script. It was translated into Russian. The title: 'Ideas in a mirror'.

Don Juan Carlos

In 1966 the Company announced the launch of a faster and more modern copier. Imitating the mobile exhibition of the Spanish company, the English chartered an aircraft with a flight plan covering the main European airports. To this end, they recommended that the exhibition was inaugurated by a prestigious figure. It seemed to me that they were wrong to assume that worthwhile executives were going to accept going all the way to the airport. To please the vanity of the organizers I dared to invite the future king Don Juan Carlos. He gracefully accepted. When it was all over and we were celebrating the occasion at Sargisson's office, someone from the London group commented that everything had gone rather well, although maybe we could have chosen a more prestigious person to open it. I asked if in England the Queen would have agreed to come down to Heathrow. Sargisson looked at me, muttering: 'Luis, Luis...'

Advertising

Ads made Sargisson happy. Thanks to them, his family and friends got to know the name of Rank Xerox. As for customers, our presence in newspapers and magazines protected them from internal criticism or doubt. The campaigns were designed in Walter Thompson's London headquarters and only the texts

needed to be adapted. Walter Thompson European branches were delighted and set to work in meetings with the attendance of *creatives*. In Madrid, the intelligence and psychology of Manuel Elexpuru prevailed over the rest. Yet, I wasn't convinced. To me, advertising Xerox copiers was like makeup on a beautiful and very young woman's face. Well applied, it was flattering, but, without it, the number of suitors would not have varied.

Euphoria

In the two years that followed, the Spanish company proved to be the most efficient and cost-effective among the European subsidiaries. Americans are fast at detecting success. They demanded immediate rewards, both for the Company as for its managers and employees. A new multistorey building was erected on the street Josefa Valcárcel, at the exit of Madrid towards the airport. An important increase in staff was authorized. Salaries rose and company cars granted.

Rewards

Sargisson was able to buy a villa in Jávea. He changed the old car for a voluminous English saloon, brown color. I stopped having to go everywhere on a Vespa, protected from cold with the pilot outfit. From then on, I could drive a Mini 1000, and had a better salary, enough for the bank to grant me a mortgage to buy a flat. I visited Italy, where I established a lasting friendship with my colleague Luigi Pellegrini and a good relationship with the general manager Alfonso Bordone, who impressed me with his *Masseratti*

Quatro Porte, sexier than the *Humber* limousine chosen by Sargisson.

A lucid presentation in London

Guillermo de Aledo was frustrated. The purchase of the chalet of Jávea was an indication that Harold (and specially Evelyn) had decided to stay and live in Spain. I have already mentioned that the success of the Spanish company intrigued the decision makers of London, without Sargisson appearing to give a satisfactory explanation. Finally, he excused himself saying that the reasons were statistical and that it was me who could best answer that question. We stayed at the George V hotel. When the meeting began, we were told to wait outside until called for. We carried an excerpt from the INP list, as a sample, and three rolls with maps of Spain. One with predictions of future installations by provinces, another with growth forecasts, and the third with number of necessary salesmen. Someone said 'If that is so and you happen to be right, then the market in Britain is grossly undervalued' Luis Camino came to my aid. In his perfect English he retorted 'It is quite possible'.

Wine and roses

When the glass was filled and I saw that it began to overflow, I thought of Andres and of my brother Guillermo. The first entered as head of Advertising and my brother joined the sales force, with Luis Camino. Later also Manolo, Andres's brother found the job of his life in RX. I was permitted to expand the

department, with new entries. I want to single out one, which deserves a separate paragraph.

Carlos Pascual

I will say no more that he has spent his entire life in the Company reaching the highest ranks not only in Europe but also in America, where he became one of the US Xerox presidents. Nowadays he lives retired in Marbella enjoying a yacht called *At my whim, blue*. His daughters have written a choral biography of delicious reading. There are three of them and they live in Seattle, London, and Madrid.

Other emigrants

Luis González Camino was promoted to Sales Director for Europe. He appointed his assistant Julio Camarero, president of Xerox Italia, named Juan José Morera president of Xerox Denmark and Carlos Pascual president of Xerox France. There was an attempt on the part of the French executives to avoid it by arguing that Carlos didn't speak French. Luis Camino's response was to send him six months in advance to a village in France to learn the language. The humiliation of the French crystallized into a conspiracy against Luis, with no other reproach than his haughtiness and uncompromising style and methods. Ingratitude affected his mental health, and he ended his days without memory and saying unintelligible things.

A sailing trip

Sargisson had bought himself a small English sailboat, a *Vivacity* 24 feet. He thought about sailing with his son from Jávea to Ibiza, but the son was not interested in that kind of adventure and Sargisson proposed that I went instead. The idea was to arrive in Ibiza in the morning, spend the day and return on Sunday. At the epoch, the best meteorologic forecast came from local fishermen. When they saw us loading provisions into the cockpit of the boat, one came up to advise us not to sail that night. Sargisson said thank you and ignored the advice. At about one o'clock in the morning we were surprised by a storm. I was put in charge of the tiller, while he tied a rope to his waist and lowered the mainsail. Then came a thick fog. Unable to secure a landing in Ibiza, he opted for a safer course, which was to set West and wait to see Peninsular land. I was lying on the bow, staring into the fog to warn from obstacles. At dawn, the coast appeared, and we returned to Javea. Evelyn, his wife, was surprised to see us sooner than expected.

Other storms

Lene felt a little abandoned. We had had our first and second child. While the children did require her full attention, she was happy and contented. Before giving birth, she returned to Denmark, to her parent's. because she felt more secure and accompanied than with me in Madrid. Lars and David were born in the Aakirkeby hospital, near Gudhjem. On both occasions I went there the next day and spent a week with the family. Lene's parents came a couple of times to

Madrid. My mother asked them to buy a car for Lene. I guess they thought it a bit impertinent yet submitted to the idea. So, in addition to the Mini 1000, we had a Renault 4L that Lene drove well. In her spare time, she wrote poems and articles. She met with the correspondent of the journal *Information* in Madrid, Ebbe Traberg, who kept her abreast of Spanish and Danish politics. Ebbe sympathized with ETA terrorism, although he did not dare to state it clearly. He said that he was limited to report facts objectively. The awkward thing is that being me the one who could feel jealous, Lene manifested an atavistic horror towards any female creature nearing us. A feeling that increased with the passing of time. On the beach of Torremolinos we quarreled for this reason. She got into her car to return with Lars and David to the house. I climbed on top of the car's hood, and she went on driving that way, one and a half miles, without being stopped by any police, and we reached home laughing.

Half a suicide

In Madrid, following the advice of Lars' godfather, Carlos Bustelo, Lene and I enrolled our two children in the Colegio Rosales, which was not far from our apartment. I could not understand, then, why, having achieved a way of life which I considered meritorious and selfless, Lene preferred the hippie and the revolutionary. I remembered then the words from the father of a student of mine in Denmark, about marriages between foreigners. When he heard that I was about to marry Lene, Falck told me 'Don't forget to tell her *everyday* that you love her'. I was forgetting. My aunt

Conchita had been sent to London for cancer surgery. I wanted to visit her in hospital and made the mistake to tell Lene that she didn't need to join me. She thought it was an excuse for something I was hiding and asked me not to move. That got on my nerves. I went to a pharmacy and took a whole bottle of anxiolytics. I fell asleep. Lene told my mother. My mother notified my uncle José María Laviña. And I woke up in a hospital.

Nights in the gardens of Spain

In a cafeteria on Alberto Aguilera Street, I met after many years with my partner of school desk Manolo Domínguez. With him was his wife Vicky, and they told me that they had been living in Seville before returning to Madrid. Vicky and Lene became good friends. The Dominguez couple left us the keys to their Sevillian flat to spend a few days as a starting point for an Andalusian vacation. We made plans. First the Alcázares, then Ronda, and finally Granada. In the 60's there were only a few daily visitors to the Alhambra. Engrossed in the oriental environment we had no notion of time, we lost contact with the group and, when we wanted to leave, the guardians had already closed. We knocked on the door, but they were gone already. We returned to the royal chambers to wait for events. The event was that the moon rose, and we stayed to sleep there. At dawn we heard people cleaning and we managed to sneak outside. Lene commented: 'Next time we must bring a cushion'.

Seated

Jack Thomas

Derek Hornby

Roland Magnin

Hamish Orr-Ewing

Dick Holmes

Nick Nickolson

Standing

David Thomson

John Duerden

Jack Milligan

Luis González Camino



Harrold + Evelyn Sargisson



Chapter VIII

A miniskirt

In 1966 Mary Quant and Twiggy had not yet convinced Spanish women of their ideas about women's fashion. That is why the visit of the Price Controller Rosemary Price (yes, Price) raised more than one's attention. The apparent reason for her visit was to check that the peseta prices of contracts complied with her pricing guidelines, a task which she could have done from London. I think the real motive was to meet me and give her opinion on the possibility of me replacing her, since she was about to marry and leave the Company.

London

Lene and I were curious about London. In those years, the end of the 60's, all things British were fashionable, especially the Beatles, who had not yet premiered *Hey Jude*. We found a villa in Wimbledon, on Lake Road 35, with a small garden for Lars and David. From there one could hear the clapping of the Tennis Courts, during weeks of championship sessions. There was a Commons prairie for walks, in the opposite direction. We bought a black *Mini* so Lene could come down to Chelsea or Brompton Road whenever she wanted. The Company

had just moved into new & modern offices on Euston Road, which took me an hour and a half driving each working day.

Factions

A company, like a convent, presents to the observer a deceptive appearance of tranquility and internal peace. A closer look permits to notice shades of prejudice according to elective affinities. And a more attentive gaze will be able to detect instinctive rejection, indifference, or affection between members. Inside the walls of the Euston Road building, I could distinguish three groups: the British, which one might brand 'aristocratic'; the American, or 'liberal'; and the French 'conservative'.

Paul Allaire

Allaire was born in US, held the position of Financial Director and was married to a French woman, named Jay. He was very conservative and therefore *French*. He appreciated the seriousness, rigor, and intelligence of the Northern peoples. Contrarily, he had little sympathy for Latinos, more unpredictable and independent. The job of Pricing Controller that I had been appointed to, was reporting directly to him.

A great ally

I don't know who of us managed first to elude the other. My ideas concerning pricing strategy were not conservative. I claimed that lowering prices would result in more earnings, consequence of demand being extremely elastic. Paul must have seen me as a heretic,

dangerous person. On the other hand, my experience was in line with the thinking of Michael Hughes, Marketing Director, who extricated me from the dominions of Allaire. Mike, although born English belonged in the *American* group, he was a liberal. The British elite, under the leadership of Hamish Orr-Ewing, didn't like him, because he was a self-made man. His only link with the upper class was Eddie Moss, who had both the right ancestors, wit, and a touch of cynicism. Lene and I invited Mike to visit Spain in summer and he gladly accepted. From then on, Mike Hughes was my support and counsel. I remember that once he congratulated me for the complaints which he received about me as manager. 'Why do you like that they are complaining?' 'I don't like that they are complaining. What I am pleased about is that they complain about these things instead of other'.

Responsibility

Although I had other minor tasks, my job was to put figures on the imports and or manufacturing of new products from the factories. When I arrived, I found there was no other methodology than *gut feel* and the rule of thumb. I asked for as much information as possible concerning the machine population and copy volume in each country, to be submitted at regular intervals. What interested me were the *differences* from time to time. They made it possible to draw a dynamic model predicting changes, and henceforth opening new entry lines for new products, replacing the old at an advantage. Computer listings began to throw specific forecasts, *including new products*, that no one dared to contradict.

Surnames

Again, patient reader, I threaten you with names of people who do not mean a thing to you. When I struggle to remember the faces and manners of people who worked for me, it helps me to mention them aloud by their names and surnames. Sometimes I see them clearly, because they were more talkative, but more often I only perceive confused images, silent shadows. Among those who joked about the misfortune of having to report to a Spaniard, I signal John Betteley and Jim Havard. Both were witty and ironic. I must say that the rest of my subordinates had no problem. Dave Cattaneo, American of Italian origin, saw it very natural. He worked slowly and was successful with the feminine element. Just as friendly, though cleverer, was John Duerden. He was straightforward, loyal and better than me at managing people. When I say aloud 'Eric White' I feel the calm that Eric expanded on my questions about the new products, so important to foresee their impact. I try to represent the faces and opinions of Peter Grubb, Joe Glover and George Rush, but only see blurry images.

The Colo from Spain

At the end of the 60's, a cousin of mine arrived in London with the idea of learning English. I offered to increase his pocket money in exchange for accompanying Lars and David when Lene and I wanted to attend some of the shows that were advertised in *Time Out*. Jose Maria was the first son of Pilar, a sister of my mother. I liked her because she was a nonconformist. Her son Jose María inherited a left-leaning, less

perceptive in his conversation because of the charm indebted to his father's. He got to know Spain's president Felipe González who appointed him Government Delegate in Madrid. and then National Director of Police. *The Colo* (from Colorado), more than returned our hospitality London. We visited his official mansion in old Madrid, a spooky grand house with old kitchens and bathrooms. He was close friends with Luis Carlos Croissier, a character little appreciated by the editor of this chapter, as will be seen before the book is finished.

1968

It's the year of Leonard Cohen's *Suzanne giving you tea and oranges that come all the way from China*. The year of *Prague's Spring...of French May...* and of *Flower Power*. Lene wasn't going to be insensitive to the effluvia which crossed the Atlantic from California. The Victorian long skirts she wore fit very well with her blonde hair. Less impressed by the new vogue, Liz Thomas y Wendy Duerden often invited us with conventional British hospitality. There was much sympathy mixed with curiosity. Thus, Lene's attention was caught between two poles: Communal hippie life or Comfortable corporate living, with handsome children and bourgeois friends. Our friends had children the same age as Lars and David. I remember their names: John, Jessica, Deborah, Matt, Helen...

Malaga

Living in London, the notion of spending summers in Spain came easily. My mother, wishing to help my

brother Guillermo, had suggested that we rented him our empty apartment of Madrid and that on vacation we went to the house of Malaga. I proposed a change: the flat in Madrid for the house in Malaga, adding the difference. Accepted. That's how Lene and I became summer neighbors of Alejandro and Pili Serrano. We kept the 4L of Lene waiting for us there when we arrived in August in the Company's car. I'm not being fastidious about cars, the coexistence of both vehicles in Malaga became fateful.

Americans woke up

Every autumn, when appearing on Euston Road, the progressive occupation of the Company by the Americans was more evident. Gone was the initial and provincial timidity of the Rochester men, for whom everything that wasn't American was almost inexistent. They had given in because of lack of practice of a right which IBM took great pride from, to the extent of having it printed in the first acronym of its name: *International*. With maturity came repentance and the decision to recover that right from perfidious Albion. In 1967 Xerox decided to create an International Division at Vice-Presidency level with full independence from the Domestic US part of the business. In charge of that Division, they hired Joe Flavin, an ambitious IBM executive. The die was cast, and the Rank Organization sold dearly its majority.

Unorthodox presentation

When pondering about the numbers in market growth, an anomaly arose that in my opinion made all

market studies from European subsidiaries not only useless, but wrong. Orthodoxy led the Company to believe that Copies were predetermined by need. Since all copies were made with existing means of reproduction Xerox planners thought that its fortune consisted at grabbing of market share. But evidence indicated that most of the xerographic copies would not have been made any other way. Therefore, the potential market was underestimated to unknown extremes. I was determined to make a first attempt to break the conformist inertia. Mike Hughes arranged the presentation and made sure that Robert (Bob) Pippitt attended to it, a newly American arrived in London as Deputy Managing Director.

From my Centon (hundred) of books

To compensate for the aridity of xerographic chatter, I turn to more interesting themes. Such as: *Three men on a boat* by Jerome K. Jerome; *Epigrams* of Martial; *Little Dorrit*, of Charles Dickens; *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, by Gabriel Garcia Marquez; *Amadis from Gaula*, of Rodríguez de Montalvo (or A); *First love*, by Samuel Bekket; *The Metamorphosis* of Ovid; *Elegies* of Propertius; *The forging of a rebel*, by Arturo Barea; *Fanny Hill* by John Cleland; *The origin of music*, by Abbot Antonio Eximeno; and *Essays* by Michael de Montaigne. Enough for now. And if I had to save some pages from a consuming fire I would those of that elegy of Propertius that begins: *Sunt aliquid manes* (Something remains from the souls)

Proposal to move to the USA

In the early 1970s two key American Directors came to visit London invited by Pippitt. One was the Joe Flavin mentioned. Joe invited Lene and me to dinner and proposed that I join his team of collaborators in the Xerox International Division. The other: Donald Pendery, who along with his wife Joyce came to our home. Pendery had no international authority but was responsible for overall Planning. Lene's reaction to Flavin's invitation was one of confusion and doubt. It was proposed that we should pay a visit to Connecticut and judge by ourselves.

Some worrying signs

The problem of jealousy, which had already manifested itself in Spain, showed new signs in London. My office had two parts: the first one occupied by a secretary and a larger one where I had my desk. They were separated by a wooden panel and an upper glass window. One morning I was surprised to see that my secretary Chris Stewart was talking to Lene. I came out suspecting that something serious had happened. Nothing. Lene had only come for a walk around the office. In Connecticut we were greeted by my eventual new boss Elmer Humes and his wife Sue. They were instructed by Joe Flavin to go out of their way in hospitality and promises of help (schools, home, etc.) They convinced Lene to accept us moving to America.

Lene's first escape

In Massachusetts a Xerox US Marketing Convention was going to take place and Elmer thought it appropriate to invite me to attend. I couldn't refuse

since my work in London touched its end. When I told Lene she said she would come as well. We had just returned from America, and I thought she was being difficult. But she insisted. So, accommodation was arranged in a nearby hotel, and my room in the residence remained empty. On the fourth day of sessions, when back at the hotel, I was told that she had bought a ticket to California and left with her case. It was the last day and I still ignore if anyone at Xerox found out.

The commune

We were again at Malaga seashore. Novelist Esther Tusquest would have recalled it *the same sea as in all summers*. With us were Alejandro and Pili Serrano, sometimes on the beach and other times in their pool of *Cinco Arcos* (Five Arches) villa. It seemed that everything was going fine. Lene and the children were happy. She proposed to stay a little longer in Malaga and return with Lars and David to London in her car. Our incorporation in Connecticut was planned for early January 1971. She spoke to me from the telephone cabin of the Pinar Hotel. The delays begun to worry me. Once, I picked the phone and heard not her voice but that of Alejandro. He told me that Lene had gone back to Copenhagen with Lars and David in her Renault 4L. Afterwards I learned by letter that they were living in a commune.

White raincoats in Saint Pancras

My first reaction was to think that I could make amends and put remedy to the situation. Lene had left her things

in Wimbledon and there were also children costumes, books, and toys. I managed to send her the message that she would be welcome to pick up whatever she wanted. That would give me a few days as if nothing had happened, while trying to please her twenty-four hours a day (and I mean 24). With the advent of Christmas, we had peace and quiet to chat calmly. When the last scheduled day of her visit dawned, I dared to suggest 'Do you think it is good time for me to go and fetch the children from Copenhagen?' She said no with her head. I got up and went out to the street to absorb the negative. The following day I helped packing her bags. We passed near the Rank Xerox office without saying a word. It rained. With wet umbrellas we entered the platforms of the railway station. Among the many couples who were saying good-bye to each other, we were difficult to distinguish, wearing the same white raincoats as most of them.

Intermezzi

I have given account of what happened when I went alone to America (with the hope that Lene would change her mind) in a little book with the title 'Living at Richard Meier's Smith House'. What I'm going to do (with your permission) is to choose four of its chapters as...intermezzi. If, up to here, I have sought a narrative tempo that musically would be deemed *andante*, the intermezzi pages are marked *adagio*. You can skim the next four chapters if discouraged by the threat of sluggish narrative. In fact, you can skip them all. I already said that I am content for you to read the last one.



35 Lake Road Wimbledon



Esuton Road Rank Xerox House



Joe Flavin

Hamish Orr-Ewing



Lars



David



Intermezzo I

(a different house)

It would be 8.45 in the afternoon when my phone rang in the room of the Holiday Inn of Stamford, Connecticut. I thought it might be a mistake because nobody knew where I lived other than some people from work. They wouldn't be calling at such late hour. It could not be my wife, as she would be sleeping peacefully in her Copenhagen commune. For a moment I imagined it might be Barbara, one of the young women who served coffee at breakfast, walking professionally amongst the tables to counter the effect of cheerleader type skirts which they wore out of obligation.

It wasn't Barbara, but a much older lady to whom the company had entrusted the search of a suitable home for me. She started her assignment with enthusiasm, but after several days, her face began to show signs of resignation and displeasure. The first morning, she asked me how many children I had and when would my wife come to America, because, she said, it was important to count with their opinions. My evasive answers met with silence.

The *lady of the residences*, as I called her, worked for a real estate agency, she was quite tiny and when she sat at the wheel of her huge station wagon her head barely emerged from the depths of the car. When we passed near a house, she would ask for my attention lifting one hand. She followed a cunning order, starting with the ones she thought I was going to like less.

They were all too big. I had tried to tell her about how in Europe everything was smaller, the trees, the fruit, the roads, the streets and of course, houses and cars. Information on so far away countries was of zero interest to her.

One afternoon, returning from work, I saw a little house which I did like, and I wrote down its address for her to accompany me in a visit. She came in her car with alternative suggestions and refused to take me where I asked, without telling me why. She had fixed ideas about suitable locations, which in fact were limited to New Canaan, Wilton, Westport and Darien. Her preferences went for Wilton because that area was 'dry'; and had no bars, no shops, no hotels, nor anything that might disturb one's peace of mind.

She told me that Westport was the most interesting of the list. Paul Newman, she informed, lived there and so did many famous actors and actresses. "And they have a lovely country theatre" she added, as a piece of encouragement. I told her that I appreciated all that very much but that all I wanted was a *small* house, please, if it was not too much to ask for. Disgusted by

so many efforts to no avail, she stopped calling just when I was about to accept anything.

The Holiday Inn was rather depressing. Built in a space between two highways it lacked any pretence of charm. Down in the parking area lay a car that I had bought, maybe too quickly, and that I no longer liked it because it was, also, too big.

In that hotel I felt like I had descended in parachute in a forgotten dream. My appearance must have reflected an abstracted and confused air that didn't pass unnoticed to Barbara when, one Sunday, I came down to breakfast later than usual. While picking up a glass of water from the table, she asked me if I wasn't feeling well. I smiled to reassure her that I was not dying and then she invited me to visit her friends.

Barbara's friends lived in a magnificent house, better than any of those shown to me by the lady from the agency. It was a white, colonial-style mansion with small and abundant windows, painted green and framed with side blinds always open.

It had been the dwelling of a famous photographer, whom I had never heard of. Inside there were lots of photographs, some hung on the walls and most archived in cabinets. In addition to Barbara, the house sheltered some ten or twelve young men and women, carefree and condescending. They were surprised that I didn't know the photographer's name. Soon they brought before my eyes some magazine covers of "Life", signed Margaret Bourke-White, and I was

offered to pick the ones I liked most, provided I would take good care of them.

I am telling these trivial things because I said earlier that I thought the phone call of that night in 1971 could come from Barbara, even if it was unlikely. Reality was different: on the other side of the line, a familiar voice spoke to me in these terms: 'Mr. Orueta, I have the possibility of offering you a rather different house, but the owners are leaving tonight, and you would have to come to see it now'.

I was in my pyjama and feeling lazy, but at hearing the word *different* I replied that in fifteen minutes she would have me waiting at the door of the hotel. It had already gotten dark when she took me through Stamford in the direction of Darien, away from the office buildings. We ceased to see highway lights and run into a forest by a narrow road. On each side there were mailboxes located at half height, but there was not a single lamppost.

When we turned a corner of the road, I noticed a sign with a small notice which read: Contentment Island. It seemed a good omen in the *winter of our discontent*. We arrived at a stone bridge, guarded by a policeman inside a car, who stopped us. She explained that we were going to the "Smith House" and the goalkeeper made a brief greeting of understanding. More darkness, more mailboxes, and more trees on the sides. Then the road suddenly ended, and the car's headlights illuminated a white wall like the screen of cinema where only a few small windows and a smooth

and short ramp distracted the view from the overcoming whiteness.

On one side there stood a windowless construction in the shape of a cube, also very white. "It is the garage", said the lady. We were both standing and looking at the wall in the dark and started to climb the steps to the ramp, me behind her, when the wall went white again, this time illuminated by spotlights located on the ground, a sign that our presence had been noticed. "Yes, it is different" said I, while we were waiting for the door to open. And I said no more. Seconds later I found myself in the middle of a stage, arms down and pupils dilated by excessive light. Around me, cylindrical and white columns were raising to hold a roof barely perceived. Outside the house, there was a rectangular chimney which only joined the glass wall to connect with the stove where some burning logs were crackling. That chimney, standing on the garden, so white, independent, and haughty, was like a monolithic character, an icon of the deities of the place, under which presence Mr. and Mrs. Smith seemed dwarfed. He had in his hand a glass of bourbon and wore navy blue blazer and flannel trousers. His wife was dressed in a grey tailored suit of the same material.

Mr. Smith's name was Frederick and Mrs. Smith's name was Carole. They told me that they were leaving for New York that night. Out of the introductions I made out that Mr. Smith had a marketing company and that she was an excellent ice ring skater.

Before showing the inside of the house, Smith played with a kind of keyboard that controlled the lights. With one finger he turned off the house completely and with another he lit the spotlights on the outside. The luminosity of the garden entered the living room through the huge glass, and we could see each other easily. Mr. Smith encouraged me to go out to a small promontory marked by firs to each side of the house and facing the waters of Long Island Sound.

Down, on the left hand, there was a very protected cove, fully illuminated, between two rocks. Its sand was very thin, and I remember it getting inside one of my shoes. As I stood barefoot shaking the sand, I turned my head towards the house and there it was: incandescent and beautiful. You could only hear the rumour of the water in the shore. To portray the vision faithfully one should imagine the house over in a kind of pedestal, pointing to the sky as a white church organ. At the time I thought that its possession would escape my means, but that it was worth seeing the thing so closely, like someone who visits a museum or a waterfall.

After that, Mr. Smith and I went back to the house. The owners wanted to know what I was thinking, and I told them that I had not seen anything like it in my entire life. Then they asked if that meant that I approved, to which I replied raising my hands and pointing to the roof. At that moment, the lady of the dwellings woke up from her lethargy, really surprised.

We then sat on a white couch and matching seats, minus the lady who preferred a purple cushion, near

the fireplace. I was told that the house had been built for them by a young architect named Richard Meier, whose name I didn't retain at the time, worried as I was about the rental. I told them that I was afraid that the housing allowance would be insufficient, although I thanked them for their kindness to receive me. I remember Mr Smit's question: 'How much has Xerox assigned to your home per month?'; '750' the lady was quick to answer. Fredy Smith nodded his head and told her to prepare everything and send it to his address in New York. Then he turned to his wife, in attitude of questioning, and, looking at me afterwards, he added: 'If you want, you can stay now and sleep here. I leave the keys with you and our phone in New York, in case you need us, even though the house has no secrets.'

I breathed deep, not quite believing what was happening. I feared that suddenly there would appear somebody from the office celebrating the joke, and, worse, carrying some camera to immortalize the feat. But minutes passed and nothing like that occurred. The lady of the real estate agency asked me what time she would pick me up the next day, reminding me that I might have to go back to the Holiday Inn.

Then the Smith came down from the floor upstairs carrying a small suitcase. Before leaving, they had time to issue two Bluebeard style warnings, which they kindly presented in the form of two requests: One, most important: that nothing of the furniture and objects was to be changed. They expected me to understand that furniture was an integral part of the whole idea. I said I promised.

The second request had to do with the architect. He was just getting started and counted on being able to show the house to prospective customers. Drawings and models left too many questions that only visits to a real building could answer. I promised also to show the house with enthusiasm.

Perhaps to compensate for these restrictions, they added that, if I wanted, I could make use of the little sailboat, which that night had remained unnoticed. I thanked them, more out of courtesy than true interest. I went out with them to say goodbye at the door, and after a timid hand shaking, closed it, and was left alone inside. It was then I became aware of the aroma from the wooden walls, and which would welcome me from that night on, like incense from a church. It was something seductive, not too strong but impossible to ignore. No doubt it had a lot to do with wood, but also from the smell of glass and that of the furniture. Being painted all white, one might think that the house was built with hard materials; however, except for the columns, which were iron and the chimney that was brick, everything else was wood and glass.

The floor at lawn level left the dining room to one side. I noticed the fireplace repeated on the wall, and turned into the kitchen, hidden behind. It was small compared to others I had seen. Hanging on one wall there was a small frame the size of a box of cigars. It read:

SMITH HOUSE
National Architecture Prize 1968
Richard Meier

That name I was not going to forget anymore.

The fridge was empty. In the lounge bar there were drinks and snacks. I moved around looking for a bedroom. The main one was near the living room, set back to the back wall, but with the bed facing a large window in a covered space overlooking the sea. A navigator with powerful binoculars could observe the movements of the interior, especially at night.

It took me a little time to fall sleep and I remember being awakened by a ray of sunshine which had landed on my nose. Waking up at Smith House is like coming back to life in another planet. The sense of splendid isolation owes much to the uniqueness of the site. Similar places there are many in the world; but houses like that one, in 1971, there were none.

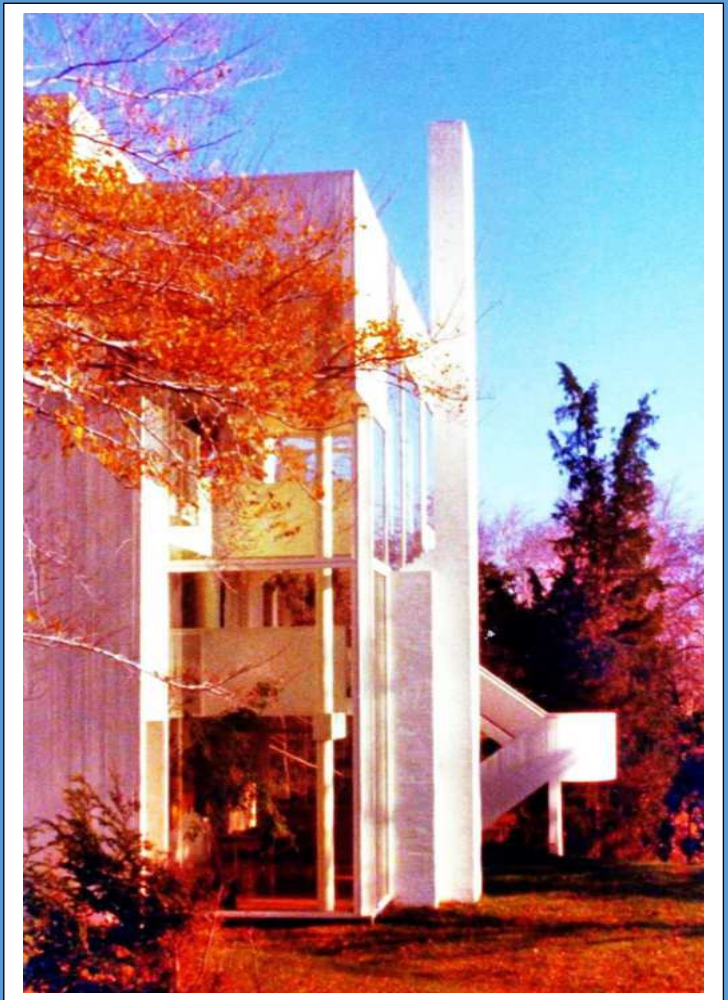
Planes heading to Kennedy Airport were starting their downward trajectory and could be seen from the left and highest angle of the glass, they hid briefly behind the chimney and continued going down until they disappeared behind a fir. On the beach, there was a wooden jetty that was accessible by almost invisible steps. And, indeed, the little boat which, noticing me, must have suspected a long period of hibernation.

That morning, the horn of the lady's station-wagon reminded me that my toothbrush was still in the Holiday Inn, and that there was no coffee left in the kitchen. By day, the Island of Contentment was anything but gloomy, though the trees hid the forest. Only the inhabitant's surnames pasted to mailboxes slightly betrayed their intimacy.

I arrived a little late at the office. The building, which used to seem powerful and harmonious to me, now looked snuck and almost ridiculous. Back in my office, I set out to pick up the work of previous days, without achieving concentration. The image of the house in Darien infiltrated my brain. The leaves from the trees that could be seen outside the window reminded me of the place where I had slept the night before. I got up to stretch my legs and started to walk around the padded corridor. That move made my secretary rise her head: 'Everything alright Mr. Orueta?' 'You see, Thérèse, I think I am in love'. Thérèse frowned. And I, raising the palms of my hands towards the ceiling, finished: 'In love... with a house'.



The Smith House



Intermezzo II

(a sailboat)

It wasn't the fear of a second suggestion to cross the waters of Long Island Sound to visit Barbara's aunt, nor the disrespectful wobble of the small sailboat. These reasons contributed to the decision but were not the main cause. It was the desire to see the house from the sea which moved me to choose a Sunday afternoon, when the waters were calm and ran a light breeze, as time to try my first outing on board of the boat.

One of the few times I used the garage, I had noticed a thin tube that was forgotten in a corner, like the harp of Bécquer, and surrounded by a kind of plastic cover, which could very well be a sail. Nearby, also against the wall, you could see a small boat engine which weighed more than it appeared at first glance.

The morning of that day I had gone down to inspect the sailboat and I could see that, in what one might call his navel, it had a fitting which could receive the garage tube and the enrolled sail. I also noticed that at the stern you could easily hang the little engine; so, everything was ready for the experiment.

A small sailboat, like a bicycle, offers a deceptive appearance of simplicity and innocence for those who think it is possible to use them for the first time without facing two or three shocks, at least. Regardless of this consideration, I busied myself moving from the garage to the beach several times, preparing for the event. The things from the garage had to be collected by the jetty. As I inserted the tube into its receptacle, it became the mast of the ship. From its top hung two wires as tousled locks, which were promptly fixed on both sides. Then it was the turn of the engine, which I placed at the stern, without difficulty and with my feet already in the water.

Sitting on the bench of the boat, I wondered whether the time had come to break loose, or better think twice about it. I noticed that if I leaned to the right the mast leaned to the right and that if I leaned to the left the mast leaned to the left. Encouraged by the docility of the mount, I released the ties that joined us to land, and tried unwinding the sail completely, which happened without my help, leaving a visible line at one end. The little wind pushed the sail aside, the line fell into the water, and it cost me some display of skill to recover it. Once I had it in my right hand, having the tiller in the other, the boat began to separate from the jetty. I felt something like the first time I rode on a donkey, especially when checking that if you moved the tiller to the left the boat went to the right; and vice versa. It didn't seem reasonable, and I took it as a rude reaction of the sailboat.

Another curious habit was that the sail behaved the opposite as it would have been expected. If you pulled

it, to slow down the mount, its reaction was to go faster and if you gave loose to the rein, it simply wouldn't move. Anyway: it was good to know and remember. Vessel and crew, closely together, managed to get away from the beach about two hundred meters, moment when I set out to turn my head to see, finally, the Smith House from the sea.

There she was, a little smaller, and indifferent to our manoeuvres. When leaving the area which was more protected from the wind, the ship suddenly rolled over and lay down floating. It was like the time I got thrown out to the ground by a horse in Segovia, for no reason. The worst wasn't the awkward sensation produced by cold water; that was important, but, more than that, was the fact that the small engine had disappeared.

I swam back to the beach to ponder, in dry condition, possible ways to secure the boat. My first idea was to go buy an anchor so that it would not go any further. This idea contained the problem of not knowing where to find an anchor shop. It seemed to me easier to buy a long rope and swim holding it to the boat. If one rope were not large enough, I would buy two and tie them up.

That's what I did. I drove out with the car to Ridgeway Centre and found what I wanted. It took me half an hour to get back to the house, hoping the boat had not 'gone with the wind'.

When I got to the top of step which leads down to the beach, I saw that the boat was quietly resting in the jetty. Next to her, shone the chrome of a boat that

evidently was from the Police. Two officers were already stepping on the sand and when they saw me upstairs, they moved their hands waving. We exchanged polite words, and since then my territorial waters were the subject of assiduous vigilance, which gave me diverging feelings: of security on the one hand, and of being victim of meddling on the other. Nevertheless, on the day of the shipwreck the capital thought was that the little ship had been saved and that the attitude of her salvagers could not have been more polite and attentive. I was already learning that at sea nobody snubs other people mistakes.

That afternoon, however, my thoughts followed other avenues. Despite having come out relatively well, I felt submerged in a state of melancholy that could not be attributed solely to the realization that I had to buy another engine. What was happening to me was that an illusion, an incipient and tiny illusion, had vanished. A door, small but open to a vast space, had suddenly closed. The Smith House look diminished, as if shrunk, and the flight of the geese almost irritated me. I went downstairs to collect the ship's rigging; I disassembled the mast and rolled up the sail, tying it carefully with the line, which came out in the shape of a mouse's tail. Everything had to go back to the garage.

Then I stopped to think a bit about the garage. From the beginning my attitude towards the garage had been quite inconsiderate. Most times, I would leave the car outside, without bothering to make use of the protected space. That garage couldn't have a good opinion of me, because I didn't have a good opinion of it. Being so detached from the house and so lacking in

grace, I attributed its existence to an untimely request from its owners, possibly Carole. At the Smith House it played an expendable role, an afterthought that assimilated him to an adopted entity, in whose veins did not run the same blood as that of its parents.

That day, I noticed that he had lost his sulky air and that my unsuccessful navigation and subsequent shipwreck made him crack with laughter. With mast and sail under my arms, I stopped for a moment in front of the door. 'You are not ugly' I told him. 'I apologize for not using your services a little more often' I added.

Light came in from the outside through the raised gate. Nevertheless, I lit the indoor lamps to better see inside. I looked at the coin where the mast had been and put it back in the same position. When I was about to leave, something caught my attention greatly. Something that was leaning against another wall, something that was shaped like a wing or fin, the size of a large dog, but quite smooth and sharp. All of which would not have been of much interest under normal circumstances, had it not been for its colour. It had the same, identical, unmistakable red colour of the ship. It was a keel.



Intermezzo III

(Caramoor)

I had been scheming for several days the impending sacrifice of the Chevy Monte Carlo for the sake of a better adaptation to the tastes of my unknown neighbours of Contentment Island, when a wonderful event came to his aid, and ensured its permanence in my company.

The resistance that the sea had opposed to my attempts to be welcomed, made me turn my face to land, settling for more familiar and friendly spaces. Steeped in the purpose of appreciating what is at hand instead of chasing the elusive, I asked my car to take me wherever it wanted, so long as it wasn't the office, because it was Saturday.

Fairfield County is a forest, and the roads are like walks inside a park. In autumn, the trees look like paintings by a beginner in which he had used all the tubes of his box. In winter, the leaves abandon the branches, and the area only regains its lost beauty when it snows. Then, the colour white substitutes or represents all others, as Meier would have said. Sometimes it snows too much, branches break, older trees fall, and the power goes off. Everyone must

remove the snow from their plot, something that turns out to be more painful than it might seem at first sight.

The car followed its instinct and drove me inland, crossing forests and two highways, with so much dedication that it began to worry me. After half an hour we stopped seeing trees and we entered a more civilized region of meadows and elms, which reminded me of the English landscape. The road became narrower, we had got lost and it was time to return. But we had three cars in front of us and there was no way we could overtake them. In more open fields, they began to circulate slowly. Their caution intrigued me. One after the other were turning to the left, leaving out of the main road in a semi-hidden deviation. At the corner, a T-shaped board announced Caramoor.

I assumed it was a rural restaurant and followed the track of the last of the preceding cars. We arrived at a beautiful meadow, the size of a square, and all three cars lined up and stopped their engines. In the background, an imposing Florentine style arcade emerged against the blue of the sky with no other apparent utility than to attract attention.

As soon as I got out of the car, at the other end of my visual horizon appeared, surrounded by trees, a Roman villa, which could also have been taken for a Spanish convent. Being so out of its natural environment, that severe mole, with its red tiles and Mediterranean stones, produced a sense of unreality. The occupants of the cars headed to the entrance of the building, and I took the occasion to pretend that I came with them. A large wrought iron door was the

first obstacle. To each side there were two small buildings, joined by a central arch, with lateral gates doors. I tried to pass but someone stopped me with a determined, polite, and almost obsequious gesture. That someone was an Englishman who liked to look like it: foulard of silk around the neck, suede jacket, shiny big shoes, handkerchief in the jacket pocket. He made me go to the office next to the door, offered me a seat and sat behind a table. 'I am assuming you want to become a sponsor?' were his words. A diploma made me member of Caramoor (25 \$ a year), which had just been open to the Public.

From the large entrance, the first thing you could see was a courtyard with the appearance of a cloister; columns and corridors in its four sides. It was the 'Spanish Courtyard', where the chamber concerts would take place. In one corner, a grand piano was awaiting its turn, sheathed for protection. Around this courtyard were various rooms and main halls. Each of them was a museum by itself, with furniture, pictures, fabrics, watches, and curtains brought from Italy, France, or Spain, in accordance with the spirit of the mansion, which was strongly southern. The Chinese exception, which some might judge discordant, was no different than the *coins chinois* of European palaces.

The dining room was composed of a long wooden table with endless chairs and over them a coffered ceiling. At both ends of the table there were two armchairs with legs one inch taller than the rest, following a European custom of the time, to give a plus of visibility to the hosts. The whole set came from a palace in Toledo, Spain.

One of the bedrooms kept a bed where Napoleon was said to have spent the night. Another room, imported in its entirety, apparently had belonged to Pope Boniface VIII. Elegant doors were attributed to the home of the Capuletti, in Verona. Everything was like that, a bit surreal, not in a pejorative sense, but meaning dreamy.

In a corner of the music room there was a curious artifact, like an old radio. My host explained that it was a musical instrument, named *Teremin*. All you had to do was to stand in front of it and move your hands like conductors do, and the teremin would answer (provided it was plugged in) with musical sounds, like those of the cello, each note corresponding to each gesture. It had been invented by a Russian, with a complex and errant life. His name was Leon Termen, expert in electronics, and had married three wives, one in America. One day he asked a sculptor to make a wood carving with the eagle and the shield of the United States. The object was placed in the American embassy as a gift from Russia to a friendly country. For years it was broadcasting conversations to the Russians. Finally, the Americans found out and made a movie with details of the intriguing story.

Termen had conquered favour with the Rosen, who protected him with moral support and money. The teremin was there because the late lady of the house had distinguished herself as a concert player of this instrument in important cities. She even had had sympathetic composers write music scores. Her name was Lucia Bilgelow before she married Walter Rosen, and they had two children: Walter and Ann. The Rosen

lost their son Walter in World War II. Ann was the only heir and could be seen in Caramoor, busy bringing her parents Foundation to life.

Her father, the patriarch, was a German immigrant, who arrived in New York in the 1920s and became known as a lawyer in a real estate law firm. From there he went on to work in a bank and become a rich banker. He accumulated more than he could keep in the house of New York. In need of space, he turned to a former partner to find him a residential bargain as large as possible and not far away. The search ended in Katohna. Walter went to see the property, whose owner was married to Caroline Moore. The name Caramoor comes from hers.

Walter did not like the buildings, but he found the farm excellent, with beautiful trees and bright. He would tear down the houses and build in its place the villa of his dreams. After the crisis of 29, Walter began to look at those walls with more forgiving eyes. Caramoor was saved from demolition. Florentine dreams bore fruit in an open-air opera house containing the arches I had noticed without guessing their purpose.

Lucia used to invite musicians to Caramoor, together with music-loving friends, who enjoyed not only the music but also the hospitality of the Rosen. Among them were some eminent artists, such as Artur Schnabel and Bruno Walter (I was able to verify this statement in successive visits, sitting next to a gentleman in a white jacket, who listened to Alicia de Larrocha play the piano and whose face belonged to Leonard Bernstein). Instead of having to pay for a

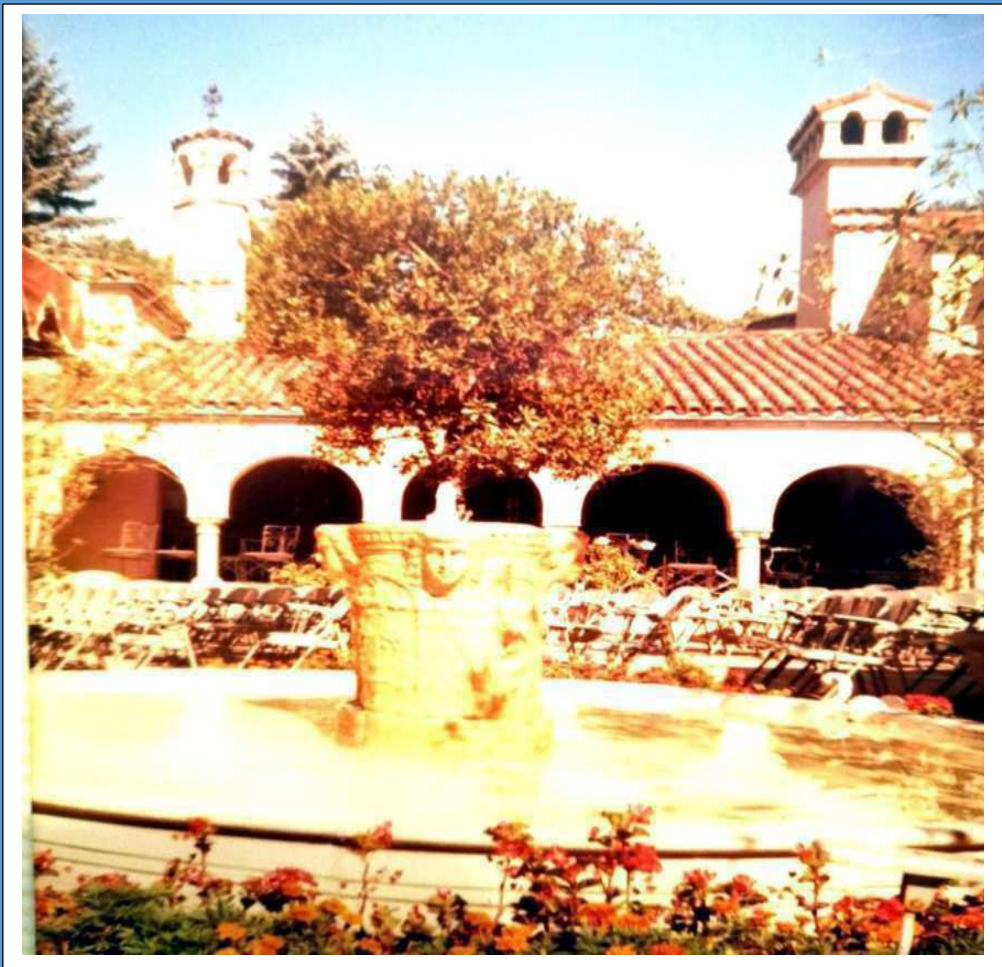
night in Manhattan, they were picked up by the Foundation, or Anna Rosen herself, and up they went to Katonah, where they were treated like princes or princesses, dining, sleeping in any of the eight rooms and having breakfast, delighted with Caramoor. Sometimes they paid back with a concert for people like me.

As I listened to the explanations of the Englishman, an interesting aroma was coming from the kitchens. I thought I knew enough about Caramoor and we returned to the front door.

Back on Contentment Island, I refrained from commenting these admirable events with my car, but once we got to Tokeneke, I put it in the garage and patting him on the back, I told him not to worry anymore.

Before going to bed, I entertained myself thinking about Caramoor. The *Spirit of Contradiction* hovered over the top of the Smith House, which was the antithesis of Caramoor. Were Meier and Rosen this opposite? Rosen died before Meier built anything, but it is easy to guess that the house of his dreams, the one he never built, would not have been entrusted to Meier, not even for free. Rosen, like Goethe, dreamed of '*that country where the lemon tree flourishes*', and Meier, also like Goethe, would ask for *light... more light!*.

And I understood them both, as incapable of deciding as Buridan's donkey.



Caramoor

Alicia de
Larrocha

Leonard
Bernstein

Chevy
Montcarlo



Intermezzo IV

(the oracle)

The idea of sending three airline tickets was of no use. On the first visit to my children, I was able to find out that their mother had exchanged the tickets for money, to contribute to the expenses of the commune. Besides, she wouldn't let my sons visit me in America because her lawyer advised against, as the Law could make her unable to claim them, once in U.S. territory. So, I was the one who came to see them in Denmark. I used to pick them up in the commune and take them for lunch in a restaurant, before entering the Copenhagen parks. I watched how they were growing, and I was impressed, above all, by the way Lars extended his protecting arms towards little David.

In those days, I very much wanted to talk to them about the Smith House. In the same way as Richard Meier had designed a slide for Dagny, it was clear to me that the rooms on the top floor of the Smith House belonged to them. But since I wasn't sure to be able to turn that dream into reality, I was happy with just enjoying their company and that, back to the commune, they could talk about how they had enjoyed the time spent with me.

During my journeys back to America I was immersed in thoughts about the origin of my misadventure, which I placed in a precise day, years before I even got to know their mother. A phone call to a certain Ursuline person had disturbed my inner peace for years. 'Sorry to tell you that I am getting married', that's what she answered. Until that moment, I had held the conviction that my life would make a lot of sense if the one who married her was to be me and, on the contrary, it would be an error of Nature if she preferred another.

After seven years of that dire warning, was my life a vacuous life? Not completely. Every event, good or bad, is chained to the next good or bad, so that, if one eliminates the bad ones, the good ones also disappear. As in the strange life of Ivan Osokin, without the elusiveness of the Ursuline, there would be no Lars, no David, nor I would be living in Smith House.

Yes... but.

Inside, I sometimes was lost in thought, while looking at the strange piece that Meier had placed at the mantelpiece, perhaps intending to counterbalance so much whiteness around. It looked African, may be a souvenir of a trip. I considered it an object of worship, a representation of the seed, always impure, of Beauty. For me it was an oracle, like the Indian bronzes in the house of the Russian. 'All things can be made to return, but to no use', said the magician.

Return... I remembered my excitement when ascending in the elevator to the flat where she lived in 1952,

ringing the doorbell and meeting her mother, me not knowing what to say. She smiled, gave me a small photo of her daughter, and gently accompanied me back to the door.

The three useless tickets offered curious similarities with that photograph. The oracle of the Smith House was less pessimistic than the Russian magician. 'All things can be made to return, and chance decides, sometimes in favour, sometimes against. But it is never the same'. His words alerted me. I had to go back to the turning point of my previous life and place myself there again, so that chance could find the opportunity to intervene.

Almost twenty years after the first time, I went back to that flat and saw her mother again. She told me that the marriage was not going well. I was given some news of her daughter, among them that she would attend a congress of pharmacists in Tel Aviv.

Back at Smith House, the oracle didn't seem alluded nor gave any signs of giving up. While some wood was consumed in a fatuous way under its base, I dared to insinuate that he was wrong and Ouspensky was quite right: 'All things can be turned back, but to no use'. I insisted: 'In vain, devil, do you hear me'?

'Perhaps you ought to buy another ticket' was his reply.

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The plane landed in Tel Aviv and several soldiers entered the cabin who proceeded to ask for documents before authorizing to disembark. I asked the taxi driver

to take me to a central hotel. The congress was in its third day. I found about the hotel where the Spaniards were staying, went to the place and struck up a conversation with the concierge. Indeed, she slept there, but she was absent all day. Apparently well accompanied by a professor from Tel Aviv University, who would pick her up and return her to the hotel in the evening.

In my hotel room I meditated on the futility of my impulses, every time I tried some form of proximity. There was the consolation of presenting myself in front of her, telling her the truth, and saying goodbye.

At breakfast, the next day, I appeared in the dining room of her hotel, and I told her bluntly why I was there. 'I am sorry, but today I am expecting a professor' 'Cannot you excuse yourself?' 'He is going to show me the city and I am invited to his house' 'I will go with you' 'Say I am your brother' Her gaze reminded me of her mother's twenty years earlier.

He was talking while driving a yellow Volkswagen Beetle; she was looking at everything outside the right window and I was behind them, leaning forward a little to see her in profile.

The professor's house was flat and extended, on the outskirts. It had a covered terrace at ground level, with a table and chairs where we were undoubtedly going to eat, protected by a handrail. His wife was in a bad mood, partly from having an unexpected guest and partly from having a guest unwanted. She got up to prepare things in the kitchen and a minute later I

followed her. It was an instinctive act and we both felt that we had put a bit of acidity in the sweetness of the moment that the other two lived.

With the trade-offs made, lunch was enjoyable for everyone. The after-dinner, however, seemed like the third act of a comedy that was missing the fourth to know how it was going to end. The professor was supposed to return the two brothers to their hotel. But, to me, that ending was unacceptable, and, without thinking what I was doing, I suddenly got up looking at my watch and said in Spanish: 'We have to go'. The hosts turned to her, puzzled, looking for translation. I took her by the hand repeating: 'We have to go, come on, or we will be late!'

I don't remember how it happened. I was driving a rented car and she was looking at me with amusement. It all seemed very funny to her. She couldn't stop laughing at everything. I, who had started without seeing the comic side, began to feel caught in. 'Where are we going?' she asked, 'I don't know, perhaps to Lake Tiberias, where miracles happen'. Smile. 'Or to Mount Carmel, in the obscure night of the Soul'. Silence.

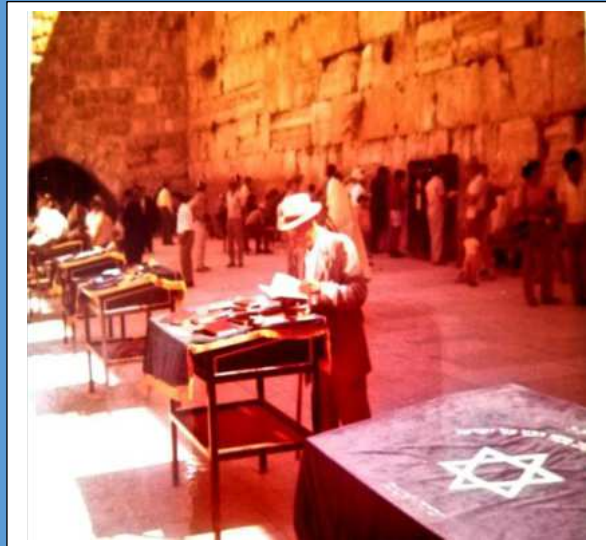
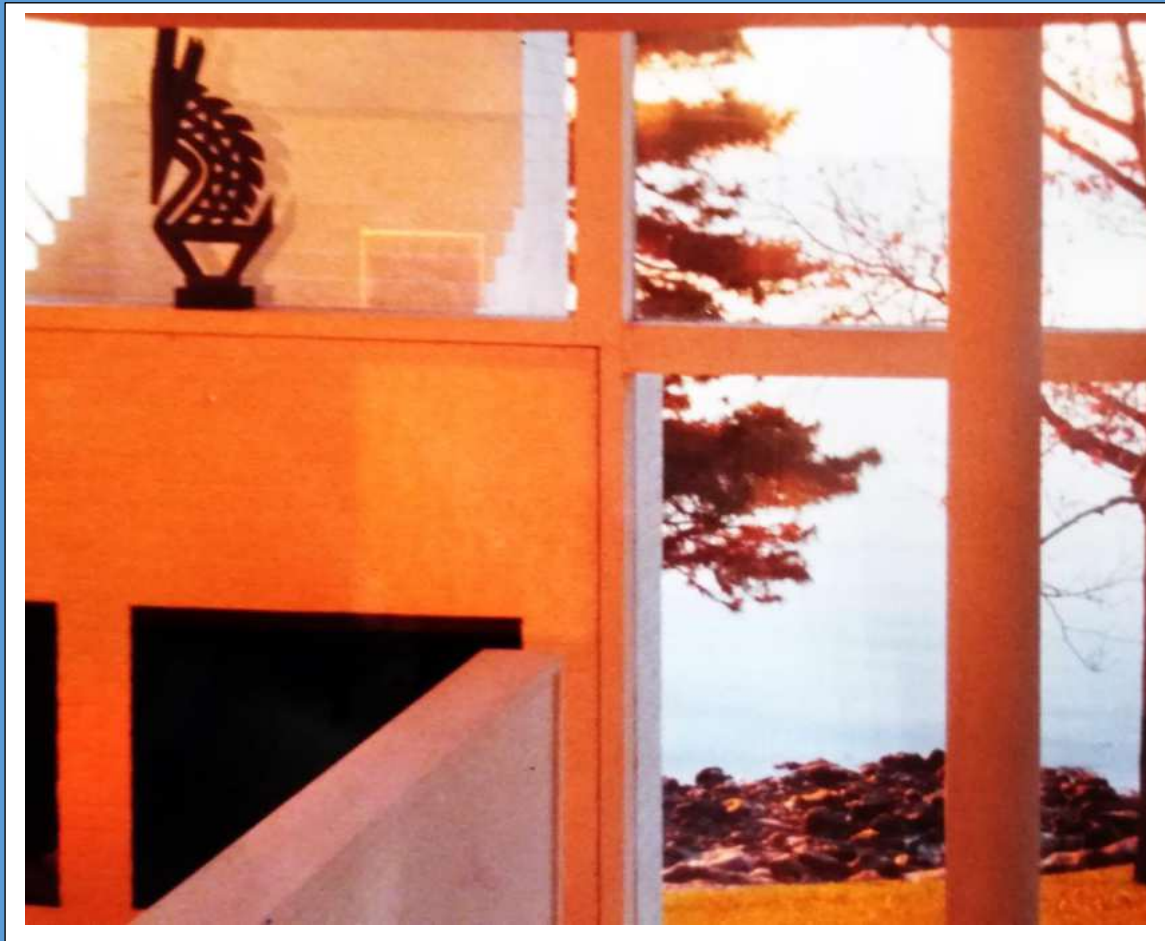
At the lake we met Spaniards from the Congress who were sightseeing, and we sneaked out of their reach...as we assumed that they would be missing her at the meetings. Later we noticed the group everywhere: in Jerusalem, in Haifa, in Jericho, in the Dead Sea and in Bethlehem. Seeing them so passive, while they listened, caused hilarity in us because we imagined that some were commenting on the strange

disappearance of the pharmacist favoured by the professor. In front of the Wailing Wall, I dared to write a suggestion for my future on a piece of paper. She didn't ask for anything.

Days later we were in Rome, in an apartment whose keys my friend from Rank Xerox, Luigi Pellegrini, had agreed to lend me, emulating Jack Lemon. It was raining heavily in the neighbouring Piazza del Popolo. '*Too much rain falling*' Carole King had anticipated in 1968. '*Non scordarti di me*' repeated Iva Zanicchi, on the way back from Israel. Had they been premonitions from the Smith House?

Meier's oracle watched me amused. 'How was it?' he asked, though he knew the answer. 'How was it?' I asked, timidly. The strange figure seemed to look up to the bedrooms. 'Are you coming back alone?'

I closed my eyes. The image of Lars, with his arm around his brother's shoulder, protecting him, got in the way and made the vision vanish.



Oracle Ursuline The Wailing Wall

Chapter IX

Bette Davis' Villa

I got a call from Carole Smith telling me that she had divorced. In her agreement with Federick, the house of Contentment Island was granted to her, so she asked me when she could have it back. I hung up the phone and started singing so I wouldn't cry. I imagined myself living again in the Holiday Inn and told Jack and Liz Thomas, who had just arrived from Europe. I was still at Richard Meier's house when they called to offer me a *pied a terre* in the gardener house of the villa where they lived. I found out that their white colonial mansion, with its little windows and green Venetian blinds, belonged to Bette Davis.

Pier way landing

Finding anything like the Smith House was impossible. The same real estate company started looking and the same lady showed up one afternoon saying she had the perfect house for me. When I saw the place, I told her I already knew how to reach it by boat. It was true, I had already sailed from Smith House to *Pier way landing* and climbed the ladder of the prolonged pier that was supported on wooden pilasters. The owner's name was John Van Rensselaer.

I asked him if that long wooden construction on the Saugatuck River made part of the property. He answered: 'Of course. Do you like sailing?'

John Duerden

John and Wendy had Argentine neighbors, owners of a sailing boat. In order not to disturb conversation, I tried to speak little or zero Spanish when we went sailing in Long Island Sound. John insisted on teaching me how to. He was very patient, and I learned enough to dare to buy one.

The Cape Dory Typhoon.

In New Port, Rhode Island, I stumbled upon a sea wolf smoking his pipe and sitting at the foot of an office of the port. He saw me somewhat lost, and we talked. 'Interested in buying a boat?' 'I'm thinking about it' As it was obvious that I had already thought about it, he gave me the following advice: 'Before you sign anything, go to a good butcher shop, and find out the price of the most expensive meat they offer. If the pound of the chosen boat is cheaper, don't buy it'. I made the experiment. A pound of Cape Dory Typhoon was somewhat more expensive, so I bought all her pounds. In winter, ships could not stay in the water. They had to be beached and sheathed. Cleaning and painting the hulls in Spring was a sure way of making friends. My neighbor to starboard was more talkative than the one to port. He mentioned a friend from his father who had had many yachts, and none had made him as happy as a small Cape Dory, just like mine. 'Probably it was his first' I said to myself.

Flavin flees

Joe Flavin's International Division wasn't acting to everybody's content. European business was growing too fast and to leave all this in the hands of an experimental Division had two problems a) Flavin complained of lack of resources and (b) the other Vice-Presidents did not like having to ask for his approval in too many instances. Adding to this was the realization that Joe, who came from IBM, was an ambitious rival. Had he believed in Xerox future, he might have settled for the position he had, but Joe was the first to guess that Xerox's strategy was going the wrong way. So, he resigned. He left to preside over the machine sewing company, Singer, which was suffering losses due to obsolescence, and turned it into a profitable aerospace concern. For those of us in his team who remained, that meant having to be relocated. Without Flavin, for me, the illusion of working at Xerox was no longer the same. And besides, he left me without a protector, that figure that multinationals have copied from convents. In Madrid it had been Sargisson. In London Mike Hughes and in America: Joe Flavin, for a brief time.

A World without paper

A clever Slovak foreteller could be found in one of the offices of Xerox Stamford headquarters. He had fled the Nazis before WW2. His name: Paul Strassman. His office was unique in that there was no desk inside. Just a primitive personal computer and a comfortable chair. Paul officiated as *Guru* of the company. His mission was to forecast the future of technologies applied to the reproduction of documents. Documents? He had

predicted that the World was on its way to become a Paperless Society.

Guidelines

When the International Division was dismantled, the writer of these lines was relocated to the Planning Division of Donald Pendery, who regained authority over Rank Xerox, Fuji Xerox, Xerox of Canada, and Xerox Latin America. My mission remained to manage the logistics of long-term planning in these four Divisions. Evidently, I couldn't tell them to forget about paper. The plans were for seven years, and paper seemed to retain its good health. But just around the corner, lurked some bad news.

The end of monopoly

In a world of possible scenarios, one thing at least was certain: the patent of Chester Carlson was due to expire in 1976. And the last years of the L.R. plans were beginning to exceed that date. I thought back of Flavin's escape and started to bring up the topic in my conversations with my new vice-president. At the time, two opposing strategies were being considered: a) The Palo Alto visionaries, who agreed with Strassman and advocated small computers and b) The Rochester County orthodoxy, maintained by Xerox veterans, who were committed to manufacture machines ever closer to the printing press, while incorporating improvements from California. In both cases the fact that the xerographic patent was about to expire didn't seem to bother them. For the personal computer it was unnecessary. And the machines that were being

designed to suit Rochester taste, would be so complex and advanced that their xerographic nature would appear to be a secondary feature.

Big is beautiful

In Rochester there was an admitted aversion to anything small. Even to small computers. Large products, for large customers & and large bills was the *motto*. I couldn't help but remember my frustration when looking at the copiers they called "small". They weren't. What Xerox needed urgently, thought I, was a *true* small, good, and cheap plain paper copier. That strategy I considered the best response to the end of the monopoly. Just the opposite of the rampant orthodoxy.

The quiet Japanese

Seeing that Pendery wasn't supporting my viewpoint openly (though secretly agreeing) I opted to look for an ally from the Japanese partners of Xerox. Negotiating alliances was one level above my responsibilities, let alone suggesting them to President Archie McArdell. But I could try to convince Bill Souders, who was Vice President Operations. With this in my mind, I approached the Japanese director Yotaro Kobayashi and asked him what information Fuji had about other Japanese companies that I knew were planning to make copiers like those of Xerox. For months I heard nothing from him. I thought maybe I had hurt his patriotism. And yet, when he turned up the following year heading the Fuji Xerox Long Range Plan presentation, Tony took out of his portfolio a thick

computer listing of many pages. He told me: 'Take it, Luis, it's not a secret. It comes from the M.I.T.I'

The house

Although the lady of the agency assured me that the house that she was going to show me looked like the Smith House, the Smith's was white and this one was black. Unlike the Smith house, which had no curtains, Van Rensselaer's was protected from the sun with rotating white blinds. The interior resembled a huge aviary, inviting to jump from one level to another. Another peculiarity was a certain lack of intimacy: Before arriving, one had to pass Carol Chambliss's home, who could see people going in or out, from several windows.

Maria Eugenia

She becomes more real to me if I recall her by her name instead of referring to her as 'Mam' or mother. Is it correct to express one's feelings with affectionate phrases, gestures, caresses, and hugs? Not in palaces, not in embassies, not in monasteries and not in Castille, region of the world from which the Royal Protocol was adopted by most European courts. Then? Then, love and affection are more correctly manifested by favors, gifts, and invitations.

La Boheme

I have told you already that Maria Eugenia had a special liking for this opera. She, like many people, appreciated a story that was not unreal. Rodolfo the poet asks himself: 'Che cosa facio?' 'Scrivo' 'E come vivo?' 'Vivo'. Besides, the

primacy of melody facilitates remembrance. This is the case with the duet where we can hear *They call me Mimí*. In Segovian way, I invited my mother to hear that opera in the Metropolitan, for which it was inevitable she had to travel to America.

A faint

I was happy seating by her side in the Met. During the intermission I wanted to show it jumping above the seats from our row to the one behind. What happened to me was the same as once playing (badly) tennis with my friend Dominguez, when I tried to jump over the net. That I fell. In the Metropolitan I got up right away and my mother and I went out to the Hall to celebrate our evening with 2 glasses of champagne. Then some mocking spirit took over my body and I fainted, falling to the floor on the red carpet, just under a menacing huge crystal chandelier that blinded my vision, so I closed my eyes. I tell this regretting the brief scare of Maria Eugenia, but also for being trivial. After some seconds, I came to my senses, and we went laughing back to our seats to keep hearing the sad story of Musette and Mimí.

Ecce me veniens

Two hours before, I asked myself: Is what is happening true? Is there anything that can prevent it? I rubbed my eyes and pinched me in the face. The car was ready, the tank was full, I knew how to get to Kennedy airport without getting lost, the watch seconds kept moving forward... Two hours later, the Ursuline was at home unpacking her suitcase. She took out two white doves, life-size, made of something resembling paper. And a kite.

From a window of the second floor, I could see her on the beach, looking up to the sky and playing with her kite, which seemed to complain about the thread that held her back and prevented her from flying free.

Bluebeard

In Connecticut, no one locks the doors of the houses. Neighbors can come in at any time, although they know how to be discreet and avoid disturbing. Two days after the arrival of the Ursuline, Carol Chambliss appeared smiling, and I made the introductions. The three of us were sitting in the living room conversing with some difficulty because of the language. Carol Hurley also appeared, with her young daughter. The same ceremony and the same small confidences. Both Carols mentioned being divorced. Since then, the Ursuline, whenever she referred to the house, she called it: the castle of Bluebeard.

The sonnets

She looked at me amused, like watching a snail sunbathing after the rain or a puppy that starts walking. At no time did she feel uncomfortable or not knowing what to do. Speaking of the sonnets I had written to her, she said that they were very sad, and that this sadness might be due to an excess of hormones. The observation wasn't the most romantic thing I've ever heard, but if one stands to write memoirs without lying, he must be ready to admit some shocks.

New Orleans

I had a great idea. 'Why don't we have coffee in the Ursuline Street of New Orleans?' '*Pourquoi pas?*' she answered. First by train to New York, then by plane to Atlanta, then by bus to New Orleans and then on a cruise on the Mississippi. On the street of the Ursulines stands the convent, a replica of the old building in the French Quarter. (The Ursulines of today are in the center of the city). In those moments of walks and shared wonders, I told myself that *Time ought to have a stop*.

In the Saugatuck Cove

Time did not have a stop. When we came back, we organized some short crossings on Long Island Sound, accompanied by John and Wendy Duerden. We two, sailed alone most times. Happy, oh you! Cape Dory Typhoon who took her on board, happy the helmsman, happy the waters that welcomed the small boat and, above all: happy the soft wind that moved everything with the care of a Roman priestess.

Adieu

The day of saying goodbye arrived. The two white pigeons stayed with me. When I came back from the airport and opened the door of the house I felt as I was about to enter a prison. I set out to annul the marriage with Lene. I wrote her a very thoughtful letter, so as not to hurt her self-esteem unnecessarily.

Divorce

I don't know what she thought when she received it. In her reply she said that in Denmark what existed was divorce, and that she could not admit not having been married to me. Of course, she continued, without divorce there would be no annulment. I said yes to whatever her lawyer proposed and therefore the divorce went very fast. But, once obtained, Lene refused to grant the annulment. Before getting married we had signed a document written express to facilitate annulment in Spain, but she kept it; I only had a copy. The priest of the convent told me the only solution was trying to convince her to change her mind.

Uprooting

Without the Ursuline, Pier Way Landing was a tomb. Better moving. I would look for a mooring for the Cape Dory. My friends the Kauffmans mentioned that house renting was a very rare thing in Connecticut and that my Bank would be delighted to finance a purchase in line with my salary. They were right, one could find more homes for sale than for rent and the bank knew almost as much about Xerox as I did.

Prohibition

There is in Fairfield County a place that outsiders call disparagingly *The sticks*, whose true name is Whipstick. The neighbors in the area vote once a year whether or not to abolish Prohibition. And the result has been always to maintain it. Which means: no restaurants, no hotels, no malls, or supermarkets. Just what was intended. A very secluded part of the world with few houses

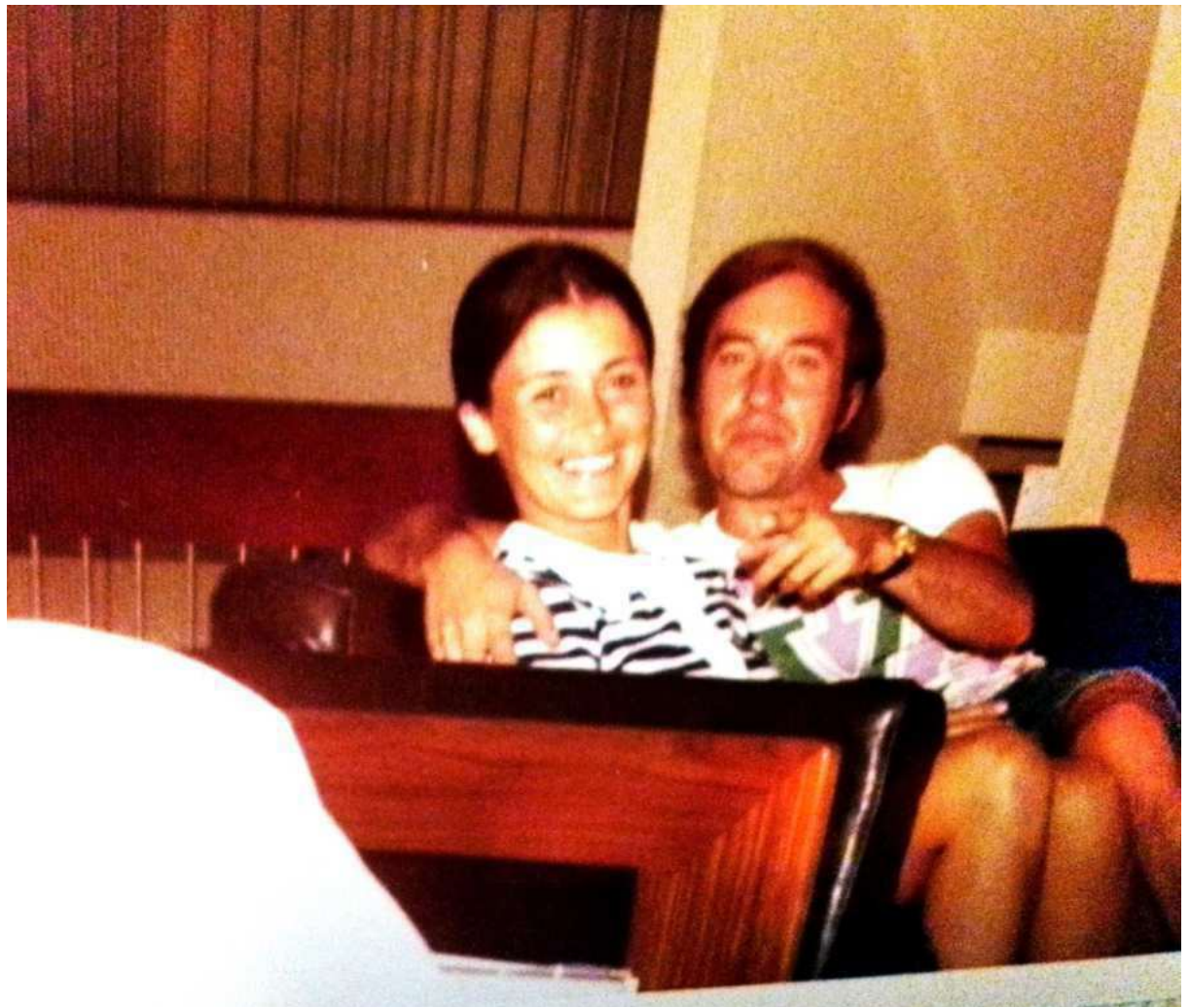
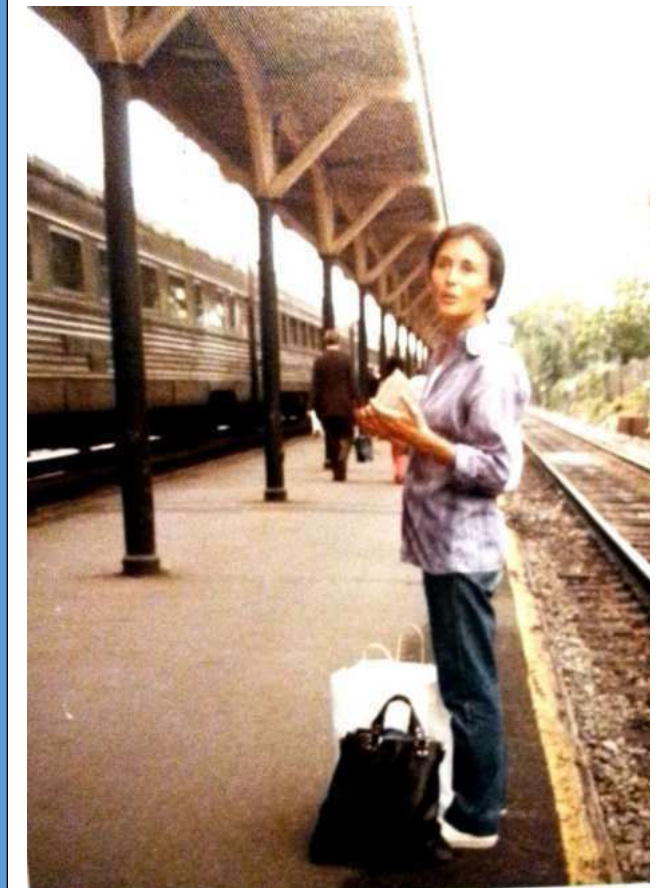
hidden under tall trees. At night there are no streetlamps nor any light other than the Moon, illuminating narrow paths. All very *spooky* and mysterious.

The Weeping wife owner

When I found out what I had just said, I asked my real estate agent to drive me to Wilton Forest without delay or prejudice. Seeing Antler Lane's house and remembering Smith House was a matter of seconds. The home in front of me was owned by a very young couple. They explained how the concept for a house in middle of the forest became a reality. First there would be a huge stone fireplace: imposing as a monolith. It had a space reserved for firewood, always visible, as if prepared for some neolithic ceremony. Outside the building was rust green, including the roof. The narrow stairs led to a kind of loft, where the master bedroom was visible, with only three walls, the fourth replaced by an open space from where to look down at the fireplace and the rest of the house. Behind the fireplace, and invisible from above, surrounded by glass and views to the forest, there was a space, which I awarded the *Chickering*, a grand piano which I will recall later because of its importance in the coming to the world of my first grandchild. I already said that the owners were young. He had been relocated to the West coast with so good an offer that they couldn't refuse it. I looked at her face while he was talking and I saw that she was smiling, and yet her eyes were fogged with tears. 'Don't worry' said I 'I stay here, and will reserve it for you when you come back'.

Another divorce

The Duerdens had met the Ursuline from the day that we sailed together and, now and then, they asked me about her. Through these conversations they came to know about my divorce and soon the whole Company found out. Until then the official version was that Lene did not want to live in the United States, a kind of sickness, and therefore forgivable. Divorce was something else, worse in those days. I noticed that I didn't get any more invitations to parties. At a dinner where several English couples met, including John and Wendy, something happened. Wendy must have drunk more than prudence recommends and her feelings ceased to be hidden. The Duerden marriage broke and ended up in divorce. And poor Wendy was never seen again.



Chapter X

The Squirrels

My first companions at Antler Lane were squirrels, and at night raccoons. The squirrels they woke me up making a big fuss over the roof of wood. I could hear the raccoons emptying the bucket of the garbage to see what they found that seemed interesting. As much as I tried to make it difficult, they always managed to remove the lid and knock down the bucket. They had a funny face, like the panda. with large white whiskers. They were night owls and avoided humans. Squirrels, instead, they walked very close to the windows. I felt amused watching them hide small fruits in anticipation of the snow. Finally, sometimes you could see, and what it's worse, smell, some errand skunks.

Lars and David

The divorce had a first beneficial effect. Seeing that I had behaved well in everything, especially regarding the partition of property, the lawyer advised Lene to let Lars and David visit me in Connecticut. I remember my pilgrimages to buy sheets and pillows trying to choose them as joyful as possible. The Cape Dory had been a single mother (Anglo-Saxons boats are

feminine) and gave birth to a *dinghy* to bring us ashore in the Long Island crossings.

Hughes v. Allaire

While these pleasant things were happening on Whipstick Road 165, there arrived from London to the Stamford offices a quartet composed of two friends and two foes. Friends: gentleman Michael Hughes and his Squire Dave Catanneo, one of my former subordinates. Both creators of wealth and tolerant. The enemies: the knight Paul Allaire and his squire Hanfried Haedeler, financial creeps and intransigent. I would have preferred that they had stayed on Euston Road, and I had remained the only expat in America. *Mais, quoi pourrait-on faire?*

The air hostesses

Lars and David had to go back to school. Their days in America always passed too fast. I took them to the airport and entrusted to the care of the hostesses of Scandinavian Airlines, who put them badges with their names. Despite their kindness, there was something pathetic about those scenes of farewell. My sons were still too small for separation from father. A wound of too long absences became difficult to heal. I don't know what Lars was thinking. In the case of David, it's still open.

The empty house

My existence has known a more than usual frequency of returns to empty houses. In Whipstick, games and laughter stopped being heard and everything became

serious and taciturn. The house was beginning to look like its owner.

An unexpected visit

Telepathy or coincidence, the fact is that my mother announced that she was willing to visit America again, this time with Alejandro's wife, Pili, clarifying in her letter that they had become close friends. My mother remembered Carol Chambliss, the neighbor of Pier Way Landing who kept her company while I worked. They were both happy to see each other again. The four of us gathered in Antler Lane and thanks to their company I recovered from an incipient depression. A short time later, Alejandro's mother, Juanita, who had seen with bad eyes the escape of his daughter-in-law, insisted on repeating it with herself as the protagonist.

My neighbors

The day after my mother arrived, I introduced her to my neighbors from Antler Lane. David and Mary McCue. A young couple with children, helpful and welcoming. The property boundaries were only clear in the title deeds. On the ground it didn't matter. The only responsibility to insurance companies was to remove the snow to avoid people falling and being hurt. María Eugenia, my mother, was appreciated easily and I saw them laugh together, despite the difficulty of language. With Bob and Liz Perry, she managed in French. Their house was somewhat lower and in the opposite direction. They had no children and therefore they lived in a little dollhouse with very

old and small furniture, and in which every detail was very thought out and an object of conversation. The Perrys also became friends of my mother, and of Pili Ramírez and Mercedes Rico, the Diplomatic who came to see me a couple of times. And now I remember something about Bob and Liz that deserves a separate paragraph.

The Triumph Stag

After two or three visits to the dollhouse, Bob felt brave enough to tell me, jokingly, that if I wanted to remain friends with them, I had to change car. I told them their hippie van brought me bad memories. They still insisted. It was a coincidence that a friendly and very British John Marlow, who owned a Triumph Stag, was planning to return to London. His car was for sale. Imagine a convertible sweet thing, colored peach yellow, with a top as black as coal. This time, I thought, Bob and Liz will be proud of their neighbor. I felt sorry for the Monte Carlo, who had been a loyal companion in my better and not so good days. Weeks after, I was deservedly punished. The beautiful Triumph broke continuously. I ended up making friends with the crane man and all the authorized workshop technicians. All her pieces had to be brought from England. Desperate, I changed from stag to rabbit. And put the bigger animal on sale. A boy came to see it, who made me feel sorry. I told him that the car was a ruin. 'But does it work?' Now...yes 'Then I buy it' I don't recommend it. But it was too late; he had fallen in love. And, who knows, perhaps they were happy ever after.

Felipe

On December 20, 1973, Felipe de Borbón was 26 years old, and one month short of his 27th birthday. Why do I say this? Because that day we were both quietly seated in the front cabin of a flight from New York to Madrid, me a little closer to the cockpit and him in a side seat leaving free the one by the window. A stewardess was handing out small leather agendas, as a gift from the Company. I opened mine and saw its pages so white pages that I got up from my seat and went to the prince. 'Pardon me, Your Highness, today is my birthday. Would you accept signing in here?' 'What is your name?' 'Luis' He wrote: *Happy birthday Luis* signed: *Felipe*. Before leaving the plane: a respectful greeting of recognition.

Jens's trousers

He was an Iberia pilot and a friend of my sister Piti and of my mother too. His manners revealed innate elegance underlined by some eccentricities One of them was a fixation about American vulgarity. He flew the route Madrid-New York, but he didn't leave his hotel in Manhattan because 'there was no reason', and finally agreed to come to Fairfield County, just to see how I lived and to please me. Once he was under my control, I got him to visit my friends of the small house. When he noticed the VW hippie van, he put on a disgusted face and expressed the desire to turn back. Finally, we entered the little house, Jens bowing his head as he went in. Jens had thought that some corduroy pants were appropriate clothing to come to a forest. While chatting, Bob did notice them. 'Have you

bought them in Switzerland (at such, such a place)? He had. But the best came later. Jens asked Liz and Bob why they used a van in place of a car. Although the house was tiny, next door there was an immense barn, about three times as big. They invited Jens to visit the barn. Inside they unsheathed a Porche Carrera and a Bentley Sedan. In a corner I noticed a Montesa Cota. On another occasion, talking about opera, Bob commented that the voice of Jaume Aragall was the most beautiful of all living tenors. Bob was a professional at voice dubbing.

The conversion of Hanfried Haedeller

Allaire's squire had always seemed to me a rather disagreeable person. Trying to build bridges with the Enemy, we both thought about getting to know each other going out for drinks together. We sat in front of an empty bar. Little by little, I noticed women joining us on both sides who took any excuse to talk... mainly to Hanfried. And his indifference, reminiscent of that of Karry the Finish in the pool of the Hotel Pinar. Hanfried felt adoration for his parents. He talked a lot about them. I suggested that he ought to invite them to America. He did, and both were my guests at home. They were proud of their son and appreciated everyone who was friends with him. I had already changed my opinion of him. Hanfried Haedeler and Paul Allaire were not *two different persons of the same financial god*. One day he told me that he felt bored by Xerox and American women and was leaving. 'Where to?' I asked. 'To Brazil. To Copacabana' For Hanfried, the Complementary was *The South*.

Treasury issues at Xerox

The huge costs involved in the investigation that preceded the invention of *Windows*, the fax, and the personal computer, on the one hand, and the maintenance of an elite sales force, on the other, forced Xerox to borrow money. To please the banks, the Financial Vice President, James O'Neill, hesitated between two options: a) raise the price of copies or b) sell some of the machines. The question was addressed to Donald Pendery, who commissioned me to give a documented answer. I asked how much time I had, because Christmas was approaching, and I was thinking of spending them in Spain with my mother. Pendery was in a bad mood. He replied that I should forget about holidays, also in America.

The result

The right thing to do was to sell. It sounded like blasphemy in many ears, perhaps remembering the story of the hen of the golden eggs. Rising prices would make our copiers more vulnerable, while selling copiers was a sign Xerox was prepared to battle in the manufacturing field. Besides, ours wasn't going to be the only hen with golden eggs for long. And then, eggs would not be golden but plain paper. The verdict was accepted willy-nilly. And Xerox started selling, little by little.

The impassive Japanese

Mesmerized by IBM, Xerox didn't realize that its back door was threatened by a real invasion of small machines, both in computers and in copiers. It was

already urgent to deal with the virus. A vaccine was needed. I was thinking of an agreement with Fuji Xerox to manufacture small copiers in Japan. I took a trip to Rochester so that some expert could help me convert into production units the square meters of each factory in the listings given to me by Yotaro Kobayashi. The inquiries provided sufficient ammunition for a full-fledged presentation. I talked to Pendery and he organized the event.

A failed presentation

I have a vague memory of how it all took place. I had promised to myself not to talk about elasticity of demand nor of the occupation of empty space. I knew that the engineers considered these concepts almost literary speculations. I opted for a terminology halfway between the military and the therapeutic. I showed the evidence of the listings with the M.I.T.I Seal of authenticity. I exposed the certainty that whatever products would come out of those factories were to be installed in our customer premises. Machines like ours and surely cheaper and possibly not for rent but sold. To support my arguments with transparencies showing graphs, the room was in darkness. In other presentations, the face of Bill Souders used to remain indecipherable. This time, however, he shook his head from side to side, slowly but significantly. At the end, no usual praise. I tried to hear what was being said and only managed to hear derogatory comments about ‘the *japs*’. Pearl Harbor was not forgotten. Paul Allaire learned about the failure and felt relieved.

Pendery flees enraged

I ought to wait and tell in due course what happened later, but I can't resist the vanity of advancing the importance of three facts that prove how right I was in my diagnosis. Bill Souders left Xerox and was replaced by David Kearns, who came from IBM and was an acquaintance of Don Pendery. In 1983, Don went to see David at his office to reconcile their positions on the future of Xerox. Pendery was seen and heard screaming and slamming the door of Kearns' office. He left that minute the Stamford HQ, without even picking up his belongings. Reason for the discussion: Pendery told his ex-IBM colleague that the Xerox ship was sinking like the Titanic while the orchestra was still playing. He was repeating (more dramatically) what I had said seven years before. Few days after fleeing Xerox in anger, according to Strassman in his book, Pendery died in strange circumstances. First fact.

Allaire adulterates the Company's accounts

In 2002 the Securities and Exchange Commission considered proven a crime of Paul Allaire and five others Xerox advisors for hiding the truth from shareholders. To avoid imprisonments, the Xerox Board accepted exchanging the original sentence for a \$10 million fine. Second fact.

Fuji buys Xerox

The Japanese have been waiting patiently for Xerox to ran out of Cash, while they engrossed their treasury to extremes that would allow them to allocate a small amount to the rescue of their feudal Lord. When the

creditors were already pounding on the doors of the Old Mansion, the modest Gardener picked some golden coins from his bourse and asked the vociferous to leave him in peace. The news spoke of a Renewed management and stressed the dependence on new masters, mentioning that the Xerox headquarters would thereafter be in Minato, Tokyo. Third fact. *Q.e.d.*

Navigare necesse est

In times of tribulation, nothing better to appreciate the emptiness of human concerns than to escape the coasts of our planet to anyplace where only sky and sea can be seen. *Living is not necessary.* Buying a larger sailboat, especially if it is designed by Sparkman & Stephens, yes, it is. Part of the blame for the betrayal to poor Cape Dory can be placed at *Marta's vineyard*, on the island of Nantucket. Martha lived in the seventeenth century, and there were never vineyards in Nantucket, for it was wisteria. I planned the journey with Marjorie, who lived in Mystic and thought, wrongly, that a bigger sailboat was needed to reach the island. The maiden voyage was a disaster because Marj became dizzy. She went back to Mystic by train, and I went back to Wilton laden by the revenge of the Cape Dory.

She is bad.

I received a letter from Ursuline saying how much she had enjoyed her stay in America. So much, that she was proposing to return. She had described the Pier Way Landing house to her boss Carlos, director of the

Llorente laboratories, and she was sure I wouldn't mind him coming as well, with his wife Adela. I did mind. When I saw the three visitors at home chatting in front of the stone fireplace, I realized that Carlos had fallen in love. Adela said to me: 'She is no milquetoast. She is bad'

The Wandering German

Hanfried had entrusted me with looking after a compatriot (whose name I can't remember now) who was depressed because he had not been able to convince his American girl friend to marry him and come to live in Germany. Before leaving, we were introduced to each other and I learned that she was Jewish and her name Carol Sarabum. (More about her in Chapter XII). I wrote to her boyfriend renouncing the assignment for the simple reason that I also had to return to Europe. Paul Allaire had so decided and told it to Donald Pendery.

Pendery's affection

Don and Joyce had shown curiosity for the stranger couple that were Lene and I, as members of the hive established in London. They were understanding when Lene returned to Denmark, and even praised the house that Richard Meier had just planted on the shore of Long Island Sound, for scandal amongst neighboring owners. Pendery was a quiet man, who denied with his silence, who disdained banal conversations and kept his opinion when was contrary to the established consensus. He advised me doing the same. He used to counsel me not to be so explicit, respect opportunity and speak with fewer words. After

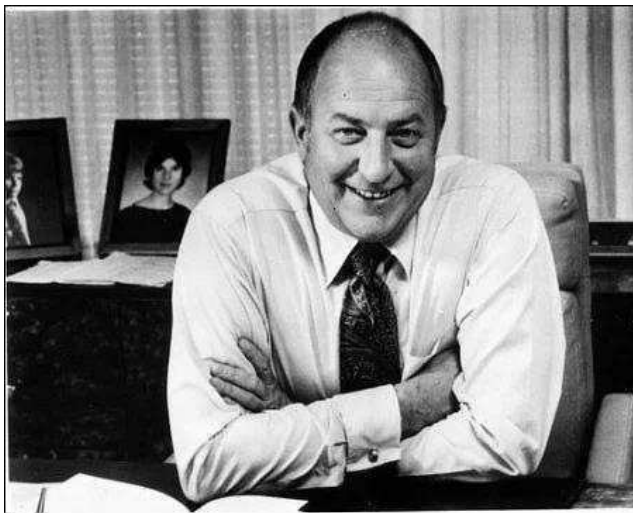
my return to London, I received punctually his Christmas cards together with long letters. In them Don reported with irony the events of the year in Stamford and sometimes remembered and praised my efforts. Joyce added some lines talking about trips to Italy. Precisely in 1983, when Donald ceased to exist, I stopped hearing from them.

The personal computer

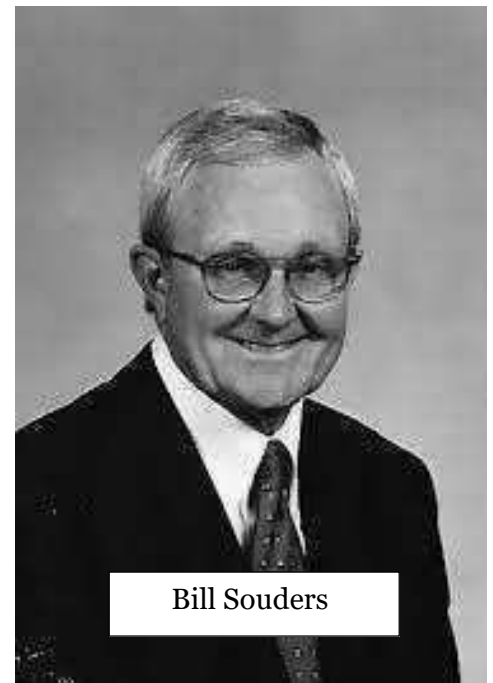
Archie McArdell was responsible for Steve Jobs and Bill Gates appropriating the invaluable technology developed by Xerox in Palo Alto, California. In August 1976 (the very same month I left Connecticut) Archie had to make up his mind about Palo Alto's proposal to move the ALTO III prototype of a personal computer to the next phase of the program: Production. His decision was negative. At that historic moment began the empire of Microsoft. Although Paul Strassman has written a book which attempts to justify the enormous error, the historiography about the empire of Bill Gates and Steve Jobs coincides in situating at that moment the beginning of the theft. Discouragement among the research teams led to disdain for Xerox and many leaving the firm.

The return

In the Personnel department I was told not to worry about the nuisance of the move. They asked for my address in London. But I had no address in London. Can you send my grand piano? 'Yes, we can' And my boat as well? 'And your boat too'.



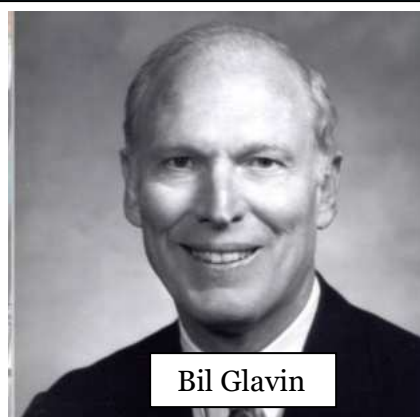
Archie McArdell



Bill Souders



Paul Allaire



Bil Glavin

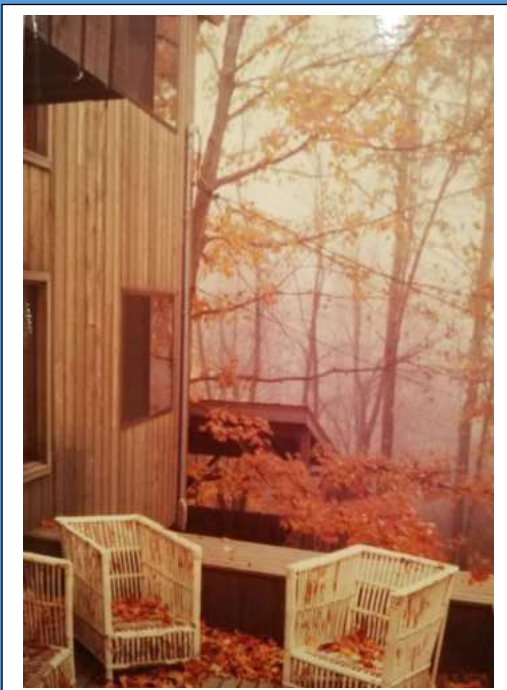
They had in their hands
the opportunity of
making Xerox the
company with the first
Personal Computer



ALTO III



ALTO III



The house of Antler Lane



Happy birthday, Luis (signed) Felipe



Lars and David
in América





The Ursuline in
América

Chapter XI

London

After the divine journeys in the promised land of New England, what awaited me in London was fog and humiliation. Evil Allaire, instead of staying in America, seemed to haunt me and he also returned to London, this time with full powers. The first thing he did was to place me at orders from my friend John Duerden, who had been my subordinate before going to America. When I arrived at Heathrow I headed to North End Road, where my sister Piti lived, with her husband Francis Earle. She had divorced Jacques and changed Paris by London. In the midst of my general daze it was reassuring to see and hear my handsome nephews Daniel and Emmanuel, in their uniforms of British schoolboys.

Raff

In addition to a sailboat and a grand piano, I had brought from America three albums by the Swiss composer Joachim Raff. He was the antithesis of Mahler and hence his appeal in those months of my life. Curious musician. Bourgeois like few others, son of a fugitive, and hard worker with the persistence of a

Swiss watch, apparently little could be expected from that combination of elements so unlike Zarathustra. He composed to be able to eat. He was in Listz's pay because Liszt didn't know how to orchestrate. In the same way as admiration prompted me to travel to Vienna and put some flowers on Mahler's grave, this time Raff's music made me appear in Lachen, see the street where he was born, then fly to contemplate his house in Weisbaden and finally pay tribute to his monumental mausoleum in a corner of the cemetery.

New scenario

The Weimar aesthetic atmosphere had infiltrated my temperament. I felt like I had put aside the Southern or the Nordic, to impregnate me with a decadent romanticism, of Germanic roots. A lot had to do with the finding of a unsuspected place to live.

Cornwall Gardens

It is a square where in the seventeenth century there stood a market. In the middle of the gardens rises an imposing building which in its day was a unique mansion. As such, it has a marble staircase of palatial amplitude and a first floor intended to receive illustrious visitors and hold dances where one could waltz without fear of bumping into other couples. To give more feeling of spaciousness, the walls were paneled with narrow mirrors that rose to the ornate roof. And to the hide far of the orchestral rumble, semicircular balconies in front of a garden (Cornwall gardens) where to mutter feelings exacerbated by the champagne and the music. In the center, a

fireplace of marble would look less intimate than the flames of some hearts. 'Okay, I buy it'. Listen, it has an immense bedroom. Just one? And a large wood-coated carved bathtub on a carpeted platform, to be able to climb to it barefoot. In one of the many antique dealers of London I found a four-piece screen, golden glazed and very high. It was the solution to leave my bedroom to the guests: I would place behind the screen a sofa hiding during the day its nightly service. 'Okay, I buy it'. And I bought it. Next, I invited my mother to see that the old Chickering had arrived in London.

Poole

The marina of the Royal Motor Yacht Club (RMYC) is different from others in that, depending on the hour of the day, the boats may or may not be reached. The rules of the Club do not allow pipe smoking in the smoking room, nor drivers entering the premises. At high tide sailboats float gracefully in wait for the skippers. When the tide goes out, the boats lie down to sleep in the mud. That doesn't seem to matter much. In the club's restaurant, because its members take advantage of periods of infertility to chat and drink beer, with or without caps. The tie is marine blue with red-and-white oblique stripes. The current in the mouth, which is canal-shaped, can reach 7 knots in the middle of the tide, so that a sailboat making 7 knots either remains unable to move forward or flies at 14 knots, depending on whether you intend to enter or exit. To complicate things a bit more, instead of one tide a day, there are two. All this is very well explained in an almanac full of figures. Before leaving London to sail, it is convenient to consult it.

The route from London

To go to Poole, you can take advantage of the Brighton motorway or opt for more picturesque roads where to have lunch or dinner before or after the naval adventure. Combining the tide calendar with pub hours, is no simple matter. Quite a few times I (or we) arrived at their doors just as they were closing.

What was I doing in the office?

Since one of my duties was to supervise market research in subsidiaries, I thought of a simple way to disagree with Allaire's phobias and philiias. I already said that Paul clearly preferred Germany and France to the detriment of Spain and Italy. I asked the subsidiaries to send me detailed and multiannual information of their machine population, broken down by models, number of salesmen, income statements and balance sheets. Then I repeated the same exercise with macro magnitudes of each country, taking care to select the same for each one. The graphic comparisons showed that RX Spain exceeded expectations, while other subsidiaries, such as RX France and RX Germany were far below. I had those statistics printed, without forgetting one, in the form of a luxurious vademecum with golden page borders, as if it were a Bible and I adorned it with full color flags for each country.

John Duerden perplexed

Poor John may not have been a supporter of this type of *vendetta* on my part. He argued that there was an explanation: Germany and France suffered greater

competitive pressure. 'How do you know?' I asked. 'Looking at the investment by competitors' 'John, sorry, but that's sophistry. Competition abounds precisely there where less resistance is offered (You cannot justify a poor rose garden *because it has more weeds*)'. John was patient with me. I'll never appreciate enough that it was John who taught me how to sail.

Luis Camino versus Roland Magnin

The competitive struggle between Francophiles and Hispanics would reach its maximum heat among the European leadership of Luis González Camino and Carlos Pascual, on the Spanish side, against Roland Magnin and his squire Bernard Fournier, as representatives of the French team, with Paul Allaire as referee. Allaire's bias favoring the French, despite that Luis' results were much better, embittered the last years in the life of the Spaniard. Sheila, his wife, had to live with the loss of reason that came upon his retirement. Jay, Allaire's wife, feared better, and spared the embarrassment the millions of dollars fine imposed on her husband. She had divorced before.

Diana Brown

My bad mood because of Paul Allaire found a daily balm in the presence of the secretary who had been awarded to me. She was spectacular and motherly. A few months after returning to Spain I received a letter from her in which she told me that Paul had asked if she would be willing to work for him, and that she had accepted. She seemed to want to excuse herself. I wrote back saying that I was glad for her sake

since it meant a promotion, higher salary, and a lot of indirect power. At the same time, I wondered what had become of selfless Wendy, Allaire's former secretary, who attended my farewell party and wrote on the card some heartfelt words next to Paul's signature.

Mary Archer-Shee

In the house opposite Cornwall House there was a balcony a little lower than those in my apartment where the (few) sunny days a woman, very white, went out trying to be less (white). I tried not to be seen, but one of the times she signaled to open the window. She said: 'Why instead of looking so much, which is very annoying, don't you come here and see me without hiding?' She was angry. Mary was taller than me, very bossy, and very Catholic. She had a classic beauty, but she liked to quarrel. Once, ironing at her house, I left the iron lit on the carpet and such was her horror that she didn't say anything to me. The surname Archer-Shee is easily recognized among painting experts. One of her ancestors was a famous mid-XIX century portrait painter. Mary was a friend of Melanie Horcher, daughter of a German restaurateur installed in Madrid. She knew, also, the Spanish ambassador. Despite her character, it was easy to take a liking to Mary and admire her elegance. She showed interest in meeting my mother and there were attempts at conversation in French, between laughs. She would later befriend Lars and David, like a member of the family.

Erki Rahuio

I am not sure of the date of that visit. Maybe was before my return from America. What I do remember well was the afternoon of sauna with the president of Rank Xerox Finland and his wife. We were in an almost frozen lake, where customers are expected to dive after being steamed. There was a stretcher where a giant woman rubbed a brush against my arms and thighs. Also branches to flagellate ourselves in the gloom. There were huge sausages wrapped in aluminum foil next to the embers. And the epiparous dinner with abundant beer to compensate for dehydration. The following day, from Helsinki came a steamer full of RX employees who had rented it as the site of a Marketing Convention. Sessions followed one another performed with Nordic rigor during daytime. At night the ship docked in Stockholm. No one bothered to disembark. In front of a tiny office window, a long queue was formed. Everyone came out of it with one or two bottles in hand and returned to their cabins. At dawn, the comings and goings from one cabin to another seemed like wanderings of possessed people, regardless of rank and size. Next morning the sessions resumed as if nothing had happened.

Christmas holidays on Euston Road

Without going to those extremes, the pubs of Euston Road they also sold considerably more alcohol at Christmas. The proportion of males exceeded by quite a few decimals to those of the opposite sex. Congenital intelligence of the English devised the following system of celebrations: The week would be divided

into as many days as floor plants in the building. Each day the pubs were reserved for the exclusive benefit of the tenants of that plant. Predictably, women were invited to attend any day of the week. With that cunning scheme, at some parties there were more women than men.

Caroline Tolson

I was curious about her, but she didn't belong in the same floor. I saw her in the elevator with her long blonde hair at the back and her blue eyes staring. I tried to pretend I didn't see her, but it wasn't easy. I asked afterwards if she was married, had a partner, or what on earth others thought of her. I was warned that I was the last of a long queue, and to keep no illusions, for she was unfriendly. And, given the failures of recognized *Don Juans*, possibly lesbian.

Christmas 1977

I was about not to attend. I am a poor dancer and drink little, compared. My friends, as they got drunk, they seemed more distant. The idea of returning alone to the empty flat in Cornwall Gardens plunged me into a state similar to ethylic torpor. So, I stayed with my head leaning on the table, while lifting it from time to time, to show awareness. In the premises, with the passing of hours there were fewer people. Some came to say goodbye, offering car rides. Mine was nearby, in the *car park* of the office. Some lights were starting to go out. I felt a hand on my left shoulder, turned my head and it was Caroline Tolson. 'Are you feeling well?' 'Do you want me to accompany you?' I got up. Then,

without remembering the car, I replied: 'It's a little far away' 'It doesn't matter' And we walked away, on and on, to Cornwall Gardens. Caroline, my dear friend, I don't think you will get to read this in the armchair of your home of Winchester, quietly with your cats, but no one has given me a hand at a more opportune moment than you did that Christmas.

An indolent messenger

Honorius has always been Honorius, which is not a compliment. Spain's Minister of Industry called at Rank Xerox Madrid to find out how to contact someone whom Honorius knew quite well. He knew exactly how to contact him. But Honorius did not consider it appropriate to pick up the phone and tell him in person. Nor he did follow up and try to comply as soon as possible. Days passed, one week, another, and finally Diana says to me: 'Mr. Orueta it looks as if someone from Spain wants to contact you' 'Anyone in the family?' 'I don't think so, his name is Bustelo'.

A walk through the *Retiro* Park

One of the qualities that make Carlos unmistakable is that with his example he gives us to understand that everything in Life hides a playful element. Only death and physical pain, which are the opposite of life, lack it. Carlos announced a stimulating situation: 'All of a sudden, Luis, we have this country in our hands' And he went on to say: 'But I don't know how this will end' and as if he were talking about something funny, he added 'They might shoot us' He told me that the Basque National Party required *them* to place a very religious

gentleman as president of the gigantic Institute of Public Companies and that he was concerned about what he might do. That my salary was very low, but that it would be compensated by allowances as Board member in several companies.

Few caresses in Segovia

Castilians are little inclined to express our feelings with words like *dear* (except in letters) or *darling*. That does not mean that we feel less than other more expressive countrymen. After the meeting with Carlos Bustelo, it was necessary to sell the house of Cornwall Gardens. It didn't mean a fortune, because it was a freehold and, in addition, a bank had helped me to buy it. But it meant enough for two apartments in Copenhagen. David's was very close to the Opera (whose motto *Not only for Entertainment* I've always found amusing) and Lars's, a little bigger on the neighborhood of *Northport*.

Party in the living room

After many years of hibernation, the hall of the Cornwall House was again full of people with drinks in their hands. The astonishment of some to see themselves in such a place was understandable. Others already knew the apartment. And they calmed envy commenting that, *after all*, it only had one bedroom. The British shine at events where people gather themselves and someone asks for silence before a speaker addresses the guests. The most timid and quiet person in normal life becomes an inspired orator. Diana handed me a notebook which on the cover read:

The witty, the cultured, the charming, the original, the stimulating, and on the page following: The Irreverent, The Incomparable 64 LOUIS 79. It contained 48 farewell phrases. I choose some of them:

- When you are gone, who else is going to make me feel so good in the mornings*
- It seems like a long time since 1970! You critiqued the US business strategy then and you haven't stopped since.*
- I hope you are not thinking of nationalizing El Bodegón*
- No time to write as much as the other blocks. I have to finish my game of bowls.*
- I hope everything goes well with you in the Spanish post-opus dei ! (written in Spanish)*
- I can only conclude that this is the first time that J & J have managed to get a word in.*
- Does Spain really know what it is you coming?*
- I cannot understand why you are returning to Spain, despite having read Emerson and realizing just how superior the Anglo-Saxons really are!*
- There's a porpoise closet behind you and he's treading on your tail (Lewis Carroll)-well, you nearly beat me to it, but the world is full of porpoises, large and small.*
- To a unique and highly talented friend and colleague. Original thinkers are often difficult to live with, but even more difficult to find. Thank you for your insights, originality, hard work, and perhaps, above all, your irreverent humor.*
- The loss of a friend is never a good thing.*

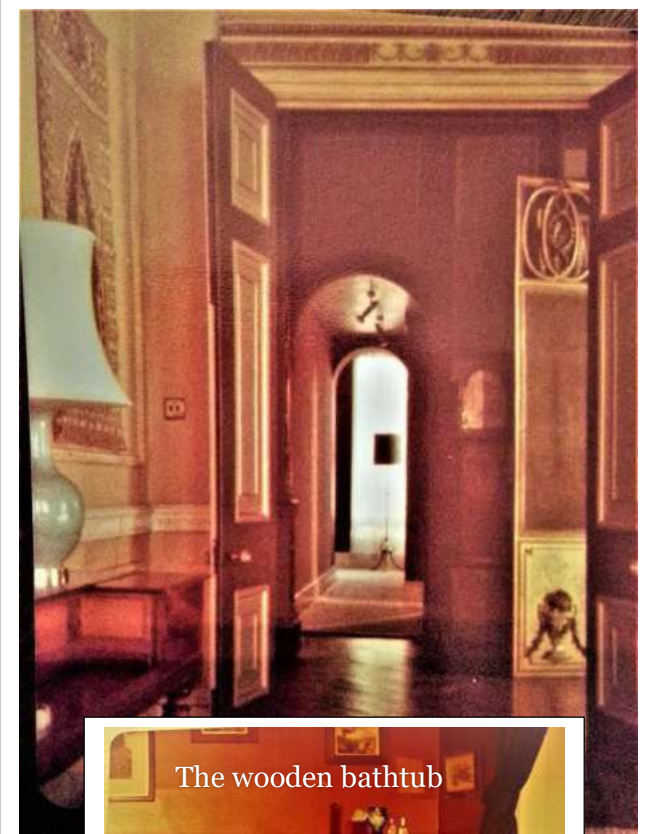
- *If I write as much as my colleagues, there won't be enough room for the other 999 admirers!*
- *(In red) This card could do with a bit of color! Although I feel you are letting down the European (in English 'foreign') contingent down by deserting...*
- *You are always, creative, always stimulating, and only sometimes obstinate.*
- *The realizable market for tourists in Spain can be increased If you make them stand up on the beach rather than lie down-. And then, invest in the Spanish deck chair business.*
- *How did you say? 'They must have classical lines and be soft to handle. Then you will fall in love with them (speaking of ships)*
- *Out of Poole harbor, leave the coast on your stern and you should hit France. Turn right (before you hit France) and just follow the coast. You can't miss Gibraltar. It's the only way into the Med, and also has the British flag flying. Turn left and follow the Spanish coast. You should be able to take up your new post, in about June 1981.*



Cornwall House in Cornwall Gardens



Old photo of the living room



The wooden bathtub



Caroline Tolson in
Poole Harbour



Tolson in Cornwall House



Pacific Dolphin

Chapter XII

The Plaza de Salamanca

In my little book about the Livermore sisters, I mention the relationship of businessman and marquis José de Salamanca with the Orueta family and with the rest of the oligarchy from Malaga. When I entered for the first time the imposing building and met the endearing Mariano Candil (who watched the arrivals and exits with the memory of an elephant) I wasn't thinking of the Marquis, but about how to introduce myself. A few minutes later, I was sitting across from the newly appointed president: José Miguel de la Rica, who watched me intrigued. After the appropriate salutations, he accompanied me to my new site. The main piece, which was in a corner of the building, was furnished for two secretaries. The next room had a desk between two large windows, and two chairs for secretaries or collaborators facing opposite. Some plants, for a bit of atmospheric sympathy, and the sitting area for external visitors occupied by a sofa, two armchairs and a tea table. There was also a cabinet for books and documents. I was most interested. Empty.

The secretaries

My experience told me that I should not open my mouth until protected by a secretary. I stated my desire that she knew English and shorthand. Instantly, an elegant lady appeared looking at me like a nurse who receives a new ill person. She told me that her husband was a civil engineer, that she worked for fun and that she expected to be able to leave in the mornings to do some shopping. I told her that in return I hoped she wouldn't mind doing extra hours when the work demanded it. She showed the same surprise as someone who hears a parrot speak for the first time. Then she said she felt sorry for me and recommended I asked for a secretary again. Two or three days passed, until appeared Mercedes Martinez.

No plans at INI

At the INI of 1978 there was no concrete Plan for the future nor Development proposal. The previous director of Planning and Development, Tomás Galán, hardly had time for anything. He had experience in Macroeconomic Planning as one of the authors of the Development Plan for the Spanish Economy that achieved State support in 1963. The idea of introducing control methods specific to a holding company came from previous presidents such as Julio Calleja and Juan Miguel Antoñanzas, but the person in charge of carrying them out, Andrés Fernández Romero, was a theorist who wrote a document describing the tasks of planning to perform by the INI. The only bit that was missing was to put them into practice.

The INI Studies Office

The name describes a creature of the socialist economist Miguel Boyer, who staffed it taking care that all its members were socialist economists. Since INI was involved, of its own will or by force, into almost any imaginable economic activity, any study could be deemed appropriate. One might think that such studies would be aimed at proposing new activities or scrapping others. It was not the case. What obsessed the socialists were the electricity and banking sectors. Spanish socialism suffers a lifelong fascination for anything French and few things more French than *Électricité de France*. The probable advent of a socialist government arose fears of nationalization of the sector, something that would have solved the economic problems of the holding, although at the cost of creating others for the country. Considering that the main Spanish private electricity company was Basque, it made sense that the Basque Nationalist Party had managed to put Jose Miguel de la Rica as president of the INI, who under cover of a paternal and soft appearance hid the task of guardian of the Kw/h gate, like the Cerberus of the Hades

Physical units and money invested

In addition to the Studies Office, the INI had a Technical Directorate, where two kinds of figures were kept that had mainly interested its founder: a) units of production most representative of the contribution of the INI in each industrial sector and b) proof of the effort made, measured in millions invested. These were easily understood by the dictator and by any citizen. Unfortunately, in the later years, productive investments began to share funds with contributions

to the famous ‘accordion operations’ consisting of bringing the capital of loss-making companies down to zero and starting again, thus putting good money on bad, and knowing that sooner or later, there would be need to do the same thing over and over.

The strings attached

From 1963, with the opening of the economy, the *raison d'être* of the INI as an instrument for the industrialization of the country was losing steam. Its existence benefited the banking sector who found in the Institute a space where to bury their losses, with allies in the trade unions and regional authorities, eager to avoid unemployment. The most burdensome region for the INI was undoubtedly Asturias, followed by Andalusia, Galicia, Extremadura, and Murcia. Basques and Catalans had managed to ensure that *Babcock Wilcox* and *La Maquinista Terrestre y Maritima* received funds secretly and should remain unnoticed.

Hunosa

Was the most important company in the Mining Division, directed by José Manuel Fernández Felgueroso, a person of pleasant demeanor. His surname very appropriate for the mission entrusted. Felgueroso used to invite anyone who could favor the activity of Hunosa, to visit the most representative of its shafts: that of *María Luisa*. Getting to the cut where the miners extracted the coal was a journey of several kilometers. That long time detracted from the efficiency of each miner. The worst thing was that, after the trip, the coal had such poor quality that it did not burn without mixing it with

a better one, which used to come from Australia. The first owners of Asturian mines such as the families Duro, Figaredo, Felgueroso, Nespral, etc. had given up at the prospect of ruin if they continued with the business. In other words: Hunosa was doomed to lose money every year, and the losses to be assumed by INI were easy to guess: infinite. Accordingly, any figure that the director of the Division could propose to compensate the miners for closing would be a great deal for the INI. ‘Not possible’ ‘But, *Mamel*, there must be an amount of money so high that all miners prefer to leave and devote themselves to something else’ ‘Luis, you don't understand, they would buy a taxi in Oviedo or land on the hills where to keep cows. No one would stay on the basin. It would be the ruin of commerce, of property value, for many people other than miners’ ‘So there is no solution?’ ‘We do what we can. Do you think it little?’ It seemed quixotic. Hunosa reminded me the torment of Tantalus, condemned to pushing a rock to the top of a mountain, to see it fall into the void and starting again. The endearing *Mamél* died young, in 1983. Forty years later (yes, 40) I have read that the Unions *have reached an agreement to establish a transformation process that will allow Hunosa to change from being a strong mining company to a consulting concern in new energy and environmental restoration*. A case of black humor or of final redemption?

The shipyards

The Shipbuilding Division corresponded to Julián Massa, a person as involved in his own métier as was Felgueroso in his mines. Massa also invited members of INI to visit the shipyards of Cádiz and those of San

Carlos. The world's largest oil tankers have been built in those docks. Measured in tons, the contribution of the INI was impressive. While admitting the grandiosity of the effort, the p/l accounts were deficient and amounted to almost as much as those of Hunosa. Massa liked to say that shipbuilding was *an industry of synthesis*. The salaries of welders from Cadiz were considerably higher than those paid in Korea. To compete, it was necessary for the synthesis of Massa to synthesize more things than those necessary for an oil tanker, no matter how big. In a plausible effort to add complexity, the shipyards began to manufacture ships with retractable bows and sterns (the *roll on* and the *roll off* that Julian liked to mention). I was unimpressed and impertinent with Julián Massa, in suggesting the possibility of building... cruisers, which was the French and Italian solution. Instead of listening to me, he proposed the vice presidency of *North-Western Shipyards* (Astano) to see if that way I became more understanding. In one of the Boards of Directors meetings I posed a question that, according to Masa, affected a mysterious and old Galician secret. I asked him to offer my resignation at the next meeting in a discreet manner, which no doubt my admired Julian did very well.

The pigs and tomatoes of Extremadura

In its zeal to obtain subsidies via INI, the Extremadura Community did not want to lay behind. A covert way of subsidy to its cattle growers was for INI companies (such as Carcesa and Igfisa) to buy meat more expensive than any other slaughterhouse. As for farmers, the same generosity, but with the tomatoes. Antonio Álvarez Couceiro was as appreciated in Mérida,

as Felgueroso in Asturias and Massa in Cádiz. I made him see that, so long as Carcesa remained so complaisant, it was foolhardy for the private sector to open any food company in Extremadura. No frozen cameras, no slaughterhouses, no fried tomato, nor any *et cetera*. could be sure that Carcesa would not meddle with any novelty to demonstrate initiative. Couceiro was not angry when I commented that Carcesa's social benefits would be more beneficial if they appeared in its income statement, which is the signal that attracts investment to a region like bread thrown to pigeons.

The Elusive Frigates

The national company Bazán was an example of a public company operating in an activity unattractive for the private initiative, always fearful in Spain of the complexity and confidentiality of military products. Here, too, the INI boasted achievements measured in tons of aircraft carriers, frigates, coast guards, etc. By definition, their profit statements should be equal or greater than zero, as is the case of projects financed under the modality *by administration*. However, Bazán also gave losses due to *budget errors*. To avoid criticism at INI's H.Q. they claimed to be able to recover what was lost when the Navy recognized the added costs. If in the case of mining the torment of Tantalus came to my mind, in that of Bazán the tricks of Penelope's loom were applicable. When a frigate was very advanced it used to happen the visit of a newly promoted admiral who criticized some modules as obsolete. No problem. Everything had a remedy, although time was needed and more money. To which the admiral used to respond that without the changes the ship lost much

interest. And as Bazán's order book was not very buoyant, the day ended to every one's content. The only question I could think of was about the urgency of the elusive frigates. One hull of the series was ready to be launched in Ferrol's shipyard, and Bazán invited Doña Teresa Tortella, the wife of Minister Bustelo, to be godmother of the new ship.

The impossible nationalization of profits

Autarkic or Marxist economic systems need tariff and bureaucratic barriers sufficiently dissuasive for foreign companies contemplating operations without fear of competition from outside. The market is considered by Marxists and Nationalists as a patrimony of the nation that cannot be enjoyed freely by foreign companies. With such an ideology the implantation in Spain of companies such as Alcan, Fiat, Mercedes, SKF, and Fujitsu obliged them to accept the participation of INI as shareholder in hypothetical equality of conditions. With the opening of the Spanish economy advocated by Opus Dei, the five above-mentioned companies reconsidered the situation. Negotiations to make their withdrawal affect the holding as little as possible occupied much of the care of the directors of INI, me included. No one doubts that it was the INI that dramatically promoted the Car and Truck industries. In cars with the technological support from Fiat. But French companies like Renault and Peugeot set an example that it was possible to operate in Spain without the need to share management with the INI. The economic crisis that was also felt in Italy made Italian Unions question the investments & losses of the Spanish subsidiary. And Seat became an orphan

suddenly. I remember the meeting in the room of the Executive Committee, in which Umberto Agnelli communicated to us the irrevocable decision with few words.

Transportation companies

INI had set up shipping companies like Elcano, which competed with advantage with private concerns, since it could assume losses without angry faces. As regards air transport, Iberia added value to national pride by being comparable with those of other countries. Comparable also in that the income statement was not the ultimate management criterion since both Alitalia and Sabena were losing money. In the case of Iberia, the great social acceptance was echoed in the elitist pilot trade union, many of them from the military academy of San Javier. For a president of Iberia, having the consensus of the pilots was almost a condition indispensable in measures affecting the *flight* staff. This difference between *Flight and Ground* reminded me of the days of my youth in the military service at Burgos. One of the peculiarities of Iberia was the ease with which a lot of people flew for free. It seems that this fashion had extended since Jesus Romeo Gorría was its president and wanted to make up for his past in the world of politics. Carlos Espinosa tried to put an end to a practice that made the *Business* class look like a meeting of Buddies. But high rank socialists objected that free flights were being abolished precisely when it was their turn to benefit. Iberia was not the only company in that Division of the INI. There was also *Aviación y Comercio*, a company limited by its statutes to domestic flights, in practice those that Iberia allowed. This humble enterprise had no losses, fulfilled

its plans with rigor and punctuality and behaved in everything without the haughtiness of *the flagship company*. Their pilots were normal people, their hostesses were younger, and their managers were not arrogant. Its management were not so generous in offering free flights. I did not applaud the subsequent merger of the two enterprises.

Ebitda and Ebit

The economic historians who have dedicated time to the analysis of the management of the INI have abundance of figures referring to capital aid. Since the losses were accumulating year after year, the INI decided to be a lender to its own companies, which allowed the *holding company* ceasing to be deficient, by including in its assets the funds provided. A different matter were the balance sheets and P/L accounts of its enterprises. This is where I noticed and missed the scarce interest of academic historians. No one seemed to concentrate on magnitudes as decisive as Ebitda. And yet, any prestigious manager who accepts the position of saving a Company in difficulty will demand to be judged according to earnings *before payment of amortizations and interest on the debt*, which are usually attributable to *faits accomplis* prior to his arrival. A sustained improvement of Ebitda indexes would prove that the company was viable, even if it incurred losses for some time.

The Parable of the Ambulance

Regarding the place of ideology in the management of companies, I suggested imagining a person whose

philanthropic feelings would have moved him to work as an ambulance driver. Now think of him as idealistic but clumsy. The ambulance, as an object, tends to ignore his personal eagerness and obeys exclusively to the man's hand and foot movements. Imagine also that the same ambulance is driven, depending on the days of the week, by another person, this one very skilled but deeply selfish, evil even. On the road lies next to the remains of a car an injured person, bleeding to death. Depending on whether the day of the week were Monday, Tuesday, or Wednesday, he will have more, or less, chance of surviving.

The room of simultaneous translation

Not far from my office, there was a room with a table the size of those used in ministerial councils. It was so called because at one end, there was a glass-insulated booth for translators and headphone jacks for each place at the table. I seem to recall that the initiative came from President Juan Miguel Antoñanzas, innovator of the headquarters of Plaza de Salamanca in several aspects, including gastronomic improvements. It was in this room where the presentations of the companies' plans were held with detail, duration and protocol traced from Xerox. To a side sat the president of the company accompanied by his management team. Sometimes it was the same president who assumed prominence, leaving the details to his collaborators. On the other side of the table sat the director of the INI division concerned and the components of the Studies Office who had plenty of time to *study* the document.

Inquisitor Orueta

Those meetings were somewhat humiliating for most company presidents. The system made the side from the INI table more knowledgeable of each plan received than those charged with defending it. The INI team was integrated almost entirely by economists. Some: socialists, as Paulina de Beato, Jorge Fabra, Carmen Mestre, Martín Gallego, Ana Martín, María Paz García Gordillo, and the communist Eugenio Vela, to which was later added Alfredo Pastor. Others were liberals, such as Rodrigo Keller, Pedro Castañeda, José María Rodes, Javier Quílez and José Oliú. It was surprising to see Macroeconomic researchers interested in business issues such as... segmentation of markets in the ceramics sector, the profitability of transport routes, prospects for hydrocarbon explorations, or the influence on Endesa's results from its open sky mining operations, to give some examples. As the presentations ended, the inquisitor side praised the positive aspects of the plan but gave rise to questions on the less clear issues and hinted at aspects *that perhaps ought to be reconsidered*. Days later, they received a rather formal letter with the official response of the INI signed by the President. This style clashed with the Versailles modes that were still in force on how presidents of companies should be treated. The irony and sometimes sarcasm of Orueta and his people were not at all shared by the President of INI, nor by his Division Directors. ¿Why then was it tolerated? Because in another room of the INI premises it was Orueta who knew how to respond to a new class of Inquisitors.

The INI Board of Directors

The INI Boardroom proper was more baroque and impressive than the room of simultaneous translation. It was designed for the greater glory of the Institute. There the acquiescent members heard about the achievements of the Suanzes era, and so it continued to be until, with the advent of democracy, the tables were turned. Socialist members of the Board like Josep Borrell, Eduardo Santos and Guillermo de la Dehesa were proactive enquirers. The origin of their questions usually came from leaks from companies, where the Party and the Unions had informants. It was understandable that some board members of the Opposition to the Government, when asked to approve substantial contributions of funds, were ironic and even sarcastic. The presence of the inquisitor Orueta, as informant and defender of INI's activities in the face of tricky questions, compensated the President for the internal criticism of his inquisitive methods. Besides, he had deactivated the leaks from the Studies Office by rotating 180 degrees the attention of his subordinates and making them see public companies with shareholders eyes.

Other Boards of Directors

The INI appointed its own board members in affiliated companies, whose salary added to a common fund. I was directed to represent INI at Unión Fenosa, Ensidesa, Enasa (company of the Pegaso trucks) and Seat. The councils of Union Fenosa were chaired by milady countess of Fenosa and I was treated with deference and affability by the CEO Julio Hernández Rubio,

although with some caution knowing that I came from the same nest as the harrier Endesa. Looking for minutiae, I confess that when they asked for an address to stop me from receiving electricity bills, I chose Aldeallana. At that moment I was remembering the arrival in the farm of sacks of coal from Asturias, gift from *Compañía Eléctrica de Langreo*.

The American doctor of Enasa

As for Enasa, President Federico Sotomayor and its technical director, Juan Llorente, needed help to ensure continuity in the face of competition from Mercedes, Leyland, Scania and Man. Interestingly, my idea to contact International Harvester, then presided over by the infamous Archie McArdell, ran into the unexpected fact that the sick American patient died of intolerance to McArdell's treatment before the Spanish ill company could enter the operating room.

The infiltrator

Carlos Bustelo never asked me for anything. Never, except for a curious commission at the time of my appointment, strange precisely because of being the only one. He wanted me to go to the Ministry on a regular basis and inform a commerce director called Luis Carlos Croissier of the activity of the Instituto. The designs of Bustelo were (are) inscrutable and I complied regularly that easy mission. Carlos warned me of that Croissier was a socialist, which, considering the composition of my Studies Office was just more of the same. Croissier and the member of the Board Borrell, were married to two sisters of French

nationality, a trivial detail, which explained some coincidences.

Recommendations

Like one grape after another, a request now comes to mind that Josep Borrell made me at the end of a session of the Board of Directors. He had a brother who was a doctor out of work and wanted to know if some INI company could have a vacant position. It was striking that he asked me instead of addressing the president. I found an opportunity in the oilseed company Olcesa, which presented no other problem than its fondness for speculating in the grain futures market (and warned to abstain from this vice) At the next Board meeting I told Borrell the available job and he thanked me, although his brother had already found another.

A lunch without consequences

On one occasion when *Explosivos* was considering the immediate transfer of its fertilizer business to INI, Carlos Bustelo didn't even attend a preparatory luncheon to which the financial director Fernando Rubio and I, were invited at the company's headquarters of the *Paseo de Recoletos*. Our joint answer was affirmative only subject to evaluation of the parties' assets by auditors such as Peat Marwick, Arthur Andersen, or Boston Consulting. There was no follow up on their part.

Other attempts to emergency aid

The same answer I gave to Alfonso Fierro, who offered INI to sell his company from Extremadura of processed

tomato at no small price. In general, the proponents did not see any need to audit anything and believed that their word ought to suffice. Mentioning audits was enough to discourage the proponents. Maybe because of our reputation of reticent listeners, when the case of Rumasa exploded, and despite that Fernando Rubio and I were summoned at late morning hours, we were told that we could go back to sleep at home and the company would not be transferred to INI but to the (benevolent) State Patrimony Agency. I have often thought that Ruiz Mateos' success came from the fact that Spanish Banks found in Rumasa the sink where to bury losses that INI refused to continue absorbing. And moving on from the abominable Rumasa to a sympathetic moment of the Andalusian affiliate Sodian, I can't resist the temptation to remember the visit of Miguel Primo de Rivera and his affable and reasoned request that INI enter the business of rabbit breeding.

The INI Strategic Plan

Of individuals so critical of the plans of the companies, the least that could be expected is that they publish their own Plan and that it better be credible. And we did. When I reread the stated objectives, I recognize myself easily as its author incurring in capitalist orthodoxy and expressions typically used by me. Don't worry, reader, I won't extend in this matter. I will limit myself to cite quotes from an interview published by the weekly: *5 Days* on October the 4th, 1979.

Headlines on front page and quotes in inside pages:

** With a profitability criterion Investment for 1980 would have been reduced from 203,000 million to 117,000 (headlines)*

Loose paragraphs:

** Loss subsidies are humiliating and should be replaced by aid for performance, conditional on agreed objectives*

** We need to strengthen a system management of negotiation of objectives and control much harder and not only looking at the profit and loss accounts*

** I repeat the importance of establishing clear priorities and setting realistic goals. This, for whatever reason, has not been done.*

** The quantified objective is to reduce losses in 1980 by 20,000 million pesetas.*

** As important or more important than aids to activity is to receive them on time. Currently that ideal is far from being fulfilled.*

There was no way

The objective of reducing losses in the amount envisaged was achieved because it was easy. What couldn't be managed was to link the delivery of funds to the proposed objectives. Politicians prefer to create dependence on taxpayer money instead of rewarding the merits of Companies which succeed in shaking off their losses. In most cases, aid is delayed until the last moment, sometimes to save a strike or to win an election. It was

illusory that the Ministries concerned would agree to condition the delivery of funds to something other than their own will and covenants with trade unions and local politicians. Even, within INI, companies in distress went to the President and the Financial area, without relating their needs with the accomplishment of activity agreed in the plan. That essential difference between planning at Xerox and that of the INI made the process a bad copy, easily discoverable by one expert. We, *men in black*, lacked a tool as convincing as the faucet that regulates the amount and terms of the contribution of funds. For this reason, there appeared a formidable paradox: the worse the management and the more substantial the losses, the greater the transfer of resources from the State to that company, and, therefore, to the region involved.

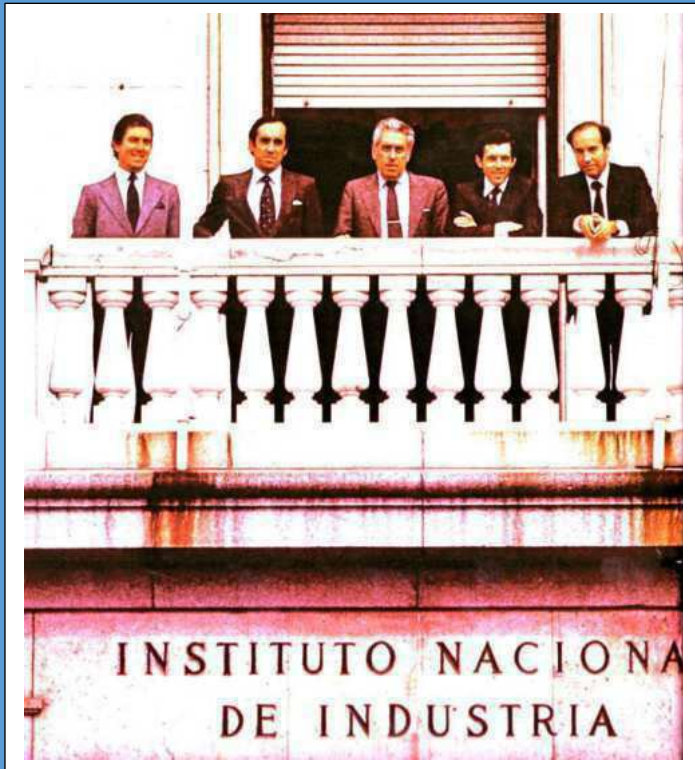
In the *Cercle of Economics*

Having De la Rica as president of the INI, the Basque Nationalist Party did not need more information on the recent Strategic Plan. More interest showed the Catalans. Jose Miguel was invited to present the plans of the INI before the exclusive Catalan Circle of Economy, followed by interventions of its founder Carlos Ferrer Salat and Josep Borrell. Twenty-four hours before the time of the event, De la Rica arranged for me to go in his place. Ferrer Salat, Borell, and I, traveled in the same plane. I had had almost no time to prepare my speech, but the tone was decided. It would be that of a director addressing the Board to give account of the holding's situation. If properly addressed, the audience should feel *owner* of the INI, at least during that brief space of time. It wasn't a bad tactic because I got indulgent applause and bland questions at the

end. Then, it was José Borrell's turn to speak, who, in a fiery tone and using a metaphor, compared the magics and spells of healers with the activity of professional doctors, letting the audience guess who was who.

And what about Development?

Tomás Galán, State economist and advisor to the INI Presidency was disappointed with my management. His friend, Feliciano Fuster, of the Mallorca Fuster dynasty and president of the island's electricity company, commented on my inability to undertake a true momentum of Development for the Institute. He may well have been right. In fact, he managed to remove the word *Development* from my assignment and putting *Control* in its place. I will try to explain my laziness with a metaphor. It was like presenting the excellences of marriage to someone of advanced age who had divorced Eight times and known moments of euphoria and happiness followed by conflict and abandonment. I'm not saying that a Ninth link could not be interesting, but it would need more than the recommendation of the Studies Office.



Fernando Rubio
Carlos Espinosa de los Monteros
José Miguel de la Rica
Eduardo Serra
Moi même



Visiting María Luisa mine shaft at Hunosa (in the middle)



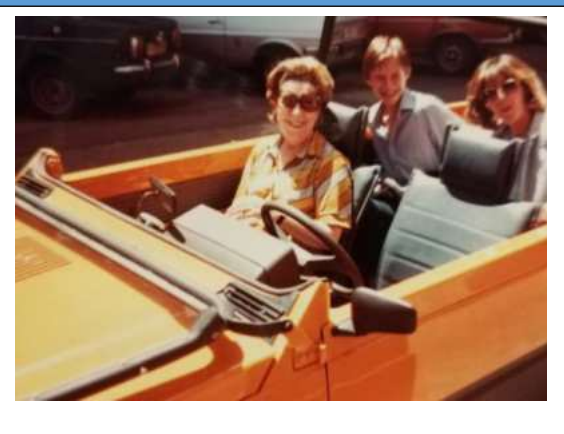
José Miguel de la Rica



Carlos Bustelo



PRESENTATION OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN OF THE INI
1981-1985
Carlos Espinosa de los Monteros
José Miguel de la Rica (como ponente)
Luis de Orueta



The prototype SEAT Panda Cabrio
(Unfortunately, was not mass produced)
With mother, sister, and nephew

Chapter XIII

I'm wrong about Suarez

This Chapter XIII covers the same period as the previous one, seen from a more domestic perspective. I returned to Spain with a manifest ignorance of what happened in politics during the 70's. Living in Connecticut, I had read of the death of Franco through the New York Times, and that there was already a new president of the government called Suarez. I don't know why, I thought he would be Fernando Suárez, and no one could correct me until that I saw the real Suarez on Spanish television. I didn't have a house in Madrid. My mother knew of a furnished apartment property of María Jesús Hurtado de Mendoza in Montesquenza street, next to La Parra restaurant. While looking for an empty one, there I settled.

Juanita Revenga

Mercedes Martinez, my secretary, had hers, which shared office and obeyed diligently everything Mercedes ordered her. Juanita was from Sepúlveda, from a family important of that most Iberian city, where they ran a jeans factory. Knowing my Segovian ancestry, she was interested that I should visit her town and coming to taste

the suckling pig in a well selected restaurant. These typical luncheons lasted a whole afternoon, with intermissions of salad dishes in preparation for second, third and fourth rounds served by the innkeeper in clay fountains. I found the propitious occasion to appear there when José Manuel Fernández Felgueroso told me about a colleague of his from the School of Mines, named Vicente Torrego, who had purchased the exploration rights and mining exploitation in that part of Segovia known as the Serrezuela, not far from Juanita's cherished Sepúlveda.

The Atlanteans

This friend of *Mamén* was crazy or almost crazy. One weekend, having nothing else to do, Torrego and I met with the idea of visiting together Serrezuela and, incidentally, Sepúlveda. I didn't have a car. We would go in INI's with the driver Manolo, always willing to do extra time. During the trip, Torrego started telling me about an old Roman mining operation in Serrezuela, which is why he had acquired the exploration usufruct in that small mountain range north of Madrid. He believed that gold could still be extracted from the dumps. Then, he confided in me that he was sure of it. 'How do you know?' 'Because I have been able to verify it at home with a rudimentary crucible' And he showed to me some gold nuggets as proof. The conversation was gathering interest and Manolo the driver listened attentively. Torrego continued his narrative by assuring that his wife was Atlantean. 'And what is that?' 'Don't you know who the Atlanteans are?' 'No idea' 'Why, they live among us' We were stepping on the sites that Torrego considered more promising. 'In all of them there is gold' He repeated. The driver didn't know whether to smile or take notes. He played a lot of

tute cards with the other drivers and sometimes he was decidedly short of cash. As for Torrego, amazing Torrego! He had convinced a young man who worked in the Commerce area of INI and together they went on to form a company with the prospect of becoming immensely rich. In fact, the gold nuggets they came from a workshop of brush makers, a profession that consists of cleaning jewelry workshops free of charge and burn the waste in an oven from which they hopefully do extract small quantities of gold, just enough to go on living. The technician from the Commerce department, whose name I don't remember, used to go to the Serrezuela before dawn, together with the parish priest of Aldeanueva, in a *Land Rover* where they carried sacks of earth that ended up in the crucible of the astute brush maker, named *Señor Jadraque*. Once on a while, Jadraque gave them some nuggets to maintain the illusion and, incidentally, his business. No doubt Jadraque was one of those Atlanteans who, like the wife of Torrego, lived amongst us.

The Chickering and the Pacific Dolphin

In Heaven, an archangel approached Mercedes and said 'See you that man who is talking to Mariano Candil on the door? You should go down and take care of him' Mercedes came with that idea. She began *taking care* that the Pacific Dolphin arrived safely, I don't know how, in Cadiz. And from Cádiz, already registered, to Malaga. I only had to find her a shelter. The Malaga Yacht Club boasted a waiting list of several years. She ended up in a small marina with a narrow mouth, a place called *El Candado*, (the Padlock). She was there for two years, until I put her in another marina, a huge development,

which was totally empty. The builders, a Dutch enterprise, had disappeared. The project failed and between the docks, small lots where grass grew showed a sad countenance. At night it was little practicable, because there was no light. There was no Captaincy to guard the entrance. But the Pacific Dolphin said that she didn't want to go back to the *The Padlock* and that she intended to stay there. 'Here?' 'Yes, sir' 'Alone?' 'Alone' And that was her home for more than one year, sharing it with no other boat. Finally, the Town Council of Benalmádena realized that it had a beautiful port on the Costa del Sol and took possession. The search for a site to the Chickering in Madrid was going to prove somewhat more difficult.

The countess's apartments

I already said that one of the salesmen of Rank Xerox belonged to a wealthy family. His name was Mariano de Rivera and he was married to María Victoria Lamo de Espinosa, better known as Toya Lamo, sister of Jaime, the Minister of Agriculture. Talking with Mariano I happened to mention the piano Chickering and Mariano, whose memory I remember gratefully, had the idea of introducing me to a daughter of the famous poet Maria Teresa Roca de Togores and Pérez del Pulgar (sic). I will soon tell you why. But let me mention that her name was Maria Theresa, as well, and she was also countess of Torrellano. She lived in a house so close to the Royal Palace that looked like an extension. The dining room boasted a large table, many chairs, and large tapestries on all four walls. The library had dust and contained copies of editions of Don Quixote. She told me that she had commissioned an architect friend a four-story house (on Calle de la Encarnación (a name from the nearby convent)).

Four flats, one for each of her 3 daughters and the other occupied by a brother-in-law of Mariano: José Lamo de Espinosa and his wife Africa. It turned out that the attic was meant for the smallest girl, Leticia, and it was empty. So empty that it had no partitions, except to hide a bedroom in a corner. The floor was covered in chocolate-colored carpet. A prominent glass balcony offered a viewpoint to the other four iron balconies, which overlooked the plaza and, further away, one corner of the Royal Palace. There was no doorman, because it was a 'family house'. And that's how Leticia, María Leticia Rojas, became my landlady and how the Chickering found peace and place after its trip from Cornwall House.

Cardboard theatres

Ever since grandma Dolores took down one day from the closet of my uncle Manolo a box containing *Children's Theatre*, for me to play with it and leave her alone, I have felt a strange fascination for those objects that simulate real theaters, with prosceniums, curtains, backstage, backgrounds, characters, and librettos. The one my grandmother kept had three works: *The sea lions*, and two by Shakespeare: *The Taming of the Shrew* and *The Merchant of Venice*. Not so many years ago I was lucky to find the same toy in *El Rastro* (a kind of Portobello market) and I began the collection. In the ironing room of the flat I put up a small workshop and started building them with cut outs brought from Denmark, England, and Germany. One reminded me David's apartment in Copenhagen because it simulated the Opera house, so close by.

Letters

Letters from my children were arriving in my mailbox from Copenhagen, and from London and America. I choose to mention three of them because I invited their authors to come to Madrid and accompany me to Aldeallana, Segovia and Malaga. One was John Duerden, my boss, before subordinate. Sailing in the waters of the Costa del Sol we remembered our outings in Long Island Sound. With Caroline Tolson memories came from crossings from Poole to Lymington in England. And with Carol Sarabum, the girlfriend of the wandering German, souvenirs of Opera nights at the Metropolitan. The Opera of Madrid, which we had in front of us, was under works. Dear Carol got to become well acquainted with two vehicles manufactured by INI companies. The Panda which took her to the Alhambra in Granada, followed by the bridge of Ronda, and the Casa CN-235 aircraft where she travelled from Malaga to the Alcazar palaces of Seville.

February 23

That Monday of year 1981, we were surprised by the news of the coup d'état, minutes before we were about to leave the INI premises. José Miguel de la Rica called us to his office and from there we went to the Executive Comission room. We had the radio on and access to a television set on another room. I noticed that José Miguel was more worried than us. It's understandable; soon some presidents would start calling asking for instructions. Others would act on their own, which was almost worse. If you are reading this, I remind you that on those days the Instituto Nacional de Industria owned more than thirty

companies directly, which with the indirect ones, totaled over 200,000 employees. All presumable watching the news that came from Congress. If the coup d'état succeeded, would they come to the plaza de Salamanca? Who would take control of the Companies? We were busy agreeing on a common position, when the King appeared on television, and we knew that the coup had failed.

The trip to Haiti

Yiyita, my brother's wife, introduced me to an American friend who was feeling bored in Madrid. I told her that I felt the same way and that why not a visit to Haiti. She was amused. From Haiti the most trivial that I can remember were the men inside their tents with sewing machines, something that reminded me of Joe Flavin, president of Singer. They made trousers and skirts for their women, always with highly colored fabrics. After finishing, they ironed with utmost care and put them on to go for walks. 'Why are you telling me this? It's not trivial, it's banal' Because it has a grotesque ending. 'Ah! And how' 'We lost the return flight' 'Pas grave. Is that all?' The next one was going to take seven more days. 'And?' I called Mercedes. Only possibility: transfer in New York. The consulate in Madrid mentioned two months for a visa, give or take. Mercedes talks to Loren, secretary to President José Miguel De la Rica, who offers to do whatever is needed. Both secretaries believe that the best thing is a letter from the president of INI to the consul of the United States in Madrid. It was written by Mercedes, signed De la Rica and sent by Loren. At *arrivals* in New York two federal police armed to the eyebrows were waiting. The other passengers didn't know what to think. It was all my fault, as Lana was American and didn't need a visa. We

were escorted to the very door of the Iberia plane. From this trivial (not banal) story four good conclusions can be drawn and one bad. The good ones: 1) the prestige of those INI presidents; 2) the kindness of José Miguel de La Rica c) the importance of Mercedes being a friend of his secretary d) her intelligence writing difficult letters. 'And the bad one?' Do I need to admit it?

My sister's tragedy

One more fateful day among the fateful, Piti told me that Danielito, her firstborn, had cancer. 'How is it possible? He is only twenty years old!' I can't forget those days. Once, in bed, he signaled to me that he wanted some orange juice. I brought it to his mouth, but I did not have the expertise of the nurse. He looked at me a little bit angry, and then he forgave me, also with his eyes. Piti, who was always such a cheerful person, has never been the same again. There is something unbearable in the early death of a son, young, loving, funny, friendly, and full of life. Since then, I feel closer to my sister, so alone in those terrible days.

My children

Lars and David were coming to Spain. Lars started playing the saxophone and going on pilgrimage like an adventurer to Spanish cities. He went to Seville, and I imagine him putting his hat on the street floor. David was finishing Economics and his behavior was less bohemian. They weren't sure which one was their country. David had traveled extensively, through Africa and Greece with Lene. Like their mother, they were worried about the poverty and lack of freedom in the world, but

they were also attracted by the variety of customs and landscapes of the sites they visited, compared to the neatness and monotony of Denmark.

A very Japanese hotel

I already said in the previous chapter that Seat was a widow company and a husband had to be found. In Europe Japanese car companies sold almost nothing. They did not have it easy if they intended do it bare-chested. We thought that together with a Spanish company they could see the doors more open. With that hope I made a first trip alone to visit the president of Toyota. Corruptly, I stayed the weekend and the Japanese hosts wondered what I intended to do. I told them please to take me out of that American hotel and look for a truly Japanese one in a Japanese village. In my new room there was no furniture and the walls looked like thatched curtains. When night came someone put a mattress on the floor for me to sleep. In the morning, a basin, soap, and water. And for breakfast fish. I preferred coffee, but they didn't understand me. I ordered paper and pencil, and I was able to paint a steaming cup. They brought me hot milk.

Kathmandu

The conversation with Eiji Toyoda (with d) would lead to a second trip with Carlos Espinosa de los Monteros, Tomás Galán and Javier Álvarez Vara. Carlos had more experience in this type of missions and was in charge of organizing everything. His was the idea of stopping at Kathmandu to entrust ourselves to divinities more oriental than ours. Of that stop, the most trivial thing I

remember is that when we arrived at the hotel (which looked like a British governor's palace) we noticed that we were missing a suitcase. I think it was from Carlos. We went back to the airport. The waiting room had a table where a government official banged with a seal the passports of those who were kind enough to approach him. We asked him about the suitcase, and he shrugged. So we went out to where the taxis were parked and we saw one that looked like ours. Opened the trunk and there it was.

Nissan

Toyoda's men didn't seem to show a lot of enthusiasm. The Japanese never say no, they expect you to guess it. We decided to test Nissan that already was in relations with Motor Ibérica and more familiar with the peculiarities of Spain. For this purpose, we had to go to Barcelona and there we found resistance from the Catalans, who did not want to hear of a replacement of Fiat by Nissan. Especially, Pedro Olavarria was very outspoken, as if implying that *we were too many and grandmother gave birth*. We managed, in spite of everything, to talk to the Japanese. Nissan proposed the joint manufacture of a rather ugly van, called *Vanette*, and we didn't insist.

Orueta stuff

To be an executive *comme il faut* I've always been lacking faculties, one of them being memory. Trying to rekindle the fire of the negotiation with Toyota, I came up with the idea to give a *cocktail* inviting the President of Seat, Juan Miguel Antónanzas and several illustrious Japanese residents in Madrid, including some managers of Toyota. My flat in calle Encarnación was

situated in the Madrid of the Austrian kings, overlooking the Palace, the Senate and the convent of the Incarnation, the oldest, inhabited by cloistered nuns to whom I asked their patriotic mediation with heavens above. Someone advised me to hire the services of a restaurateur named José Luis. A day before the event, almost at night, when I returned from the INI and the car made its entrance into the street of La Encarnación, I noticed that in the gardens of the square facing the convent there were many Japanese executives, having drinks cheerfully. As I got closer, I was alarmed to see that among them was Juan Miguel Antoñanzas. But the worse part was to notice, parked on the sidewalk, the van of the restaurant José Luis serving delicacies.

The third journey

In view of this *faux pas*, Antoñanzas decided to take the initiative of the third trip. I can't remember what happened. But I didn't miss much. What I did lose was consciousness due to a fall. When I woke up, Antoñanzas and Galán had returned to Spain. Juan Miguel had the kindness to visit my mother, who was very worried. In the hospital where I was attended by nice nurses, I had a room with an annex occupied by two Toyota employees, in charge of my custody. They had orders to inform the company of developments. As I felt well, I went for a walk and observed over the door of each room (also mine) strange colored objects, such as those used to illuminate festivals. In fact, they were votive offerings for the healing of the sick. Mine were busy trying to get me out of the place. In the meantime, a nurse, who looked like the boss, asked if I would mind teaching Spanish to the staff from my bed. Soon I found myself surrounded by other nurses

under the watchful eye of Fujimoto and Sumishima. To Antoñanzas all this nonsense remains extremely funny, and he always brings it on when we meet in the nostalgic INI luncheons that I remember in the last but one chapter.

The talk in Frankfurt

Mercedes announced to me the visit of a correspondent of the newspaper *Financial Times*. It was a question of whether I would be willing to appear in one of the interventions in a Symposium. I would have an hour to talk about the SEAT situation, an intriguing issue for the audience. It was a week away and there was time to prepare. Affirmative. When my turn came, I spoke with humility, describing the reasons why, in my opinion, Seat could interest Asian companies as beach bridge to penetrate the European difficult market, presently dominated by French and Germans. I went on to admit that our attempts had been futile, so I considered that after my speech many attendees would feel somewhat relieved. I hadn't stepped down from the lectern, when two German executives approached me gently. They said they were from Volkswagen and added that they were interested in starting negotiations.

Melanie Horcher

One letter I didn't mention was from my neighbor from Cornwall Gardens, Mary Archer Shee. During her visit she took the opportunity to criticize me once again. She found it wrong that I was still obsessed with Caroline Tolson. She instructed me to immediately meet her friend Melanie. I promised her that when she left, I

would call Melanie and invite her to a restaurant other than precisely Horcher.

Two endearing mills

The first was in Segovia, near the Serrezuela, in the village Prádena. It had been bought by Daniel de Linos and his wife Pilar Escario. I was invited to spend a few days. In such a place, and with the company of two people who helped Lene and me with a tenacity that makes one believe on the goodness of the human species, I felt happy. And even happier is how I felt in the second mill. It was owned by the Ursuline and in a parenthesis of her life, divorced and with company in the capital, she invited me to know her hiding place. To reach it you had to cross tunnels with disused tracks. It was on the site more recondite than can be imagined. There was no village nearby. The area was mountainous and uninhabited. One small river between ravines expanded on something resembling a tiny valley. And there, half cavern, half Snow White's house, was her mill. Outside I thought I saw some orange trees, or so I may have dreamed. Inside one could feel like being in the Gypsy quarter of Granada. The room she awarded me was carved into the rock and had that ideal temperature which prescind of the changes of the seasons. 'Don't take photos' She said: 'I give you this painting' She was now an Ursuline painter. Her works were being exhibited together with those of other authors. She was very happy. And once again I asked to the divinities, please, that Time should have a stop.

Divorce law

Although in the entire world I was a divorced person,

in Spain my condition was still that of married, with Lene. The thought of struggling to see if I could still marry the Ursuline painter came back to my head. One morning Mercedes, the thought reader, brought me the draft of the impending Divorce Law that minister Paco Fernández Ordóñez was about to issue. 'For you to read and comment as you see fit, before publication' 'Really?' No answer. Then I dictated 'Additional clause: Separation and divorce decrees issued by foreign courts shall produce effects in the Spanish Law from the date of their recognition'. Lawmakers copied literally the clause dictated to Mercedes, adding '...as provided in the Law of Civil Ordinance' At first, I thought this addition unnecessary. (Then I realized that the legislator's subtlety might be due to wanting to exclude the domain of Canonical marriage Law). How Mercedes found out that I could intervene in that future law and what strange powers she had, are matters reserved by the archangel.

Letter from a stranger

I always thought Stephen Zweig was exaggerating. That the eternal and immortal love were only possible in the direction Petrarca - Laura, like mine for Ursuline. One day I received a letter from a woman with a broken heart. She said she spent hours on a stone bench among the cypresses of the Plaza de la Encarnación. She envied the nuns because they lived near me, and for being able to see me from the windows of the convent. I am not mentioning this out of vanity, but because when I read it, I had a strange feeling, like being in an upside-down world. I felt closer to her than to myself, with the difference that my person seemed to me alien, unpleasant and fastidious.



Mercedes Martinez



Carlos Espinosa, Javier A. Vara and Tomás Galán
in Katmandú



The Mill of the Ursuline, painted by her



Danielito in London



Mary
Archer-Shee



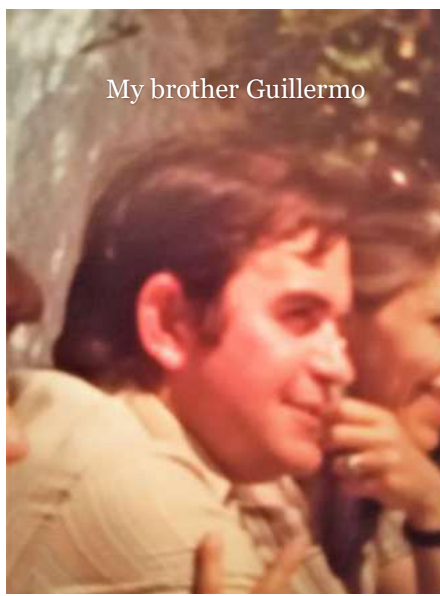
Caroline Tolson in Málaga



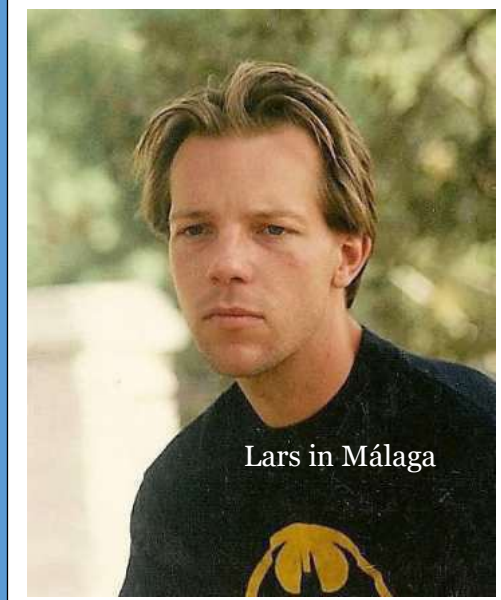
I lived in the attic, the third
and the first floors



With John Duerden in Málaga



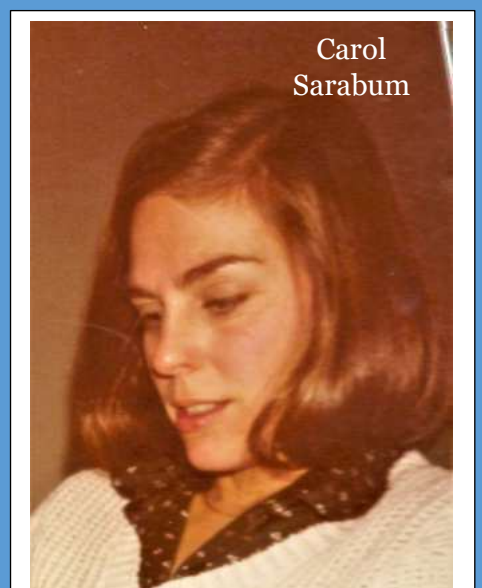
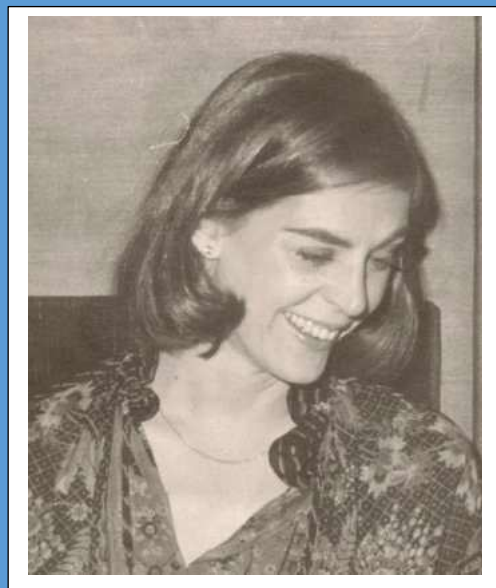
My brother Guillermo



Lars in Málaga



Garden of Málaga house



Carol
Sarabum

Chapter XIV

A wrong decision

In Richard Meier's booklet remembering the Smith House I mention the Russian author Ouspensky and his book *The Strange life of Ivan Osokin*, his first novel. Ivan, before throwing himself into the Volga, visits a magician, who announces himself next to the river. He grants Ivan the faculty to live again knowing what will happen after each decision. The novel ends as it started, because Ivan is always convinced of doing the same things, leaving the change of course for the *next* wrong decision. If only that magician had given me the same possibility, when it came to Bustelo's question about whether I cared about leaving the Planning Directorate to Miguel Boyer and become Chief Financial Officer instead, I would have said yes. I was wrong not accept.

Bustelo president

In 1981, just before the Fiat scare, Spain's President Calvo Sotelo made Ignacio Bayón Minister of Industry and entrusted the INI to Carlos Bustelo. Carlos chose to leave the Directorates of Planning and Financial as they

were. Boyer migrated to the Treasury Ministry, in charge of the State Patrimony, where he was the star of the absorption of the disastrous Rumasa holding. By impeding Boyer the opportunity of delivering Rumasa to INI I rid myself of mixing in the *affair*, but I acted with a mixture of selfishness and cowardice. If Rumasa had been absorbed by INI, the pillage that ensued would have been averted.

Melanie's friend

Melanie and I went out together a few times and I became close friend of hers. On one occasion she invited me to accompany her to a party which had to do with her English connections. I refer the consequences back to the very beginning of these memoirs in the paragraph entitled: Two friends.

Charles Macintosh

When I met Libby Macintosh, her father had already died, too young, of a heart attack. Somehow, I ended up translating an unfinished manuscript, where he tells his life, since childhood. Was born in Uruguay, but his childhood was spent in Rosario, Argentina, along with her New Zealand parents and owners of extensive plots of land devoted to cultivation of the potato. The harmful beetle razed those green fields, and the Macintoshes found themselves in a difficult economic situation. To this we must add that the father became lame from a fall. Charles soon learned to help in all. To drive he put studs to the pedals of the car. An uncle of his, Robert Macintosh, famous worldwide for his contribution to modern anesthesia, wrote a letter

from London, offering to pay Charles a medical degree at Cambridge. His parents would lose a much-needed support, but refusing would have been unforgivable. Charles boarded a freighter that carried old horses to be slaughtered as leather suppliers. There were storms during the crossing, and the cargo arrived in London quite decimated.

The annual festival of Cambridge

Every year, the students in the University celebrate a bloodless fight against the neighbors of the city. They have fun, but in England 'Fun', like most things, has its time measured and, at a certain time, all alumni had to return to their dormitories. That year, the class of Charles was delayed and found the doors closed. To avoid being punished they climbed up the walls and helping each other managed to enter in the enclosure and slide between the sheets. But they were found out. The disobedient climbers were summoned up to chapter and Charles, assuming a hero role, claimed to be the leader of the group and, hence, responsible for the misconduct. His companions denied it. The University hesitated and informed his uncle, who, feeling his fame slightly tarnished, decided to stop paying. That meant leaving Cambridge. The friends of Charles made an offer so that he didn't have to leave, but Charles felt humiliated, and, preferring to save what little money he had left, he walked all the distance to London.

An advertisement in the *Times*

In an inn room, Charles browsed job offers and his eyes were fixed on an advertisement that only asked for

someone who spoke Spanish correctly. Since he was young, handsome, and courteous, he obtained the position. All that was requested of him was to attend training sessions in London. If all went well and progressed satisfactorily, he could go to work to Maracaibo. The company was Shell. Libby was born in Maracaibo. Her parents met in London. Her mother, Dorothy, was Australian, beautiful, and everyone called her Dixie. With economic liberalization, Charles Macintosh came as president of Shell in Spain. In England he was better known as a hero of the Second World war.

The mysterious house next to Harrods

When we went to London, instead of choosing a hotel, Dixie would take us to a house without any sign on High Kensington district. There was a small doorbell and the gate opened giving way to a hall with a secretary who checked identities. The dormitories had military names. The narrow staircase was filled with portraits of British heroes. One of the faces, wearing a military cap, belonged to Charles Macintosh. Not being able to obtain a pilot degree, Charles enlisted as a paratrooper and organized the British support in Northern Italy. His heroic deeds are detailed in a book entitled '*From cloak to dagger*', tools he used as a secret agent in the Italian resistance during World War II. Member of the *Special forces*, he was awarded with English and Italian medals. On the second floor of the Club there was a spacious bar, never empty. On the first: the kitchen and dining room. The old comrades they talked from one table to another, recalling their experiences as spies and commandos.

A fondness for Asturian *hórreos* and Roman relics

Macintosh and Sargisson coincided in Madrid, the one in charge of Rank Xerox and the other to find a place for Shell in a market dominated by the former monopoly of Campsa. They got along very well with the inhabitants of small villages. I already said that Harold bought a villa in Jávea. Charles was attracted to Asturias and happy inside the typical granaries. Dixie preferred something closer to Madrid and bought some land on the edge of the San Juan reservoir. There they located a granary transported in pieces from Asturias and reconditioned as a house with views to the lake. The nearby sands intrigued Charles, who bought a metal detector and started a collection of coins and Roman pieces. From London he ordered historians books in Greek and Latin, published by the Loeb Classical Library. I am now the guardian of his notes and museum pieces. He had two sons: Johnny and Elizabeth.

Libby

I met Elizabeth at the party I went to with Melanie Horcher. Jack Thomas had told me about an island totally unknown to me, near Libya, founded on sand and devoid of water. They had to pick up the drops that fell from the sky. In truth, it was connected to Tunisia by a bridge. The French had promised the government all kinds of ventures if it agreed to build a pipeline with enough water for a luxury hotel. First came the *Club Méditerranée* and then, right next to it, the Hotel Menzel, so called because the rooms were freestanding *Menzeles*, with windowless walls, flowery courtyards

inside, and hemispherical domes to refresh the atmosphere. All this between palm trees and slab paths on the sand. The waters of the beach contained sponges.

The house high up on the hillside

One afternoon, climbing the slope of the vineyard, to contemplate Aldeallana from a bird's eye view, it occurred to us how good a house would look there. You just had to put a pipe from the water well. We choose the site and left it marked down with some stones. I thought of glass and a fireplace, like in the Smith House. White, defiant, and very out of place. Petronilo Pérez Escorial, who had to see it going and coming from his farm in Colina, called it *The Dovecote*.

Government of Calvo Sotelo

A dark maneuver ended the government of Adolfo Suarez. The new president took the most important political decision for Spain since the war of the Independence, by promoting accession to the European Union. The move put an end to the tortuous digestion of the loss of the Empire and consequent civil wars. However, in a less important framework, the uncle of Carlos, Leopoldo Calvo Sotelo, remembering the creation of Campsa monopoly by his ancestor José, had no qualms about robbing INI of its prized companies Enpetrol, Enagás and Hispanoil, three legs on which the new economic equilibrium had been achieved. That operation meant the end of INI as a viable economic entity.

Socialists in power

In October 1982 Felipe González won the elections and replaced Leopoldo Calvo Sotelo. Gonzalez decided to appoint president of INI someone who would not cause misgivings in the Spanish oligarchy. The chosen person was a Canary businessman, Enrique Moya, who appeared in the Plaza de Salamanca very conciliatory. If I were to review the most trivial memories, I could recall that Enrique used to start meetings at the Executive Committee room by saying: 'Point number one: (whatever)... 'Point number two: (the following)' and so on... point after point. Moya, after a while, decided to reorganize. I was entrusted with the new divisions of Defense, Informatic & Electronics, Food & Miscellaneous, and Regional Development Companies, the so-called SODIS. I admit here my lack of empathy for the last two.

A complaisant manager

As part of that reorganization, Moya thought to assign one of the new Divisions to a young manager that had become available when SKF cancelled its partnership with the INI. Moya appreciated me. Libby and I were invited to spend a few days at his home in Tenerife and to visit his exemplary kiwi plantations. That is why, before naming Vega de Seoane to the job, he asked if he counted with my acceptance. 'Naturally' said I. Among the directors of INI companies, Javier distinguished himself by his eagerness to please. While presiding over SKF, it was his idea to send gifts to plaza de Salamanca. I was not the only recipient of a box of tools for bricolage, difficult to return to sender for fear of offending the Swedes. Later, when he was in INI, and

SKF was packing up, he asked me to influence Construcciones Aeronáuticas to buy the SKF headquarters building on the road to Barajas airport. I thought it was a good idea, conditioned to SKF not obtaining capital gains in the operation. And so was it.

The Socialist spies

In all INI companies there were employees with large doses of leftwing ideology, which gained new strength with the change of government. Most of them limited their claims to demanding wage or social improvements. But there were some who were real spies and informants of politicians. Croissier was especially interested in whatever happened in C.A.S.A., perhaps because his brother-in-law Josep Borrell, was an aeronautical engineer. Croissier's spy was Jaime Vallori. 'Luis, Vallori has told me that Guzman has suspicious business in Indonesia'. Another target was Fuji's Secoinsa, whose president, Antonio Rodríguez, his spies considered inept. I could agree with Rodríguez's unsuitability to negotiate the departure of Secoinsa from the INI. To defend INI's interests in a future negotiation I thought of Jaume Clavell, person appreciated by the Japanese of Sony, who knew how to move in those areas and would please the Catalan marketplace.

Stormy airs

One morning Mercedes announced to me the visit of a person highly recommended by Croissier to replace Rodríguez. And Jaime Terceiro appeared. He was trained in Germany and made a good impression on me. Set to remember trivialities, I will tell you, curious

reader, that his black shoes shone like shells of Egyptian beetles. I told him I could offer him the presidency of Secoinsa, conditional on Enrique Moya's approval. He got up and told me very calmly to add the corresponding Division in INI. To which I replied that the post he suggested was *not* vacant.

A parachute factory

By then it was clear that some Socialists or Communists aeronautical engineers had a plan to take over Construcciones Aeronáuticas. Its chairman, Enrique de Guzman had resigned, to preside over a private concern, so it was urgent to act expeditiously to avoid political meddling. I had no other criteria than the merits of employees of the company and suitability for the position. And it seemed to me that the most adequate candidate was Fernando de Caralt, another Catalan with experience in business management. The only downside in Caralt's candidacy was that his family had shares in a parachute factory. I offered him the job subject to stopping all parachute purchases from that company during his mandate. Then I proposed to Moya the appointments of Jaume Clavell and Fernando Caralt, who took possessions with Felipe González already president of the Government.

The Ides of October

In the summer of 1984, an invitation came from Brussels for me to attend a NATO meeting, as representative of the Spanish Defense industries. It was a month away and Mercedes Martinez prepared the protocol reply accepting. The sessions were scheduled for the beginning of October and in one of those days

Felipe González agreed to cease Moya and appoint a substitute. Minister Solchaga would have preferred his friend Claudio Aranzadi, but the candidacy of Croissier prevailed. I was glad because he was a close friend of my cousin José María, *El Colo*. His inauguration was to coincide with my trip to Brussels. Mercedes warned me: 'Cancel the trip' She could have added: 'Beware of the Ides of October' I ignored her advice and went to the meeting in Brussels.

The following Monday

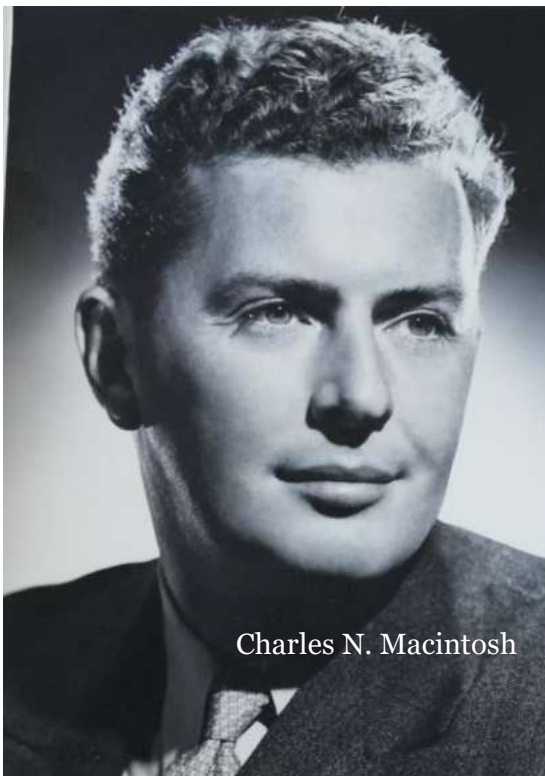
Mercedes was very serious. 'Croissier has called asking for you' I went to the well-known office, previously occupied by De la Rica, Bustelo and Moya. The new boss told me he didn't count on my collaboration in his new team. 'May I remain until Wednesday to say goodbye to the Board members?' 'I don't see it as appropriate. Surely you understand that you belong to the outgoing political team' 'Luis Carlos, I belong to no political group' Silence, and then: 'Anyway you come from Rank Xerox' and I imagine you can rejoin it' 'Never mind. In any case, I wish you success in your new assignment' 'Thank you Louis' When I returned to the office it was to pick up my things and leave. Mercedes reported a bit of secretarial gossip: 'Croissier has been conversing all weekend with Javier Vega de Seoane. They ate together and decided what will go to the Board on Wednesday'.



Sir Robert R. Macintosh



Libby's grandmother



Charles N. Macintosh



Dixie



Libby



Dixie





The hotel Menzel in Djerba



Chapter XV

Alone on calle de la Encarnación

On Tuesday I got out of bed with the strange feeling that I didn't have to, I shouldn't, go to work. My boss had fired me with the same lack of empathy that one finds in American films. 'You are fired' Now what? Back to Rank Xerox? Could there be anything other than president of RX Spain? How could I think of replacing Emilio Haase, totally innocent of my misadventures? I remembered Mercedes last words. 'You have a call from Enrique Guzmán'. He had resigned from *Construcciones*, and I assumed it would be for something related to his personal situation. Was he duly protected by the pension scheme? If not, there was little I could do. I decided to call him back. 'Good morning, Enrique. I have something to tell you' 'I know, and if you have nothing better on sight, I offer you the Directorship of Planning at CASA' I left him speak. 'As you know, such appointment is the prerogative of the president of the company, and they cannot prevent it. If you want it, you can have it, because Caralt agrees'. Curious, thought I, this world

of the aeronautical engineers. 'Enrique, you don't know how much I appreciate this. Say yes'.

Again the Centon

After hanging up, I took a walk around the Opera Square, I had some *tapas* and some wine at the *Taberna del Alabardero* and back at my flat, I searched for some book with which to entertain the hours. I looked at a few, and this memory serves as an excuse to mention more titles from the list of the Centón. *Odes*, by Horace; *The Reasonings* by Pietro Aretino; *Letters to Attic* of Cicero; *Gargantua and Pantagruel*, by Rabelais, *Life of the Twelve Caesars*, by Sallust; *Madame Bovary* by Gustave Flaubert; *Loneliness* of Luis de Góngora, *Tirant lo Blanc* by Martorell; *Faust* of Goethe; *Pedro Páramo* of Juan Rufo; *Trip to The Alcarria* by Pedro de Alarcón; *The manuscript found in Zaragoza* by Ian Potaki; *Life of Illustrious philosophers*, of Diogenes Laertius; *Just William* by Richmal Crompton. Fine. There are already twelve. And *Don Quixote*? In the next one, don't let me forget.

The Queen of Tonga

Tonga is an archipelago of Oceania, very purposeful for the CN-235 transport aircraft, capable of landing on very short tracks. For this reason, Queen Salote and her entourage visited Getafe installations and it was decided to bid her farewell with a dinner at the *Corral de la Morería*, booked that night for the occasion. A long table was installed from where to comfortably watch the flamenco show. All the directors of the

company were invited to attend and present their respects to the Queen and her attendants. Five minutes before the scheduled time, the imminent arrival of Salote was announced, without Caralt and his wife having reached the restaurant. When bulky Reina managed to get out of the car, panic spread. Pablo de Bergia and Luis Muñoz, always attentive to matters of protocol, asked me to pretend to be the president and Elisabeth Macintosh his wife. The Queen didn't speak Spanish and didn't know who Caralt was. That night Libby and I became friends with Salote and *the wheel bend and the story end*.

Sara de la Sota

In a small room next to Caralt's office reigned another woman, named Sara de la Sota, daughter of a famous architect. A classic would put her discretion before her disturbing beauty. Sara kept the secrets and knew the stories. She enjoyed the authority of a Roman matron. and her words were always well meant. It was her who advised me to rely on the support of the Air Force people. We mustn't forget that CASA had two grandparents, the civilian and the military. The 235 had been born as a transport of troops requested by the Air Force and CASA had adapted it for civilian use. When I arrived, the generals were noticing with concern the drift of the company towards contracts for the supply of parts to Airbus and Boeing, in detriment to the function of supporting the needs of the Army.

I didn't feel alone

Close to the office of the president, mine was

spacious. I wasn't supposed to need a secretary. Sara could take care, from her desk. I received unannounced visits from Joaquín Abril Martorell, counselor of the presidency of CASA and brother of Fernando, former number two of Sapin's president Adolfo Suárez. The visitor who most liked to illustrate me about what he would do in my place was colonel Fernando de Castro, a military appointed by the Air High Command to keep them informed of what was happening in the offices on Rey Francisco Street.

A certain smell of sulfur

A few months after my incorporation, I received a strange letter from the INI Personnel Department which made me creditor of a compensation of 10 million pesetas following the termination of my employment at Plaza de Salamanca. I left it on the table. In the room I could feel a familiar fluttering of wings. And within me, a voice warning 'Beware of the Evil One'. I felt transported to my previous office in Plaza de Salamanca, with Mercedes in the next room. And to make the apparition with wings happy, I wrote a brief note in which I said the proposal was duly appreciated but in considering that the recipient continued to provide services in a company 100% owned by the Institute, he had no right to the compensation proposed.

Two generals

Although they were both equal in rank, judging by their reactions, one participated in the best qualities of Don Quixote, and the other sometimes reminded the

petty selfishness of Sancho Panza. They were generals José Santos Peralba and Gabriel de la Cruz. The younger, Peralba, had studied in Germany, France, England, and the United States. Calvo Sotelo put him in command of the Air Force. Had been the first Spanish pilot of jet aircraft. The Texans, Mirages and Sabre jets had no secrets for him. He spoke several languages that allowed him to teach as flight instructor in Germany and the U.S. I enjoyed travelling with him to and noticing the depth of his knowledge, to which he linked an exquisite education and great indulgence with the other people's imperfections. In contrast, Gabriel de la Cruz was not born in Bayonne, like Peralba, but in a town of Albacete, like Fernando de Castro. The proximity to San Javier encouraged him to follow the career of aviation and graduate as a test pilot. Gabriel was the first pilot who flew in the CASA C-101 designed at the request of the Air Force, but with some limitations introduced by engineers of the Company.

The C-101 (chicken ass)

What I'm going to write is not written anywhere else and is the result of my conversations with Santos Peralba. It refers to the C-101, widely praised as training aircraft. What the Army had asked from *Construcciones Aeronáuticas* was more than that. The initial specifications configured an attack weapon qualified as *tactical*, intended to be supersonic, with autonomy enough to defend Canary Islands and power to load tactical weapon under the wings. The benefit that it might provide as a training aircraft was an easy corollary, a byproduct of the original idea. All that was

needed for the purpose was not to load it with bombs. As a weapon, it was of the essence that the avionics achieved *state of the art* perfection. That plane never reached prototype status. Reason? CASA insisted on a subsonic motorization, supported by a Garret engine. As a fighter jet, the project lost interest and yet the condition that could fly to the Canary Islands was not dropped. To this end, the wing surface was reduced, impairing its ability as a training aircraft. The result was of the neither/nor type. In the international market it had no success, except for a few units sold to the Chilean Air Forces

The AX

Santos Peralba was in favor of returning to the idea of an air-to-ground combat aircraft, supersonic and, why not, an aircraft to improve the training of new pilots. This aspiration was alien to Airbus management who were already engrossed in the *Raphale*, origin of the *Eurofighter*. They felt little inclined to assist Construcciones in a coincidental but low scale project. But that was only a small stumble. Peralba knew that in the United States you could obtain the transfer of very advanced technology, provided it was considered not last generation by the Pentagon. That way companies like Boeing, Northrop or Lockheed enjoyed an international military market, to reabsorb the costs incurred on the most advanced prototypes.

U.S. Support

Peralba, Castro and I we went to America to present the project accompanied by Gabriel de la Cruz. According to Peralba, the important thing was to talk

about number of units envisaged. We mentioned figures close to a hundred aircrafts, with a substantial part committed by the Spanish Air Force. This could easily be achieved by replacing the production of the C-101 as soon as possible. At Boeing, the numbers seemed conservative and sufficient to support the project.

One and three

Construcciones Aeronáuticas was then a company with three souls in the same body. The original existed since early twentieth century, fruit of a generation of dreamers and prophets in their land and on a par with any other country in inventiveness and achievement. Then came the European soul, eager to participate in the harmonization of projects, to join efforts for being able to compete on an equal footing with the United States. And, thirdly, the patriotic soul, which was a continuation of the first, by way of service to the Air Force. It allowed continuity of opportunities for aeronautical talents, which were obscured by dependence on the foreign R+D of the second soul.

The offices in Gran Vía

I saw little interest in Fernando de Caralt for the AX, and that lack of enthusiasm was transmitted to the Projects department of Francisco Fernández Díaz, a quiet technician of no incandescent temperament. The colonization of the company from Toulouse advanced to leaps and bounds. To obtain some independence for the AX project, I asked that it be of exclusive dedication for the engineers who were assigned to it.

And that its HQ were off street Rey Francisco, but not very far. I spoke with Eduardo Serra, Defense minister and former comrade at INI, who was present at the inauguration.

Wedding with Elisabeth

Elisabeth was now divorced and could marry if she wanted. She wanted and came to live with me in the street of La Encarnación. With her came her daughter Natalia, who evidenced emotional dependence on both her grandmother and her mother, forming a strong triangular relationship between them three ('Huh, huh! *triangular between three?* Remove triangular' 'Oh! Leave me alone!')

The San Juan swamp

The imprint of Charles Macintosh was still present in that original granary next to the new one plant villa, pride of my new mother-in-law. We had as neighbors Simeon of Bulgaria and wife Margarita Gómez Acebo. It was not a good place for sailing, but yes for waterskiing. Libby and I went looking for a boat for Natalia to show everybody her skiing skills. In San Martín de Valdeiglesias we saw a Tulio Abate. You don't have to know, but, believe me, it is an exceptional brand.

Johnny and Petra

Sometimes John, Dixie's son, visited the swamp with his Dutch wife, Petra. He was very jovial and a true sportsman skiing and surfing in the calm waters of San Juan's reservoir. He wanted to show me how to acquire

both skills but with unequal fortune. Speaking of surfing, the boards on those days were heavy and carried excessive rag. They weren't like the ones today. On one occasion I crossed to the shore in front, and I was unable to come back. As a castaway in deserted island, I waved my arms for someone to come to my rescue. Dixie looked amused, proudly savoring the Anglo-Saxon superiority in the family environment. Even worse were my beginnings at skiing. Unlike Natalia, who suddenly emerged from the water as a Venus by Boticelli, I couldn't help a strange and curious tendency to continue being a fish.

Finally, almost vertical

Trying to find out what it felt like to ski, I thought of tying at my back one of the four defenses of the Tulio Abate. So, yes, Johnny at the wheel and me skiing in the form of C we slide along the swamp causing surprise to many bathers who got up from their towels in the sand to see a curious specimen of hunchbacked skier. Libby didn't want to hear about the feat. She hoped that Simeon and Margaret that day were in Madrid or Sofia.

Emma is born

Although the name was already quite popular, the choice wasn't totally unrelated to Flaubert. I remember going to the Hospital San Francisco in the Constructions car, which was green color and very square, with an empty basket of the kind known by the name Moses, and back to Encarnación in the same car with a full basket. Emma slept so much that we almost forgot about her. One morning, as I awoke on the bed,

I turned my eyes to the cradle and on one of the edges protruded a childish head who stared at me as if to say: 'Here I am, in case you had forgotten'. I woke up Libby and the little head turned to her, with the same message.

Sheeba

In addition to Natalia and Emma, my new family was increased with a quadruped member whom we baptized on the same day as Emma, but with a different name. She and I had little in common, except an inclination towards independence. Emma insisted on taking her for a walk on a leash, as if it were a dog. Sheeba was trying to make her see that she was a cat and did not accept certain customs from human beings.

Natalia flying

One afternoon I noticed in San Martín de Valdeiglesias a motorcycle shop on the corner of the Mainstreet. I entered to find out if one would fit in the car. The most feminine looking was a red *scooter*, which seemed to want to come with me. It was for Natalia. The first classes went well, and we were all very happy. At the end of one of them, Natalia turned the handlebar control sharply and the bike rose like those circus horses that stand on two legs before the tamer's gaze. Nothing happened. Natalia didn't even fall. Then? Nothing. I just wanted to remember.

A travel companion

My friends in London decided that the Spanish Company had behaved badly with me throughout the

topic of my incorporation to INI. According to Anglo-Saxon ethics, providing service to a Public Entity is a plausible practice that does not cancel the contract relationship. Therefore, I received a letter from London where I was offered to represent Xerox in the Spanish Company. To do this, if I accepted, I should travel to London where they would be waiting for me to sign the documents and, above all, to stage the reinstatement. The remuneration exceeded my expectations. I was happy in the London airplane, when I discerned the profile of a passenger very reminiscent of that of Luis Carlos Croissier. It was inevitable. I had gracefully decided to waive the compensation, so nothing was pending. I saluted. Luis Carlos returned the greeting, slightly disturbed, and asked the reason for my trip. I told him the truth and he had a negative reaction. 'Luis, this appointment is incompatible with your position in CASA' 'Luis Carlos, I have been Board member of Union Fenosa while at INI' 'It's not the same' 'In that case I prefer to accept the offer of Rank Xerox'. At the exit gate I was expected by a chauffeur with the sign *Orueta* and, one minute later, Luis Carlos was able to observe how he opened the door of a large limousine. It was in that very moment when another door began to close in Spain.

Higinio Raventós

One of the many satisfactions Libby and I had, from being a director of Rank Xerox Spain, was to meet a lovely Catalan couple. Emilio Haase, also a Catalan by birth presided over the Board of Rank Xerox and was interested in appointing a compatriot who might keep him company during the sessions, a bit boring and

long. It occurred to me to suggest the name of José Oliú, son of the then president of Banco de Sabadell. The offer didn't suit him, for whatever reason, but he talked to a friend of his, Higinio Raventós, a young entrepreneur belonging to one of the oldest family sagas in Spain. And that's how Higinio and his wife Cristina Martí invited us to spend a weekend in their farmhouse and visit the wineries. Higinio was a family shareholder. I remember he had a lot of interest in a new white, non-sparkling, wine, intended for the foreign market. It was a year short before maturity, yet he handed cups for us to try. It had a very smooth taste, almost better than if it had already reached the expected point. I also remember the vision of a huge tree, a kind of oak, located in a magical place, just as the Romans would have chosen for a family lar. Five hundred years old and sustained by multiple wooden and iron canes. And, once again, the verses of Propertius could be heard in the air: *The Spirit is Something/ Death doesn't finish Everything*.



Eduardo Serra



José Santos Peralba



Gabriel de la Cruz



Enrique de Guzmán
Ozámiz



C-101



Emma



Natalia

Chapter XVI

The outstretched hand

I begin this chapter talking about a feeling. It all started when a friend of Carlos Espinosa de los Monteros offered him to join a society of consultants, an activity that promised the security that Carlos needed, just dismissed by Croissier in Iberia airlines. The seed of that new society came from the excellent relationship that Carlos had with Boeing, whose planes were preferred by Iberia pilots on all those routes on which Airbus was not competitive. The surprise of seeing Espinosa dismissed without any reason or gratitude, made the Boeing's management consider having his advice when the time would come to renew the fleet. Besides, Carlos had sworn to himself never to rely on a single source of funds in his family life, after the scare of seeing himself momentarily on the street. He then remembered a suggestion of his friend Javier Cardenal to start an insurance brokerage, taking advantage of the availability of a complete team of experts in crane insurance intermediation. A turnkey business, and disinterested. In the heart of Carlos lit the flame of perennial gratitude to the one who lent a

hand in a moment in his life when he felt alone and unjustly treated.

Carlos' offer

That feeling, multiplied by two, is what I felt when Espinosa offered me to enter as a third shareholder in A. Ballesteros y Cía, a small firm until then dedicated to managing personal matters. Alfonso Ballesteros was one of the division Directors at Enrique Moya's INI. He took care of the Shipyards division, although his trajectory originated in the world of oil prospecting. Elegant and good looking, he was a lucky man, in the literal sense. Alfonso did not need the profits he could get from a consulting company. As for, Carlos secured himself a podium from where he could develop his professional skill and excellent relations. They didn't need me. Carlos' offer came from a feeling of friendship, seeing that I was in a similar situation to his before Alfonso's offer. I told myself that, from then on, no matter what, I would always find myself in debt to Carlos. And it has been so ever since.

A. Ballesteros y Cía.

At home, my work changes passed unnoticed. The horrible green car I had never liked I returned without regret and bought one of my own. The Panda was happy with Libby. Instead of walking to the offices of the AX project in Gran Vía, I parked in the subway of Almagro 34. Soon afterwards that building was sold to be remodeled and we opted for another more central site in the number 76 of Velázquez Street. The inner part of the office was occupied entirely by the people of

Hispasegur, led by a solicitous Alberto Blanco. The frontal area with balconies had three luxuriously furnished offices overlooking the street. The staff on payroll included: The two secretaries of Alfonso, Fátima and Beatrice; mine: Isabel Pernaute, and of Carlos: his sister Gabina and my sister Maria Eugenia. In charge of the Administration there were two people trusted by Alfonso: José Luis Linares and Jacinto Maldonado. Gabina and my sister left the premises, because they didn't feel comfortable, only curiosity, soon satisfied. Neither Carlos nor I were on payroll, which had the disadvantage of disrupting Social Security contributions. That's all very boring for you. I must turn to something intensely trivial.

The slide rules

I had furnished my office with my father's desk. As a complement, I placed a small tea table with folding glass cover and a wooden bottom where to place the best pieces of a collection of slide rules. With the appearance of the first electronic calculators, I started feeling sorry for all slide rules. Where would they end up? Manufacturing a slide rule was so difficult that they were only made in Germany, France and the U.S.A. The precision needed to shorten the distance between each hairline, according to the logarithmic series, converted those ivory pieces into admirable objects. Many booksellers were suspicious. 'Do you have slide rules?' 'How did you say?' 'Slide rules' 'No... Well, yes. Wait a moment' 'What do you want them for?' 'We have some left' When I saw a stationary that looked like they might keep them in some forgotten drawer, I asked a friend to go in while I

waited outside. I was too interested, and it showed. Even so, at times, the stationary owners found excuses not to sell them.

A morning at the Milford Bar

Boeing had sent a young man named Philippe de Saint Aubin to deal in negotiations with Iberia. He had his own place and telephone within our office. Croissier told him that this circumstance did not favor Boeing's interests in Spain. One day he had a mysterious call from a firm called Taramundi S.L. The messenger implied that he had an interesting offer to propose. Philippe was suspicious and asked me to contact them on his behalf. I answered the call, and we arranged an interview at Milford's bar, not far from our office, at about eleven o'clock in the morning. The place offered an unusual look, with chairs on top of the tables, so early in the day. I asked the waiter to arrange some space to sit, tonic water, and waited. Finally, a man and a woman appeared who did not beat around the bush. Boeing would secure the fleet contract if it recognized the intermediation of Taramundi with the socialist government through a 5% commission. Otherwise, the successful bidder would be McDonnell Douglas.

Boeing leaving

Philippe informed the Central HQs and soon we had a dinner with executives from America in which the matter was carefully discussed. Boeing wanted to know if that proposal merited some credit or had nothing to do with Iberia. My opinion was affirmative. That same night they decided not answer and wait for

events to unfold. They told us that, if that was the condition, Boeing renounced to win the Iberia contract, but that they hoped the pilots imposed their preferences. It is well known that the contract went to McDonnell. Soon after, Saint Aubin was destined to another country and the relationship ended.

Carlos takes flight

Whims of fate. Carlos saw that the office of Velazquez was too limited for his aspirations. And one day he informed us that he would not come anymore, and that he had been appointed to the same position which my father left, thirty years ago. He offered the services of A. Ballesteros along with his new role, and I went several times to the familiar offices near Gran Vía. In times of my father the company had factories in Reinos and Córdoba. Since then, the new owners had added a third in Valladolid. The conclusions of my work were unequivocal: the Valladolid factory was not competitive, nor could it be made without much change. (Now I think it would have preferred not to carry out that assignment)

The Henares Valley

Alfonso and I were alone in the office. He made some laudable attempts to introduce me to his family environment. Married to Paloma Fierro, he enjoyed a stud farm, which grazed in meadows of the Ribera del Henares. On the river banks he had built an example of how to combine the style of rural mansions with a white and glass annex, reminiscent of Richard Meier's aesthetic. In that great house dinners were watched over by a butler attentive to any eventuality. I

missed Carlos' company while in that home. I felt sorry when Alfonso divorced Paloma.

Red Eléctrica (National Grid)

Among the components of the Studies Office of INI it must have come as a surprise to stop seeing me so suddenly. When they found out my whereabouts, many already had obtained the positions that their socialist creed accorded them and had been denied during the Transition. This was the case of Paulina de Beato, who became President of a unique company in Europe: the first National Grid. There was none that had as its only mission the transportation of electricity. The idea generatrix came from INI economists like herself, Jorge Fabra, José María Paz, Martín Gallego and Carmen Mestre. The thinking behind was that it was Socialist enough to nationalize the Transmission Network leaving in private hands Generation and Distribution. A breath of relief welcomed the birth of Red Eléctrica. Its revenue would depend on the Directorate-General for Energy (with Carmen Mestre in charge) in response to annual proposals defended by an expert engineer: Luis Villafruela. The Nomenklatura recognized the logic of those negotiations within the rules of what became known as *Paulina's formula*. Thanks to Paulina I kept a working relationship with successive presidents of the national grid. With the first: as consultant of A. Ballester y Cía. Afterwards: contracting with my own company.

Everything was going well

The first two years of that association of friends were

very profitable and we decided to invest in buying our own offices. The place chosen was a street floor in Núñez de Balboa, at number 17. The economic depression was still months ahead. I parked happily my Alfa Romeo in the courtyard of that noble building, giving thanks (as I went up in the elevator) to some divinity for the friends I had. Once inside, my research work was interesting and conducive to travels abroad. Yes, this is becoming boring, and I prefer to recall what was going on with Lene and the sons we had together.

Emmasvej 10

It was (is) a large house with a generous apple tree in the middle of the back yard, on a street located in the best area of Copenhagen, which is undoubtedly Hellerup (so named by his first landowner, surnamed Heller). There lived Lene, with furniture brought from the house of Malaga and with Lars, who was graduating from high school education, with excellent marks. Lars had a room (with terrace) full of musical or audio instruments. The saxophone had been replaced by guitar. In one of my visits, I took some photos, but I haven't found them to put at the end of this chapter. David was living in Sudan or travelling in the Third World in search of direct experiences.

Emma's birthdays

Emma was already going to school and her friends used to come to her birthday parties in calle de la Encarnación. Even I had birthdays, and on one of them Libby gave me an impressive camera to film 8ms movies. Emma's parties were propitious occasions to

immortalize childish gestures. An entertainer with puppet theatre came always and managed to keep the children's attention more than one hour, with tricks identical every year. He reminded me of *Master Pedro's* puppet owner in Don Quixote. Watching those films now, each small little change excites comment, along with the persistence of other images.

My two Maria Eugénias

To be completely happy, it was necessary that Maria Eugénia, mother, and Maria Eugénia, sister, were happy too. Piti, my sister had divorced a second time before she met a German painter, based in Spain, named Stefan, that became a good friend of hers, and she looked happy, all the happy that she could be without Danielito. Maria Eugénia, mother, was also well accompanied by old admirers like general Gutiérrez Mellado or like a pretender prior to the return of Ulysses, whose book of poetry began with the following octosyllables:

*Mi pena cuando la miro
Corre delante de mi
Como un niño sorprendido*

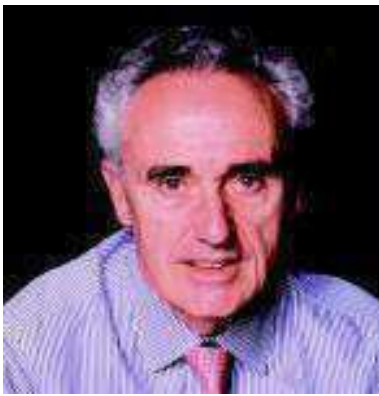
Rank Xerox in 1992

I said earlier that Emilio Haase presided over the Spanish subsidiary and wanted the Company to contribute to the Olympic Games of Barcelona and the International Fair of Seville. In Barcelona he chartered a cruiser that served as a hotel from its berth in the harbor with cabins that reminded me of the sleeping carriages of the Great European Express. Libby and I

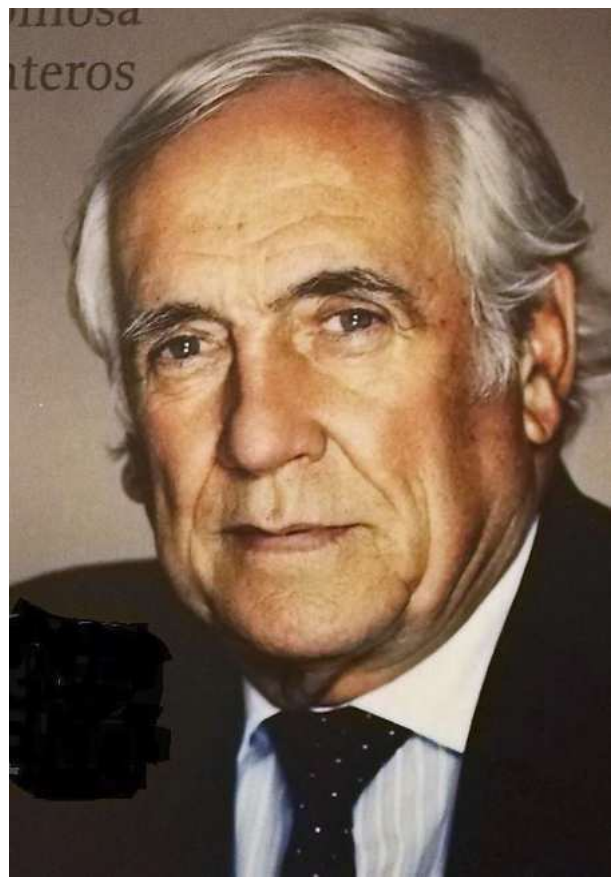
went to Barcelona as guests, accompanied by his wife Berta Casanova, and we attended the inauguration from a privileged box. Gone were the bad memories from careless Honorio Gayo. Later, in Seville, Emilio organized a reception for us in grand style. The company's stand at the Fair was impressive for the modern and clean image that exulted. With these sunny happenings and no black clouds, in 1992, I could agree with Leibniz that I lived *in the best of all possible worlds*.

Stereolithography

This cultured, though not euphonious, word describes a technical process by which a machine creates a three-dimensional object from the information that receives from sheets of paper drawn by draftsmen at the project desks. It was based on laser beams and their property to solidify special resins. Its future commercial value was still unknown, although the analogy with Xerox was obvious, so there was something more than scientific curiosity. Alfonso obtained the company's representation in Spain during a successful trip to California, where *3D Systems* had its Headquarters. With that exciting novelty in view it was possible to imagine a future in which consulting work moved to a secondary place.



Alfonso Ballester



Carlos Espinosa de los Monteros



Infante Alfonso de Borbón and
María Eugenia, benefactress



The granary



Natalia



Emma's birthdays





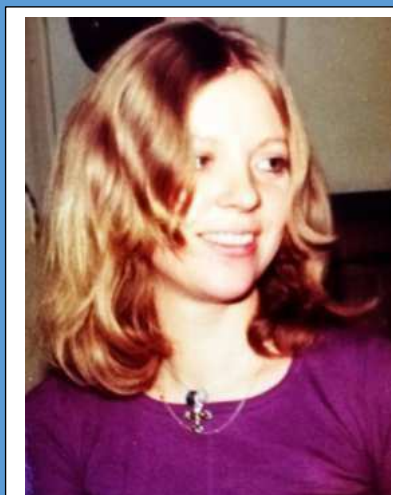
Emmasvej 10



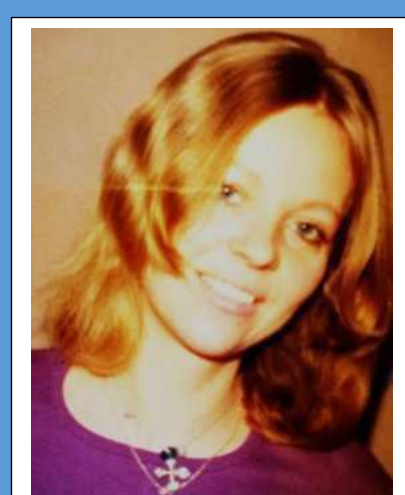
David



Lars



Lene



Chapter XVII

Lars and David in Spain

Lene thought our children should live in Spain. David settled in an attic on Calle de San Bernardo and began to teach English. Lars preferred the hamlet of Aldeallana. Once, we went to Segovia and we sat on the terrace of the familiar cafeteria by the Cathedral. Lars got up for a walk and didn't come back. The feeling of sudden abandon was the same as when, being only four years old, he disappeared from the beach of Torremolinos. Back to the present, a few days later we were looking at Aldeallana from the heights of *El Palomar*, when he went down the steps, got into the car and left without a word. We hadn't been talking and there was peace and quiet in the house. Mechanically I started to walk following the only possible car route. After one kilometer of worried hike, I saw the green car at one side of the road to Avila. He was inside listening to music. Lars was not well, but the doctors did not speak clearly.

Natalia

Natalia wasn't well either. His father was warned and

decided to admit her to treatment in a psychiatric clinic. It was easy to assume that these were effects of the separation of their parents. There was a certain analogy in the cases of Lars and Natalia. In Lars's case my view turned to family precedents. As for Natalia, the fact that the father's relationship with his daughter was mediated by her godfather, didn't help. Finally, Natalia escaped from that confinement. Her mother and grandmother redoubled their efforts to make her happy. Natalia was a beautiful young woman, innocent and an excellent match. With time, she would become Duchess of La Torre. One wedding leads to others. We attended several, always with Natalia. We took care that she sat at tables with interesting young men. But her extreme shyness only faded when she returned home and could play again with her dogs. She had three.

Fernando de Castro

At that time Colonel Castro, who had accompanied me as attaché of the Air Force in *Construcciones Aeronáuticas*, informed me that he too had been replaced and was in line for some new assignment. It occurred to me to invite him to join our company as a shareholder for he could attract customers with his many Opus connections. I thought I was doing him a favor in a situation like to the one I was experiencing. What would be my surprise when he invited me to spend a few days at his mansion in Albacete. There I could see that the Castros were part of the city's oligarchy. They had invested copiously in farms and married their sons and daughters with clan criteria. The extraordinary thing was that the origin of his fortune came from his wife having been graced by the jackpot of the Spanish

Lottery. A halo of unreality made even more attractive the obvious wellbeing and irresistible hospitality.

Black clouds

Stereolithography was a failure. Perhaps Alfonso Ballester and Carlos Espinosa remember the fate as an unimportant setback. For me, it meant getting into a labyrinth of difficult exit. Let me tell you first what happened with that invention. The contract with 3D Systems demanded that we buy a machine for demonstration purposes. Its size and technical conditions made it impossible to place it in our office. It needed a more adequate place, with space for demonstrations and room for visitors or clients. To gather some means of defraying so much expenditure (the machine was more expensive than a Rolls Royce) we opted to open a workshop office in the outskirts of Madrid, which would serve as demonstration and sell parts on demand. With the help of Fernando Castro, CASA agreed to rent the first machine. The idea of providing the one at Coslada was against the rental clause; therefore: we had to buy another. Add to this the cost of transport, insurance, and travel to and from California. Nothing would have mattered if the prospective customers found the machine useful enough. We tried to interest companies in the Automotive parts industry. The machine could be helpful in prototypes of new elements for model changes. But all our efforts failed. The process was cumbersome and too slow. It required bothersome preparation of drawings, and the resins used as consumables were expensive.

Disappointment

One morning, Alfonso summoned Carlos and me to tell us that the Company's treasury was exhausted and unable to cope with immediate payments. That the only solution was to sell the office premises. Given the urgency and to facilitate matters, he offered to buy them himself, adding that, with the real estate crisis, the fair price would not suffice to overcome the debt incurred. He would not demand additional contributions from us, for the difference was small. At that moment I looked at Carlos and I could clearly see that his eyes were fogged.

My situation

From then on, I was exclusively dependent on my work as a consultant, although I only received a third part of the invoices. The rest was absorbed by an excessive payroll, given the little activity. But I didn't complain because I had at my disposal a secretary and an office, which were indispensable in those times before the arrival of personal computers.

Adrift

Carlos Espinosa abandoned the company Cenemesa for the presidency of Mercedes Benz. He stopped coming to the office. Alfonso gave up the idea of representing & distributing new products in Spain. Nor did he see himself as consultant. He felt he wanted to become a writer. His specialty would be biographies of entrepreneurs or biographies of large corporations. And, based on his experience, he opted to begin with the life of the founder of the INI, Juan Antonio Suanzes.

Consequently, in that office, with 3 secretaries 2 administrators and the office rental paid to Alfonso, my work as a consultant was going to be the only source of income. As a sailboat crew, I know what it feels like when the storm rages and the ship tilts dangerously. All the attention is concentrated on making her run its course and overcome this wave and then the following. The reason for the trip, the passengers, including the original course, they cease to be paramount. Before the uncertainty of what could happen in the way of income the following year of 1994, my only concern was to ensure that the few resources which I counted with, did not stop flowing. Every movement, every trip, every sentence of a report was implemented with that fixation of mind. The idea to become self-employed or create my own company was beginning to gain strength, but first it was necessary to reach port. I did it with the jobs I'm going to recall now, even if it might be boring for you.

In Red Eléctrica

France and England followed the Spanish idea of establishing National Grid companies, in a clear imitation of Red Eléctrica de España (REE). Given the almost simultaneity of these developments, Jorge Fabra, the second President, was interested in finding out the similarities and differences between the three enterprises. To this task I dedicated time and hours of flight.

At the Red Cross

The management of a hospital must deal with two different scenarios. The clinic, which is based on the

selection of its list of professional people & the means placed at their disposal, which is very much like a hotel with operating rooms. All Spanish Red Cross hospitals maintained daily activity data classified by medical specialties. Those computer listings contained extremely useful information. You may find this hard to believe, but it is nonetheless true that the economy of any hospital is mainly governed by the correct duration of night stays. Each intervention has a maximum and a minimum which depends only on the technology used. I started my services by making friends with the managing director of RC Hospitals, José Ramón Bronet, and convincing him to ask doctors for their opinion on the normal number of overnight stays in their specialties. It could be seen that the economic losses were in direct correlation with an excess of overnight stays in few treatments: Cataracts, Varicose veins, Hemorrhoids, and Phimosis. From that intelligence, I designed new computer listing showing the differences between real and advisable duration, by hospital, by specialty, by doctor, by operating room (when applicable) by day, by month, by week, by year, and all possible combinations. To improve economic performance, it was enough to prevent doctors from adding days at the request of families of patients, especially Fridays and weekends. As is almost always the case, something so simple clashed with acquired rights and existing power relations.

Repsol's consultation

When the Spanish gas stations market opened to competition, Portugal's Petroleum company was interested in the rest of the Peninsula. Soon some new

stations began to be seen with the signs *GALP*, *BP* and *Shell*. Rather than to compete on prices or quality of fuel, they did it on sympathy, cleanliness of the toilets and originality of the shops. Repsol wanted to return the ball by entering the Portuguese market. The request came through the mediation of an interesting Portuguese gentleman well established in Spanish Society: Joao Van Seller. When I heard about the contract, I couldn't help remembering the gas station of our neighbor of Aldeallana, with his initial monopoly of gasoline in Segovia, later shared perforce with our ex-farmer Gerardo Otero. Should a similar study be restricted to Segovia, the answer would be as simple as buying the gas station of Petronilo, and if the price went through the roof, try the one of Otero. A third (and dubious) option would be in detriment of the first two. Somehow, I was able to browse computer listings (always the listings) with sufficient details of each Portuguese petrol station. I checked *in situ* the suitability of the selection and provided the list of the most desirable. Logical? Simple? Yes, but disappointing for those who were thinking of plots, new constructions, personnel selection, Portuguese friendships, trips during the works, etc. etc.

The Red Cross affair

The newspaper *El País* unleashed a campaign against Carmen Mestre, instigated from inside her Socialist party. One of the accusations was that of having hired the consultancy of A. Ballesteros and especially, of her former boss. I was asked by the newspaper to receive the visit from a journalist and explain the nature and circumstances of the assignment. I thought it was an excellent idea. A young woman came, probably in her early days as a journalist. We sat at a table where I

deposited the hospital listings covering the entire activities for a whole year and all the CR hospitals throughout Spain. I remember showing her where the inefficiencies were. That lecture on medical economic management went very well. She asked about the cost of our counsel, and I said that the prize was in line with the standards of consultant companies. They left it at that, and the newspaper turned its docile attention to a swap of buildings involving a nineteenth-century mansion for two modern offices on the road to La Coruña. No one was able to prove irregularities in that operation, but *piano piano, terra terra...* Few things can be more despicable than friendly fire.

Sánchez del Toro

She retired from politics and went to live in a rural house in Catalonia. Of Carmen, I can say that I haven't known anyone enjoying such a wide range of possibilities to increase her patrimony without doing anything illegal, and yet preferring a life of rigid austerity which is in strong contrast with those of most Spanish politicians. Her successor was a Canary named Juan Manuel Sánchez del Toro. He showed interest in the Strategic Plan, and we met a few times to discuss its consequences. I found him less prepared to direct Red Cross than Carmen Mestre. He was Board member of two Banks in the Canary Islands. A comment about honesty: He (together with other Board members) became accused of fraudulent and disloyal administration as well as machination to alter documents & etc. etc. When facing the judge, the papers say that *he defended himself by proclaiming that he was an engineer and did not understand financial statements.*

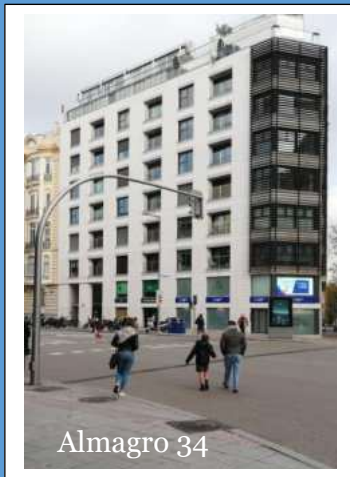
An imagined conversation

‘Speaking of something else, Carlos, what do we do with Orueta? ‘I can't think of anything’ ‘Why doesn't he come back to Rank Xerox?’ ‘Archie McCardell barely knew him’ ‘And couldn't you have him at Mercedes?’ Smile ‘No, thank you. Luis wouldn't fit. He is intransigent. When he puts something in his head, he doesn't listen. It would bring me problems’ ‘What if we put him in charge of Hispasegur?’ ‘Removing Alberto Blanco? It is risky. Other shareholders wouldn't understand’ ‘We could put him as Blanco's assistant’ ‘That is not a bad idea. With that and his consulting contracts he could get along. Let's see how we can explain it. We will tell him that we are concerned about Alberto Blanco, which is true. And who knows? Maybe in Hispasegur he will do well’.

Le retour aux sources

Lars lived in the lower part of the house in Malaga. To get him out of his inactivity I proposed a trip with me through the lands of Cuenca and Soria, going up to La Rioja and Álava, where we could visit the roots of our paternal ancestors. He liked the idea. In Cuenca we saw, of course, the hanging houses, the Museum of Modern Art, and the large stones of the Enchanted City. In Soria we went up to the black lagoon, which isn't black. In La Rioja, I wanted to see what the village *Torrecilla de Cameros* looked like, because Manuel Agustín and Martin Heredia were born there. It's not something that they talked much about, but at last they recognized it and even felt like asking for a paper testimonial of *purity of blood* (i.e.: entirely Christian)

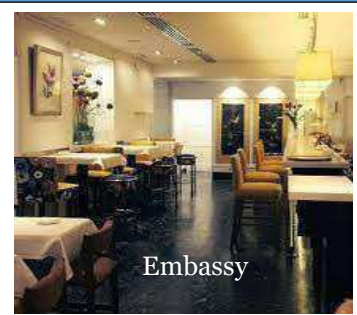
Isabel Livermore convinced her husband to erect a school in the village, which didn't have enough inhabitants to get it from the State. And there it was: the school. Then we went to Heredia. It is a place in the province of Álava. We inspected the village, and we didn't really like it. Much better was Oñate, in Guipúzcoa, where the authorities of the city, happy to see us after many centuries, took us by car to the hillside where the Orueta hamlet was located.



Almagro 34



Núñez de Balboa 17



Embassy



Embassy



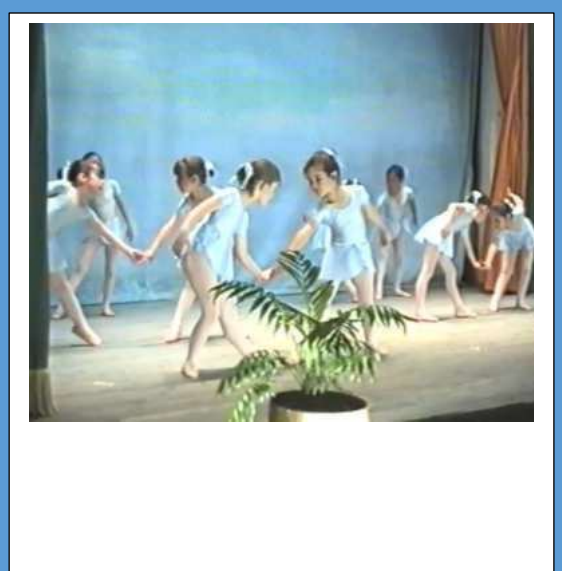
Cranes Aguilar and Cranes Madrid



Velázquez 97



Libby, Emma and
Natalia



Chapter XVIII

A shopping mall with history

At the end of the decade of the 70's, there was in Miami a Jordan Marsh signature store, a bit lonely. A more famous brand, J.C. Penney, conceived the idea of creating a Mall right there. Thus arose the *OMNI Mall Center*. It was an exciting novelty for the town authorities. However, twenty years later, the mall had lost spell. It was degraded because of the growing insecurity, causing the flight of homeowners to urbanizations far from downtown and the arrival of new residents, mostly colored people. Two years before the beginning of this story, in 1992, Jordan Marsh closed its ruinous business, and a public entity was created for the rehabilitation of the area. Patricia Allen, director of the Downtown Development authority, noticing the lack of commercial interest in the main building, thought about renting the third floor for zero dollars to anyone who could set a permanent International Exhibition, letting the content to be decided by the candidates.

The Spanish connection

There lived in Miami a Nicaraguan person, who couldn't believe that no one had taken advantage of such an offer.

The Nicaraguan, whose name was Alfredo Gallart-Príes, created a Company, which he baptized with the name of *Intra Expo*, and then applied for the concession of the premises. The contacts and experience he alleged were those of *Construcciones San Martín* and partners, with offices on Jorge Juan Street of Madrid. IntraExpo was domiciled in Delaware under the chairmanship of shipowner José Manuel Triana-Souto, in the news for having secured himself the famous *Chicote Beverage* museum, a relic among the ruins of Rumasa. It turned out that Triana was a friend of Fernando de Castro, my companion in *Construcciones Aeronáuticas*. Triana was exultant and very outspoken about the possibilities he saw in *IntraExpo*. ‘Look, Fernando! Can you imagine? In downtown Miami! And free!!’

Laziness

Julio San Martín was then a major shareholder of *Construcciones San Martín*, a company dedicated to the purchase and renovation of veteran buildings with potential. The idea of dealing with the setting up of a permanent exhibition in Miami did not enter his plans. Triana said he was tempted but mentioned the problem of language as a good excuse. Castro discarded himself as incapable for that sort of assignment. All of them were supporters of Opus Dei, yet they didn’t find any sympathizer willing to pack his bags and lend a hand to the Nicaraguan. As I heard them talking, I thought of Emilio Haase (that president of Rank Xerox so kind when we were invited to Seville and Barcelona). He had left the Company for an unknown reason and had opened an office in one floor of a building belonging to Tristán Martín Urquijo, whom I knew from my days at

INI. Would he and his wife Berta like some change of airs for a couple of months? Emilio did speak with Triana and Castro, but he declined the offer. Then Fernando turned to me. Summer was beginning.

Miami

At first, I preferred to travel alone, to judge by myself. The Nicaraguan had expected me to come with my family, and had arranged for us a lovely flat, mid-height in an eight-storey building, standing on pilasters cemented in the sand of Miami beach. The sea in front was visible from a small terrace. The address was Collins Avenue, and on those days, there were no more than eight or nine buildings in that exclusive row, which shaped the landscape of the waterfront line of the city (small details only, please). The smells: of *new* in the house, of seaweed in the sand of the beach, and of sea everywhere. I remember that the beach was always empty. We did go down a few times from our flat to swim and we were alone.

The hurricane alarm

I returned to Miami with Libby, Natalia, and Emma. A few days after our arrival, the television announced the proximity of a hurricane. We went down to the car to buy groceries which in Miami are known as *Hurricane Food* because it keeps better. A policeman knocked at the door, urging us to leave the place and drive outside the town to a safer place. Natalia looked worried. I wasn't a bit, and said we were going to stay, but Emma rushed to hide her face by Libby's skirt, whispering: 'Mummy, I don't want to die'. The Mitsubishi small van crossed the long bridge that separated us from the

mainland and turned North in the direction of Fort Lauderdale. There we stopped at a small wooden hotel, reassuring Emma that the hurricane would not reach us in that spot. We were wrong, because its trajectory varied, forgiving Miami, and threatening just the place where we were. Before it might arrive, Libby and I wanted to give example of tranquility, going down in swimsuits and putting our feet in the water. The owners watched us astonished. ‘Madam don't move. There is a stingray behind you’ Sure enough, in the water there was a stingray that waved its flat & white body with the movements of a slow and harmonious dance.

The Mall

The first time I saw the space to be filled with exhibitors, my impression was favorable. Alejandro Gallart and his court had settled there comfortably, a move which already meant savings for Julio San Martin. Imagine desks, panels, and people pretending to do some work. It must be said that Alejandro showed towards me a mixture of respect and suspicion, reminiscent of the times of the Conquest. Looking at the unoccupied part, I tried to amuse Alejandro. ‘Why don't we put an ad in the Miami Herald and see what happens? He didn't think it was funny.

All those Commerce Agencies

On the one hand there were the *Florida Department of Commerce* and the *City of Miami Development Board*. Almost all directors were of Hispanic origin, with surnames such as Macho, Laburu or Italians such as Cervone. Imports of products from the South were nonexistent. Which, looking on the bright side, could be

turned into an opportunity. On the other hand, there was the *Spanish Trade Office* in Miami. There, I met Manrique, who told me of the large number of imports of tiles coming from Valencia.

Manrique

My optimism lasted until I mentioned to him the Mall. I explained what I was coming to do, and his expression reminded me of the lady of the Connecticut real estate agency when I mentioned the street where I had seen a lovely and very cheap house. If you have read the Intermezzo I of this book you know that she refused to come anywhere near, without giving a reason. Manrique had no qualms in warning me that *OMNI* was in a black neighborhood, unsuitable for the purpose of an International Exhibition. I appreciated his advice and went home to consider the situation, hoping that Manrique might be a bit snobbish. I decided to pay a visit to the *Downtown Development Authority* to know the small letter of the agreement with *Intra-Expo*. I was thinking of downgrading the concept of International Trade Fair to something a bit more down to earth. But Mrs. Allen made it clear that shops selling products (like in other floors) were not on. And she remarked that the Exhibitors ought to be there on a permanent basis.

Diagnosis

I knew well that my job there was to get things *done*, and *not* to give *advice*. However, I felt I could resign and then explain why I did so to Julio San Martin. The reasoning was simple. For potential exhibitors the cost of space was of little importance, compared to having

someone in Miami and going every day to work on the stands. On the other hand, the space we offered was decisive, but in a negative sense. That night I called Julio San Martín to tell him this and resign. He asked me if it was already night in Miami. 'Luis, I ask you to sleep over it. Tomorrow you may see things in a better light'.

Alternative project

He was right. The next day I had the idea to convert the space in a very specific *Monographic Exhibition* suitable for signing contracts, making deals, and saving trips...to Spain. I was thinking of the Tile Industry that Manrique had mentioned so enthusiastically. Clients could leave their cars in our parking reserved space, go inside in seconds, see catalogs and products, or even negotiate the return of products damaged in transport. I went to the Spanish Office of Commerce to share the idea with Manrique, who saw it as feasible but placing the Room on another site. He suggested the Palmetto Bay area.

A double edge presentation

I returned to Madrid to give an account of my efforts to San Martín, Ramón Rato, Paloma Segrelles, and some other partner, who were waiting for me in the office on Jorge Juan Street. With abundance of photographs and slides, instead of denigrating our space at the Mall I did the opposite, demonstrating how wonderful it was to have free space in Miami. When I made sure there could be no doubt about my enthusiasm, I told them the same thing as to Julio that night. That the project was unfeasible in its present

configuration. That I intended to travel to Castellón and Valencia to convince Procova (promoter of activities of the Valencian Community) to support a permanent exhibition of Valencian Ceramic Industry. Then, I would expose the initiative to Companies like Porcelanosa and Pamesa. And without further ado, I went East to interview Fernando Roig, who recommended me to Ascer, the Association of Ceramic Manufacturers. Fernando de Castro helped me with contacts obtained via Opus. Everything was going well. I travelled to Bologna to attend a monographic exhibition of Italian ceramists, some very introduced in Miami. I offered them free occupancy of Miami space during the first year of exhibition.

Internal opposition

But, for Alejandro Gallard-Prio the idea of seeing *his* space occupied by Spaniards was to return to the times of Philip II. Ramón Rato, rightly, began to see the project as something different. Apparently, the gratuity of space was not as good a business as it had been suggested to him. José Manuel Triana coincided with Rato in feeling disappointed. Gallard was opposed to letting the space free for one year. To make my point of view more obvious, I proposed to Gallard a return to the initial idea counting with the pavilion of Nicaragua to begin with, and to Triana I said that I was sure his Museum of Beverages would look fantastic in a place as privileged as *OMNI*. Julio took notice of my irony and mediated by saying that he supported the *ceramic* variant. But the initial harmony had been broken. And we agreed that at the end of August I would cease to occupy myself of that curious project.

Julio San Martín

I have fond memories of him. I thought he was generous, reasonable, and affectionate. However, all these years, I have asked myself a question: How is it that he didn't see from the beginning the total unsuitability of the Mall? How could he breach the real estate axiom *location, location, location*? It is the same odd question a judge had to solve before the accusations of swindling presented by 380 clients of Julio's fundraising *Caná Cuatro Inversión*, amounting to 100 million euros. It is still a question, because San Martín's defense maintained that he was ignorant that the activities were fictitious, passing all responsibility to the Catalan promoter Mas Samora, with the remark that he himself lost money in the pyramidal fraud.

And the Mall?

The Mall was never used for what Gallard proposed. There was no follow up. The shops of the lower floors began closing one after another, moving to the outskirts of the city. During the period 1995 to 2000, the ownership of the building passed through different hands, with disparate projects, all unsuccessful. Finally, the City Council did take over. One part was demolished, and the rest converted into an Anti-drug laboratory.



Miami Beach. Collins Drive



The beach



Espacio para el texto

The bridge to Downtown



The Mall



Alejandro Gallard-Prio

Chapter XIX

A providential advert

‘Have a look at this job advertisement, Mr. Orueta’. Isabel Pernaute, attentive to everything that could help me, was showing a page of the newspaper *EL País*.

‘Young economist required, with knowledge of Accounting and Administration and complete command of English, Danish and Spanish’.

I couldn’t believe it, In Spain, possibly, there would be no other candidate than David, who was then 30 years. The job was to run a clinic of the Danish Social Security, located in Málaga. I called him at Emilio Haase's office, where he was employed precisely in charge of accounting and admin. David ran to Málaga, he got the job and started to work from our Torremolinos house.

And Lars?

Lars had spent a season at the apartment on the ground floor of the same house. He lived all by himself and liked to ride a motorcycle, wearing a gray helmet. He used both to attend regular meetings with doctors at a

hospital. Lars seemed to me calm and enjoying his independence and mobility.

The autumn of my discontent

My return from Miami without achieving the intended goal provoked reactions in the environment of A. Ballester. Fernando de Castro placed on me one part of the blame. Alfonso remained indifferent, immersed as he was in writing the biography of J.A. Suanzes. For Alberto Blanco it meant returning to a situation of undesired vigilance. Carlos Espinosa said nothing, but he would have liked a happier ending. While I was away from Spain, Fernando de Castro had devoted time to interact with Hispasegur employees. His daughter Ana had an administrative job and informed him of everything she could hear in corridors and outside the office. Fernando had hoped to introduce his son-in-law in the world of brokerages.

The plot

It was Fernando who learned from his spies that Alberto Blanco was planning to submit his resignation imminently. Blanco had made a pact with his people to set up an independent brokerage where they should migrate as and when the most interesting policies were due for renovation. Fundamental piece of the operation was the connection with the insurance company Fiatc, and its managers Mario Molinero and Joan Castells. Very important also for the success of the escape, was to count with Jerónimo Burgueño, the accountant. Since the overseeing of Blanco's conduct was my responsibility, I thanked Fernando and decided to act by firing Alberto on

the spot. The rest of the employees were stunned, not knowing how react. Only one, Isidoro Beltrán, left the company that same day as Alberto Blanco.

Second bad decision

Alfonso Ballesterro, as president, called a shareholder meeting to report what happened. One of the issues was the appointment of a new managing director. Fernando Rubio, who had been chief financial officer at INI, offered himself as a candidate. But Carlos Espinosa, with the authority of main shareholder and founder, thought that it was more natural for me to take the job. I shouldn't have accepted. But I lacked the courage to face a humiliating insolvency before my family. That was another decision that, if given the chance to know the aftermath, I would not have made. I ought to have taken refuge in Aldeallana, rebuild my life calmly, and, as I did later, start my own company. But knowing the future only happens in novels like the one by Ouspensky.

The austerity plan

Although the treasury of Hispasegur was abnormally high, I could see that it was waning. Rather than concentrating of *future* revenues, the urgent task was to reduce *current* expenses. I will talk about revenue actions later (pages 283 and 284). Before, let me tell you that I set out a cost cutting program, beginning with my own salary which I reduced by 40%. I asked Alfonso to contribute with a reduction of the monthly rental for the space occupied. He didn't like the idea and said no. A bit surprised, I decided to look for a cheaper location. I found one on Calle de Ayala 4, just above the Embassy

restaurant. It was larger than we needed, but I rented the best part to a lawyer firm, including Antonio Escorial, his wife Begoña Pernas, and his sister-in-law Ana. Alfonso's office was no longer our address though he continued as president and a large space, with a balcony to Ayala Street, was reserved for shareholders meetings, and his office. Next, I reduced my secretary's salary by half.

Datafirma S.l.

The Company that paid for the remaining 50% of charming Eva Espartosa's salary, was my own, which I named *Datafirma*. My cousin Jaime Laviña accepted to join the mandatory partnership and kindly agreed to sign the deeds of incorporation. Its first customer was the Merchant Navy Directorate, a contract commissioned by Alfredo de la Torre, brother of Francisco, the now famous mayor of Malaga. That first job led to a trip to Portsmouth.

The effluvia from Embassy

The offices of Ayala 4 were on a second floor, and they offered views of the inner courtyard with windows and fumes from the kitchens of the restaurant. At about eleven o'clock a delicious smell rose with miscellaneous origins: chocolate, fried eggs, coffee, hot rolls, and croissants taken from the oven. The temptation was irresistible, and some legs moved and supported bodies down the steps to taste breakfast. A parishioner who never missed the table reserved for him in a corner of the tearoom, was that Jens Jessen, pilot of Iberia, friend of my sister and mi mother (the one with the

corduroy pants at Bob and Liz Percy's house). He had already retired. Jens was a bit of a bedbug with the breakfast thing. His fried egg had to show scorched edges and come very hot. I viewed several cold deportations of eggs to the kitchen.

Grandfather's clock

I went to my mother's house to talk about Embassy's fried eggs, and I found her, as many times, making cards solitary. Before arriving at the room, in the flat's entrance you could hear the ticking of a grandfather clock, with its golden pendulum, tall, and bombastic sphere, indifferent to its own time. It didn't belong to any grandfather, because it had made its appearance in Lagasca's flat along with furniture from La Cubana. Another interesting clock hung in the living room of Aldeallana, an Austrian cuckoo specimen, while in the dining room there was one of those country clocks with a pendulum in the shape of a sun and two lead weights which went down almost to the ground. My brother cared a lot about clocks. So much so, that when he went to live with his Cuban family in Florida, he became a clockmaker and had a large workshop, where he fixed or remade damaged units. He wrote several books that can be downloaded on line with the words: *Guillermo Orueta Relojes*. If you do, you will be able to distinguish the *Comptoise* from the *Trunk dial*; the *German Regulators* from the *Tableau*; and the *Oeil de Boeuf* from the cuckoos *Railroad*.

Guillermo and his hobbies

My brother died a few years ago. When we were bachelors

we were very close. Later, he married a very nice though a little bit absorbing Cuban girl, and we stopped seeing each other so often. We shared more interests in things than in people. My line was books, records, paper theaters, slide rules and Alfa Romeo cars. My brother went for the books of Emilio Salgari, Bach's records, the wall clocks, models of fishing boats, bas-relief models of rural houses and Morris Mini cars. Like me, he felt pity for things which ceased to be useful and ended up abandoned at dreary corners, despite have been kind to their owners. Guillermo bought Minis when it was evident that they were few months from the scrapyard and once salvaged he fixed them himself. Because he spoke little English, he consulted British technical dictionaries looking for names to order parts from England. He wrote little cards with those names. So many that he was able to edit a *Diccionario Inglés Español del Automóvil*. The only one extant in that matter.

From my parents' house

In addition to the grandfather clock, the house on Maldonado had a Rönisch piano that had belonged to our grandmother Dolores. She did not like music: the only advantage she saw in studying piano -she confessed- were the trips to Madrid for exams. That piano was so old that it had support for four candles and was made with a light wood like bright nuts. Its sound was velvety and the keyboard very soft. Some said too soft. At an angle to the wall in the piano room, the rest of the house was under the spell a bookcase with a desk and two glazed columns on the sides. It was the only piece of furniture that my father kept when his mother died. Its first owner

was Serafín Estébanez Calderon and behind its windows slept books with bookplates of prime minister Antonio Cánovas del Castillo. In the drawers there were letters from nineteenth-century characters, such as the mentioned Cánovas and Estébanez Calderón, also of the French author of *Carmen*, Prosper Mérimée, the marquis of Salamanca, Reinhardt Dozy, generals Narváez and Zurbano, and politician Martínez de La Rosa; writers like the Duke of Rivas (*la Forza del Destino*) and Juan Valera, friend of Serafín. Moving inwards in the flat of Maldonado, along the corridor, on the left, Guillermo and I would put our stuff in a large closet that had a plaque with the name *Maple*. A trivial detail that sometimes came up in our parent's conversations. One would start whispering the 'A media luz' tango lyrics: *Cozy flat decorated by Maple / piano, mat, and nightstand/* and the other would add with an accomplice smile: *and a porcelain cat / so that it doesn't meow to Love*.

Soria

The imminent business takeover of the manufacturer of Pegasus trucks by Mercedes Benz encouraged some German companies to settle in Spain. To advise them in the undertakings, Carlos Espinosa kindly mentioned to some the name of Datafirma. That's how I met Franz Josef Wolf, owner of Woco, a rubber parts manufacturer from the town of Salmünster. I traveled to Valladolid to meet with the president of the Castilla y León Regional Community, Juan José Lucas. From that meeting onwards, everything went on as softly as silk. At first, the Germans preferred Barcelona, where I did show them some lots. Having covered their initial request, I prepared conscientiously a theatrical arrival

in Soria. Four policemen motorized escorted the car to the Town Hall. The mayor received them in the Assembly Hall, illuminated with crystal chandeliers hanging from an ornate ceiling. A welcome speech followed wishing them success in Spain. Wolf had come with his secretary Erika Stengler and his managing director. The deputy Mayor told us that he had booked rooms at the Parador and invited the entourage to an hour of rest before the scheduled visits to the industrial area. The morning was splendid and a car of the Town and another as spare car, came to pick us up. In a prominent place of the new industrial area there was a tall, newly built unit with warehouse, extensive workshop space and offices ready to be occupied. We went in with the awe of one who enters a cathedral, hearing our own footsteps and looking up to the high ceiling. A lot of light came through the high windows. Wolf, Erika, and their companions stood on that large empty space not knowing what to say. At last, she asked me 'Does it belong to the Town?' Javier Jiménez, the deputy Mayor overheard and guessed her question. He turned his head over my shoulder and whispered: 'Tell her that the building is theirs, totally free, if they want it'.

Cent of books

Later I will tell you more about Soria. Now I return to the Centon, a little forgotten: *Salome* by Oscar Wilde; *Hippolytus* of Euripides; *Sanctuary* by William Faulkner; *The Arabian Nights*, Anonymous; *Orlando*, by Virginia Wolf; *Chronicle of John II of Castile*, by Alvar García de Santa Maria; *Dialogue of the two systems of the Worlds*, by Galileo Galilei; *Elegies*, by Albio Tibullo; *The Bible in Spain*, by George Burrow; *The*

Aeneid, of Virgilio Maron; *The daughter of the Air*, by Pedro Calderón de la Barca; *Sonnets and Eclogues*, by Garcilaso de la Vega. There are twelve already. Two more: *The Regent lady*, by Leopoldo Alas Clarín; and *The Banquet*, of Plato.

Family setbacks

At the end of the twentieth century, problems were accumulating in my two families: the Danish and the British. Starting with the second: Dixie felt very hurt because her son Johnny, my brother-in-law, on his travels to Europe from America, seemed to give priority to visiting the parents of Petra, his wife, in Holland. It seems that, on one, he forgot about Madrid. From that moment, the relations between mother and son were definitively broken, to the point that Dixie disinherited him. Such is the official explanation, which seems to me incomplete. But it is true that my mother-in-law did not accept divided attention. Johnny's void was immediately filled by Libby and Natalia. I would have preferred Libby to have tried to mend relationships. As children Libby and Johnny loved each other dearly. Feelings evolve as wind changes, sometimes rapidly, sometimes barely perceptible.

The Lamo de Espinosa couple

The owner of the third floor of Encarnación Street returned from Switzerland and wanted it for her and her husband. In the previous year we had made friends with the owners of the first floor, the Lamo de Espinosa, who were planning a change of address, so the idea of becoming their tenants seemed very good. We only had to move on floor

downwards. From theirs, the Plaza de Oriente looked closer with pedestrians and cars on the street. We felt the absence of José María and Africa, his wife and her two children, who always came to Emma's birthdays. Months later we learned that the reason for their moving was divorce.

The Stabat Mater

I found out that Bocherini's was going to be played in the village of Arenas de San Pedro, and I wanted to attend such an event, on the place where Luigi had spent much of his life. This liturgical sequence is something unusual in the history of poetry and music. And now I'm going to explain why. Luther forbade it, the Catholic Church views it with suspicion. Musicians don't want to hear talk about it. It is known that the liturgy has fed many composers at some point in their lives. *Passions, Ave Maria, Psalms*, etc. etc. A twin composition of the *Stabat Mater*, the *Dies Irae*, easily sneaks into Requiem masses. Historically, the Stabat Mater was little heard in churches. So, where is the secret of its success in concerts? It surprised and enhanced the fame of composers like Dvorak, Haydn, Schubert, Pergolesi, Rossini, Bocherini, Vivaldi, Scarlatti, Arvo Pärt and hundreds more. The sequence consists of three parts: the first conveys the vision of a Roman citizen who is contemplating the scene of Calvary from afar and approaching. He is intrigued by the woman at the foot of the cross. Of the crucified he only knows what he has been told. With only the first three verses ends the First Part. It is an altarpiece: tragic, descriptive, pictorial. Then the focus of attention changes towards feelings. It goes on with callings of sympathy until the crucified son dies. End of Second part. The third is wholly different.

He who talks is a person addressing his words to the woman in a tone that seems a declaration of love: *Eia mater fons amoris; Mihi jam non sis amara; Penas mecum divide; Fac ut tecum plangere*. The ‘with you’ ‘with me’, and even ‘don’t be bitter to me’ is too intimate. The Church is shocked. ‘Doesn’t he mention Christ?’ ‘Barely?’ He asks her to make him feel love for her son to please her’ ‘No. No. The one to please is Christ. Change *tibi* for *sibi*’ ‘Anything else?’ ‘He says he feels a bit drunk’ ‘Drunk?’ ‘So, he says. He adds that he feels inflamed and like suspended in the air’ ‘What a disgrace! We must change that. And how does it end?’ ‘He begs her to do whatever for his soul to enter Paradise when his body should die’ ‘And who do you say has written such nonsense?’ ‘I have not been able to find out, but people like it. Above all, if it is with music’ ‘With music? Let’s do one thing: we will leave it to be sung only the *Friday of Sorrows* (Good Friday) in Easter, but not one more day’ ‘Done’.

The Oruetada

One night I dreamed that Aldeallana had been sold. When I woke up, I remembered that the farm had belonged to the whole Orueta family, until my father bought his sisters’ shares. Time was moving forward too fast. Would all the cousins and uncles want to come to a family call? It could be organized in the garden, with many tables. Clemente and Pilar Aragoneses would care after the grill of lamb chops. How many would come? ¿40? ¿50? Too expensive. In village wedding guests are suggested to leave bank notes in cigar boxes. ‘Don’t, Luis. It is very unbecoming. You’re going to worsen your reputation of pettiness’ ‘But listen. I don’t have a penny!’ ‘It

doesn't matter, they don't know that' Still, they came and paid.

The end of Hispasegur

'That's all well and good, but it seems like you're beating around the bush and avoiding talk about Hispasegur'. Not at all. I have left it for a separate chapter. If you want to know why it is not a good idea to invest in insurance brokerage for Crane companies maybe you will be interested. If you're curious about how not to manage a brokerage dedicated to so bumpy a business, you will not be disappointed. If you can hardly imagine anything less interesting, skip the next ten pages.

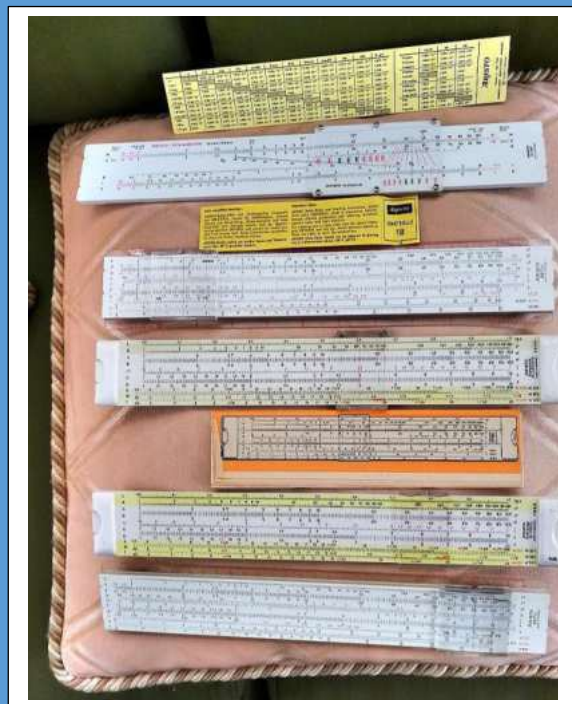
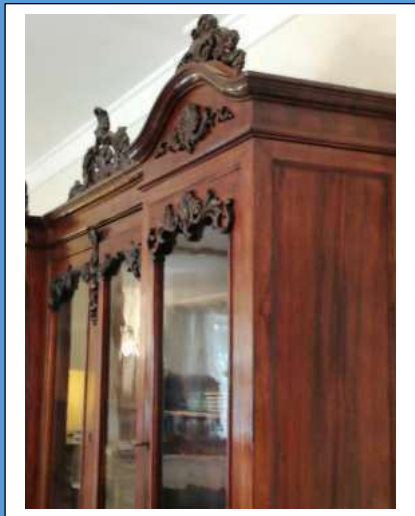
Before I finish this chapter

'I still don't know why you brought about the Stabat Mater' Maybe you will if you read the last chapter. The masterpiece of German literature contains two phrases whose meaning continues to give much to talk about. They are mysterious and at the same time explain almost everything. I'm not going to translate, because it is almost impossible. They are:

*Wer immer strebend sich bemüht
Der können wir erlösen*

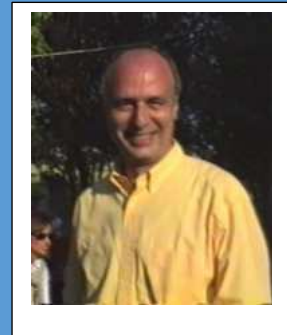
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Das Ewig-Weibliche Zieht uns hinan





The
Oruetas
Reunion



Separate chapter

(dedicated to Cranes)

Character of the crane

They are powerful tools, not docile like a glass or a spoon. There are cranes that exceed buildings of many floors in height, capable of withstanding very heavy loads. The most proactive move on wheels to go where they have been called. Watching them work is a show for those who encounter their presence unexpectedly, sometimes preventing access to a place. I never thought cranes could also cause me so much sadness.

Hispasegur

It all started with the advent of a contingent of good & disciplined people that occupied most of the space available in the offices of A. Ballesteros y Cía. Their boss was Alberto Blanco, a person in the extreme respectful, whom his team obeyed blindly. It looked like a swarm that had nested there but could fly to another tree at any time. It had been attracted by Carlos Espinosa. It was a gift. A turnkey business

handed over by his friends: Javier Cardenal and Santiago Gil de Biedma, whom I knew from school.

Shareholders

My initial relationship with Hispasegur was minimal. As co-owner of the offices, I was glad that they paid for the space they occupied. In addition, I received unexpected profits at the end of the year. Alfonso was its president, and all shareholders were friends. Fernando Rubio, friend of all three; Juan Riva, friend of Alfonso Ballesteros; Alberto Isla, friend of Carlos; and Fernando de Castro, a friend of mine.

Hispasegur's business

The *raison d'être* of all brokerages is to advise their customers how to prevent a risk. When the individual advised decides for a Company, the chosen one pay a commission to the broker, who becomes their *agent*. Crane owners often have problems with damage caused by their artifacts, which can be fatal. Hispasegur was dedicated to mediating in this branch of the business and, both customers and insurers, seemed very happy.

The origin of the tumor

In the valuation of a claim, we can distinguish four opinions a) that of the injured b) that of the causing party (c) that of the insurance company and (d) that of the judge if they do not agree. This is so, whether it be for a simple leak or for an operator killed by a bad

crane maneuver. The more serious the accident, the greater the differences of opinions.

A buoyant treasury

Apart from the relationship with the president, Alberto Blanco reported to the Board once a year. I was intrigued by the disproportionate amount of money that appeared in the bank's account. The reason for so much solvency was that in that account not only entered the payments for commissions but also the income from the collection of policies. And, on the minus side, the payments to policyholders whenever an accident occurred. Explained: Hispasegur mixed sources and applications of funds of a very different nature in the same bank account: a) those which were duly received as for its work *as broker*, and b) those in temporary possession *as cashier* of the insurance companies. In England it is required that they are kept in separate bank accounts so as not to mix apples and oranges, wheat with chaff.

Time to pay

In those years bank deposits were receiving two decimal points of interest. Why did the insurance Companies let Hispasegur keep their money for so long? Well, they didn't. Most preferred to avoid crane customers. But a few did. And they did because Hispasegur used their cash to pay claims according to the damaged party evaluation. They knew that the ultimate responsibility would not be theirs, whose accounts only reflected as paid what their experts considered fair. When the moment of truth would

come, the only responsible party of the mismatch before a judge are the shareholders of the broker company. Like many tumors, this one remained hidden, although with symptoms that made suspicious its existence.

The symptoms

The most worrying was Alberto Blanco's refusal to be a shareholder. Carlos thought it was a way of admitting a difference in social position. One second suspicious symptom was that all salesmen of Hispasegur received no commissions, no incentive for new customers but a generous *fixed* salary. I remembered my time at Rank Xerox where salesmen worked *only* on commission. The third symptom was the absence of relations with any other company. Hispasegur, apart from a small competitor, worked alone, as in a corner.

Il dolce fare niente

The feeling of perfect bliss among shareholders, was celebrated with parties and tournaments of *mus* (a psychological Basque card game) once a year. I don't know how to play *mus*, so I missed those gatherings. Fernando de Castro, he did play very well, but wasn't invited, something that annoyed me, and didn't know how to tackle. Neither Alberto Blanco nor any employee were invited.

Metastasis

The time came when Alberto Blanco considered prudent to migrate to the competition. Each salesman would take their customers, leaving behind the debts

not recognized by insurers. An employee, possibly Javier Balanzat, informed Fernando of Castro that Blanco was going to resign the next day. Fernando communicated it to me with whispered dramatism. At that time, I was not aware of the existence of the treasury hole. It would have been for Alfonso Ballesterro, as president, to find out, but that kind of business bored him greatly. I attributed Blanco's wish to leave to another, better, offer. Castro told me that the rest of the employees would follow him.

Treatment

As director of Hispasegur, I decided to start replacing the crane business with less problematic customers. For this intended diversification I selected two targets: a) the fleet Suardiaz, if our shareholder John Riva gave me the opportunity; and b) acting as broker for plans of retirement pensions for Company executives through the services of Banco de Sabadell. I counted on Pep Oliú's interest, who was already its president.

The Suardiaz fleet

I seem to recall that its annual bill was close to two hundred million pesetas and later whatever euros. An opportunity for its president, Juan to alleviate those expenses by convening a tender for offers. The fact that he was a shareholder of Hispasegur brought about no conflict of interest since the winner Company would have nothing to do with him. I set myself to preparing the proposal and decided to choose a prestigious international firm, which ended up being AIG. They were interested because precisely on that year the AIG

was expanding its presence in Spain. I personally introduced the AIG's offer inside the envelope and handed it to Riva. When the tender offers were disclosed, Juan Riva and Alfonso Ballestero (presidents of Hispasegur and Flota Suardiaz) called a meeting with AIG to receive their proposal. I noticed that I wasn't invited. Although AIG's offer implied a 25% reduction in costs, they told me that they preferred not to change company. The explanation: *AIG was unknown in Spain in the field of marine insurance.* And as a trivial note, I remember that Alfonso seasoned the justification by saying that Juan Riva and himself laughed at the presentation of the AIG representative, a person who had just arrived at Spain with Sephardic accent. AIG suspected that some members of the Riva family breathed a sigh of relief. I imagine Alfonso Ballestero and Juan Riva sleeping peacefully that night, though Hispasegur lost an excellent opportunity of renewal.

Pep Oliú

I had met his father one morning when Mercedes Martínez announced his visit as president of Banco de Sabadell. I remember him as a most pleasant person who asked with extreme courtesy that his son José could work a few months in any assignment that I could give him, as part of his training for his future role as president of the Bank Sabadell. Many years later he accepted my suggestion of having Hispasegur introducing Sabadell as candidate for companies who were contemplating retirement plans, though, with no guarantee of final success. I had lunch in his office at Sabadell and he showed me the Banks' gallery of

museum paintings. Only Carlos Espinosa took the trouble to provide three tenders. Sabadell didn't succeed, and after the third opportunity they refused to pay commission. Finally, Oliú gave order to comply with contract conditions, but I had failed a friend.

Time to sell

The meetings of the Hispasegur Board showed disappointment in the shareholder's expressions. Far from making them millionaires, the profits barely justified the capital invested. Alfonso Ballesteró offered to negotiate a quick sale. Fernando Castro and others proposed to probe Santiago Gil de Biedma, which apparently was willing to buy. I remembered the occasions when companies in bad circumstances were offered to INI and my instant reaction to request an independent audit. But the general opinion was that the company was in excellent health and was sold only due to unsuitability of its director, which was me. Everything seemed to be going just great, until Santiago Gil de Biedma, leaving aside smiles, jokes and affability, appointed Carmen Martínez Sarmiento, a very professional general manager to get inside the nitty gritty of detailed negotiation. My instinct suggested that a more naïve buyer had to be found.

Caveat emptor

A rare admirer of my management at Hispasegur was an independent broker, related to Eos Risk, whose name was Manuel Vivas. I told him in confidence that we were selling the company and asked help to find me a buyer. He became very interested. It was him who

introduced Nelson Hurst, a Lawyers firm representing the South African Finance giant Alexander Forbes. At the same time, I noticed that Alfonso Ballestero stopped coming to the meetings with Gil and Carvajal and Carmen Martinez, a bad symptom.

Manuel Vivas

A problem of conscience arose when Manuel Vivas said he would probably end up as Director of Hispasegur. The price was calculated in line with the *two years of commissions* practice. Once the price was agreed, two-thirds would be paid at the purchase and the remaining third a year later. With that amount it would be possible to return the capital invested to each shareholder. I calmed my conscience with the Roman *dictum* that places the responsibility of discovering hidden faults in the buyer.

The Tax inspectors

The counselors of Alexander Forbes wanted to avoid fiscal risks and provoked a Tax inspection. To face it, I looked for a consultant who would have been a priest (inspector) before a friar (consultant). Fortunately, the inspectors showed no interest in crossing the accounts with those of the customers and insurance companies. They reproached us payments of commissions without invoice or VAT. I feared the investigation could be extended to income statements of some shareholders. I managed to agree to a tax penalty in exchange for dropping the issue. That amount meant a reduction of payments to our friends, but I breathed a sigh of relief. When it was time for the signature, Alexander Forbes

put as a condition my continuity for two years. Manuel Vivas was holding me hostage.

A very special shareholder

Most shareholders had received excessive profit returns during years, so I wasn't too concerned about them. But there was one for whom I felt special affection, who joined late and lost some of his contribution. That made me sad, because he was young, newly married and was beginning to find his place in life. He lived in a loft near the restaurant Viridiana. I am willing to believe that he and his wife Rocío, had a liking for my extravagant way of life. Alejandro and I travelled to Cordoba on one occasion, when he and other companions were celebrating at the hotel Hesperia the arrival of a new political party. Later, I wished he had ignored Hispasegur. His name was Iván, one of the sons of Carlos Espinosa de los Monteros.

What could have happened

Several things and all worse. That Gil de Biedma had informed all of us that the value of the company was negative and that, in consideration of Carlos, he might accept to take over the business for one euro. That the inspectors had decided to investigate some income tax returns. Or that no buyers were found. In case of eventual insolvency, we shareholders would have been liable with our patrimony. None of that happened. Only that I lost many friends, including Manolo Vivas, when the real value of Hispasegur was found out and the buyers refused to pay the third installment. All

things come to an end. The day I was finally able to let go of that torment, I slept more ashamed, calmer, lonelier, and poorer than ever in my life.



The Insurance Company proposed for Fleet Suardíaz



Alexander Forbes
(buyer of Hispasegur)



The Spanish
broker
Gil y Carvajal

Chapter XX

Holm oaks in the middle of the plots

In Aldeallana, the size of each plot of land (its boundaries) was determined by the tiredness of a couple of oxen working from dawn till sunset. It depended on the number of loose stones and the hardness of the earth. That's why some lands were larger than others. The amount of holm oaks that were let grow on the edges had to do with making sure that there would be plenty of firewood for household needs. The proportion of chickpeas, barley, or wheat looked at how many human mouths had to be fed and how many animals. In richer hamlets the matter was left at that. But in the poor ones, like Aldeallana, there resulted a deficit of food for pork. The holm oaks of the edges, not being cultivated, did not give enough acorns. The prospect of not having enough bacon and *chorizo* for stews, forced the farmers let grow some oaks in the middle of the plots, just the necessary ones to complete the menu. Those oaks, being in tilled land grew very big, they gave a lot of acorns and much firewood. But it was at the expense of less wheat because the farmers were forced to raise the plow and

sink it again, interrupting work like a pedestrian standing in the middle of the road obliges a car driver to use its brakes.

The beauty of the holm oaks

The English say that *beauty is in the eyes of the Beholder*. Before, Plato had already confused Beauty, Goodness, and Truth. The holm oaks, seen by a farmer, were beautiful only if they were useful. In a rich hamlet, beauty was their absence *in the middle of the plots*. Therefore, hamlets with small plots and holm oaks clogging the cultivated fields were perceived as ugly, relatively speaking. Just the contrary to what a poet or a painter would think.

What if oxen were not needed?

When the tractor replaced pairs of oxen, the plots were seen as too small. The Roman ploughs had been happy to avoid the isolated holm oaks with a simple lift. Nowadays, tractors, pulling ploughs behind, hated having to go round them, spoiling the symmetry. The mechanization of farming in Aldeallana clashed not only with the hardness of the earth, but also with the presence of those trees and the abundance of big stones.

The sacred oak

I already told you that my father had become a farmer and he knew very well what I just said, but for him the holm oaks were sacred trees. One in particular, next to the boundary of Guijasalbas, was revered with pilgrimage walks accompanied by María Eugenia.

Over the years, my father became a more fervent adorer than my mother and used to go alone to pay his respects to the majestic specimen.

Guillermo and the Brañas

When my father died, Maria Eugenia leased the farm to a family of farmers of the village of Abades, surnamed Brañas: *The Brañas*. As they had tractors, one of the conditions that my mother put was that they leave the holm oaks in peace. It happened that my brother stopped working at Rank Xerox to start a copy service with other rebel salesmen. The idea did not go as well as they had expected, and Guillermo went to live in Aldeallana.

Libby's Gift of a Camera

The possibilities of filming in Madrid's Old district were soon exhausted (only for the writer) and I went to Aldeallana with the idea of filling enough minutes. I saw my mother, who was in front of the fireplace doing solitary cards. The Brañas had brought geese that roamed loose as in ancient Rome. Up at the *Dovecote* it was tempting to film a long panoramic sequence. With my right eye surrounded by a thin surface of rubber, I was horrified to notice the void from many missing holm oaks. What had happened? I talked to the Bañas, who admitted that the land was *cleaner*. I was flabbergasted and they excused themselves saying that Guillermo had given orders to cut some down and that he had sold their firewood. I went to see if the sacred oak was there. Empty space. I said goodbye to my mother quickly with a made-up excuse. On the way

back to Madrid, I set out to save the rest of the holm oaks.

María Eugenia is left more lonely

Guillermo and Yiyita went to live in Florida, invited by her family. For María Eugenia the company of her youngest son and grandchildren was the most precious, although she had friends and was busy with Charities. But it wasn't the same.

Farewell to La Encarnación

José María Lamo de Espinosa came home, already divorced, and during his visit he dropped that, due to the expenses, he had to raise the rental price. I asked him to give me some time to think about it. I found a cheaper alternative in front of the restaurant Zalacaín. We had former minister Gregorio Moran as a neighbor, who lived on the ground floor. From the terrace of our flat, a third, we were amused to see the arrival of official cars and recognize socialist ministers of the government. While they ate, their bodyguards stood waiting on the sidewalks. Sometimes they looked up and we exchanged salutes.

Meals on the banks of the Thames

Speaking of restaurants. Once a year Rank Xerox held luncheons for retired executives at Henley-on-Thames. Hamish Orr-Ewing went to all until he died. From then on, his widow took his place. Their plum red Bentley Sedan could be seen parked at the door of the elitist club *Phyllis Court*. I was seated to a round table with names and surnames: Jack Thomas, John

Duerden, John Betteley, John Fyfe, Pam Wood *et moi-même*. Thomas gave up because he thought coming all the way from Salisbury was too much. Bettelley, not wholly recovered from having reported to a Spaniard, liked to bring up memories of Drake and Trafalgar. John Duerden preferred other kind of navigational memories and remembered his holidays in Malaga. He asked me license to go there with a Swedish friend named Ann Ekhölm for a few days and go out to sea in the Pacific Dolphin. They had a great time. She was amazed at John's friend's generosity and wrote me a letter of thanks. Perhaps by association of ideas, John Fyfe recalled that he also had a Swedish friend and imagined a pleasant weekend in Madrid. At home there was no place and I offered to find him a good hotel. John expressed a certain fear that it might not be perfect. So, I booked in Santo Mauro. When they came to see us, she lavished praise on the palace. To compensate a little for the bill that awaited John, we invited them to dinner at Zalacaín. And set to remember happy moments: her amused face when the concierge offered a tie to John.

Bad Soden

I jump from invitation in England to invitation in Germany. Franz Josef Wolf had fulfilled his dream to build a Research Center in his native village, to the greater glory of the family. Bad Soden is a village attached to Salmusnter, in Hesse. There I met his parents, siblings, and children. I also visited the factories and greeted the employees. adopting airs of feigned importance, collaborating thus to the Wolfs' self-esteem. The reason for remembering it here is to

highlight one of those moments in mi life when direct contact with successful capitalism has reinforced my belief that such impulse emerges from the deepest recesses of the European Soul.

The truffles of Soria

Which transports me in thought to a real sealed orchard in the North of the province of Soria and it does so for two reasons a) by the capitalist zeal of its founder and b) because we went to see him invited by Javier Jiménez Vivar, who from deputy had become Mayor of Soria. We used to see each other at the Parador: Javier, Erika Stengler and Karl Neubert, manager of Woco. We made the trip passing near what is left of the stronghold of Numantia, continuing towards the North. We entered the pine forest area, with care not to kill deer crossing the road, and after almost an hour, we arrived at a spot looking like a space station. They were waiting for us, and the doors opened slowly to let the Mayor in, together with his curious companions. Javier knew the owner and acted as guide. The origin of the exploitation had to be mentally placed in France, where the largest truffle market can be found. A few kilograms of truffle amply justify taking them by car or van from anywhere in Europe. The owner of the company had been employed on a French plantation and knew the secrets of the business. I am tempted to tell them here, but I promised not to, and I shut up. All I will say is that they have something to do with holm oaks and so I finish this chapter as I started it.



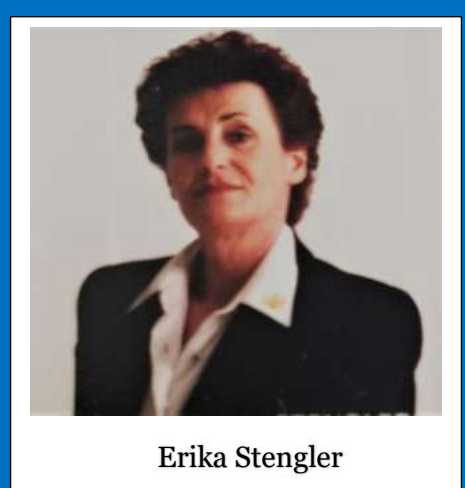
Phyllis Court Club



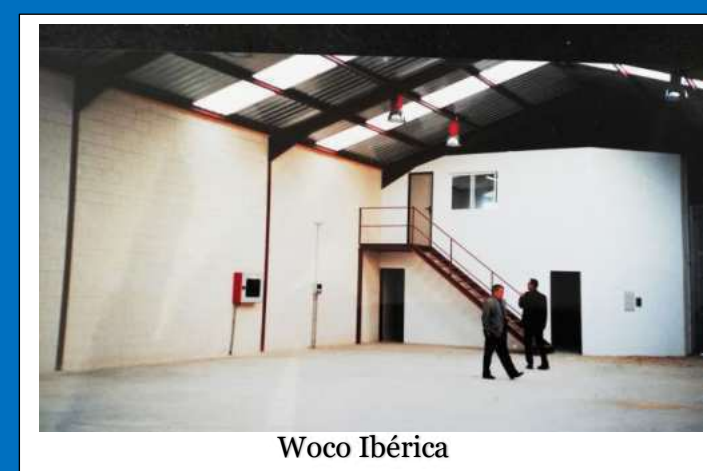
Town Hall in Soria



Franz Josef Wolf

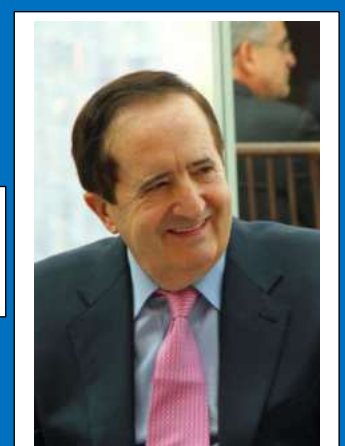


Erika Stengler



Woco Ibérica

President
Juan José
Lucas



Chapter XXI

Sailing with Libby

Sometimes the Pacific Dolphin had to disguise its embarrassment because when we lost sight of the coast we dressed in hats, alluding to the only garment that protected us from the sun. I try to find something more trivial to tell and I can think of the barbecue. It is not something that is easily associated with sailing, but the truth is that, at the height of the castle of Fuengirola, hunger knocked on the door of the hatch, we put the boat hove-to, and we were busy setting up the barbecue. It was fixed on a stanchion. It had a very long handle that rotated 360° and also from top to bottom. That way once the coals ignited and the grid put on, a rotating movement of the hand moved it away from the boat and it stood like an ear over the sea. Meanwhile, I took some sardines out of the fridge and skewers to prepare them Malaga style. Turn the barbecue 180 °, and we had it in the middle of the cockpit. Place the sardines and new turn, towards the sea. And wait. A bit of smoke from the bucket was a sure sign that everything was evolving as planned. The last move: dump the burning coal on the sea looking that there

was no living being in the water just below. Sometimes we continued the journey to Puerto Banús, thinking of sleeping on board. The animation at the port invited to dine in some restaurant. 'But, Luis, I'm not dressed for that!' 'Doesn't matter, isn't the port meant for those who come from the sea?' 'No, please'.

Gotec

Woco would continue in Soria, with the name of Woco Ibérica, during the twenty years committed by the aid of European Community funds. In 2015 the deadline was met and Woco was free to go elsewhere. The Basque Government urged it to invest in Euskadi due to the proximity of the Mercedes Benz factories. The Wolf family took a Solomonic decision; to continue with Woco Ibérica in Soria and create a sister company named Woco Técnica, which would be born in Irun. The example of Woco had encouraged another German manufacturer, Gotec, also specialized in rubber coated parts mainly for the car industry, but not only. New visits to Valladolid. Another industrial warehouse free, as an appetizer of cash aid. This time the government of Castilla León wanted to benefit Soria province, but not Soria capital. They chose Almazán. The process was identical to the one followed with Woco. A small difference: Woco's first manager, Karl Neubert, got tired of living in Soria and was replaced by Albert Wolf. Gotec's manager, Bjorn Richardt, was delighted with Almazán and bought a chalet on the outskirts.

The CAP

The Common Agricultural Policy offers a playful game,

consisting of guessing the amount of aid per kilo harvested which will apply each year. One must bet because it only becomes known several months after sowing. To this contingency two more are added a) that it will rain on time and b) that the hail will not fall at the wrong time. Those three assumptions contribute to form the color of the fields: green if with sunflower, intense yellow if wheat, and paler yellow if with barley or rye.

Harvesters

It does not matter if they are harvesters, fertilizers, carders, or seeders, all of them are regularly hired and reserved for a few days. Having settled that, all that is required from the farmer is to wait for them to come and do their job. The great harvesters: day and night, with air conditioned, canned music and fridge. So, what does the farmer do? Fill in papers for the CAP. It's not a simple thing. Important not to make mistakes with decimals of hectares or with the names of the land plots. But it can be learned, and help arrives. In Aldeallana sometimes the harvesters got damaged by the stones and we had to wait for the suppliers to send spare parts. That made us redouble our kindness and tip the drivers, who used to own the machines.

I have thought that...

‘Clemente, I thought that next year instead of wheat we might put some pine trees’ ‘Sorry?’ He didn’t think it a good idea. His was the voice of a sapient and amicable farmer. I wanted to reassure him. ‘Well, not on all the land’ He was still pensive, looking at the ground. ‘Only

on the one by the boundary with Colina' He raised his head 'And on the one of the ants' He looked straight at me. 'And on the back of the hermitage'.

The holm oaks are back

In Segovia I was sent to the Forestry Section of the PAC. I listened attentively: 'Every meter: a plant of a one-year-old pine. Four times. The fifth: one holm oak plant, also one year old. The grant lasts 20 years, while the pine forest grows. But you commit to keeping plants alive. And we do inspections' 'What happens if some die?' 'You must replenish them. All this is well explained in the contract. You see, in truth, it will be a reforestation of holm oaks, which is the native plant on this area of Spain. The pines start protecting the oaks and will end up yielding to them, which will expel any other plant from their natural territory. But that takes time. Many years. Before it happens, you will see beautiful pine trees if you take care of them'.

Sleeping among pine trees

I took care of them. The first year went very well, the second I had to replenish one fifth and the third all were safe. Sometimes I carried a cart with water for some plants that were about to dry up. August nights I went with a soft sack to sleep looking at the stars in a frame of leaves of small pines very green, at the beginning the size of a child, after of a donkey, and, years later, of a mule or a giraffe.

Gliding

In the village of Fuentemilanos, a group of German fans

built an airport track, a control tower, and hangars for gliders. Since the allies banned military aircraft in Germany, gliders became very popular. German land is not as effective for lifting airplanes as that of Castile, where its whitish color emanates more heat and thus creates strong ascending thermal air currents. So much so, that it is possible to fly without landing from Segovia to Portugal, jumping from one thermal to another. Some pilots came with their families. They used to stay at nearby towns. Others, in caravans next to the hangars. My sister and I decided to recondition the farmers building as a rural house and rent it to those intrepid guests. I was invited to enjoy some flights. They had no other danger than the wrath of vultures, which (in rare cases) could rush and break wings so delicate. From the air, Segovia looked dwarfed and not very interesting.

Lene in Alhaurín with David

We had left Lene and Lars living in Denmark, when I learned that she was coming to Spain to live with David and his friend María Angustias in Alhaurín de la Torre. Lars was left in Emmasvej 10, lonely. They bought a house in Alhaurín with money from Lars' flat in Norreport (which was sold) and the corresponding mortgage complement. Lene and María Angustias were not compatible and Lene won the game. David told me that Lene was interested in the origins of the Orueta family. Also, in hers, though she did not speak to her brother nor sister. The reason for the break with Marianne and Bo seemed banal to me. Lene was in possession of all the family photographs and didn't feel like sharing that wealth of memories. Now I imagine

how much she would have enjoyed watching the photographs from the book about the Gudmann saga which Axel Bredsdorff recently wrote.

Lene's death

I spoke little with her, ever since she refused to grant me the annulment. Our son David told me she had breast cancer. She only trusted natural healing and didn't accept to undergo chirurgical operations or orthodox therapies. In 2001 she died. I got to see her when she was already being transferred to the plane in which her body would return to Copenhagen to make a posthumous journey to Bornholm. I traveled with David to witness the Mass that preceded the burial. Standing, on a bench nearer the altar than David's, I closed my eyes and had a vision of the days in the little house of Rosengade, then the Parisian adventures, her caresses to Pyspo, the cat, our Malvarrosa home and the trips in Vespa to Malaga, the Christmas evenings in Gudjhem, with Esther cooking, Borge reading Information, and Lene decorating the tree with Lars and David waiting for the arrival of Juleman (me), and years later: the night in the gardens of the Alhambra.. Tears began to fall to the ground. Where did so much water come from?

Lars alone

On the way back I reckoned that Lars lived all by himself on Emmasvej Street. David said to me that his condition was worrisome. I tried to see him, but he didn't hear me or didn't want to open the door. When back in Madrid, I spoke with Alfonso Orueta, director of the Princess Hospital, who offered to travel with me

to Copenhagen to give his opinion. This second time we were able to enter the house. When we went upstairs to get to his room, he came out with a knife in his hand. We called the Community of Gentofte, a doctor came, spoke to Alfonso in English and both decided that Lars should be entrusted to a psychiatric hospital immediately. For this to happen it was mandatory that a judge authorized it. In Denmark these things are quickly solved. The judge called an ambulance and a police car. Several agents went up and took out Lars by force. Alfonso was quite scared. They told the driver of the ambulance to transfer him to Roskilde. We saw the hospital, a complex of several buildings. Lars no longer could be accessed without his permission. He wouldn't grant it. I came back a couple of months later. 'Wait here a moment' I sat down to wait 'I am afraid he doesn't want to see you' Like that several trips to Denmark without success. Until, after two years and a half, the nurse came back smiling 'He says yes. You can go out for an hour for a walk or have a drink' We went to a bar and ordered beers. He was talking about Lene as if she were still alive. I didn't dare to tell him.

Confidences

Lene never wanted to see anything abnormal in Lars's behavior. When we got married, I told her that an aunt of mine lived in a residence for the mentally ill. To reassure my scruples, she mentioned the possibility that a child was born to us of not a totally white color. The Gudmanns had prospered in the Danish Antilles, thanks to black slaves, he's and she's. To that, I replied that my father's family had suffered from *livermorada*. 'And what is that?' Livermore people who marry so

often among themselves, that they end up coming out a little weird. She gave me an amused look.

Aunt Pilar

On the plane going to visit Lars, I didn't think the *livermorada* was funny. Grandmother Maria Luisa at first did not want to admit that her daughter Pilar was mentally ill. She began to worry when she heard her say that she was the daughter of a famous writer. At the age of fifteen she had written a novel. Grandma paid out for a very correct edition, which I have been able to read in the National Library. The plot is developed with ingenuity. A young woman (much like her) lives together with her sisters, unloving, and more interested in a handsome gentleman who visits them assiduously. Can you guess how it ends?

The *Centón* continued

The Vanity Fair by William Thackeray; *Manual Oracle and Art of Prudence*, by Baltasar Gracián; *Asynary* by Tito Macio Plautus; *The lady of Camellias* by Alexandre Dumas; *On the mountain route of the Archpriest*, by Rubén Caba; *The wealth of Nations* Adam Smith; *A Streetcar Named Desire*; by Tennessee Williams; *The last hour may close my eyes*, a sonnet by Francisco de Quevedo; *The inimitable Jeeves*, by P. G. Woodhouse; *Don Quixote* of Miguel de Cervantes (it's about time); *The death of Arthur* by Thomas Malory; *The Book of Unrest*; of Fernando Pessoa; *The Tartuffe*, by Molière; *Song to Teresa*, by José de Espronceda. They make thirteen, I've exceeded, but the sonnet is not a book...



Parrish (and cemetery) of Gudhjem



Stone in Lene's tomb



Doctor Alfonso Orueta



Chapter XXII

Weddings

Some people showed a singular affection for our family. Two of them invited us to the weddings of their daughters, unexpectedly. That of the daughter of Melanie Horcher was held on a farm in a village near Madrid. Melanie wore a silver courtly costume. Another friend who remembered us in his daughters' weddings was Juan José Morera, who had been president of Rank Xerox in Denmark. When we met Juan José and Concha his wife, they lived outside Madrid, in Villafranca del Castillo. Concha was from Malaga. Maybe because of that, one of the weddings of his beautiful daughters was organized on a *hacienda* in Marbella, known as La Concepción. (We didn't tell them that once it had belonged to the Heredia family). Natalia sat at a table with young people from her age. On none of these occasions did it occur to me to think that one day public weddings would be held in Aldeallana. But, that story comes later in Chapter XXX.

Dixie suffers a heart attack

She lived alone, although Libby and Natalia visited her almost every day. On one of those visits she was found dead of a heart attack. Johnny was notified and came to Madrid. The burial was in Cebreros village, and Dixie was buried in the tomb where Charles Macintosh lay. The cemetery of that village, overlooking a valley of pine forests, oozes peace, even if it is that of the dead. But the sudden disappearance of a person like Dorothy Maudson had something unreal about it. To describe with few words what Dixie was like is not easy. Maybe if I say that when she saw utterly ugly persons, she kindly referred to them as *rather unattractive people* can give you some idea. Or when she wanted to praise something, no matter how small, she painted it as *out of this world*. She was happy at Libby's first wedding and less so at the second with me, though she shared her daughter's animosity against Natalia's father. Dixie was aware that Carlos had not met his father-in-law Charles after becoming chairman of Barclays Bank in Spain, but that it was *the other way around*.

16 July 2003

I got a call from Maldonado 24. The bad news was that Maria Eugenia, our mother, had been sick for some weeks, and now with the aggravating factor of not being able or unwilling to eat. The nurse who assisted her was careful to keep a bottle of dripping serum hanging from a lectern. She said that the situation had worsened, and

it was advisable to call an ambulance to admit her to a hospital. My mother listened with fear, and I can't forget her look implying that she didn't want to leave home. I don't forget it because I didn't listen to her. It was already night when I saw her entering the Clinic San Camilo, lying on a white stretcher. She was not carried instantly to a room; we had to wait. A blue curtain kept us apart and she asked to see me. Aunt Cary, her sister, arrived and said she wanted to stay with María Eugenia that night and that I could leave. I didn't think my mother was so ill. The next morning some stupid matter related to the mobile phone of Antonio Escorial, my partner of Consulfirma, delayed me in getting to the office. When I did, Antonio told me to go to the San Camilo clinic, because Maria Eugenia had died that night.

The burial

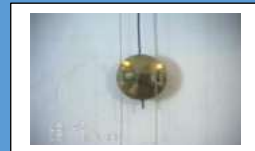
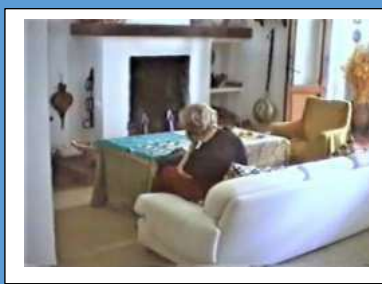
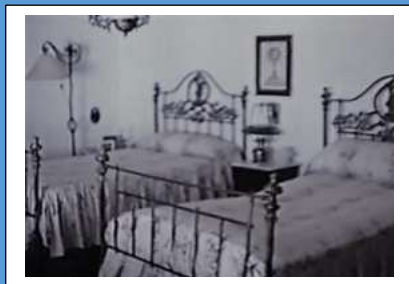
When I was little, and we stopped in Fuentemilanos, I noticed with awe an inscription on the outer wall of the cemetery, a few meters from the parish church. It said: *As you see yourself, I saw myself. As you see me, you will see yourself.* Someone had removed it. The tomb of Luis, my father, remembered the date of his death: 2 August, 1960. Maria Eugenia had survived him by more than forty years. In the same grave lay the remains of their grandson Danielito. The granite stone was very heavy, and levers were used for lifting it and rollers for moving it. People from the village came and remained outside the gate of the small cemetery, waiting to offer their condolences.

The funeral

Andrés, Fifi, Alejandro, Pili, and Rubén came to the church of Fuentemilanos in Alejandro's red Jaguar, a little tight behind. Rubén remembered his walks from Segovia (or from Otero, I'm not sure) to Aldeallana, when we were students. With my sister and friends, we drove to *El Molino*, a bar in Madrona, which was more discreet. Then we returned to Aldeallana. My vanity led to a walk to contemplate the pinewood, ignoring the poor opportunity of the invitation. When we returned, the wall clock of the dining room kept ticking. I gently grasped the pendulum and stopped it. Anyway, the weights were almost touching the ground.

Aunty Cary

Grandma Dolores' children were organized by couples, a fact derived from sharing bedrooms for years. Carlos and Ramón; Manolo and Luis; Milagros and María Eugenia; Caridad and Fuencisla. Caridad (Cary) remained single for quite some time until she married a count, not very handsome. She liked to talk about Roger Moore, the British actor. When she became a widow, she often visited her sister Maria Eugenia, for whom she felt some sort of admiration. When mother got sick, her visits became very frequent. Otherwise, that fateful night I like to think that I would have stayed in the hospital. She told me that she had problems with the floor nurse, who was not very pleasant and, on top, incompetent. She also said she heard Maria Eugenia whisper: *My daughter!* Aunt Cary, so loving, has also died.



Chapter XXIII

The Chickering goes to Malaga

In the apartment of Álvarez de Baena there was no room for the Chickering and had to be moved to Malaga. Those airs did not sit well with him, so it was necessary to call Jean Paul, the bohemian Belgian tuner, to cheer it up a little. Why I ever chose that piano has to do with my pathological sympathy towards objects aged and forgotten. It was too old for modern taste. Jonas Chickering, the builder of pianos, was a contemporary of Pleyel, and therefore of Chopin (the Steinways did not exist then). David remembered playing it on Whipstick Road on Cornwall Gardens and on the calle de la Encarnación.

The Kreutzer Sonata

Taking advantage of a reform a (which I will talk about in the chapter XXVII) in which it was necessary to remove the piano because of the works, I left it in the hands of my son. The sudden presence of a grand piano in any home produces a feeling of restlessness

that can be relieved by receiving piano lessons. David put up an ad looking for a teacher to give some meaning to its presence at home. The person who answered was not any teacher but a clarinet player, member of a family of musicians. She could also give piano lessons. The poor Chickering failed to monopolize the attention of David in those lessons as much as it would have wished. Tolstoy wrote a novella on a similar subject.

The welsh dresser

Libby and Johnny decided to sell the house on the lake of San Juan. A paradisiacal place where the family Macintosh had been happy with their American friends, the Donovan, and Polish friends, the Lubomirskys. Natalia and Emma lived their childhood among pine trees, roses and aquatic skiing. I went less, because my place was Aldeallana, not so interesting for them. In her will, Dixie left established that the Madrid flat would be for Elisabeth. Johnny would have preferred that it had been sold and shared, as the most valuable item, but English law prevailed, as Dixie knew well. Among the belongings his brother couldn't take with him to the U.S.A. there was one that he cherished: a rustic sideboard, common in the cuisines of Wales and Scotland and in the canteens of England for their suitability to flaunt porcelain pieces. Libby did not facilitate this whim. I couldn't believe it. Just as Lene stopped talking to her sister and brother for some photographs, Libby and Johnny don't talk to each other because of the *welsh dresser*, which is not even in Madrid or Malaga, but in the flat of Puerto de Santa Maria. Emma and I wish that someday, as far away as possible, that piece of furniture will travel

to Chicago or wherever Johnny's children and Petra are living at the time.

An apartment decorated by Duarte Pinto Coelho

In the early sixties Luis da Camara Pinto Coelho arrived in Madrid as Ambassador of Portugal. Here he happened to meet the daughter of the U.S. military attaché at an Embassy reception. A tall, blonde woman (that she was beautiful goes without saying). Her name: Kit (Katherine) Rodney Graf. Duarte, not Luis, Pinto Coelho, the famous decorator, converted an attic, surrounded by a terrace, in a special residence. It highlighted a great bedroom with windows to North and South, arches and columns. It connected with a large dressing room and a bathroom. The walls were upholstered with green fabric by Gastón and Daniela and the floor carpeted dark green. Kit took possession.

The Donovan's

On the same floor of the building, located towards the interior, lived *Muss* or *Moppy* Donovan who reminded me of Ernest Hemingway, and Peggy Donovan, a family of neighbors at the lake. Peggy disallowed the prejudice that American women are disinterested in European culture. She traveled around Spain with the same curiosity as Azorín, Cela, or Caba. She wrote a travel book (*Spain in your pocket*), which I keep. The family included three magnificent sons Johnny, Diana and Sheila.

The *garconnière* is left empty

Eventually, Luis and Kit moved to a more conventional residence just below the Donovans. Charles Macintosh was a friend of Kit's father and became interested in the apartment decorated by Duarte. The parents of Libby preferred to live outside Madrid. A sort of *pied a terre* like the *garconnière* was desirable. They left their address of Velázquez Street and took their place near the Pinto Coelho's and the Donovan's.

Two removals

After her mother died, Libby offered to change our home of Álvarez de Baena 5 for Rafael Calvo 30. If only by association of ideas, let me tell you that yesterday we went down (and almost every week) to the 7^o C floor invited by Kit to lunch. She is now an elderly lady. She is cared for by Rosa, a chatty South American, who combs Kit's hair slowly and feeds her with care.

Antonio Escorial and the Pernas sisters

I jump back to a year at the beginning of the century. My cousin Jaime Laviña wanted to disassociate himself from Datafirma and I chose to start anew with my neighbor from Aldeallana, Antonio. He was a son of José Escorial and Ana Gila, who had been friends of my parents and owners of the adjoining farm: Tajuña. The new company was going to be called *Consulfirma S.L.* Antonio dedicated himself to advising farmers on legal matters concerning worker's rights and obligations. Antonio's wife, Begoña, and her sister-in-law Ana, offered legal advice to real estate companies. All this mumbling is to end up by saying that Antonio, Begoña,

Ana and I, moved to an office in the Calle Príncipe de Vergara 75.

Toy trains and chocolates

Two floors up, lived María Teresa Segovia (Marujita). The Segovia's occupied a spectacular apartment, in front of the Palace of Liria. Her father kept Marklin electric trains. I was still a child when we went to *Aunt Maruja's house* and I wondered if that day I could see the trains. They passed from a room to another, they stopped at the stations, crossed tunnels and the passenger cars were lit up. At Christmas, the owner of the trains sent us boxes of chocolates, imitating tiny bricks wrapped in silver paper with the letters *Agroman*. The Segovias had three children: Rafael, María Teresa (Marujita) and Fernando (Nano). You may have noticed that I felt admiration for that family. The mother looked German, with the air of a valkyrie. Her daughter Marujita was brunette and had blue eyes. Nano was less tall and not so serious. Very sociable, he spent a few years running a cocktail bar on Calle Hermanos Bécquer, next to the José Luis restaurant.

Igor Markevitch and Turkey

Marujita felt deeply the early death of the composer and conductor Igor Markewitch, with whom she treasured a semi-platonic relationship. She had at home all the records of the *maestro* (as she called him) and several dedicated photos. She liked to talk about Turkey, just as other people are enthusiastic about France or Italy. She came to see me to the United States, at the time when I lived on Antler Lane. We sailed in Long Island waters

and, when onboard, we remembered our childhood. When I was working on Principe de Vergara 75, sometimes she invited me to lunch on the fifth floor, and in the afternoon, we would pass to the living room to listen to music and see pictures.

The concerts of the Philharmonic

Long before the *Fridays* of the Palacio de la Música, and the sessions of *Ibermúsica*, there was in Madrid a society of concerts called *The Philharmonic*. It emerged as a private initiative of the father-in-law of my cousin Petronila (Tolita) Orueta, sister of Alfonso, our family doctor. Tolita and Ricardo Quesada conceived the idea of resurrecting that Philharmonic, offering a popular alternative to Ibermúsica. Ricardo knew the ins and outs of the role of *impresario* by family tradition. We were invited to be a part of the society. My sister not only as a shareholder, but also as hostess to receive and help artists during their stays in Madrid. Everything was going very well until we realized that the economic management was not up to the artistic excellence. The Philharmonic had many members, but it spent more than was necessary. I left my participation with some excuse, not without warning them to be more austere. They didn't pay much attention to me and finally the inevitable happened. I don't think they regretted it. Because, while it lasted, they enjoyed life and were happy. Ricardo died in a hospital, almost in my arms, and dear Tolita followed soon after.

Marine sciences

Emma our daughter, bilingual by birth, could not begin the veterinary career, because, would you

believe, she had low marks in English. A new career seemed a reasonable alternative, but it meant moving somewhere on the seashore. Cadiz had recently inaugurated a remarkable building, somewhat reminiscent of the Capitol in Washington. The astonished locals whispered that the elevators inside were made of gold. Its purpose: A new Faculty of Cadiz's University for imparting science related to the Sea. The corpus took subject matters from Biology, Geography, Astronomy and Mathematics. Emma enrolled, packed her bags, and went to live in Puerto Real with a friend. From my point of view, marine sciences were more interesting than veterinary.

A place for Lars

At last, the doctors at Roskilde Hospital considered that Lars could be discharged, warning him not to stop taking certain pills daily. They waited for other patients of their age who were in the same conditions for suggesting that they rent and share a flat in the city. Some gladly accepted, but Lars preferred to continue living in the Hospital, occupying a bed that was needed for new patients. I asked his uncle Anders for advice and help. Anders was the husband of Marianne, Lene's sister.

Sale of Maldonado 24

None of the three brothers had capital enough for purchasing the part of the others. Mi sister took care of calling the firm Ansorena to evaluate the content and a estate agency for selling the continent. 'And what did we do with the furniture?' Guillermo wanted the

grandfather clock, his daughter Anuska, the piano *Rönish* and I chose the bookstore. The paintings were more difficult. My sister took a Ricardo Baroja and a small drawing by Picasso. It had been a gift from an admirer of Maria Eugenia, during the years when she was studying Architecture in Barcelona. She would never find out that it wasn't authentic. Guillermo had interest in a large one that represented boys playing cards on the floor of a sacristy. Piti asked me where I planned to put the book cabinet. As there was no room in Madrid, I ventured Malaga. 'It wouldn't match with the house' I knew she was right. I thought perhaps one day I could make the house match with the bookstore.

With Mielgo and without Rapaport

The arrival of the Popular Party to power, meant a change of Chairmanship in Red Eléctrica, which went from Jorge Fabra to Pedro Mielgo. In the transition, two senior officials who had been benevolent with me lost their jobs: Agustín Fernández Herrero and Carlos Rapaport. Carlos Rappaport expected me to intervene in his favor. I did it and, as Carlos was Argentinian, he was offered to be managing director of REE Chile. But the result of my intervention was disappointing for him, and I lost his esteem. The Rapaports had been in Aldeallana with a son, a blond and lovely boy. Carlos's wife was Uruguayan, tall, and good looking. I was invited at his Madrid house (with garden) to an Argentine barbecue. We commented on the books from their library. I also remember Carlos sailing in the Pacific Dolphin. His desolation due to a break in the foot of the main sail comes to mind as a caprice for trivia.

Agustín and the La Torre family

Agustín Fernández Herrero didn't ask for anything when Mielgo took over. Yet, I offered him to be part of Consulfirma. He only agreed to share office space. He started coming assiduously and after a few months he came less often. He seemed bored and I wondered what occupied his mind while seating at his desk. He contributed to the rent in proportion of the few square meters that he occupied. The situation became awkward, at least for me. I remember that we spent a weekend in Malaga traveling in a Mercedes van which I had just added to my collection of orphan vehicles. The idea seemed to amuse him. He helped me packing things up and down. We stayed in one of the four houses that the matriarch of the clan *De la Torre* had built on a family hacienda outside Málaga. One for each child. Ours was the one corresponding to his wife Isabel, sister of the now famous Mayor of Málaga Francisco. She was also the sister of Alfredo, director of the Merchant Navy Ministry, whom I knew preparing a comparative study on conditions for pilot exams. Isabel was more intellectual than Augustin. She taught in the University. Of the four brotherly houses of La Torre, hers was the most modern. For some *c'est la vie* reason Augustin and I saw less and less of each other. He has died and it now is too late to rekindle the old affection.

Performance marks

I return now to talk about Red Eléctrica. At Consulfirma we knew more of REE (and other European and American power grids) than each newly elected presidents did when recently appointed. Every year we

collected any published data, mainly (but not only) from the Annual Reports that are mandatory in the *utilities* of developed countries. The data basis began with the first year of REE and had already twenty years of additions. REE rated well because Paulina was not only the inventor of the concept, but in its implementation, she had carefully avoided over staffing. REE was a lean company. The topic of indicators reminds me of the grades at School (pages 26-27) in the Colegio del Pilar. What really mattered to parents were not the marks in absolute terms, but their son's position compared to other pupils. A simple indicator of the type 15/42 type was sufficient. The presidents were like parents. They wanted to know the position of each department in a virtual classroom composed of colleagues from the rest of European and Northern American electricity transport companies.

The best is the hardest to measure

I'm rambling, but I'm doing it consciously. My fondness for what the Anglo-Saxons call *benchmarking*, has an exception. The ultimate leadership in the business management must be sought, above all, in Innovative greatness. And that's hard to quantify. It is almost impossible, because no matter the extent of R+D expenditures, the number of researchers, the quantity of patents registered, etc. *Innovation* is like *Artistic Beauty*, a gift related to hours of dedication, but subject, ultimately, to an almost divine gift called *Inspiration*.

Surveys

I don't remember if it was Jorge Fabra or Pedro Mielgo the president who commissioned a study to measure the opinion of the REE employees about their bosses,

while safeguarding the anonymity of their responses. I have intellectual distrust of questionnaires. The classic ‘Have you stopped abusing your wife? Say yes or no’ is a good example. I felt sympathy for the directors and intended to relativize the results with a trick. Every question would be accompanied by boxes where the respondent was asked to indicate the importance that on his opinion deserved the question itself, and only then answer how he rated his/her boss or director.

Results

The expectations analysis ended up being more interesting than the director’s ranking in each ability. Each department seemed to have an ideal profile of the perfect director. Ideals and abilities didn’t always match. Only by knowing this first premise the judgment that the boss deserved became meaningful. The results demonstrated that some departments wanted to have a type of manager that wasn’t necessarily the type that the company would prefer. Or vice versa.

The Functions Manual

Pedro Mielgo asked for a book describing the functions allocated to each Division and department. This was a direct follow up from the previous results. The Manual showed an extended bias consisting of a tendency to avoid responsibility. The final version, approved by Mielgo, suppressed many duplicated functions, and confirmed unpaired responsibilities where they truly belonged.

Childhood friends

Some of the characters which appear in the first

chapter I found working for Red Eléctrica. You may remember that I had some neighbors in Maldonado (when I lived there with my sister and my aunts) with whom I played converting lead soldiers into laying down corpses after being knocked down with crystal balls. Ramon was the elder of the Hurtado de Mendoza brothers. Another person with an important job in REE, was Manuel Dominguez, that schoolmate who immersed with me in the pool of El Escorial cooing carelessly, slightly, softly, to unsuspecting feminine bathers. As Director of Grid Design and Construction he looked at me with a faint air of superiority.

How did the relationship with REE end?

Work was going well with Luis Atienza, but in his second year I committed an error when presenting the results. The book of data basis was in CD format. Pen drives had not been invented yet. It occurred to me to advance that in the future we would provide a software program for interactive access to data. Atienza had appointed a new director, Eva Rodicio, who caught the idea on the fly. Every year our contract was offered for tender. Consulfirma always won because the service was dependent on previous year findings and search know how. Until someone offered a way to access the data quicker and easier than the one proposed by us.

End of Consulfirma S.L.

I was almost glad to start something different. I had been ruminating on the possibility of expanding the business to other activities suitable for analysis (gas transport, air transport, oil prospecting) for which I

would have to hire people with a flare for languages, accounting, and willing to sell the product in Spain and abroad. But...just then, the French began inserting a threatening note. *All Data contained in this publication other than general domain, are owned by.....and may not be used for commercial purposes, under the responsibilities that may result...* The legality of the limitation was doubtful in the case of public undertakings, but the mere possibility of a denunciation by such Goliaths dissuaded me of the project. I was close to retirement and sold the company to Ana Pernas's husband.

Consultant in spite of myself

I have great reservations about the profession of consultant. Heirs of the king's confessors, and colleagues of the psychologists, I think the World would be better off without so many consultants. In the Administration they should be prohibited, except temporarily and concerning very difficult matters. Instead, I do believe in the advantages of finding out how people in similar jobs have obtained good results. Providing that information is not being a consultant. Is just making people wiser instantly. The various computer listings that have appeared in this book, were determinant in that they contained hidden facts, not advice.

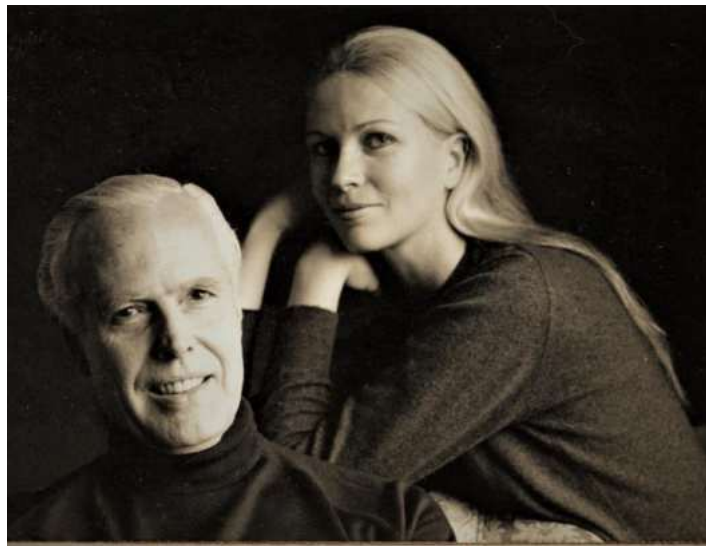
Self-employed entrepreneur

I admire those who fend for themselves. Paying corporate taxes, preparing monthly payrolls, keeping company accounts, attending customers questions and

proposals. All these activities which conform an autonomous economic entity seem to me the first stage of a model form to make a living. Hopefully one day it will have the same prestige as living from the State (or the Church). Before I shut up definitively about so suggestive a matter, I have to say that my daughter Emma worked in Consulfirma.

A conviction

It has been said that wars are not won by the bravest but by the best informed. Spies and money they are decisive. Of course, leadership is needed, but the Great Captain Gonzalo de Córdoba enjoyed the enthusiasm and the adhesion of his soldiers precisely because he knew the best time and best place to attack, thanks to the information he sought and received before the battles.



Luis Pinto Coelho and Kit Rodney Graf



Living room in Álvarez de Baena



Emma



Wellsh dresser

Sheila Donovan





Jorge Fabra



Paulina de Beato



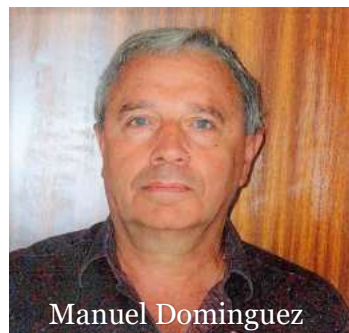
Pedro Mielgo



Luis Atienza



Carlos Rapaport



Manuel Dominguez

Chapter XXIV

The Lincoln Continental

If I said that the cars which I like the most are the veteran Alfa Romeo, I would not tell the truth. As a child I knew very well that the perfect car was the Lincoln Continental convertible. I am talking about the 40's years. That love stayed in platonic mode throughout my long life; since then I have had to settle for substitutes. While living in Gijón, the Langreo Electric Company provided the family with the following vehicles: an ancient *Citroën Rosalie* (horrible); *Fiat Simca 1100* (some charm); *Salmsom* (rara avis); *Vauxhall 14* (with odd chromes on each side of the hood); *Chrysler Imperial* (impressive front). In Madrid Cenemesa gave us a *Dodge 1949* (the small model). Private cars: the ubiquitous 600, the humble *Seat 1400*, and, later, one *Chevrolet 1935* (semi convertible, but graceless).

Something about the *Fiat 1100*

The door handles opened by pulling up instead of pushing down as in the rest of cars. The spare wheel

was attached to the rear trunk. The radiator was curved, undifferentiated from the rest of the hood. But the important thing about this car was that it overturned with my mother inside. She was learning how to drive on the road by the river Piles, which surrounds the eastern part of San Lorenzo beach. It seems that the car went upside down. My father was giving the lessons. Since then, Maria Eugenia always refused to try again. It was a shame because my mother was very precise and very accurate. I have blamed my father for not having insisted, not realizing that after he died, we had plenty of time to convince her learn how to drive, and we did nothing.

Cars in Rank Xerox and Xerox

In Spain: A *blue 600*, upholstered in dark brown (too dark); *Austin Morris 1000* green, pale grey inside (better); *Austin Morris 1000*, in dark red (too small for that color). In England: *Ford Zodiac* (enormous and horrible); *Triumph 2000*, heavenly blue (very good). In the United States people don't use company cars. So, only own cars: *Chevrolet Monte Carlo* (hood too long); *Triumph Stag* (beautiful but always sick); *Volkswagen Rabbit* (boring). In England: *BMW 320* (very middle class).

The Panda n° 1

All the cars of the INI companies had to be Seat. On the Plaza de Salamanca I was awarded a *Seat 132* and in Construcciones Aeronáuticas: a *Seat 1430*. As member of the Board of Seat, I knew about the imminent launch of a new utility car called *Panda* to

make it more endearing than the *VW Rabbit*. Since I was doing a lot of private travel to Segovia and Malaga, I needed my own car. So, I asked Antoñanzas to reserve one for me, as it was done in times of the 600. When the day arrived, I got a call from Juan Miguel: 'You got your Panda. I can't give it to you. But it's the first unit'. (Don't be suspicious, I didn't ask him to give it to me). Possibly Antoñanzas made more calls that day to award 'first units', so I am only repeating his words. During the first month, the car was motive of varied comments. It had personality. The canvas seats resembled pool loungers, something that avoided changing position during long trips.

Purchased later

After returning the *Seat 1430* to CASA, and leaving the Panda to Libby, I needed another car. Fernando de Castro recommended an Alfa Romeo distributor with a shop in Toledo. He felt compelled to offer me a discount and I felt obliged to buy whatever he said. He indicated an *AR 33 boxer* and I returned to Madrid driving it. Roman Yanso, husband of Maria Rosa Pellew Urquijo, tried it and praised the sound of its engine. Shortly afterwards I returned to the same place, and I changed the 33 for an *Alfa 164 twin spark*, more comfortable.

Parenthesis about the last car

(One afternoon, when Emma and I had gone for a walk by the Marina with the idea of having a look at the sailboat, we were surprised to see people swirling at each other on a corner of the parking lot. Something

strange had happened very close to us and made us curious to find out. It was a car that had its half rear almost sunk in the water and its half front pointing to the sky. It had not sunk because it was prevented by the bow of a boat, just under the trunk. People took photos and commented on the view with humor. It was a car very similar to ours, same color, and same brand. We turned our heads to where it was. It had left its parking space, which looked ominously empty. Emma said maybe it had decided to bathe. I did not dare to return to the circle of curious people. Above their heads I could make out a green bonnet, which stood motionless pointing to a cloud. I fled the place looking for a cabin to ask for a crane. I told them that if they were late, they would have to extract it out of the water. Finally, I saw them appearing. They lifted the green car to the sky of the Marina, where you could see its silhouette in not a very decent position, with all four wheels up in the air. Before leaving, the people of the crane advised me to remember to put on the handbrake.

The Alfetta of the 70s

In a classic car magazine, I saw an *Alfetta 1800* of the year 1976, dark blue, and I felt irresistible desires to buy it. I didn't need it, but it had to be mine. As one who hides a robbery, I took it to Aldeallana and kept it in the granary, which was empty since the contractor Octaviano Palomo, who bought our wheat, took it directly from the threshing ground. In Italy and France, cars are feminine and no wonder. I took out the *Alfetta* to have a walk in Segovia, as XIX century husbands liked to be seen with their mistresses as a sign of

personal triumph. That was blameworthy and deserved punishment. One night, returning to Aldeallana, we were surprised by a thick fog on a stretch where a tight curve was expected. Even though the *Alfetta* and I were going very slowly, the car fell to a seed field. The poor car was almost a month in the hospital of Villacastín. I came to visit and encourage her.

The collection

That love affair lasted for as long as it lasted. Noticing that in Aldeallana there was a lot of wasted space in the sheep stables, I conceived the project of enlarging the harem to complete a true harem of *Alfettas*.

The Peugeot 604

General de Gaulle liked to use a Citroën DS, pride of French engineering. But its line was too aerodynamic and reduced the majesty of the carriage. As a ceremonial car, the DS was not up to the *grandeur* intended. Hence, the Peugeot brand proposed to serve in special occasions with a sedan comparable to Mercedes. The Gallic engineers and designers strove to produce a very comfortable coach, suitable for both long journeys and for colorful parades. It was a failed attempt. It seemed drawn by a robot. Otherwise, it was almost perfect. I was sad to see how low it had fallen in the esteem of resellers and bought one almost new, light green color. The price was so affordable that I should have been more cautious. I took it to the granary, together with the first *Alfetta*, and separated from the rest of the harem, who slept in the sheep

stables. I took her out to meet and socialize with other cars in Segovia. As usual, I would leave it parked in front of a cafeteria on the Paseo Nuevo, where I liked to drink chocolate with churros and read the *Adelantado de Segovia*. When the reading was over, I went outside and into the car. Turned the ignition key but the engine would not start. Nor it made the slightest noise. One could think that it had broken. But no. It used to take about ten minutes before returning to the real world, after its fades or daydreams. Since that discovery, the trips in the Peugeot 604 required some sense of adventure. 'When I finish eating and go to the car, will it start? What if this time she falls asleep? What if for several days?' She wasn't getting any better and I took her to the hospital on the road of Villacastín. 'What's wrong with it? 'It has dreams and forgets it's only a car' 'I see... There is little we can do here. You should take it to a psychologist' 'Do you know of any?' 'May be the one in Zamarramala'

Zamarramala

From the tower of the Alcazar, the Templar village of Zamarramala, on the other side of the river Eresma, is clearly visible, perched on a hill. It is known because in that village women command one day of the year, (much less than in the rest of the world). Its church is very old, rare, and fascinating. Within the village is the only clinic for pathological cars that I know. I took the *Peugeot 604* to be examined. 'Leave it here and go for a walk' I went to the church of the Veracruz (the *true cross* so called because of a relic). Then, to the village bar. After a prudent while, I returned to the clinic.

‘There you have it’. Cured, but, like the knight Don Quixote, also sadder.

The van

One of those wishes that are usually expressed with the New Year, it was, in my case, driving a truck. A large truck. When I saw them on the road, I tried to imagine what it felt like to lead those heavy loads to their destinations. After all, I had piloted airplanes and sailed on distant seas. Why not steer one truck? I would have to obtain a higher driver license. Then I would rent one for a day. Finally, wisdom prevailed and the whim, as you may have already guessed by the title, did not go beyond buying a van, yes, as big as possible.

The Jaguar XK8

Charles Macintosh had two Jaguars. A black sedan and a white convertible, very sporty. The closest thing to the photo of the Mark II saloon which I could find was a black *S-type*, second-hand. It turned out that the first hand was one of Joaquín Calvo Sotelo, tragically killed in an accident in the middle of Paseo de la Castellana. His widow, Maria Jessen was a relative of Jens, the pilot of the Embassy breakfasts. It was more difficult to please Libby in emulating the sport car. I took advantage of a birthday to give her the keys of a XK8. The number alludes to its eight cylinders. During the test by the Valencia motorway, we reached 260 km / hour. At that speed the noise of the engine is no longer heard.

Duro's mansion

We used the XK8 in our trips to Oviedo, to the ophthalmology clinic of Dr. Fernández Vega. Always with Libby driving, well but too fast, in my modest opinion. Inside the building you could tell that Libby had recommendation. We were told to wait in a small room with sofa, armchairs, bar, and a television. On one of our visits, we shared the wait with charming influencer Ana Obregón, who came with her then young son Alejandro, blond and playful. After consultation, we used to escape to Gijón, where I roamed the corners of my childhood with the avidity of a bloodhound. We slept in what was once the family home of the Duro dynasty. Its current owner, named Velázquez, was married to a descendant of the magnates. They lived in the gardener's house. The big house would have seven or eight bedrooms and each time we slept in a different one. In the mornings, the Velázquez came in to serve breakfast. In the garden there were many apples fallen on the ground, and a nineteenth-century dinning gazebo, forged in iron. On one of our stays, we noticed that we were the only guests. The XK8 was parked in front of the main garden. The faces of the portrait paintings in the living room wished us good night and we went to sleep. About two o'clock in the morning, we were awakened by the alarm of the car. 'You are not going to go out in pajamas? Be careful!' From the window you could see the lights of the car flashing inside and outside it. I approached, opened the doors, and found nothing. *Sunt aliquid Manes.*



Peugeot 604



Twin spark after the bath



Chapter XXV

In search of Lars

Lars remained in the Roskilde psychiatric hospital even though he had already been discharged. Doctors were waiting for me to take care of him or leave the matter to the Commune of Gentofte. With the money that corresponded to me from the sale of the apartment from Maldonado I felt able to buy an apartment in Denmark so he could live close to his family. At home with Natalia and Emma there was no room, nor Libby would be willing to have him. With David neither. I decided to travel to Copenhagen and offer Lars the idea of owning a home again. We went out to a bar to drink beers and I saw that he was indeed recovered and affectionate. But he didn't want to move. He felt fine, in his hospital room. In that he showed some sign of a sickly condition. Talking to the doctor she told me that, deep down, Lars distrusted me. Then I appealed to Marianne and her family.

Marianne's family

They did not reside in Copenhagen but in a small and ancient city, fifty miles to the South, called Koge.

Marianne and her husband Anders were happy with a married son, Jesper, and three unmarried daughters: Thérèse, Josephine and Julia. A close-knit family that got together with any excuse and helped each other in the tasks of the home, that in Spain are responsible for carpenters, masons, plumbers, and painters. Marianne and Anders shared with others neighbors the property of cows they visited in green meadows. When the time came, they sacrificed them, divided their meats, and started again. It was their *hobby*, as hunting is a hobby in Spain. Closer to my idiosyncrasy was the passion for sailing of Jesper and his wife Trine (Katerine). In the marina of the town, I was able to admire their sailboat. Of all the members of the family, the person who reminded me most of Lene was Thérèse, not only physically but because of her interest in lost causes. (More recently, a granddaughter of Marianne, Anna, aged 18, reminded me even more of Lene. She came from Bornholm, where she worked in the newspaper Bornholms Tidende and was about to edit a book of poems. ‘Don’t tell me you live in Rosengade!’ (Of course, she didn’t. When I mentioned her great-aunt Lene, she said she didn’t know who she was.)

Tranegaardsroad 51 A

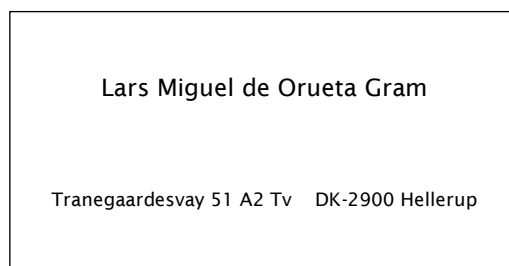
I showed Anders the two homes I had selected for Lars after visiting quite a few. One was an apartment near the house of Emmasvej 10, where Lars had lived before being hospitalized. The other was a complete house, interesting, but outside Copenhagen, in the countryside. It must be said that in Denmark housing is not expensive for three reasons: a) you can only have one house b) you must live in it or rent it and c)

foreigners cannot buy houses unless they are residents. 'And on vacation?' 'On vacation they park in caravans near beaches or forests' 'And those small wooden houses you see in some sites?' 'They can buy one, but it is only allowed to use it in summer. The rest of the year must remain closed' Of course, Danes can buy all the houses they want outside Denmark. (I am beginning to ramble). Returning to Lars, Anders wanted to see the house chosen in the countryside. He said it would be fine *for me*, but bad for Lars. Then we went to the one in Hellerup. That he liked, but not quite. The bathroom was somewhat primitive and difficult to rearrange. When we were leaving, he saw another flat that was for sale on a corner, German style, from the 30's. It was love at first sight. Anders said not to worry because he would take care of everything. All that remained was for Lars to give his approval.

Lars accepts

Since Lars' resistance had to do with a distrust of my intentions (he remembered the kidnapping in Emmasvej) I asked Anders to travel to Roskilde and try to convince him. Total success. Only one problem remained: Lars's tendency to give away stuff. As a child: toys and candies. Later: cameras, clocks, radios, speakers, a saxophone... And just before Lene's death: furniture and the most worrying of all: his flat (in Northport quarter), which he donated to Lene and David. The lawyers found a solution: to constitute a mortgage on my name that would appear in the Commune Registry and scare away unscrupulous people. Second problem: the flat was empty. I sent furniture still unallocated from the sale

of Aldeallana and left some money to complete the most necessary elements. Lars and I took a trip through Denmark to celebrate the beginning of his new life. We visited the museum of the Viking people. And many walks in the park called *of deer*, not far from his new home. It was the month of October 2003. We agreed that I would order cards that said:



The trains of Payá

First it was an attempt to get him a job as a photographer of haute couture models. Fernando de Castro helped me with his contacts via Opus Dei. That failed because of the distance, although he worked at it for some months. You may remember my enthusiasm for the toy electric trains *Marklin*, manufactured before the war. The company's molds had been melted down to make cannons and the closest things that existed were made in Spain. My curiosity led me to visit the town Ibi, where, although Payá had closed, the employees kept molds for locomotives, tracks, stations, cars, and motorcycles, which they manufactured from their homes. Then they put the toys inside cardboard boxes and sold them as gift items. I obtained for Lars the representation of Payá in Denmark, thinking of German customers. But that enthusiasm was mine alone.



Third floor in the middle of the photo

Tranegaardsvej 51



Roskilde hospital



I waited, seated



Chapter XXVI

A naïve coat of arms

At the entrance of the house of Aldeallana, when we arrived from Asturias in 1947, the first thing we saw was a rustic wooden bench, which also served as an ark. On the backrest it had a painted coat of arms with some strange drawings and centered on two feathered supports. The author had placed five stones on the right-handed canton and five stones on the sinister flank. Opposite, he put five equally repeated pots. The stones were meant for the martyrdom of St. Stephen. The pots, as synonyms for *Calderón*. The hieroglyph alluded to the buyer of those lands: Serafín Estébanez Calderón who was a senator in 1858 during the liberal government of Istúriz although he belonged to the Moderate party. His wife, Matilde Livermore had died two years earlier. Advised by the marquis of Salamanca, his brother-in-law, he invested in land from the canons of the cathedral of Segovia, located on both banks of the Moros River. He hadn't the slightest intention of cultivating that land, less of living on it. His sons Thomas and Seraphim saw to it that an administrator provided them with the rents.

The sale of Colina

At home we used to blame our ancestor, the duchess of Nájera, for the sale of Colina. It was a better farm than Aldeallana and had been in the family, until our aunt Mina (Wilhelmine) sold it to *buy a pair of gold slippers for the Pope*. Legend or truth, the fact was that Francisco de Orueta had assumed heavy debts, and overwhelmed by creditors, he asked his cousin to buy Colina with the idea of recovering it one day. But Fortune forgot Paco, and she got tired of waiting. There remained the upper part, the one belonging to our grandfather, with its Aldeallana hamlet. In those times, unlike Colina, Aldeallana lacked a hermitage. Grandmother Maria Luisa Heredia put remedy to that awkward situation. On one of the walls of the chapel she built, still can be read *This chapel was built in thanksgiving to the Miraculous Virgin for the healing of the young Carmen de Orueta*.

The sale of Aldeallana

A century and a half had gone by, and it was time to sell. My brother Guillermo lived in Florida, so the idea of a shared possession would have been unfair to him. On top of that, I recognize that I had taken decisions without consultation, some approved by my sister, such as building the house on the hill, or the one reconditioning the farmhouse as a rustic dwelling. But others were less appreciated like the one about planting pine trees in the worst lands. My exalted defense of the idea contributed to my sister's skepticism, in line with the Roman Law dictum: *excusatio non petita...*

The price issue

A forestation had seemed fine to my mother because her father had planted a large pine forest on a hill of Vegas de Matute, where our grandmother Dolores owned several plots of land, including the large hill near her country manor. I remember travelling to that pine wood in the military car, dull green, to visit Eugenio's beloved pine trees. Walking under their shade, he was holding my hand. The memory of this would have been more trivial if the first persons interested in buying Aldeallana had not mentioned pines as a negative factor. Common usage price ratings only took account of *cultivated* hectares. One of those who enquired our price was Santiago Gil de Biedma (see index for pages) who made us an offer for 250 million pesetas (still pesetas in farm talk). I once heard our mother say that the farm could be worth 200. My sister must love me much because she accepted my proposal of three million euros, which was equivalent to 500 million pesetas. Around the farm the word spread that we did *not* want sell.

An odd real estate agency

The same agency that had sold Maldonado's apartment received before the summer a proposal to include Aldeallana in its portfolio of properties, at our request. My sister and I were in the garden when we were visited by a saleslady who by that time was almost a friend of Piti. She brought with her a married couple interested in seeing the farm. They wanted to take a walk and look everywhere, without our company, to comment freely and go where curiosity called them. When they

returned, the wife, who was Peruvian, went ahead of everyone by saying that she wanted to buy it. Her assertion was so blunt and affirmative that my sister could not help muttering: 'I can't believe it!'

Withdrawal

The lady from the agency intervened adopting a professional air. The husband remained quiet and silent, waiting for what she would say. She said: 'The price is very high. On what basis did you set it?' Her words irritated me. I would have expected a more congenial opening to facilitate the sale. 'I base it on the fact that at that price, my sister and I agree to sell, and under that price, I, at least, prefer to wait.' She turned her eyes towards Lucía, the Peruvian. 'For that price, I can show you other farms that might interest you more than this one' And they left, with a polite but cold salute.

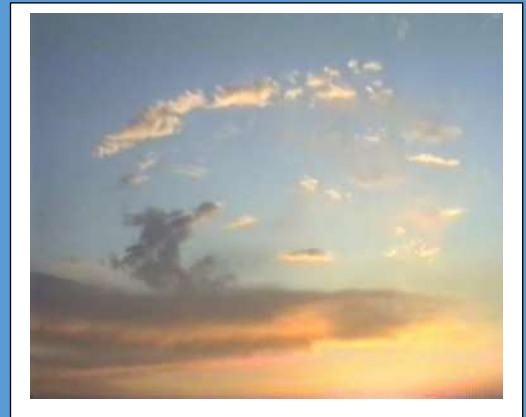
Two months later

Same scenario. Same characters. I didn't ask how many farms they had seen. I'm sure they all had nice houses, better lands, hillsides, and holm oaks. But the Peruvian liked pine trees and none could be found along with all the rest. The mere vision of that car next to the garden made me understand that we had sold Aldeallana. I didn't say anything. What for? My sister and the sales lady would take care of everything. The buyers were called Gerardo and Lucía Pérez Durias. My sister mellowed to a small discount, because she thought it was expected from us, considering that they no longer discussed the price. *Et consumatus est*. 'What happened next?' Many things. But not now. In another chapter.



□ Serafín Estébanez Calderón





The invented
Coat of arms



Pine shoots



Holm oak shoots



Chapter XXVII

Site for books

Books from Aldeallana, books from de Álvarez de Baena, books from Maldonado, books from the Lake, abandoned to their fate, shipwrecked in search of salvation. There were only two houses left where I could welcome them. Rafael Calvo 30 and Malaga. In the first, Libby took the opportunity to make an integral reform which revolved about inventing a bedroom for Emma. Her books would go to the master bedroom and mine to greenhouse on the terrace, which was converted in another living room, where the living creature would be me. As for the rest of my books and furniture, their place could not be another than Andalusia. A second *retour aux sources*.

Before Angoloti

I searched the phone book for names of experts in housing renovation. The one in Malaga faced two streets: Paraíso and Sierra de Montánchez. The expert parked his car on the second and knocked on the door. We went up to the house and I showed it to him in detail,

leaving the subject of the garden for another time. He examined all very carefully. 'What would you do?' I asked 'Tear it down' he answered. It took me two days to recover the mood to call another.

Like those of La Caleta

The next expert's name was Joaquín Angoloti. This time, before he could tell me that he was also in favor of tearing the house down, I went ahead to express a wish. 'It is only fifty years old. Could you add a hundred more? ¿Could you make it look like those of La Caleta?' It turned out that Angoloti lived there, which saved me from explaining what I meant. This way, Libby in Madrid, and I in Málaga we were involved in the joys and sorrows of any house reform. At the same time, and metaphorically, I initiated a residential divorce consisting of her having her house in Madrid and me, mine in Malaga. Beds apart, separate bedrooms, separate houses (the Danish prohibition of owning two houses acquired a new meaning). You may remark that I give too much importance to this duality of shelters. You'd be right if I were a formidable *pater familiae* with Roman *auctoritas*. But I recognized the Rafael Calvo flat as a 100 % Macintosh home where I managed better as a privileged guest and in Málaga like a serviceable owner.

Cadiz

I already told you that Emma had enrolled in Sciences of the Sea. She lived in Puerto Real with a friend, in a small, rented, villa. As we missed her and

wanted to see how she was managing, Libby I set out to take a trip to Puerto Real. We choose to sleep in the hotel *Monastery* in near El Puerto of Santa Maria. We knew nothing about the province of Cadiz. Soon, it was clear to us why the Phoenicians preferred this place to others in Andalusia. And closer in time, we recalled that in those same streets Columbus walked a whole year, before being received in Court. They were the same streets which Blas de Lezo's family went up and down, waiting in vain to see him disembark. In vain because he had already been buried in a mass grave in Cartagena de Indias.

The Larga (long) Street

That was its old name and that's how it is still known. The monastery where we slept had been converted into a hotel. Huge and luxurious, like many monasteries of America. Place of tranquility for celibate women, willingly or induced, and holders of assets that ensured a suave retirement in pleasant company. At one end of the street: the Terry's gardens, opened towards the railway station. In the opposite direction, one reached the center of the village. We had walked a few steps when, on the right sidewalk we stop to admire a patio with columns that reminded of the *House of Pilate* in Seville. We kept walking. In the shop window of a real estate agency, we saw the photograph of that patio and below a price, which undoubtedly needed to be put a zero.

Oneto's Palace

We went in to mention the mistake and they thanked us, not without adding that there was no such error.

Oneto had been a merchant of Italian origin who prospered from the trade of the Indies. With the discovery, not of America but of sherry wine, the English community inaugurated another kind of prosperity. Closer. The Osborne family bought the palace (in El Puerto the noun *palace* is so loosely applied that the place is known as the town of a *hundred palaces*). Among the guests of fame who slept at Onetos's, one was Francisco Franco. But demography is an enemy of palaces. At the end of the twentieth century too many Osborne's had inherited the palace and, as none could please the others with enough money, they asked an architect friend to divide it into as many pieces as brothers. The photograph advertised by the agency was from one of those pieces. Patio, marble staircase, wide corridors, and studded ceilings gave the place the sense of luxury and well-being one finds in mansions of XVII century. Now, each apartment was distinct. Being relatively small, we reformed ours so that the atmosphere present in the welcoming areas remained intact inside. Very proud, Libby and I brought Emma by car from Puerto Real to take possession, with her friend. She told us that the whole thing was too ostentatious and that she preferred to continue living in Puerto Real.

Placing books

I already had a new and empty bookstore in the flat of Madrid. And while I remember the moment when placing books, I take the opportunity to release a new batch of Centon titles: *Alice in Wonderland*, by Lewis Carroll; *The deceased Matthias Pascal*, by Luigi Pirandello (I thought of *Enrique IV*); *The foam of the days*, by Boris Vian; *Second part of the Chronicle of*

Peru, of Peter Cieza de León; *Philosophical Dictionary*, of Voltaire; *Parerga and Paralipomena* by Arthur Schopenhauer; *A modest suggestion*, by Jonathan Swift; *Gongora and The Polyphemus*, by Dámaso Alonso; *Walden*, by Henry David Thoreau; *Short lives*, by John Aubrey; *Life of Julius Agricola*, by Tacitus; *Talks*, by Epictetus. Twelve.

David's teacher

David ended up marrying the piano teacher, whose name was Sonia Rincón. That way the piano Chickering finalized its mission and disappeared, somewhat angry with me. (One year later it reappeared transformed into three kilos of beautiful child. After much thought his parents decided to call him David Luis). The wedding was very civil in the City Council of Alhaurín de la Torre, with more assistance from the bride's friends and family than from David's side. The Madrid party consisted of my sister, my daughter Emma, Pilar (Alejandros's wife), and the father of the groom, who was me. Sonia was very pretty, with Nordic features, light eyes, and blond hair. The marriage enjoyed happy years until the relationship began to lose charm. One morning, Sonia told me that David was too jealous, that he was watching in hiding and that he had no reason to it. But that, if he continued like this, she would end up leaving him. I said to her that his attitude came as maternal heritage.

Natalia and Wellington

While these joyful days were taking place in the South, Hamlet (which was the name of Natalia's dog) failed to

overcome the hidden scabies with which it came from the exclusive shop *Pet-a-porter* and he ended up succumbing. I suggested not prolonging the mourning and going to find a new playmate for Natalia in a normal shop. The idea seemed good to Jeremy, a typical Englishman, friend of Natalia and family. We could see the candidates in different boxes located halfway up on the walls of a store in la Ribera de Curtidores. My eyes went towards a tiny, blue eyed English bulldog, but, as Jeremy used to repeat, the feeling of Natalia for *Welly* was love at first sight. And vice versa. When we went out with Wellington in her arms, I couldn't help but feel sorry for those other puppies, who heard disheartened as the door closed and went back to sleep.

Basilio

With Welly we were supposed to have plenty. Also, it was assumed that, in case of seeking him company, I would be consulted. Natalia easily became friends with dog walkers in the vicinity of Rafael Calvo. A friend in particular, lawyer of the Congress of Deputies, had a she-dog that had just given birth to four puppies. Libby and Natalia came to see them in the house of *Maria Rosa Puppies* (so called to distinguish her from Emma's godmother). They came back with Basilio. It took me a while to realize this because he hid knowing that it lacked a small, merely formal, requirement to regularize his new situation.

What do we do with Oneto's palace?

After two years in Puerto Real, studying with much interest science related to seaweed, fish, oceans, tides,

landslides, etc. Emma decided she preferred to study Biology in a broader sense and return to Madrid. By then we had already taken a liking to the apartment on Calle Larga.

Incense flowers

As a trivial detail I remember hanging from the ceiling of the terrace three pots with incense flowers. Until then I didn't know the origin of incense. I was amused by its smell mixed sometimes with those coming from the kitchen, too close to the small terrace overlooking one of the many patios. Libby and I invited friends and family to spend a few days in El Puerto de Santa María, sure that they were going to come back well impressed. Not only by the palace, but by the excellence of the restaurant *The Vaults*, of the Hotel Monastery, located where the nuns had their laundry. Also, by the museum of Carriages, with pieces from illustrious winemakers. Without forgetting a visit to the sherry barrels of the Terry family. When the town seemed dominated, a crossing of the Bay in the Vaporcito (little steamboat) was mandatory. Already inside the walls of Cadiz, we would follow a tour of the fish market, next to the flowers market, and a stop on the terraces of the Parador, with glasses of white wine on the table, looking at America, beyond the ocean waters (I've let you speak like a travel agency. Don't let it happen again). What did happen was that the remoteness of the site moved us to rent it.

Nordic tenants

At first, we did well, with successive Norwegian clients who recommended it among themselves and rented for one

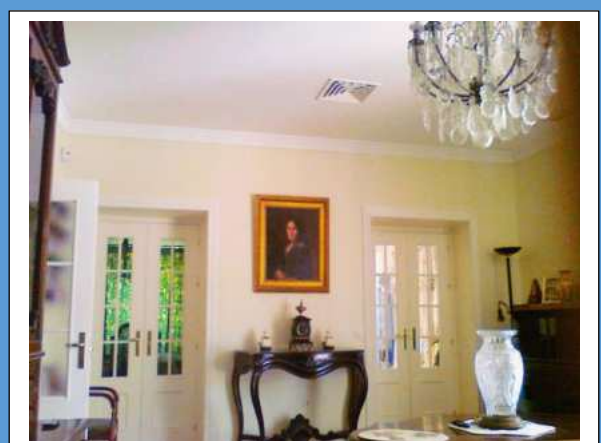
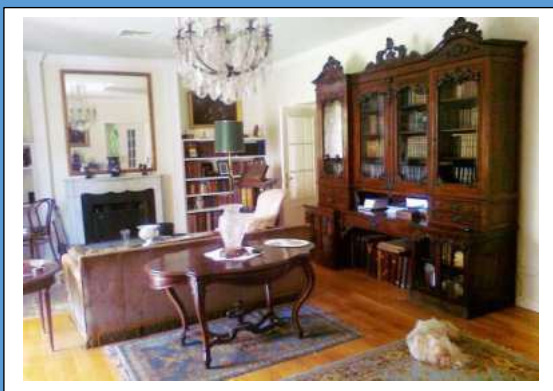
year, usually sabbatical. However, in between two Norwegians, a Latino couple moved in, too young and unpredictable. We received a police report because by having a rooftop key to dry the sheets (or watch the processions) they were growing pots of marijuana in a corner. So, no more exceptions. Nordic and only Nordic. A couple of American professors asked us if they could be regarded as Norse. We told them yes, though they only wanted it in summer, during the University vacation. In the following years, as our apartment was always occupied, they started renting each one of the apartments available in the palace. Michael made comparisons and when no more remained, his verdict was in favor of ours. Since then, together with Joanne, they have become permanent tenants and dear friends. The apartment is only used in summer and winter holidays, which they look forward to in their home of Tennessee.

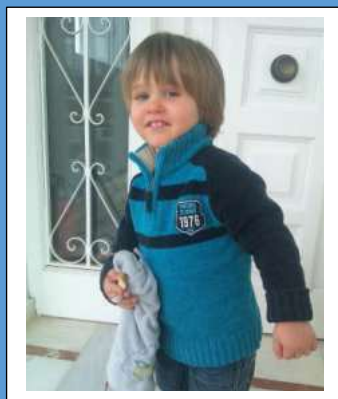
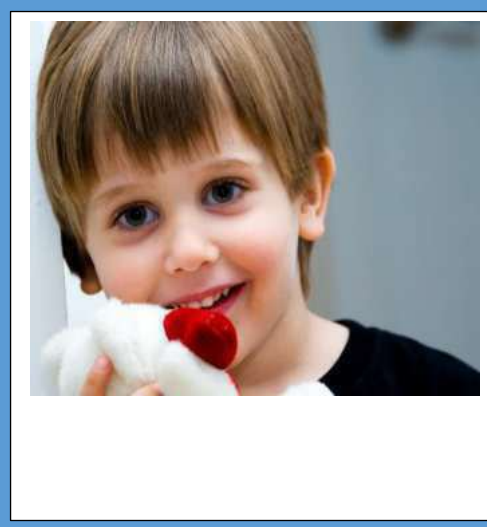
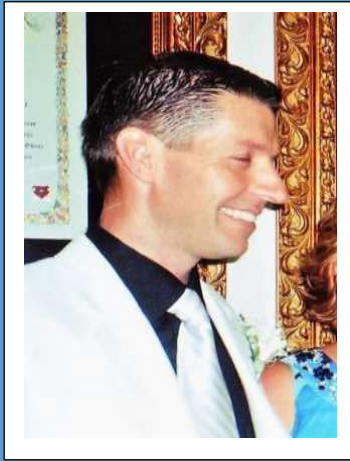


Palace of Oneto



Málaga





Wellys and Basilio



Chapter XXVIII

An imagined yacht

In the third year of high school, I saw a movie entitled ‘The Secret Life of Walter Mitty’. A printing cashier, played by Danny Kaye daydreamed, clinging to a bar of the New York subway, with adventures in remote countries where he always ended up coinciding with beautiful women, identical to Virginia Mayo. The only difference with Juan Vicente Esteban was that the stories of Juan Vicente were not always invented. Lately he was talking a lot about a yacht in the Balearic Islands that he said he shared with some friends. Alejandro Serrano, who liked to blow his lies, asked him ‘When can we go to see it?’ He changed of conversation with great ease. The idea of sharing a boat, however, remained floating in the air.

Formosa sailboats

There is a brand of sailboats that far from adopting the *slipper* design, common to all modern ones, prefer to evoke the *galleon* silhouette. Their rudder wheel is the typical wooden one with separate cuffs and the stern would only lack some baroque framed windows. In the marinas they attract tourists for short crossings. One

might expect to see the skipper with a black hat painted with a white skull and two bones in cross. Just the kind of ship Walter Mitty would have imagined. I proposed Juan Vicente to share one that was for sale in Benalmádena. We talked to the owner and a day was set to close the deal. It was a Sunday. I showed up at the marina, went to the mooring and on board, waiting for the arrival of Juan Vicente. He didn't show up. After a few days he reported that his doctor would not allow him to sail, due to an ailment of his back.

The Prodigal III

He who did have a yacht was Alejandro Serrano, distinguished member of the Pleiad (page 25), classmate at the University, and neighbor in Malaga. If the first boat of my friend (after a Zodiac) deserved the qualifier of *prodigal*, by his father, the next two increased spending proportionally to boat length. We used to see each other outside the marina, me alone in the *Lazy* (the Pacific Dolphin was baptized in Spain) and he in the *Prodigal III* accompanied by couples of friends, whose laughter and celebrations could be heard from afar, on days of calm. Alejandro had to use patience when they arrived at the boat's berth, for its crew continued to chat and move on deck, oblivious to the maneuver of docking. As oblivious as they were of filling the tanks of two powerful Volvo engines, preferring to hide down the cabin. It was Juan Vicente who proposed to sell the *Prodigal* and the *Lazy* and buy between the three of us a big sailboat. Big enough thinking of Alejandro and sailboat thinking of me. In the Marina there was a boat sales office, with a cunning and friendly salesman whose name was Tomás. Juan Vicente got along with

him (or was it the other way around?) and without further ado we were awarded a *Jeanneau Sun Oddissey 35*. When it was time to buy and sell in the marina office, Juan Vicente did not appear.

The Maltese

Part of the fantasy prior to the possession of the tripartite boat was the idea of a dreamed crossing to Malta, so even before we bought it, it had a name. I sold the Pacific Dolphin to two malagueños who approached to see it with the same enthusiasm which I had thirty years earlier. Tomás said he could return the ownership of the *Prodigal*. It remained to be seen what I had to say having sold *Lazy*. And we gave order to bring *El Maltés* from the French shipyard to Málaga.

Trafalgar

On October 21 of that same year, two hundred had passed since the battle of Trafalgar. We bought a bouquet of flowers, with ribbons of the flag of Spain, to leave it floating on the waters where the great naval contest took place. Libby asked me to add flowers with the British flag. We spent the night in La Línea to arrive at the exact time. The radiant sun was shining when we saw ourselves in front of the famous Cape. No other boat, although the presence of British and Spanish ships had been announced. We took pictures of the two bouquets floating together and then separating little by little. We made a toast with champagne for those who died on both sides. And we came back moved by the sight of the offerings and by having been the only ones who remembered. (Later we learned that in the afternoon,

warships arrived. The Battle of Trafalgar started at noon, just when we showed up there.)

Alejandro

Alejandro knew more about History than many specialists. Sailing with him one could hear the voice of the Past in every place on the coast. We toured several times from the South of Spain to Portugal and, in Africa, from Melilla to Tangier. He was a licensed yacht captain and had more experience in docking, filling up forms, taking care of the stowage, and keeping the boat in *marlinspike* condition. He knew more about engines and measuring devices. He managed best the talk with the mariners or crew of small ships that we met in the ports. He never complained. Was thoroughly happy, and sometimes, that happiness mutated into drowsiness. He liked to go to the bow and stand there, with one hand on the stay and the other making visor to scan the horizon. He was hours like that, and I wondered what would be going through his mind. He liked to prepare breakfasts and meals. At 13.30 he served a *Coca cola Rum* which later was replaced by *Martinis dry*. During siesta time, he read a volume of History, and fell asleep with his cap covering his face.

Gandia

The first long crossing we did was from our port of Benalmádena to Gandía. Reason: that Alejandro owned an apartment right across from the large beach of the village, where we could rest before making the retour trip. It was a comfortable journey, from marina to marina, with the one exception of Cape of Gata. Julio

Calleja, in my days of the INI, had forewarned. Every year he went to the Balearics in a beautiful classic schooner of twelve meters. Rounding the Cape of Gata, he lost the mast of the main sail. In the logbook (which I now reread despite being boring) it is written that on 16 June 2006, Sunday, at 15.40 p.m. we decided to abort the first attempt, due to bad weather, and head to Almería. We had swell and wind from the Southeast, which made it difficult to anchor after the Cape. The next day, with raincoats and harnesses on, we faced an Easterly by bow of 27 knots. We saw a sailboat that preceded us, and we decided to follow her at a constant distance. We had left at 10:30 a.m. and we rounded the Cape at 12:45. We arrived in Garrucha at 18:30. The encounter with the Ursuline in that little port was postponed for the return trip.

The crossing of Melilla

After two years, we were more tempted by the African coast. Alejandro had relatives in Melilla. From Malaga to Melilla there are more than sixty nautical miles, which were equivalent (in the language of *El Maltés*) to 12 hours of travel. A doubting Juan Vicente would come with us. We had eaten the customary anchovies in *The Diver* to leave satisfied. The sky was overcast and there was a swell. The wind was blowing from the bow, because we were heading 133°. Alejandro slept until 17:45 p.m. Two hours later the sun came out and Alejandro entertained himself with binoculars, observing the heavy traffic. Soon after, at 21:55 p.m., Juan Vicente demanded bar service. We had covered half of the journey. The moon was shining, and we were accompanied by dolphins, jumping at four sides of the boat. Alejandro wanted to

continue. Juan Vicente insisted on returning. I called Alejandro apart and proposed to take Juan Vicente back to mainland, and repeat the trip alone, continuing from Melilla to Al Hoceima and from there to Marina Smir, to visit Ceuta again, cross the Strait, spend the night in the Port of the Duchess and the next day back to Benalmádena.

Alhucemas (Al Hoceima)

In Melilla we were received with great affection by relatives of Alejandro. I have written in the logbook that we went to the Military Casino with Pedro, who was a retired general, and his wife Pilar. We had sea bass and tuna potatoes for dinner at the club Maritime. But that was still Spain, and we were feeling a strong desire to step on Moroccan soil. We left on June 14, 2008, and by whim of the trivial I repeat here:

10:35

We round the cape Tres Forcas by the Friar's port, saving the Faraglioni

Distance travelled: 12.4 nm.

Log: 6, 31 kt.

SOG: 4,5 kt.

Current course: 322°

For Al Hoceima:

Distance from here: 48,14 nm.

New course: 260°

Log: 6,2 kt.

SOG: 4.1 kt. (current against)

Position: 35th 279 357 N

The port offered a phantasmagorical aspect. There was only a Belgian couple on a Portuguese motorboat that was about to sail away. The Captaincy building, modern,

large, with lots of windows, was empty. The pier, invaded by thousands of seagulls and dirty with their excrement. ¿This desolation, why? It appeared that a Moroccan company had financed a Malaga-Al-Hoceima ferry to boost tourism in the zone. The lack of Hispanic curiosity made the business fail miserably. Al-Hoceima seemed to me a most interesting village. It is on a high space that we accessed by a taxi which made two or three stops, picking up travelers. Above, a square with wide views. Below, a cove beach with crystal clear waters, which explains the frequency of taxis. We were told that quite a few Spaniards had bought houses, I suppose to encourage us to do the same. The hard part was getting there.

A memorable night

The weather forecast, as I could check in a local internet shop, was bad for *El Maltés*. Winds of 22 knots at dawn and strong waves. Although with some wind, the sea was acceptable, so we decided to take a chance. The sunset brought us courage. To avoid bumps, we set course for the coast instead of going straight towards Smir. The wind gave way as we neared the coastline, and we were able to sail calmly. The idea of spending the night in Yebra was out of question. If in Al-Hoceima four different authorities had come down from the village to authorize disembarkation (that of the port, the local police, the royal gendarme, and the delegate of Finance), in Yebra and at that time we would go straight to jail. At one o'clock the probe still marked 900 meters of depth. At two o'clock we got closer: 500 meters. From then on, it was no longer sensible get nearer to the coast. The trick of taking the waves

through sideways was no longer feasible. Until the hour 8: 35 in the morning there appear no more entries in the logbook. Six hours of fight against waves and wind. That night we learned that, if one is capable of withstanding a single strong wave and furious spray, he will be able to endure three thousand and two hundred more.

The sadness of Walter Mitty

Juan Vicente had lost Chiky, the companion oh his life, and he felt lonely. He regretted not having participated in the purchase of the *Maltese*. I told him that it didn't matter, that he could come whenever he wanted, and that it was better for him to buy an apartment in Benalmadena. His sons shared the opinion that it was even better not to buy anything. But he insisted so much that, in the end, Alejandro and I made him a place in the association, paying us his share. To celebrate it we proposed an excursion to Tangier. When we arrived at that harbor, Juan Vicente was tired. We had planned the trip with excitement, and yet our friend said he preferred to stay on the boat. We didn't know his life was about to end. When he died, Alejandro told me that he regretted the times he had interrupted his speeches with questions directed to the waterline of his dreams and chimeras. My father knew him because Mining Engineers form a kind of sect. When I failed the Castañeda exam, Juan Vicente gave me Math classes. He would come home, and we studied in the library. Now I think that John Vincent, by uniting sailing with motorboat sailing, indirectly favored my friendship with Alejandro. Instead, the happy outings in the *Prodigal* were replaced by endless games of dominoes

between four of the former crew members. Pili preferred to stay in front of the fireplace, watching TV.

Natalia and Dani

I have said little about Natalia. You will remember that she was hospitalized by her father to receive psychological treatment, after injuring herself in the wrist. From there she escaped, and her emotional stability improved, but since then she had official status of a dependent person. In theory, she was still living in her father's home. She had a sister, Carla, daughter of her stepmother, Cristina Montenegro. She told us that she worked in her father's private firm. She raved about his motorcycle tours and adventures in the Amazon. And she accepted a vigilance from her godfather whom she affectionately called 'Ramones' When she went out of the house, she did it to take her dogs out or to buy shoes, bags, or silk scarves in the magazines of Serrano Street. She could afford it with the money she received monthly from her father. The rest of the time it was spent as a clerk in exclusive clothing stores or chatting with Libby on the terrace of the apartment. They talked so much and so long, that there were times when I left Madrid, so as not to be angry in irreversible mode. Otherwise, we both felt mutual affection and we showed it in our own ways. Natalia bought me Hermes vests or Ferragamo ties, and I gave her dogs, motorcycles, books, and perfumes. One day she surprised us by saying that she had a boyfriend. And a short time later we were even more surprised, when she said that she was getting married to Dani San Martín. Libby's mother had an assistant maid like those who seem born within the family. Her name was Meli. She had attended all of Emma's

birthdays. When Dixie died, she kept coming home from time to time. She asked me 'What do you think of Miss Natalia's wedding?' It took me a while to answer. 'What do I think?' 'Well, it will not be'. Preparations were made. It would be celebrated in the cathedral church of the Armed Forces, in memory of her grandfather. We went to talk to the chaplains. Apparently, our lives were going to take different routes. But it was impossible for me to imagine Natalia living away from Libby.



Málaga



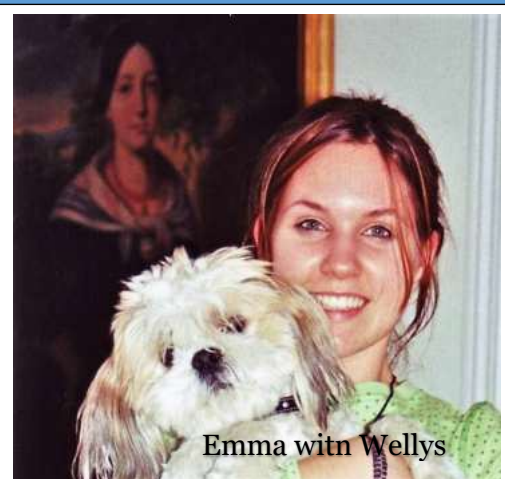
Basilio in Rafael Calvo 30



Natalia



Lars



Emma with Wellys



Prodigal III and a Formosa



Emma in the *Prodigal III*

Alejandro at the wheel



Launching of *El Maltés*



Chapter XXIX

Natalia Martínez de Campos

This chapter is dedicated to the daughter of Libby and Carlos Martínez de Campos, who suddenly left us a 20 August 2010, in a hospital in Montpellier. Only appears in the edition for circulation limited to her family.

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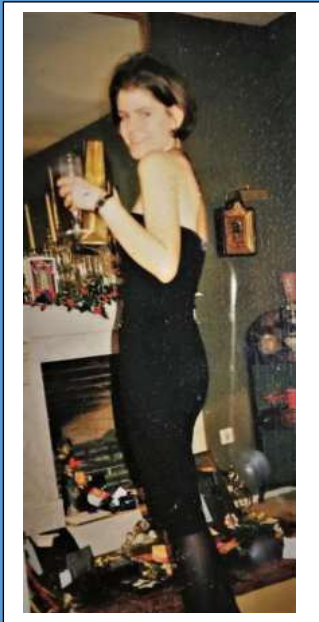
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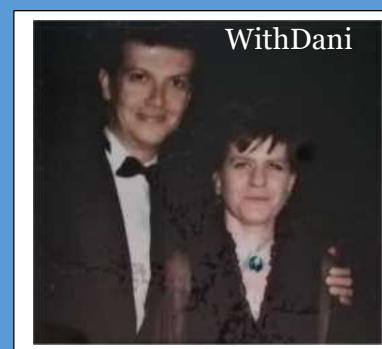
Natalia



With her father and her sister Carla



Willy visiting her tomb



With Dani

Chapter XXX

The story repeats itself

Forty years after Lene's escape, our son's wife, Sonia, decided to do the same. I tried to comfort him, but I knew from experience that the wound heals over time and the only thing that fits is to avoid the infection. David's wound became infected because of the custody of David junior. Judges used to grant it to the mother, except for some weekends. David litigated and the new perspective of Society favored his cause, to the point of reaching a 50/50 agreement. Having settled that, they have not seen each other again.

A void difficult to fill

The struggle between David and Sonia for custody of the son had a component on David's side, which gave him increased persistence. What I mean is that he remembered the void of my prolonged absences, which still hurts him. For nothing in the world, he wanted that his little David suffered the same feeling of lack of paternal warmth. I notice that the number of hours (and the dose of patience) that my son devotes

to my grandchildren are a way of compensating for that emptiness, giving them what he didn't have. The Segovian tradition of distancing between parents and sons is no longer present in his generation. I can't imagine the sons of David sitting at the top of the ladder of their house, inventing tortures against the friends of their parents, as Piti and I did (chapter I) when they were returning from the Nautical Club of Gijón.

Isabel and Rita

Although, after Sonia, women seemed to him beings to be avoided, David saw one, at least, that could be an exception. Isabel cared for David, she was sympathetic, silent, and almost invisible. With time and familiarity, that relationship got stronger. Prove of it: the coming into the world of Rita. With Rita, the house of Alhaurín de la Torre recovered the lost joy. My first impression was that her forehead was a little bit extended. Gradually, her face took a more balanced profile. When she knew that she was decidedly pretty, she stopped crying and saved the screams for situations when her smile didn't work the first time.

Oliver arrives

Two years later, David and Rita were told they had a little brother and they thought it was fine. I was invited to the baptism, in the hometown of the Olucha family. Not knowing Vélez Málaga, the trip from Madrid, in addition to seeing Oliver, offered the incentive to wander around in that city seeing it with neighbor's eyes. The baptism of Oliver had Isabel's family very

focused on preparations. When I arrived in Malaga, I saw that I ought to leave them to their task in peace and behave as discreetly as possible.

At the top of the hill

Velez-Malaga has two prominent hills. On the summit of one there is a castle; on the summit of the other: a church. And between the two hills: the city, half-Arab half-Christian. It has mansions and steep streets. That morning I felt happy. It was impossible to go all the way up to the church by car. The trails and benches of the park, without a soul, seemed to exist solely for me. At the top, an esplanade without trees. The church had an attached house, presumably for the priest. I didn't think it was a bad idea, noticing that its balcony with geraniums highlighted the whiteness of the temple. Inside, I sat down to wait. For once, I wasn't going to be unpunctual, there were two hours left. I entertained myself watching the chapel murals, painted with soft and contemporary workmanship (you're rambling). Let me. Everything seemed fine to me. After half an hour, the wooden bench began to be fed up with holding my bottom. I thought I better go back to the garden, because on my ascent to the summit some beautiful but gloomy corners had been bypassed. Indeed, thanks to my anticipation I still had time to admire them. At 13:30 I felt satisfied and went back to the church. A young woman sitting behind a glass case, with rosaries, prints and booklets. The altar remained dimly lit. Curious to see those copies of the merchandises that so irritated Christ, I got up: 'Good morning' 'Good morning' 'Can you tell me at what time is the Christening?' What Christening?

The hood

There were so many people in the right church that no one noticed that I was late. At the same time as Oliver, a few more children were being christened. To my friends and relatives, I could have been there from the beginning. At lunch, abundant as seldom, in front of me I had my happy in-laws, and aside a brother-in-law of Isabel, who got into talking about the importance and significance of the Holy Week Brotherhoods. In my subconscious, I used to retain the fearful memory of some procession in Asturias. Since that moment, I had doubts about my compatibility with the fervors of Easter (except for Stabat Mater concerts). In Vélez Málaga I learned to see the phenomenon with Andalusian eyes, which is the right way to look at it. 'Would I be allowed to join the procession as those Nazarenes with shiny clothes?' 'Of course, now you are one of the family!' 'With the pointed hood?' 'With the pointed hood'

The Danish family

Seeing David surrounded by deep Andalusians, another family of ours appeared in my memory: the Danish one. My juvenile admiration for Northern Europe contrasted with David's little desire to live in that country. He could do it. His salary came from the Danish State. He had been born in Denmark. In fact, he was Danish, and it would have been easy for him to settle there, at least a few years, but the thought never went through his head.

The ice cream in front of the port

‘David, wouldn’t you like to go back to Bornholm?’ He says yes but it is a question of finding a good moment. I went, and still go, twice a year to visit Lars. In summer we rent a house near Gudhjem to evoke his childhood and my youth, having walks. Lars always wants to go to an ice cream shop he frequented in his childhood. He takes his trophy and goes to sit on the dock, looking at the arrivals or departures of the steamer communicating Bornholm with the little island of Chrithiansee. It is already some kind of ceremony. The house that belonged to his grandparents on the hill is always empty, allowing us to sit in its garden, as before. Walks in the woods lead to the same lakes, the same water lilies, and the same votive, ancestral stones. We regain strength eating smoked herring. In the old days it was the daily food in the village.

Blue potatoes

The second visit is in winter. The night of arrival I sleep in Tranegaardsvej’s apartment. Lars gives me recorded tapes with his guitar compositions. Some are original and others from favorite composers. They have something relaxing, always with unexpected *melos*, that I notice and signal, meaning that I have grasped the intention. The following morning, we usually go to a round restaurant overlooking the Swedish coast from its glass and wood balustrade. Lars, as if still a child, asks for sweet cakes, even if it’s eleven o’clock in the morning. Then the trip to Koge for the celebration of his birthday. All the family attends. Trine makes the cake and gets the candles. Thérèse is the one who always sits next and talks to him like a sister. Marianne

prepares a dinner not as copious as the ones when christening children in Vélez-Málaga, but very carefully seasoned with species and side dish surprises. Once the dressing of the main course were some blue potatoes. 'Marianne, this year you did not put blue potatoes' 'Luis, this year I haven't put blue potatoes'.

A plot

Since the death of her husband Anders, Marianne comes with Lars and me on visits to Bornholm. During the car trip through Sweden, I remember imagining the ingredients of a Bornholm novel. On the little island of Christiansee there is only one fort, a hotel, and a dozen of houses. It is forbidden to build, so that if someone wants to retire there for splendid isolation, he can't. He would have to live in the hotel. Or wait for one of the owners to die and hope that the heirs choose to put the house for sale. The plot consists of painting a character who has an irresistible desire to live on the island (note: author to find plausible reasons) and is not willing to wait so long. So, he kills one of the owners (how? look for ways such as poisoning). The next part describes how happy he is in the house. But someone (author: imagine a rare and interesting person) begins to suspect & and starts investigating. 'Lars, do you like it? Smile 'I wasn't listening' 'Yes you were listening' Well, we leave it at that, because in the supermarket near the ferry one must buy Swedish cheeses, just as Swedes buy Danish cheese in Bornholm.

Lene

Before returning, the flowers and the visit to the tomb of Lene. She is at the Gram gravestone, in the cemetery which surrounds the church, in front of the sea. There, a round stone repeats her name to me.

Another cemetery

This one is fictitious. In the novel *I don't know who you are* of Miguel Torres López, the protagonist happens to arrive to Malaga and needs a place to live. He finds a very cheap house from a South American who keeps some mysterious plants. The low price is because of a large window in the living room overlooking a cemetery. Every Saturday a young woman comes mourning and stands in front of a tomb, deposits flowers and remains motionless for a long time. The novel, by the work of the South American plants, oscillates between reality and fantasy, the tangible and the dreamlike. It ends with the flat owner jumping to the cemetery to find out the name written on the tombstone: *Zoe Livermore*, the same name of the girl of his dreams/reality in the book. 'Miguel, how did you come up with this name?' 'I really don't know. It seemed to me both mysterious and *malagueño*'.

The Livermore Sisters

When Miguel came home with officials from the Town Hall of Malaga their mission was to register family books and collect them to become part of the Archive, where they would be more secure from the scars of Time. When the task was completed, I showed the rest of the house. On a wall of the dining room Miguel could

see the portrait of Petronila Livermore. By then he had already written the novel. He said nothing. As I still had copies of my booklet on the Livermore sisters, I handed him a copy with the dedication 'To Miguel, in memory of a dream' Signed: *Zoe Livermore*.

The gardens of the Conception

Is it possible to live in Malaga and not have seen the gardens of the Conception? It is possible. Until recently they were abandoned. They are too far from downtown Malaga. There is no public transport. Besides, its *Botanical* adjective is too scientific. They ought to be called be *Romantic*. Thanks to the absence of visitors, I enjoy those spectacular, tropical, and unique gardens as if they were mine. Or perhaps they *were*?

An Orthodox mass

Like the Concepción gardens, this attraction barely appears in the city's propaganda. Once, walking around Malaga with the idea of buying a flat that would help me pay bills, I entered the church of Saint Philip of Neri. Inside there were many people and a choir singing music that reminded me of the mysterious Katia Romansky of chapter V. The faithful gathered inside that Catholic church were Russians attending an Orthodox Mass.

The glass & crystal museum

At the end, on the street outside I could see a cypress close to a wooden door. A small sign read 'Museum of Glass and Crystal' The building was one of those with a

large central courtyard, fountain in the middle, and the corridors on the second floor; a bit like Oneto's palace, but no marble stairs, no columns with arches, no long corridors. It had narrowly escaped from being demolished. It was owned by two gentlemen: an Englishman and an Italian. The first put in it his collection of glass pieces and the second his furniture inherited from an Italian palazzo. Fifteenth-century cups manufactured by Catalan Jews, grand pianos older than the Chickering, royal tableware, British church windows. 'Why are you telling me this?' 'I don't know, I was just thinking about things that were touched and appreciated by people who no longer exist, like us soon'.

The tricks of the subconscious

After selling it, Aldeallana ceased to exist. I thought I was going to miss it, but the defense mechanisms of the subconscious did their work. Neither I was very sure that Segovia existed. The empty mental space of the old farm was occupied by Malaga-like experiences and the Castilian province lost its prominence in favor of the sea Mediterranean. Until...the pendulum of feelings regained memory and humility. That's when my sister and I decided to pay a visit to the Past, starting with Sun Street, next to the cathedral, and continuing outside Segovia until stepping again on Aldeallana.

Abraham Senior's seed

The house of *the Guitián sisters*, where I stuck my head

among the irons of a balcony (Chapter I) was in the heart of the old Jewish quarter. That part of Segovia extended from the Eastern wall to the towers of the Alcázar, with houses attached to the wall of the city. Piti and I cautiously approached the façade of the familiar building, and we were surprised by a small plaque with the Arms of the Town. The text invited people to cross the door and see a museum. Yes, a museum. The old courtyard had been renovated with fantasy. None of the timber was authentic. The great gateway to the house of the *Aunts Mallenes* had disappeared. Only the curb of the well and the stone columns reminded me of my childhood, pulling a rope to walk cars of wood as if they were pets. We walked in, and my first impression was that the walls were painted red. The intellectual: the place was dedicated to the Jewish history of the city. And the economic: that we had to pay 3 euros to be in the rooms where we slept, ate and I played piano or opened the toy theatre box. ‘Look Piti, here was the kitchen. And here is where grandfather had fried eggs with bacon rashers for breakfast’ The visitors turned their heads toward us, and Piti told me to talk less loudly. We moved further in, to reach the dining and living rooms remembering the radio that uncle Luis had brought from Germany, the one with a green eye that winked when turning the dial. But there was no corridor. A wall and a window prevented us from continuing forward. The museum ended suddenly there. I opened the awkward new window to look out and only saw a street beneath.

It wasn’t my imagination

We learned that Abraham Senior’s original house did

not reach the city wall. That street had been there all the time, gobbled up under a bridge floor on which stood our grandparents home. That is why the great staircase of the Guitián sisters was demolished and only air replaced the empty space. We went out to the street to see the second half of the house. We did not enter. It had been converted into a Town Gallery for paintings and exhibitions.

The Salon

The people of Segovia use the name *El Salon* to describe a brief park just outside the Eastern gate of the city. It is obviously a tradition from the XIX century, which evokes romantic encounters. The first photographs of the person who is now writing this page, portray him inside a children's carriage of the time. Made of wood, substantial, with a huge handle and four small wheels, not like the ones of nowadays. From her balcony, on the top floor, grandmother could see a large portion of the park, monitor our games, and make signs when it was time to go back home.

Gerardo Pérez Durias

In Aldeallana the present owner, him who was silent while his Peruvian wife decided to buy, received Piti and me with kindness. The first thing he had accomplished was to build a superlative house for them to live in another part of the farm. Our house had been entrusted to a designer, with the commission of renovating it while retaining the old style. The interior was now accessible by several doors where before there were windows. What struck me most was the

decoration of the attic. Gerardo explained that now this space contained the bedroom reserved for wedding nights. Aldeallana was advertised as a romantic place for celebration of weddings: it had a charming chapel, a rustic hotel for guests and a special home for bride and groom. All was going well. So well, that the envious Church forbade marriages in the farm, after 100 years of benevolence. Gerardo had to think of alternative ways of obtaining money to help the cost of running the farm. He thought of hosting business conventions and seminars. New hopes, new plans, decorators, etc. all thinking about the final photo to show on magazine reports. This time the project failed because some rooms lacked *en suite* baths.

Empathy

I saw him worried. We talked about the nuisance of filling CAP forms. And something inside me felt sympathetic and close to him for his trying all these things. ‘Trying what, Luis?’ I could mention Goethe’s *Wer immer strebend sich bemüht*. But I’ll say it with Economist language: liberate those poor lands from the primary sector and pass them (without transition on the secondary) directly to the tertiary. Like this I avoid romanticism. And in case anyone sees a threat to the primeval: Do whatever is needed to provide satisfaction, memories, experiences, and joys to more people than in the last twenty centuries put together. Something similar had happened with the cool Segovian patio of my childhood, and the fascinating house of aunties *Mallenes*, now an abode for paintings or sculptures.

About Alcázars

In the museum of the Jews, we learned that the house of Abraham Senior was not built near any cathedral, simply because in times of the Catholic Kings the cathedral was much further away, next to the Alcazar. The Jewish quarter reached very far. And the Alcázar was not as we see it today, but more like the ones of La Mota or Turégano. Grandfather wrote a *Guide of Segovia* where he criticizes the way it was restored, after a fire, imitating Germanic castles, which he considered unbecoming. Speaking of castles, that reminds me of Anna Thomas, the first friend that Libby had in Spain, when she arrived with her parents. She was Swedish and liked to surround herself with interesting friends. One of them was very much so. Not Swedish, very Spanish, he had inherited a large fortune, and, when he generously invited friends at his house on the outskirts of Madrid, he gave away silver medals and carved glasses. He took care personally of the cuts of meat and the choice of cheeses. In the garden he had a truck from the times of the Spanish Civil War, painted military green. That truck I did drive, making a few rounds within the garden. ('What on earth has this to do with the Alcazar of Segovia?') A lot.

Henry's castles

Enrique (surnamed Calle) had castles in Spain. Not figuratively, but as an owner who visited and maintained them, in accordance with the law. He had several. One day, his sons saw that in East Germany there were castles for sale and mentioned to Enrique that their German mother would love to own one. Not

one but two German castles were bought by Enrique and Anette. And, indeed, they *resembled* the Alcazar of Segovia (see picture). Libby and I were invited to the presentation of one in Reinsberg, near Dresden. On the streets of the village, we saw and greeted friends of Enrique. We made the trip enjoying the company of a Swedish friend: Hedvig Elkstram. The ceremony of inauguration was as follows: The guests approached the drawable bridge in a group. In the tower of homage waved the flags of Spain and Germany. Inside, in the square of arms, stood the new lords accompanied by the Reinsberg marching band. When they saw us arriving, they played the Spanish Royal Anthem, and all present we listened in silence. Then came the greetings and visits to the chambers. Canopy-faced beds. Coats of arms on the walls. 'Enrique, can I visit the rest of the castle?' 'Take care; you may get lost'. It had more than fifty rooms, most in poor condition. It had been used as a weekend hotel by the communist governments to reward to the most industrious workers.

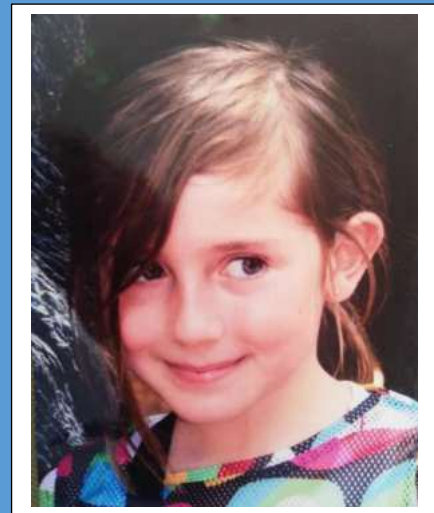
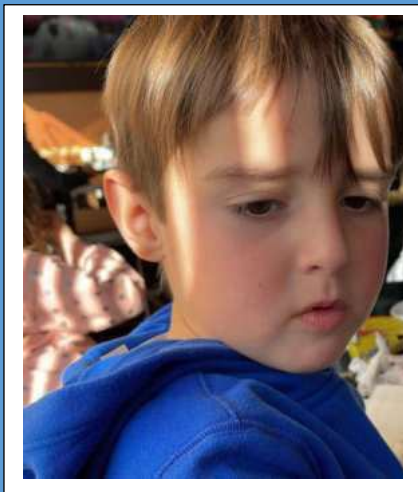
Canena

I must tell you why I have now remembered the castle of Canena, a small village in the province of Jaén. One afternoon in Malaga I thought I heard a voice, very low, asking me: 'Master, what will become of us?' It was one of the slide rules, the French *Tavernier-Gratet* (a bit snobbish). Why do you ask, little thing? 'I heard the question from one of the paper theaters, they are also worried' Yes? Which one? 'The English Pollock'. I could understand that rules and theaters wanted that their subsistence did not depend on mine. Nobody in my

family cared for them. I started looking for someone who did. In that assignment I met Antonio Lorite. Antonio, in three seconds was able to use the ruler in question to calculate its price to two decimal places, something that humiliated the rules a lot. He confessed to me that his monthly savings were destined to take them to his house, so a large transfer could not take place without his wife protesting with reason. When he concluded with my slide rules, I asked him what to do with the theaters. He called for the presence of a superior being from Jaén. The mysterious person had acquired the old school of the village of Canena and kept it like a museum, with its desks, maps, inkwells, and toys.

The Cascorro plaza

Manuel, for that was the name of the spirited collector, lived in an apartment with balconies overlooking the Plaza de Cascorro. In his house, all the walls showed long shelves occupied by toy theaters. Life took place in the kitchen, and his loving wife seemed very happy with the rest being invaded by totemic creatures. When I told mine that they were going to live in Madrid, they went crazy with joy. I had them confined in suitcases, in the garage of Malaga. Before meeting Manuel, I tried to convince Lucia Contreras Flores of accepting them in her luxury residence for toy theaters. Unfortunately, it was full. Anyway, some went to the old school in Canena, and the rest travelled to Madrid. They told Manuel how happy they were with him and how bad I had been to keep them inside suitcases.



Oliver

Rita



Vélez-Málaga



Jewish Museum



House of aunts Mallenes



Abraham Senior's courtyard



Aldeallana Boutique



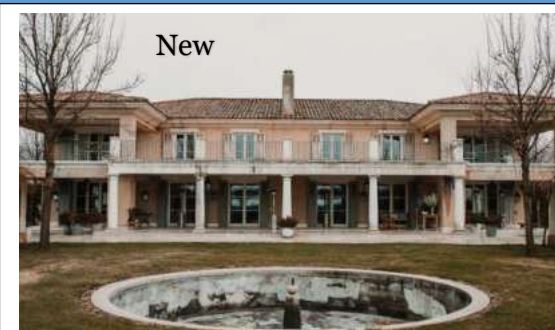
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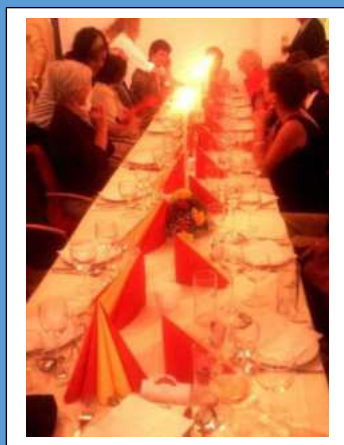
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Old



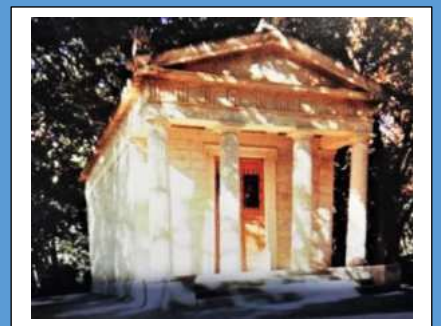
New



The German Castle
of Enrique and Anette



Gardens of
La Concepción in
Málaga



Chapter XXXI

The sale of *El Maltes*

I felt that Juan Vicente had enjoyed little the boat before dying. His sons felt the same way. But Alejandro maintained that, thanks to the boat, Juan Vicente had been very happy in those late years, when sadness and uneasiness reigned in his family environment. I added half-jokingly that, also thanks to *The Maltese*, Juan Vicente could hear Scherezade imagining to be Sinbad. The buyer turned out to be a Frenchman established in Cadiz. His lawyers, after closing the deal, advised him to make sure that the boat was free of charges. I assured them that it was. But my word didn't seem enough. This supervening condition caught me in a bad mood. I agreed to give written assurances only if it was common practice in France. 'It' is not unusual' 'Yes, but can you *prove* it?

Malta

When *The Maltese* ceased to exist, its void was immediately filled up by the island of Malta. We rented

a sailboat 41 feet in length, six more than our *Sun Odyssey* 35. I slept badly on board the first night thinking about the morning departure maneuver. The harbor is formed by a trident of land with sea inlets in between its fingers. To go from one to another there is boat service with wooden benches, sun & rain protective awnings and outboard motors. The marina is in one of the inlets, on the south side. To access the port mouth, you must stop the boat at a buoy (a virtual traffic light), from there contact Captaincy, and wait for permission. The handset of the phone lets you hear other calls. Indecipherable words, questions, and noises. After about five minutes, the voice returns giving authorization to leave and warning to disturb as little as possible. When the sailboat goes out to open sea, the memory of having sailed waters in the same mouth as La Valette, Nelson, and the knights of the Order of St. John is the perfect reward for the sleepless night. (*Plainness, boy, don't get on top, for all affectation is vain*). Don Quixote is now telling me to stick to trivial. The least important thing about Malta is that in Malta you cannot find coffee. Only Nescafé. We toured the whole city after having searched the nearest stores. 'Do you have coffee?' 'Yes. There' But it was always Nescafé. We sailed to the island of Gozo and returned leaving at starboard the island of Comino. (May I say that St. Saint Paul's ship sank there?). Before entering La Valette we hove-to waiting for authorization. A few minutes later appeared a large cruiser that stopped its engines and stayed equally motionless. We saw two pilot boats leaving harbor and approaching one side of the cruiser. Some of the port pilots went up to assume the docking maneuver. The cruiser began to move.

‘Alejandro, aren't you envious of cruise ship captains? They have it easier than us.’

Naxos

Sorry, but I must talk about Ariadne. Not about the opera, but about the myth. If you already know it, skip the next lines. Ariadne was a princess in Crete. His father: King Minos. One day she met Theseus and experienced a sudden feeling of love. Theseus was a prisoner in the labyrinth guarded by the Minotaur. That's when *the thread of Ariadne* comes to light, yes, the one that serves in the worst moments. Theseus and Ariadne embark for Athens, fleeing the wrath of Minos. To refill water their boat docks on the island of Naxos, where they sleep peacefully in a sandy area near the beach. When Ariadne wakes up at her side only the hollow of Theseus presence remains. She raises her eyes and, on the horizon, still reaches to see the sail of the boat that left without her. The rest is less important.

Paros and Antiparos

We rented our sailboat in Paros. From Paros we sailed to Naxos and from Naxos to Antiparos. We anchored and used the raft to get ashore. With us came Ana Pernas and her husband Javier Tardieu. The shortest way from Antiparos to Paros is a narrow channel with very little depth. Alejandro was at the helm, it was night time, and I was on the bow with a flashlight pointed at the bottom of the water. The sandy patches looked white. The rocky ones: black spots. I issued warnings. ‘Rock to port’ ‘Rock to starboard’. And so, sailing very slowly we got out to the open sea and Paros to give back

the yacht and return to Athens. We were flying just above the line of the sailboat of Theseus. Without Ariadne.

Stromboli

Needless to say, the reason for visiting Stromboli was Roberto Rosellini's film, not because of him, but Ingrid Bergman (Chapter II). We arrived at night, with difficulty at anchoring in a dark place and with excess of company from other ships. I remember that the streets of the village are traced as emergency exits. The crater of the volcano, always smoking, falls on the Western side of the island, and the houses are oriented towards the East. A bit of infinitesimal anxiety floats in the air. On the way back, towards Messina, we passed between Scylla and Charybdis. Assuming that Scylla was the starboard monster, only one peaceful beach with bathers could be seen. On the side of the peninsula possibly there would be Charybdis, more threatening. Looking straight ahead through the bow, I noticed that the waters swirled as if they were boiling. I turned to starboard for the protection of the coast and then I understood the legend: Scylla was waiting for us crouched with her twelve legs. But where was the cliff? Where the cave?

Naples

From Naples, the most trivial thing I can remember is Alejandro to stern observing a white wake that we were leaving behind, different from what a reflection might be of the groove produced by the keel. He was very self-absorbed looking at that strange phenomenon. With us sailed my two Danish nephews, Jesper and Trine. 'Come and see this!'

We lowered the sails to observe that better and soon discovered that the wake was nothing else than a long, white plastic, like Ariadne's thread. We had it hooked to the propeller and fortunately we were not using it. Someone had to jump into the water to unscrew the thread. We looked at each other, but Jesper was clear: Trine is always the bravest and the most determined. And I can add: Jesper the most skilled at fixing things in pipes and motors. And Alejandro the best cook and barman preparing *Martinis* at the right time. 'And *what* are you good at?' Who, me? I don't know. May be at nothing. At choosing the site and the boat.

Croatia

The most inconsequential thing about Croatia for me could have been mortal. There was a combined flight with KLM and stopover in Amsterdam. As the plane approached Split, looking out from the window I noticed that the pilot flew very low between hills. There was no wind at all, the plane was full and descending too fast. The track was still far, and I felt that we were going to crash. And then, the plane put its engines at full throttle and rose at an acute angle. We landed on another airport. When the engines stopped, with the plane on the tarmac, the commander left the cockpit saying that they had had to abort the landing for (excess!) of wind. We stood for half an hour waiting instructions from Amsterdam. When he came out again telling us there would come some buses to take us to Split, a passenger stood up from his seat shouting: 'Captain, in Split there was zero wind!!'. My seatmate whispered that the co-pilot looked very young, and that the commander probably had let him do the landing.

Several passengers decided to catch a taxi in limited partnership. It took us over an hour to get to the marina of Split. Alejandro had not been able to come, victim of covid hours before leaving Madrid. The rest of the crew was on the ship.

The country of a thousand islands

Croatia for sailing lovers is like putting a hungry child in a very large pastry shop and ask him what he would like to eat. In addition to Jesper and Trine, the crew of the *Mia* (mine) included Carlos Pascual and his wife Angelita. On the last day there was a small problem, quite trivial. It can be told. We had refueled the thanks properly. One of the employees (Esteban) who came to check the boat before delivery asked us how many liters we had filled. I answered that I didn't remember. He replied that it was necessary to register it in the report. And since he said it impertinently, I suggested him, please, to return to the office to find out the reason. He didn't come back. But I went, spoke to Tatjana, the boss, and asked her to come with me to the boat. She thought it was a great idea. On the way we became friends and she apologized gracefully. She regretted that Stephen had stayed up late the night before. And added that she also had to confess to being a fan of 'Barcelona'.

Xauen

The second trip to Xauen was on Carlos Pascual's yacht: *A mi bola blue*, (slang for *My Way*) also with Alejandro, Jesper and Trine. I'm going to look at what I wrote then and choose the three or four less serious lines.

First insignificant observation: Angelita is eager to drink green tea. Second: Alejandro and I were boring the audience by praising too much how good the hotel *Hassam* of Xauen was, how much they were going to like it, that it was worth the trip, etc. etc. It was full. Third: At the hotel *Guernika*, owned by Ana María, a Basque, her husband knelt on the ground and prayed looking at Mecca, close to the tables where and while we had breakfast. Fourth: Absorbed contemplation of Angelita haggling over the price of some carpets. The owner of the store recognizes that she masters the art of haggling, that requires inspiration, excellent mood, and address for braking in time. And he congratulates her. And fifth: Carlos and Alejandro talking from eleven at night until five in the morning. I noticed when I woke up.

Deya

The crossing of Mallorca started badly, because the anchor windlass did not work, and we had to spend the night in Puerto Colom waiting for a spare part from the Peninsula. Alejandro wanted to see again the house where he lived in summer holidays as a child with his parents, in Pollensa, facing the sea. We prowled around the place, but all had changed very much, too much according to him. On the way back we made the tour of the North. My pupils enlarged at the view of a fascinating, mysterious, dream-like place. A very steep cliff, secluded, with houses of stone and bougainvillea, which raised and lowered around a meandering road. ‘And how is this site called?’ Stop. Don’t get excited, think of something less generic. Well... I can say that in Cala Murada we saw almost too late that the anchor

clawed. Almost, because when the stern of the boat was about three or four meters from the wall of earth (which gives its name to the anchorage) I ran to the engine which started at first attempt. (Curious, how the things that are most memorable, are not the ones you think at the time of living them). Another example: Our race through the corridors of Palma airport, looking for the police office, before returning to the boarding gate with a substitute for an elusive identity card. 'Whose do you think it was?' Wrong.



Croatia



Mallorca



Xauen



Capri



Naxos



Stromboli



Malta

Chapter XXXII

(with some reunions)

Salisbury

Jack Thomas did not attend the meals of nostalgic Xerox in Phyllis Court because, as from the third, they all looked the same to him. Not to stop seeing each other, he invited me to spend a few days at his home in Salisbury. I left the car parked a little higher on the street and before calling at the bell I stopped to contemplate the façade. The whole house was his, impossible to guess the age, but more than a hundred years for sure. I remember every corner, what was in the tables, the paintings, armchairs, everything. Liz accompanied me to see one of those mansions that English aristocracy likes to open for visits in order to pay at least the heating expenses. But that day it was closed. I went to the cathedral by myself. It was in the afternoon and mass was celebrated with communion, in nothing different from the Catholic. To think that Europe lived through centuries of wars for some things which are barely noticeable! It could be said that in few things we were more alike than in Mass liturgy. At home, the breakfasts with

Liz and Jack made me feel appreciated without the usual mental reserves. ‘You say it as reproach to others?’ Precisely.

The inn of El Pardo

Juan José Morera informed me that colleagues from Rank Xerox met from time to time to eat at that Inn near the palace. Let's see if I remember all their names: Carlos Pascual, Juan Catalá, Ramón Sobera, Pepe Rodríguez, Juan José Morera, and Honorio Gayo. If we apply the filter of mental reserves, Ramón Sobera would be the only one that would pass the test for sure. In those meetings, when talking about me, I heard anecdotes which sounded as if they were talking about another person.

New Orueta reunions

The *Oruetada* of Aldeallana had its continuity in Valencia, where María Eugenia lived before coming to Madrid. It was a very big house, built almost at edge of the sea and away from any shops, hospital, church, or barracks. It occupied an extensive plot, owned by uncles José María Laviña and Amparo Orueta, my father's sister. Amparo died, José María died, and partitioning among so many sons was difficult. A clever construction company offered to swap the farthest part from the sea, in exchange for as many townhouses as brother heirs. For that reason, in summer the Laviña crowd live close to each other and remind me of the Danish Hvids. In the month of June, Jaime organizes the Orueta-ish reunion which I join travelling courageously. One doesn't have to pay like I made them to in Aldeallana; it is enough to contribute viands or liquors in recognition of the effort of others. I sleep

in the apartment close to the sea, that of Jaime and Carmen. With regard mental reserves, I also detect them in these occasions. I except my cousin Maria Luisa, for most attendees are encouraged by a spirit of solidarity at overcoming social inequalities. The unity resulting is enhanced by assuming lack of this feeling in half of the country's population. They put me in that insensitive second half.

The call of Malaga

The root of this gregarious leftism must be sought in the Association of Free Teaching Institution personalized in Giner de los Ríos, born in Ronda, Málaga. His promoting of the Residence of Students served as a shelter among others to Ricardo de Orueta, co-founder of the initiative and eternal celibate resident. The Mayor of Malaga invited us to the inauguration of an exhibition about his legacy in defense of art. On this occasion the reunion was with someone who had died before we were born. His memory had been restored after the forced oblivion induced to prevent the hives that the ideas of the Institution produced in the skin of the ecclesiastical hierarchy. The second call from Malaga came also from the Mayor's office. In the train I met Paco de Luis Orueta and Manuel de Orueta Gonzalez. This time it was not an exhibition but a monument. The president of the Malaga Academy of Sciences had the idea of honoring its founder (1872) Domingo de Orueta Aguirre, my great-great-grand father, and his son Domingo de Orueta Duarte, the geologist. The monument was a monolith of rock quarried in the mountains of Ronda, but, during its transport to the city by truck, it broke in half. The Mayor said that the bigger part was enough to place it under a

tree on a pedestal located in the Park in front of the ancient Cortina del Muelle, the Mall's façade. During the event, after a speech studied the day before, Francisco de la Torre was calling each Orueta to give us a commemorative plaque. 'David de Orueta Gram' 'David de Orueta Rincón' 'Rita de Orueta Olucha' 'Oliver de Orueta Olucha'. After the ceremony I came to offer the library of Serafín Estébanez Calderón to the Mayor, thinking of the mansion in the gardens of La Concepción. 'Sure. Perfect' said the Town Mayor, who has a lot of patience. He gave me his card and wrote the name of his secretary: *Lourdes Campos*. Then it turned out that the Municipal Archive was more interested in the content of the library than in the continent.

In Casa Carmen

It wasn't the first time we had met to reminisce our time at INI. On this occasion the name of the restaurant was right on. As Paulina liked to say: it was well found out. We were thinking of Carmen Mestre. She was the one uniting us in different endeavors. Besides her and Paulina, there was María Paz Gordillo and Martín Gallego. Once, Maria Paz took us in her van all the way to San Ildefonso de la Granja invited by Rodrigo Keller. During the trip we commented on shared experiences. They talked as if they had happened yesterday. In the restaurant of Casa Carmen, I met with Mestre, Beato, and Gordillo. Maria Paz squabbled because I once asked her to make a presentation without giving her time to go to the hairdresser. Paulina said that she thanked me for improving the skill of submitting projects. She said that I hired a teacher called Ana Uriarte with that assignment.

Malvarrosa (*Hollyhock*)

A coincidence made me see the little house of Hollyhock. *A casinha pequeninna* (the little house) *onde nosso amor nasceu* (where our love was born). It seemed incredible that it was still there, almost the same, although painted white (page 94). Maria Angeles Herrá, widow of my cousin José Mari, *The Colo*, had invited my other cousin Mili Colorado and me to know her new home in El Plantío. On the way, I detoured with little hope of finding it. ‘Here I am’ I heard the house talking. Dinner was one of those comforting reunions that come to mind in this penultimate chapter.

INI Nostalgia

Carlos Espinosa told me about meetings taking place in a restaurant run by a daughter of INI’s president José Miguel de la Rica (pages 208,209). I asked Carlos if I could join the group and he said he would consult it. I guess I won by simple majority, although I was told that there was unanimity. Unfortunately, de la Rica died before the next gathering. For a while we continued diners at his daughter’s place. With full house there were eight of us: Tristán Martín Urquijo, Carlos Bustelo, Tomás Galán, Alfonso Ballesteros, Manuel Azpilicueta, Juan Miguel Antoñanzas, Carlos Espinosa de los Monteros and moi-même. The last three meetings have been in a place that has no other advantage than its elevator, essential for Juan Miguel being able to attend.

The book of a grandfather

At school, Antoñanzas was one of the *Elder* synonym of *Wiser*. In his case, it was very justified. After one of those

luncheons, he mailed us three volumes of a collection containing photographs, texts, and clippings of press to let his grandchildren know what he did almost since he was born. Each volume covered a period. Those which he gave us refer to the years when he was president of the INI and, later, of Seat. I have admired his brave refusal to subject to political criteria received from the Industry Minister, Pérez de Bricio. When reading his memoirs, it occurred to me that I might try to write something similar, though in my own way.

Carlos Espinosa de los Monteros

It's hard to know if we're still true friends. In any case, it is certain that this friendship knew better times and it makes me sad. I will use a simile. In a plate are the favors received during years. In the other, my recognition and affection, which is not enough. To level the balance, you would have to remove benefits from the plate, as Cicero calls them, which is ontologically impossible, or else increase my affection and recognition, which are already at the limit. Ergo, I'm afraid that the feeling will continue for life.

Tomas Galán

I remember his house in Porto Cristo and his sailboat, a Puma 28 in which we did some tacks, back in the years 80's. Thomas is a person of few words, said as praise. If he were more inclined to manifest his thoughts, he would have shown his disagreement with my way of handling affairs at the INI. Who knows, possibly he still feels some affection from me, less from what he thinks than from his heart.

Carlos Bustelo

The simile of the plates and balance is also applicable to this Carlos, companion of El Pilar, before he deserted to the Estudio school. The experiences shared during adolescence makes me feel more comfortable in his company than with the other Carlos.

Eduardo Serra

When we talk about Spanish politics, he views the matters with European perspective, and we agree on that. He knows things that I ignore, and his conversation succeeds in illuminating areas which before were blurry or wrong. For Eduardo the emergency of a broad middle class is the most important factor in the history of twentieth-century Spain.

Other diners

Alfonso Ballesterro would be a closer person if he had some defect. Maybe his butler is in the secret of some, as they used to say of perfect people. Of Manuel Azpilicueta, his gifts are highly extrapolated. If we were all like him, the world would be a nicer and smarter place. Tristan Martín Urquijo continues to retain the qualities of ideal son-in-law, according to the scale of the Society chroniclers. To know what I think about me you must go to the last chapter.

Café Gijón

The waiters at this *café d'écrivains* don't just feel superior to their customers, but they seek to prove it. So long as the name does not change, it is a place that attracts reunions.

Plus, it's a stone's throw (I beg your pardon!) from the National Library, a coincidence which facilitates the presence of Rubén Caba and Eloísa. There, a sextet of friendship is performed with Alejandro, Andrés Ruiz Tarazona and his wife Fifi.

Gabriel Tortella

We left him in chapter II with the responsibility of Delegate of the Students Union. Since then, he has made good use of time. He studied in Wisconsin around the same time as when was living in America. He then received his PhD in London and is one of the few university professors of whom one can be proud in Spain. His manifest Anglophilia has produced memorable books such as *Capitalism and Revolution* where he demonstrates that progress is better achieved with the first than with the second. Gabriel is affectionate and unpretentious. Our meetings are virtual. The attendees are part from a list of recipients in which the least known person is me.

Torreldones train station

After the funeral for Pepe Rodriguez, I walked down the street. Pepe had been my first assistant and I had some affection for him. Very close to the church was Andres's house. Of late, we were meeting less frequently. During years he used to invite me to concerts, when Fifi didn't use the second ticket he received as a music critic. When the concerts finished, I reciprocated with a snack and he left me at home, driving his BMW with great skill. He doesn't anymore. Just like when we were at school, and he thought it was a highly dangerous activity (page 62). Therefore, when Pepe's funeral concluded, I said to

myself: 'Go and see Andrés' Fifi had told me he was behaving 'A little rare'. I found the door closed, I called on my mobile and Fifi took the phone. She told me that I could find Andres in the railway station. 'At the station?' 'Yes, he uses to go there to spend some time'. When I entered the hall, illuminated with old-fashioned neon tubes, there were only two people in it: a shop assistant behind a counter & in front of a coffee maker, and Andrés, undecided, looking down to a showcase of sweets. He was obviously pondering the differences of price and taste. The person responsible for putting cup and candy on dishes, looked at my friend with some impatience. Upon my appearance within her angle of vision, she turned her eyes and Andrés did the same. He recognized me without surprise. I told him: 'I have come from Madrid to a funeral' Then he asked: 'Do you live in Madrid?'

Mercedes Martínez in *Maddock*

She lives on the fourth floor of a house in Monteleón Street. I must pick her up by car because one of her knees doesn't work as well as when she took me under her protection at the National Institute of Industry. She remembers things forgotten by me. 'You almost bought a flat on calle *Angosta de los Mancebos* (Narrow of the Youths). It was like a *corrala* (a very old theater). Its neighbors shared stews. 'No idea'. 'Was it very difficult to import the sailboat?' 'I had to go to Montesquenza Street and was received in his office by José Ramón Bustelo. Thanks to him it could be arranged. Without his help I wonder...' 'How did it go with minister Claudio Aranzadi?' 'He asked for me. Unpretentious, kind, and friendly. He shied away from invitations. He was not

from the socialist party' 'Tell me an anecdote of him' 'Okay. Do you remember José Manuel García Hermoso?' Vaguely 'Aranzadi put him as director of the CSI project to link Ensidesa and Altos Hornos. Already appointed, he came to the office and, before going to see Claudio, he offered me double the salary. And what did you do? 'I told Aranzadi. He went furious and started chasing García Hermoso outside the office' How is your sister after her stroke? 'Poor she, she hasn't recovered well' Libby, instead, is feeling much better every day. She is looking forward and waiting to see you at home.

Breakfast in a café

I have finally seen Milota again. They come together, Carmen Mestre and herself. We are talking about her estate in Extremadura, adjacent to that of Mariano Rubio and Isabel Azcárate. The first thing that Juan Manuel Kindelán did on the piece of land that they bought was to build stables for his horses. Guests sat on folding chairs. The food had to be brought from Madrid. Juan Manuel had two intense hobbies: a) horses; b) go everywhere by car. 'He even drove to the corner of the street!' And did you ride? 'Yes. I had a docile horse, but he would easily get scared of anything that moved' Carmen, is your son still living in the States? 'No. You are thinking about when he was studying in Boston' And your children, Milota? 'One lives in Norway, married to a German wife' Carmen, remind me: why did we go to see Rodrigo Keller in La Granja? 'Because he had an onset of Alzheimer' Going back to INI, you couldn't stand Pedro Castañeda. 'He used to come in the evenings to check if we were working. I told him 'Are you some sort of an inspector?' I have always been the tough and difficult

one. That's why I took Paz with me to the National Commission for Energy, to help me soften relations with people'. Are you still reading Montaigne? 'I am now mainly interested in Geopolitics. Do you know Robert Kaplan? Of Montaigne I read chapters II and IV.

Continuation of the Centon

Under the Volcano; by Malcolm Lowry, *The Life of Samuel Johnson*, by James Boswell; *Life and opinions of the gentleman Tristram Shandy*, by Lawrence Sterne; *Decameron* of Boccaccio; *The Lost Grove*, by Rafael Alberti; *I do not know who you are* by Miguel Torres López; *Capitalism and Revolution* by Gabriel Tortella; *Letters from Spain*, of José María Blanco White; *The Brussels Effect*, by Anu Bradford; *Life of the soldier of Alonso de Contreras*, by Alonso de Contreras; *Meditations* of Marcus Aurelius; *Expedition to Paradise*, by Eloísa Gómez-Lucena; *Elements* of Euclid; *The Spanish viceroys of America* by Lewis Hanke; *South of Granada*, by Gerald Brenan; *In the shadow of the girls in Bloom* by Marcel Proust. Fourteen.

The balcony of Malaga

Is the name of a place on the coast of Malaga, facing the sea, on a hill and an old iron road, of which only remains a tunnel. I descend through landscaped streets, between little houses full of geraniums, where Ruben and Heloise spend their time resting and writing. You will remember that Ruben left everything to devote himself entirely to his one and only passion: the craft of writing. Years later, bookstores offer suggestive titles like *The Ivory Gate*, *Days of Glory*, *On the Mountain Road of the Archpriest*,

The Odyssey of Cabeza de Vaca and several others. A rectilinear life and without cluelessness like mine. Next to it, a woman in love and a writer too. Ruben is selective and needs no other company than Heloise, his books, and the cat Yuca. That he was willing to spend a day listening to my chatter made me feel somewhat guilty.

Domínguez

Another friend capable of putting up with me without despair is Manuel Dominguez. Like someone who speaks to a mirror, I have been sending him each chapter of these memoirs as they came out of the computer. I used to bother Alejandro, but I realized that I was reaching a limit there. Manuel and I, we are somewhat alike in our hosting many doubts. As for getting better grades in school, he won every week.

A sign, maybe

They would bring you in the wheelchair to the living room. You stared into the void, and no one couldn't know what you were thinking. I ever arrived to take your hand and press it to see if you answered me. Months and months went by, and I was not able to give the company you might have expected. The few times I was in your home, I talked to Alejandro, without paying enough attention to you. Pili, if you pardon me, give me a sign. A branch that moves on a windless day. A bird that enters by the window. A star-shaped cloud. Something.

Dialogue in the pharmacy

‘You better talk this with her nephew. He will be in in a

while'. I left the pharmacy and went to wait in Vista Alegre Park. It was newly opened. Busy gardeners could be seen everywhere, fixing new plants or cleaning fountains. I remembered the book of *Zoe Livermore*, Torres López's obsession. And the portrait by Petronila Livermore in the dining room in Malaga. I must donate it to be put in this environment when the reconstruction works of the palace are completed. Petronila had been the owner of all that. Sitting on the bench in front of the New Palace I had a hunch that the Ursuline was not going to receive me. While waiting I meditated on the socialization of some places that used to belong to the family. To sleep in one of the six rooms of the Caserío Boutique Aldeallana, 240 euros was enough, parking free of charge. To wander around the Botanical Garden of the Conception by Amalia Loring Heredia, one must get rid of 6 euros, 3 for the elderly. To enter Abraham Senior's house and know the history of the old Jewish quarter of Segovia: only 3 euros. And to visit the Park of *Vista Alegre*: nothing for the moment. Free.

Free parking

To my sister fancy, announcing a free parking in a place like Aldeallana seemed *unfading, jubilant, and a little Ethiopian*. I tried to excuse the Pérez Durías for it. 'Probably it was written by a robot. Let's see: *Does it have parking space?* Yes. *How much does it cost?* Nothing. Hence: *free parking*'

Dialogue at the pharmacy (2)

'She doesn't talk to anyone. I pass her on the street. She is very affected by the death of her son'.

The Children of the Ursuline

I knew that two had died in a motorcycle accident. He was talking about Pedro, the third one. The last time I saw him was in Garrucha, on the way back from the crossing to Gandía. He wanted to have a look at the sailboat. Alejandro and I accompanied him through the quay. 'A cancer. He lasted two years' And, the father, does he come to visit her? 'He has also died' Long ago? 'Two years' So, there was only Clara left. I felt something strange all over me. Like a bitterness for being still alive. 'Could you tell her that I am here?'

Castelló 20

When I was still wearing short trousers, I faced for first time the portal of the house where she lived, hesitating whether to give up or to enter and find out something more about her existence. Seventy years later instead of the doorman, I was received by a young woman to whom I explained my desire to go up to the so and so floor. She asked the pertinent questions, went inside and her father appeared. 'They don't live here anymore' 'Before here lived Candelas, her sister. They don't get along well. She lives in Carabanchel'.

Dialogue in the pharmacy (3)

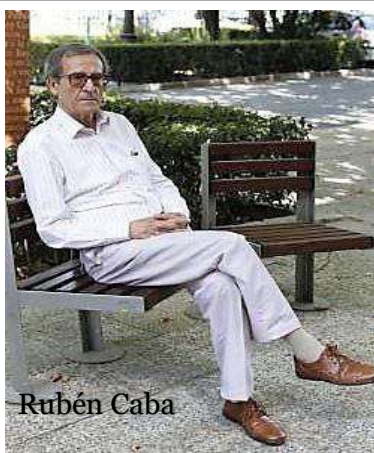
'Could you tell her I'm here?' He pondered for a while. 'I could talk to her daughter Clara' He withdrew from the counter to an interior room. Then he reappeared: 'She doesn't answer. Leave me a phone and I'll call you'. He did two days later: 'Clara says that she does not see it convenient'.



Manuel Azpilicueta



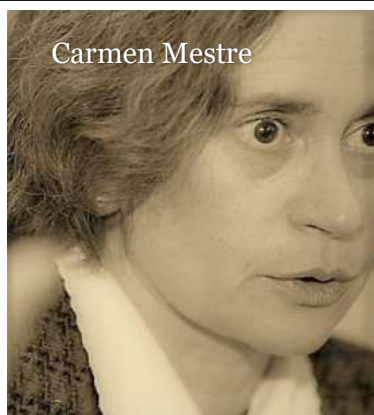
Juan Miguel Antoñanzas



Rubén Caba



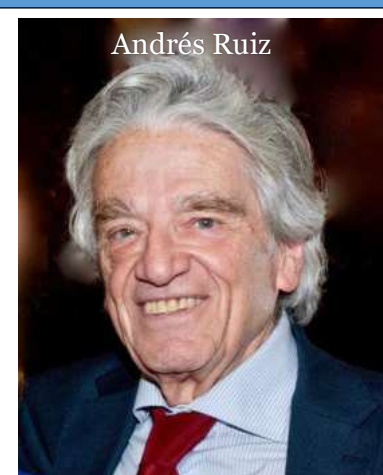
Eloísa Gómez-Lucena



Carmen Mestre



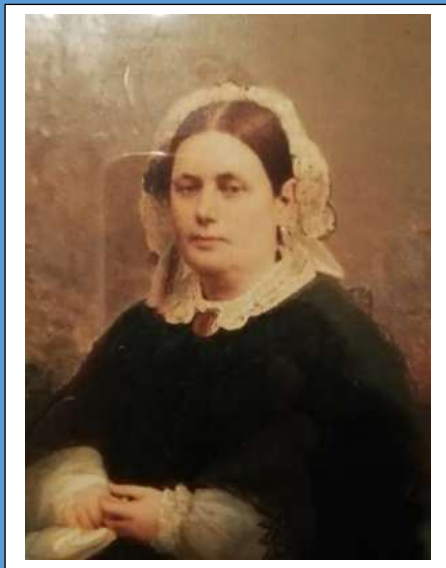
Milota Bustelo



Andrés Ruiz



Manuel Domínguez



Petronila Livermore



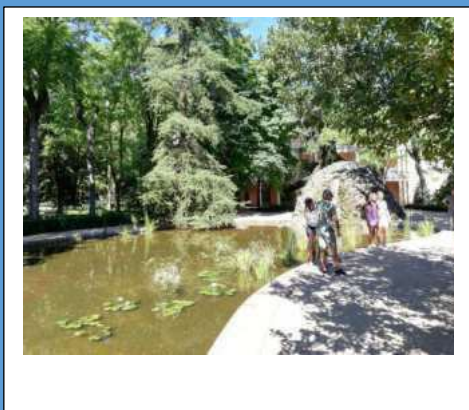
Marquess of Salamanca



Ex libris by Cánovas



Palaces and gardens of Vista Alegre



Reunion with my cousins Mili and Angelines

Chapter XXXIII

Covidiotas

It is the title of a story by Gabriela, daughter of Carlos Bustelo and Tere Tortella. The title is reminiscent of pestiferous, speaking of the plague. However, hers is a poetic book and a testimony with historical perspective of what those months of pandemic were in Madrid and outside Madrid. I refer to it to highlight the uniqueness of those days. If writing about past things is something I find difficult because of bad memory, it is even worse doing it about the present, for events being too close.

A fateful year

In our case, although we got rid of the pandemic, the last days of December 2020 we were shaken by the goddess Poor Health. After months of confinement endured with good humor and many precautions, finally I could travel to Malaga without fear of the police stopping me. Libby enjoyed the new freedom

and Emma encouraged me to stay there, less exposed to the virus.

Poor Health

One morning I was surprised to see blood stains on the pillow. It turned out to be skin cancer. With the preoperative analysis a tired-looking doctor saw that the platelets were too low, and he said I had to wait taking care with the diet. The result of such a diet was a painful urine infection. To get rid of the pain I started taking acetaminophen pills. Too many. My stomach became blocked. In the emergency room they gave me a remedy warning that if it didn't work, they would have to operate. The pain kept me from sleeping. I paced the hallway, from the kitchen to bedroom, counting the comings and goings: three hundred and twenty-four, three hundred and twenty-five, and so on, until dawn. Two nights went on like that. On the 30th I thought I had the strength to return to Madrid. Every day I talked to Libby twice: in the morning at nine o'clock and in the afternoon at eight o'clock, ending with good night. I used to make occasional mid-morning calls to comment events. That day 30, it was important to know that at noon Libby was fine. Because at eight o'clock at night her phone did not answer.

Firefighters

I called my neighbor Javier Sirvent to go up two floors and ring the bell. He only heard the growl of Basilio. That meant she was inside. I asked Emma to come with her key, but she could not use it, because Libby had left hers inside the bolt. They called the police, and two

officers came who refused to force the door, because the firefighters are more skilled in these cases. When they arrived, they went right to the roof and climbed down to the terrace. From there they easily entered the house. They found Libby in the bedroom, lying on the floor.

In the hospital

I took the train that same night and early in the day December 31 I came to see her hastily in her room of the Sanatory del Rosario. Was conscious, but unable to speak. She had suffered a stroke. The nurses prepared the sofa so that I would be able to rest from the trip and I fell asleep.

Filomena snow storm

Days passed. It was not convenient to go out into the corridors for fear of the virus. Nor go down to the cafeteria that remained deserted, except for the medical team and nurses, who collected plastic cups with coffee and cardboard trays with pastries. I went out into the street, where the bacteria were less ubiquitous and more peaceful. One morning dawned all white. Libby was beginning to speak. 'She's getting better' The nurses were encouraging. I suspected she had a broken bone and asked for a traumatologist. Sure enough, she had a broken fibula, and they plastered her foot. But the right half of the body was still paralyzed.

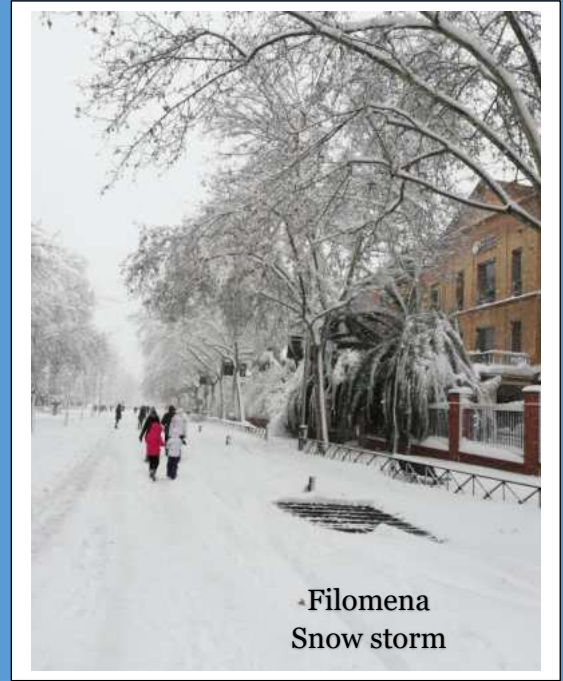
Rehabilitation

The house was filled with caretakers. Gloria kept

coming as usual. We had to choose someone to stay the nights. A young giant, of Honduran origin, appeared and David told me that strength was a plus to be considered. Diana replaced Marisol on weekends. Physiotherapists and speech therapists called on interested in speaking English. Libby couldn't move her right hand. In a rehabilitation center they suggested a stay in a rural house with the left hand tied up. It was a drastic remedy that could be effective within fifteen days. That I discarded. Then the goddess Good Health let herself be seen embodied in the person of Laura, a therapist of the Hospital de la Milagrosa. She heard my story expressed with words almost hopeless. 'Bring her to me' She seemed to speak on behalf of a superior being. When Libby met her, I wanted to witness the cure, but Laura said. "You go for a walk and do not return within an hour".

Libby says she has been very lucky

We live more united in illness than in health. I choose carefully what she likes most in the supermarket. She outperforms me making the coffee and avoiding the smoke coming out of the fireplace into the living room. I tie her hair up with an elastic ring and she brings me a tray with a cup of asparagus soup. She takes Basilio out for a walk and I help her find the house keys, or the TV remote control. She finds my glasses here and there and asks me how many have. She also wants to know what day it is today, and I tell her that she has already asked me three times. Then the doorbell sounds and it's Emma.



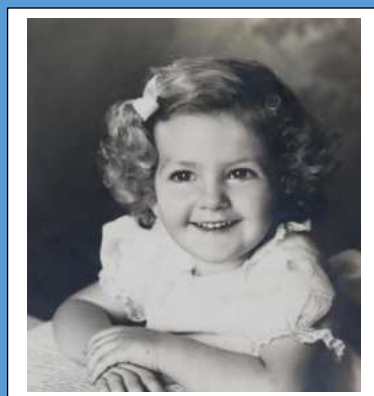
Filomena
Snow storm



Emma and Basilio



Libby 2023



Libby 1948

Final Chapter

Assessment

After more than four hundred self-indulgent pages, what's left? In attention to your patience, I will be as sincere as possible. I recognize that the verdict cannot be positive. Fortune was generous to me, and I have not known how to correspond with a contribution accepted by the Society nor with the affection that others expected of me. At the origin of both failures is selfishness and vanity. You may think that I say this without really feeling it, so I'll be a little more precise.

In the multinational

At Rank Xerox and Xerox, after a brilliant start, I showed more interest in pointing at what needed to be done, that in considering whether that leadership was requested or welcome. My proposal that Xerox use its Japanese connection to reduce production costs did not prosper. From then on, I tried to counteract the French and German influence. I published revealing statistics, which failed to change the situation. The brilliant Spanish managers ended up being postponed.

‘Admitted, but you, as a person, were appreciated’ Not is Spain. Recently, a companion of Rank Xerox, Juan José Morera, chatting about those years in my house, told his wife Concha: ‘In the Company there was fear that he would return as managing director’.

At INI

The same story is repeated. An immature urge for leadership, aggravated by the support of the minister of Industry, which resulted in a rough and inconsiderate style. In trying to find what others couldn’t see, in being more intuitive, my star project was a Strategic Plan widely disseminated. The main idea was that the State funds ought not be allocated to support losses directly but conditioned to the fulfillment of agreed to objectives. This notion was never taken seriously. Not to mention its unpopularity in financial departments and in the Administration. It only went down well with trade unionist Nicolás Redondo and Economic analysts. I imagine that in the INI circles my departure was celebrated by many Presidents and directors.

While in Construcciones Aeronáuticas

There, my obsession was to relaunch the production of a true air attack aircraft, usable for training. Generals Santos Peralba and Gabriel de la Cruz, top commanders of the Air Force, supported the idea (which was theirs, anyway). But it was not appreciated within the Company. Faced with this reality, instead of accepting the facts, I resorted to Defense Minister Eduardo Serra, who convened with me, but the engineers who had to design the systems according to our Agreements with

U.S. technicians, procrastinated and seemed unable to carry their tasks. They were more comfortable working for Boeing and Airbus as subcontractors. Without a doubt, my final resignation meant a relief for the Projects director and his leisurely team.

With Carlos Espinosa and Alfonso Ballestero

They welcomed me with affection, and I did not know or could not reciprocate as they expected. I already commented on the failures of Hispasegur in Spain and IntraExpo in Miami. In Hispasegur, I tried to get out of the business of the cranes and move to marine insurance. In the end, neither one nor the other. In Miami I almost managed to promote Intra Expo as a showcase for the Valencian and Italian Ceramic industry. Despite leaving no stone unturned, the restriction of having to count with a place located in the blackest neighborhood of the city made the project unfeasable.

Attempts to return to private enterprise

Selected by friends, I presented myself as a candidate to vacant positions at Telefónica, Banco de Santander, Puleva and Explosives Rio Tinto. I didn't make it past the interviews.

As a consultant

The German companies that Carlos Espinosa recommended to me accepted my original proposal of settling in Soria. They received the most favorable subsidies as well as free turnkey buildings and superlative reception by the authorities, both from the

Community and from the Towns. Nothing to object. In the Red Cross, on the other hand, my remedies for the dilapidated CR hospitals in Catalonia probably contributed to the downfall of Carmen Mestre, harassed by the Catalan minister Narcís Serra. In the principality of Asturias, Carmen, advised by me, denied her support for figures such as Ana Belén and Víctor Manuel, in the Show business, by not accepting a cultural project linked to costly and unprofitable (except for themselves) urban planning. It is symptomatic (and comforting) that those who have supported me in difficult times were old friends and collaborators like Jack Thomas, John Duerden, Luis González Camino, Jorge Fabra, Paulina de Beato and Carmen Mestre. All held positions of presidents of Companies who offered me consulting jobs, but they took care not to have me in the payroll. Can there be any other reason than my way of being? With my experience, a discreet and less eccentric person, no doubt would have been invited to join their teams.

My partners

Probably, both Begoña and her sister Ana Pernas have an opinion unfavorable of me as a business partner. When my associate Antonio Escorial had a stroke and lost completely his memory, I didn't provide the affection and support that could have been expected from a partner and friend.

On the Xerox Board

Instigated by Honorio Gayo, my colleagues from Rank

Xerox divided and took my contribution to the Pension scheme. That seemed unacceptable in London but it was too late to revert it; therefore, they reacted by appointing me to the Board of Directors of the Spanish Company, with a generous remuneration. This time I appreciated the kindness by keeping quiet in the Board meetings, not for lack of desire to say something. The new management policy based on *business divisions* seemed to me not only sterile, but also counterproductive and therefore: wrong, but I said nothing. And the years of quiet conversations, dinners, and celebrations passed happily until my retirement, in peace and harmony with the various Presidents and Board members. *Quod erat demonstrandum.*

As a farmer

My idea of converting the poorest land into forest areas has lacked followers thirty years later. ‘But didn't you say that it was an economic success, and that you are very proud of having planted 50.000 trees?’ ‘Yes, but in this chapter the issue is not about being right or wrong but about what others thought of me. My sister, for example, believes that Aldeallana was much better before. She is of the opinion that the buyers made a mistake by paying an excessive price and by investing in an illusory concept.

As father or husband

My children and my wife also think that I am selfish and vain, that I talk too much and do not listen. That I am little affectionate and that I only care about my own

things. 'And are they right?' I'm afraid: yes, except for selfishness.

As an author

Here my pretended originality was to fight the *black legend* by underlining the longevity and extent of the Spanish presence in an incredibly large portion of the planet, an inexplicable fact if Spain had been a clumsy or greedy Administrator, as some historians or politicians describe her. Nothing written by me on the subject has been published, despite having a friend, Javier Santillana, that would be very happy to do so if he thought that my books could sell well. With a similar idea, the writer Elvira Roca has become a millionaire. The difference? Gabriel Tortella nailed it: 'Luis, when you write, you don't put yourself in the reader's shoes'

What about Ursuline?

Just as bad. I feel as lost as the first day. Some nights come to my mind (why do you say to my mind when you mean to my heart?). Yes, to my heart, the verses of the Stabat Mater: *Mihi jam non sis amara. Poenas mecum divide.*

My Creed after the verdict

I don't know if you've noticed. But my consolation is that I still think I was almost always right. In my failures as father and husband I believe I have acted according to my conscience, and that such conscience was selfless. I think that Xerox strategy was wrong. I think the INI should have stopped talking about subsidies to losses and, instead, provide a less paternalistic system of

financing, conditioned to the fulfillment of objectives, in the current style of the European Union. I think Casa should have made the AX Aircraft. I think the cranes of Hispasegur were a business cancer. I think that in Miami no International Exhibitions should choose a site in black zones. I think I was right to separate myself from my partner in Consulfirma, because taxes must be paid. And I also think that one day Castilla will have more than half of its land converted to forest. And that in the Iberian Peninsula, the direct descendants of today's Spaniards will be a minority by the in the year 2100. And before that year the Spanish political parties will have been absorbed by their European counterparts, so that their current prominence and controversies will seem a curiosity to historians.

Conscience

It is my ultimate friend. A she friend. Women who have known me were more tolerant with my defects than men. And yet, the Ursuline does not want to hear from me. She may be thinking that so much Sonnet praise and so much infinite love are nothing but an idealized form of author's vanity (in that she behaves like Cynthia *Versus ure mihi*. Burn verses of me). 'So, what is consciousness?' I should say is a voice that whispers and whose advice does not usually coincide with our comfort, convenience, and recreation of the moment... nor necessarily with the tastes and beliefs of those around us or those who can favor us. (However: on the reliability of our conscience, see *Tristram Shandy*, vol. II; Cap. 16 and 17).

Relativity of human things

At the Washington Space Museum there was a small room completely dark and provided with comfortable seats. A white screen called the attention of the visitor. Every half hour an untitled film was projected, which began with the image of the hands of a wristwatch. On the upper left corner of the screen two figures appeared: Miles and Time. The camera started moving away from the watch as if located in a helicopter. It could be seen that the watch belonged to a man lying in a hammock next to a swimming pool. After, that the pool was in a residential area; Then, a big city. Not a minute had passed, when the horizon began to curl. The curve was getting rounder and rounder until the whole Earth was visible. The chrono indicated thousands of miles and the speed was increasing dizzily. On the screen there were moments of darkness and others of intense luminosity when the camera passed near a planet or a star. In less than five minutes we reached the Milky Way. The Space Flight continued to increase the score with billions of miles. At a very distant point, the director saw fit to return to Earth, so the film was repeated in reverse. When the Moon appeared, we knew we were close to seeing the Earth, and so on, to the round dial of the bather's watch.

Inside the watch

Yet, the mayor discovery came later. Far from stopping at the hands of the watch, the journey continued inside of the mechanism. Molecules, atoms, hundredths of atoms: the progression did not cease, the counters oscillating dizzily, penetrating an Inner Space whose dimensions were symmetrical to that of the Exterior,

implying that the size of the watch could not be considered either small or large. It was right in the middle. It took us another fifteen minutes to get back to the watch hands. When the film was over and the room lit up, I thought how infinitely close we are to the ant and the to the elephant. That: as for the Space. As for Time: it is enough to know that some Animal remains date back millions of years. It's as if Proust and Ovid had just died. Seconds ago.

A purposeful Sonnet

I admit that it may seem out of place to bring up a few pompous verses of mine before closing the inconsequential tone of these pages. But I put them because they state the ultimate question that has been hovering in each of them. Excuse the translation, if not the original.

Dejo este barro que cuidé un momento
Y ya me voy, acelerando el paso
Quede con Dios se algo queda acaso
Y no muere del todo el pensamiento

Once I took care of this bit of mud.
But, now I am leaving it fast behind
May God keep it if something remains
And Thought doesn't fade away

Quede con Dios y sirva de escarmiento
El barro, el polvo, o nada, y el fracaso
De la alegre paciencia y el ocaso
De la vana esperanza que aún siento

May God keep it and use as a warning.
For it was mud, dust, and failed joyful
Patience, the downfall
of a vain hope that I am still caressing

Que aún siento y quisiera ver al menos
De quien esto leyere recordada
Por lo vano, si no por lo vivido

That I'm still caressing and wished
Not forgotten by whoever read this
For its vanity if not for it being lived

No sean menos ciertos por ajenos
Los cuidados que se quedan en nada
Y esa Nada que busca su sentido

Alien endeavors are not less real
Even if they end up in nothing
A Nothingness in search of meaning

The Meaning of Nothingness

Rereading this Caprice and rummaging through my books to see if I could find an answer to the question, I stopped at the last words of the second part of Faust. A hint taken from Gustav Mahler. With that intention I have chosen two photos that close this chapter and the book. The second somewhat blurry, as corresponds to an evanescent finale.



With my cousin Lolita

Final chapter



In the Salón of Segovia, 1938

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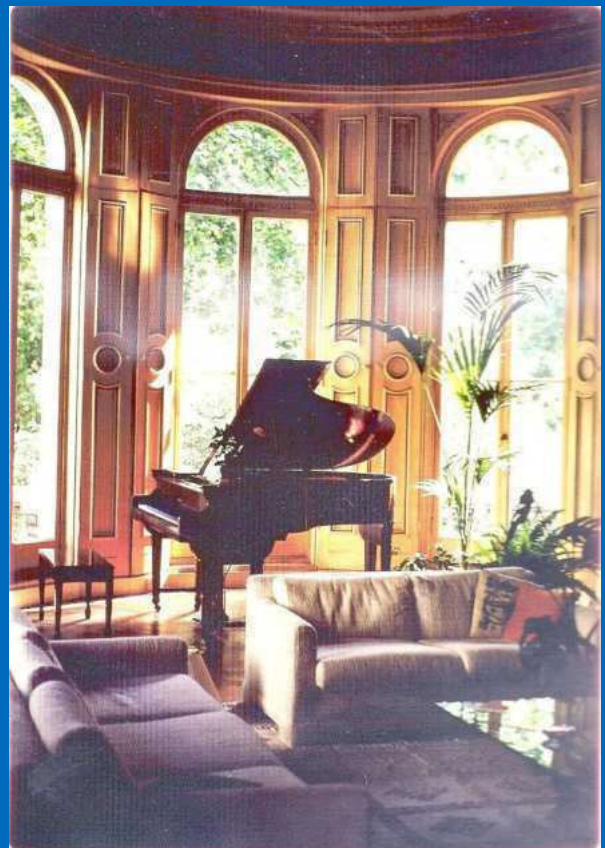
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Whim of the trivial

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