

**continues with,  
UFO contact from Planet ITIBI-RA, CANCER PLANET MISSION,  
by Ludwig F. Pallmann and Wendelle Stevens.**

(page 33, in the stevens pdf book)

He asked me to continue.

«It was while I was once in South America, at a place called Barrunquilla, in Colombia. I was there on business. I was in a cafe having a drink when a beautiful young woman sauntered by. She really was beautiful, in a dark, Spanish sort of way. This young lady had a remarkably over-developed bust. I remember that she wore a vivid red dress, and that she had tiny bells stitched to the dress. As she walked through the down town section, her hips swivelling, so the bells tinkled away merrily. It was sensational. All the men started to follow her. Traffic came to a halt. Eventually the police had to step in and ask her to stop strolling along the street. That's when the riot started, for the men turned on the police and began to beat them up.»

And where were you when all this was taking place?

I kept my seat in the cafe, and had a grandstand view of the riot. It crossed my mind then what a powerful force a woman could be. Why, there was a rebellion in one of the neighbouring countries, There are always rebellions in South American countries. So I thought that if that woman, or some other woman with the same kind of sex appeal, could put up for president, or could be made head of a junta, there had be peace for a good many years to come, Men would just do as she told them at the crook of her little finger.

Satu Raa nodded in agreement. There is much truth in what you say.

The men would be lost in admiration of such a president. They'd spend the entire day muttering. 'Mamasita que hermosa' and 'Que preciosidad.' 'What a gorgeous baby! What a doll!' Why, she'd be just about the first South American president to die of old age. And she'd never fear the assassin's bullet, The South Americans are even more demonstrative than the Indians over there!

I jerked my thumb in the direction of the girl-watchers, who were still feasting their eyes, and their imagination, on that doll of an air hostess. Some of the expressions that filtered across to me on the night air were frank in the extreme, reminiscent of some of the more realistic passages in some of the modern novels that I had read.

Satu Raa was still amused with all this. He had looked a trifle nonplussed at the starkness of some of the language of admiration, but his sense of humour took over, and he laughed at some of the more outrageous expressions.

My friend had not said very much, but had contented himself with watching the by-play. I in my turn was fascinated by the facility with which he understood everything that was said, no matter what the language spoken. for example: we were speaking in English. I had lapsed into Spanish, which is one of the languages that I speak fluently, mainly because of my extensive business interests in South America, then again, some of the girl-watchers had broken into rapid Hindi. Yet Satu Raa was at home with all these languages, and, I shrewdly suspected, with many more besides.

*I decided that the speaking gadget that he used, which looked for all the world like a very sophisticated deaf aid, must have something to do with his gift of tongues. I thought that it must be an advanced form of electronic translation device, something of the nature of the simultaneous interpreting machinery that is used at the United Nations, on a vest-pocket scale, of course. But there was something also in connection with the device that puzzled me. I have said that Satu Raa's*

voice was nothing out of the ordinary: it had not the timbre of the orator, the resonance of the velvety musical voice. And yet there was a quality about his voice that made the hearer feel the inner meaning of words.

There is a figure of speech in which the word suggests the act. A word like crash, or bash, suggests the action implied by the spoken word. With Satu Raa, however, there was depth of feeling even greater than that contained in these onomatopoeic words. If he spoke of pain, then you almost winced at the word. If he spoke of love, then you were blanketed in the sensation of love. It is a difficult thing to explain. The gadget gave the voice a new dimension, a subtlety such as I had not heard in any other man voice.

Again, this set me pondering. In my heart of hearts, I knew that all talk about people from outer space, people from other planets, was just so much nonsense. But even as I told myself this, I remembered the ring on my finger, and the metal dot that lit up to warn of Satu Raa's approach. Like the agnostic who has had a revealing spiritual experience, I reminded myself that I must not condemn out of hand, least of all because I did not understand the mechanics of a thing.

Satu Raa was speaking earnestly to me. I appreciated that I was being a trifle discourteous in allowing my thoughts to wander.

Did you say your sister? I asked, latching on to the last word that he had spoken, the first word to impinge on my conscious mind for some little time,.

I'd be delighted.

Then I will summon her.

When he said this, I naturally thought that he would leave me for a few minutes, go to the hotel, and then return with his sister, perhaps phoning wherever she was from the reception desk. *Instead Satu Raa remained seated.* The expression on his face changed. It seemed as if that different chin was suddenly possessed by lock-jaw. It was hideous to look at. The eyes, too, were widely dilated. Curiously, the light seemed to leave the eyes, as though someone had turned off a switch at the back of the retina.

I realized that Satu Raa was in a mild state of trance. Then, as suddenly as it had been occasioned, so the condition left him. If I had not seen the change in the man, I would not have believed it possible to change from normality to catalepsy and back to normality in the split second that it took for the sequence to be played out.

Satu Raa had not turned a hair. I for my part felt in need of a drink, so I called a servant across and ordered Scotch and soda for both of us.

The servant turned away to carry out the order, and as he did so, I saw Satu Raa's sister coming across the grass to us. At least, I took it to be his sister, for there was no other reason why a most attractive lady should be advancing upon two men taking their ease in the grounds of an hotel late at night.

As she approached us, I thought it was queer that I had not noticed her before she materialized in front of us. My subconscious choice of mental words staggered me. I had thought in terms of materialization. She had come from a well-lit area. I could see everything and everybody in the vicinity of the hotel entrance. *Yet I had not seen her until she neared the bench on which Satu Raa and I were sitting.*

I liked the way the woman walked. A gliding, undulating movement, a movement in which

body and arms moved rhythmically in a way that I had only noticed before with her brother.

As I rose to be introduced to Xiti, I could see at once the family likeness. There could be little doubt that this was Satu Raa's sister. There was that same different chin formation, those same compelling eyes, that same air of charm and of authority. And when we were introduced, she looked me straight in the eyes in a way that few women do. But there was no pert boldness in that look, merely fearlessness and utter frankness.

Inserted pictures not of Xiti- just similar nice girls?>>>

Xiti took a chair opposite the bench on which Satu Raa and I reseated ourselves. Her every movement was a study in gracefulness. She was dressed in a glittering evening gown, as though she had just left a very formal reception. But although the ensemble was exotic in the extreme, there was no hint of the oriental about it, except that her tiny feet were enhanced by golden sandals. *An orange half-veil accentuated rather than hid her matchless beauty.*



and one can imagine that the jewelry hides the translator device that she used>>

I'm very pleased to be able to meet you.

Her voice was a scented whisper, the pianissimo of a magnificent melody. I caught my breath as I listened to that incomparable voice.

One thing at once became apparent to me. ***Although she was speaking normally, it was obvious that she was employing the same technique as her brother for communicating with me. I looked closely at her charming, petite figure. There, the pendant on her flawless throat, was a small bejewelled brooch. It was seemingly an exotic version of the electronic gadget that her brother used.*** Her voice came from the heart of this fine, small brooch, yet the sound synchronized with her lip movements. This was one of the refinements of the gadget. Never were lip movements out of phase with the sound.

Satu Raa had a good-natured twinkle in his eye. Seeking to prove a theory. I suddenly spoke to him in Spanish. *He answered without hesitation.* His Spanish was correct, the accent perfect, the grammar excellent, however, there was one significant point. There is a whole range of Spanish accents, depending upon whether the language is spoken in Spain itself, in Argentina, in Colombia or in Cuba. There is, of course, little difference between the Spanish of Mexico and that of Peru. As I have already mentioned, I am fluent in Spanish, for I have made many business trips to most of the major countries where that language is spoken. So I am aware of the regional differences of the language. Of course, one has to stay a long time in any one of the countries to speak the language correctly and idiomatically.

I persisted with my experiment, continuing to speak in Spanish, but ringing the changes, so that at one time I spoke as though I were a native of Spain, the next of Peru.

Satu Raa and Xiti reacted to the implicit challenge. Their facial expressions changed as I altered my intonation. I could see their puzzlement reflected in their eyes. They looked at each other intently, as though they were listening to strange, unknown sounds, and were trying to identify them. They seemed to be caught in some mental activity induced by imagined sensory impressions

that were causing them some tension and ill-feeling.

Immediately, they switched back into English. Thus I knew that they were not truly polyglot, but were relying on some mechanical device: and the only mechanical device visible was the gadget worn by Satu Raa and the brooch by Xiti. But they were innocent of wires or batteries, of circuits or valves.

By this time, I had recovered my normal composure. Human nature being what it is, inevitably I paid more attention to Xiti than I did to her brother. Of course, I was never discourteous, and he made his contribution to the conversation. I suppose that I am attracted to the exotic in the female of the species, and Xiti had exoticism in the highest degree.

If I were a professional writer, I might be able to probe in depth my feelings that night when I first met Xiti. I might be able to find words that matched the beauty of that Indian night and the greater beauty of that glorious woman. Let the thought pass for the deed, for those feelings indeed men usually keep to themselves and don't go shouting about the rooftops. The man in the street, that mythical ordinary man from Lima to Lhasa, would blush with humiliation at the thought that his most intimate thoughts were being given vocal expression. Xiti's self-assurance, her rigid self-discipline, her exoticism, that hint of mystery about her, that incomparable beauty: all these kindled within me basic masculine desire. This must have been only too apparent at times, but Xiti's air of charm, of being in control of the situation never deserted her for one moment.

I was eventually glad about this, for I discovered that she did not react in the way that I reacted. Not that she was free of desires, but this was neither the time nor the place to express them, nor was it the right technique to employ. For we humans are peculiar people. We can make love, the summit of human affection, in the midst of the most terrible human suffering, in the depths of human despair. We can copulate, then dash off in an airplane and kill a few hundred women and children with napalm and high explosives, then rush back and start making love all over again. Our surroundings do not mean very much to us when our sexual appetites need quenching. ***This is all supposed to be perfectly normal behaviour in the human animal.*** Any healthy man who acted differently would soon find himself on the psychiatrist's couch, or behind prison bars. But as I found out with Xiti, she and others like her are made differently. Or rather, they are not brain-washed or conditioned to this form of behaviour. With them, there is an absolute isolation of the spirit from the carnal body. Love cannot exist where there is hate, despair or suffering, and love in this context includes the physical act of love.

*But as the evening wore on, my contribution to the conversation became less and less as I thought more and more about the extraordinary situation in which I had found myself.*

## CHAPTER 3

### THE HUMAN COMEDY – PAINLESS DEATH

The following morning, I wanted to be alone in order to think over the extraordinary affair of Satu Raa, Xiti and Itibi Raa 2. *I wanted to make up my mind once and for all whether or not I had been the victim of a gigantic leg-pull, although why anybody should want to hoax me, a stranger in India, was beyond my comprehension.* Also beyond my immediate comprehension were the references made by my two friends to their homeland and to their people. Whenever they spoke in these terms, there was no doubt in my own mind that they were thinking in ultra-mundane terms. All the realist in me bristled at this thought, but there was no denying it. Both of them spoke in these terms in a completely matter-of-fact way that forced credulity upon me.

So I wanted somewhere, some place, where I could think over the implications of this ultra-mundane frame of mind and choice of words, somewhere to ponder over the essential differences in their physical as well as mental make-up, somewhere to rationalize the whole sequence of events *since I had joined the Bombay-Madras express.*



The crowds thronging the waterside of the Ganges, the sacred river of India, as it flows majestically through Benares, the sacred Capital of Religion, was the very place for my cogitation; for there is no place where a man can be so lonely as in a vast crowd. So I went down to the water's edge, moving among the young Brahmans, the Ashariram sharireshv, the anavasteshv. I picked my way through the Harridans, the sons of God, to the gurus, by the madmen and the lazy saints, who make you believe in the power of meditation, although their meditation takes the form of waiting patiently for the inevitable tip.

There was also a good deal of political activity going on that morning. Beggars were shouting. «India must have the atom bomb!» Other beggars, cancelling out the exhortations of their professional brethren, distributed leaflets printed in fractured English announcing that, A-bomb manufacturers will be heavy burden!

I listened to the pro-atom bomb chanting and wondered what on earth was really happening in India. Here was a country impoverished beyond belief, suffering from constant starvation, living on the dole of better-organized communities: yet her beggars were clamouring to have the atom bomb!

At last, I found a suitable spot almost at the river bank. and gave myself over to thinking about my personal problems rather than those of Mother India. ***I had scarcely started on my self-examination, when I noticed Satu Raa making his way towards me.*** How he had known that I was in that crowd: how he had recognized me even: how he had known the exact spot where to find me, all these were beyond my understanding. But I was getting to the state of mind when I did not try to understand the mental processes of my new friends, but rather was beginning to accept them, and not find a rational explanation for what they said and did.

*I thought I would find you here,* he said brightly.

He was followed by several very old men and women, who continued their walk towards the bank of the river where I later observed them praying, Because of certain primitive elements and castes which cling to Indian society, I was surprised to find my friend amongst these the poorest and most miserable creatures: The untouchables.

Mr. Satu Raa asked me if I would like to join him and without waiting for my answer made his way in the direction of the Ramakrishna Monastery. It was a glorious day, full of sunshine as we walked up the ghat to the chants of Sita Ram. Since the early morning hundreds of pilgrims and those ready to die are joined before the sannyasis, the holy men.

Soon, we were mixing with bhists, khitmitgars, the watercarriers and the skivvies right bang in the middle of the mahabhinishkamana.

That word, mahabhinishkamana, needs a little explanation.

I think the best translation is, The way to ultimate resignation. In fact, it is the vast dumping ground where people, young and old, men and women, who are at death's door, are brought to await the end. *It is one of the most pitiful places in all the world.* It is also one of the busiest.

Soon, Satu Raa was going about his ministrations. I have been in the midst of natural and man made calamities, and seen doctors and nurses, parsons and other welfare workers going about their duties. *But I have never seen anybody, man or woman, professional or amateur welfare worker, act with such compassion and gentleness, as I saw Satu Raa carry out his works of mercy in that wretched mahabhinishkamana at Benares.*

He went straight to a crying child that was huddled over its mother. It was obvious that the mother had just died. The child, she could have been no more than seven or eight, howled to heaven in misery, the tears cleaving a path through the dirt and muck that befouled her face. Satu Raa found some water, and with the utmost care he washed the child as best he could. I myself was almost moved to tears. *But I noticed the nearby chokidars, the watchmen who worked at this ghoulis place, looked on without showing the slightest trace of emotion.*

Satu Raa finished this task, spoke comfortingly to the child, found something for her to eat, then came across to me. The pity of it all, he said, indicating the mass of dying humanity.

What is happening to India? I asked; This was the question that had haunted me, the question to which I could find no answer. What will become of her?

Nothing, replied Satu Raa simply. India will always be India. Violence is not the answer. Self-control is. She must regain her capacity to understand her own nature.

I took it that Satu Raa meant that India must learn to control her own population. Of course, he was right. Pity is not the answer to India's problem of starvation, nor is the sending of a thousand ships a day to the country, laden with food, if that were possible. ***The control of the population is the only answer to India's twin problems of poverty and starvation, with the attendant misery that these bring in their wake.***

It was while we were discussing these problems that I saw Xiti once more. At first, I did not recognize her, for she was wearing a topee, and a silken veil hid her eyes. In any case, I would not have interrupted her. She, too, was ministering to the needs of the people gathered at the mahabhinishkamana. It was the children she was helping. She had charmed two bhists into carrying cans of clean water for her, and this she ladled out sparingly. Now she attended to a small mite that was moaning piteously like a mourning dove. No wonder, for the child was covered with open sores. Xiti reached into the sari that she was wearing, an elegant green sari. Carefully, she covered the child's sores with the yellow paste. *The effect was little short of miraculous.* The child, it was a small girl, stopped keening. It even managed a faint smile. The ointment seemed to be as much a panacea as the tablets that Satu Raa had dispensed on the train. Tablets and ointment appeared to have the power of speeding the recovery of bodily organs that still functioned, however imperfectly.

They brought the blessing of peace to those in need of death.

I use the expression, 'in need of death', advisedly: for there is a point in life when death is more welcome than life itself.

I did not thrust myself upon Xiti, although I longed to talk to her. Instead, I crept away, leaving her to her task of healing and comforting. As I did, some words that Satu Raa had spoken the previous evening thundered through my brain. *'My people alone know the real horror of the sin of negligence.'*

He had used an unfamiliar word that I spelt as **ruessit**, when I wrote up my diary before turning in for the night; but he had explained that ruessit meant negligence. How right he was, I reflected as I looked around the mahabhinishkamana. Negligence and apathy are deadly sins which we encourage because we are frightened to do anything positive. I thought of all those people living a sub-standard life in India, in parts of Africa, South America and Asia. I thought of the millions of people who lived worthy, blameless lives, and then were punished by being afflicted with some terrible terminal disease such as cancer, a disease which, like so many more that bedevilled humanity, could be cured if man would put his skill and resources into the necessary research, instead of dissipating them on useless things such as atom bombs.

India epitomizes this negligence and apathy of mankind. It epitomizes the dichotomy within man. Where there is pain, suffering and death, there is also love. Conversely, where there is love, there is also pain, suffering and death. In this context, I include the act of copulation as part of the mystique of love. Even in the death-shambles of the mahabhinishkamana, there was sexual love.

Right there by the sacred river, where the sick were waiting to die, and the dead to be burned, there was an awful lot of sexuality. Next to the burning logs of the funeral pyres, immediately alongside the waters of the most holy of Indian rivers, the prostitutes had their symbolic temples. I really mean temples: for many temples, and not only those dedicated to procreation are embellished with illustrations of carnal love which rank as religious art, the most intimate, indecent is perhaps the better word, positions are graphically highlighted on the walls of these temples. The message of carnal love - creativity is, I suppose, the correct Euphuism, blazons forth from a thousand religious statues, from a thousand religious frescoes. But it is the act of sex not of love, that is symbolized.

Sophisticated societies use all manner of illogical phrases for the emotion known as love. To make love is just plain stupid, for love cannot be made. It is born with a person, within the heart and soul. It is a feeling that one may or may not have. If a person is lucky enough to be born with love in his heart, then he has love for the rest of his life. Love cannot be turned into symbols and statues, nor can it be made.

If you think that I am drawing a long bow, then remind yourself of the psychopath. He is the person without feelings, without emotions, including the feeling and emotion of love. So, if it is possible for there to be an absence of these qualities, then it follows that it must be possible for those without these feelings to make love like robots.

Indian brothels are, I suppose, the most smelly places in the world. They are usually located next to the temples, or by the markets, and they stink to high heaven. The lover pays the record sum of eight cents to have sexual union with a lady of pleasure.

After Satu Raa had finished all he could do at the mahabhinishkamana, we wandered in the cool of the evening down through the ghettos. In the hovels with their open doors, dim petrol lights revealed dirty straw mats and even dirtier straw cushions. Painted whores were very much in evidence, as was the all-pervading stench, a vile smell compounded of the odour of urine, sauces, cunningly mixed spices, that were sold under most unhygienic conditions at street corners; of red betel nut, of potato and pepper patties, of cheap perfume, of decaying rats. ***Here in the ghettos was***

### ***a fiesta of dirt, smell and sex.***

We watched as the excited patron of one of the ghetto houses paid his eight cents and passed through one of the open doors. This was immediately shut. We heard a bolt being rammed home and a key being turned. The door is the only part of such hovels that is made of wood. The rest is cardboard and flattened tin containers. Within a minute or so, the movements of violent passion started to shake the whole flimsy structure. The waiting customers hooted with laughter.

The hovel shook in one last frenzied thrust. There was a moment's pause, and then the satisfied client, he was hardly more than a youth -came out of the brothel, looking rather sheepish, I thought, and the first in the queue took his place. Soon, the hovel started to tremble once more, to shake and then to dance. A man had taken the boy's place.

All this rather sickened me, but Satu Raa was not at all perturbed. He was aware that the Indians are far from being bashful where sex is concerned, and their animal behaviour was of interest to him anthropologically. Indeed, I heard him comment that the Indians possessed the most interesting of all forms of native civilization. I wasn't quite certain whether or not he was referring to their mating habits or to their general standards of living.

In a nearby doorway, in this same stretch of the ghetto, we noticed a fat little girl. She was no more than a babe, with black braids that came down to her shoulders. I thought she was trying to dance. Then I recognized the movements. Despite her tender years, she was trying, and trying in vain, with her stubby, little immature figure, to imitate the cunning body convulsions of her professional and practised neighbours.



We watched the human comedy, or should it be tragedy, for a few more minutes, and then my companion hailed a passing rickshaw.

Where are we going? I asked, for I had let him take over the arrangements for the rest of the evening. We are going to see the Children of God, he replied. The Children of God! This is possibly the most pitiful of all necropolic ceremonies in India. The rickshaw took us to a place some way from the hovels we had been visiting,

but still on the banks of the river. The night sky was turned into day as we reached the very primitive crematorium. I counted more than forty funeral fires, some so close that they were almost contiguous. The attendants are so callous that the decencies are offended. As we walked round the crematorium, for all the world as though we were enjoying the attractions of some public park or place of amusement, we could see small, tormented limbs dangling outside the immediate orbit of the flames until the consuming fire broke them off. The attendants snatched up the freed arms and legs and threw them back into the flames as if they were feeding a garden fire more twigs.

It was a sickening experience to see the small, lacerated faces, the thin, black emaciated bodies, the burning, sightless eyes staring into the night sky.

Life to these children had meant nothing but suffering and despair, What else could have been expected in a country afflicted by poverty and starvation, set in a world riddled by fear, hate and war? These are the reasons why nameless children are burnt at night beside a majestic Indian river. That is why the faces of the children, twisted and contorted by the searing flames, seem to be crying and not frying.

*I was glad that Xiti was not with us to see the end product of man's sin of negligence. That scene*



would have made angels weep. Sadly, Satu Raa and I returned to my hotel.

It is a well known theory that, under the stress of emotion, even though an attempt is made to hide those emotions, the characteristics of the human voice may lead towards a true understanding of the nature of the speaker. The well known phrase, The ring of truth about it, is an example of this theory. Let me give one illustration from history.

When Columbus returned from his first voyage to the Americas, most people in Spain called him a liar when he told of his discoveries. Openly, or secretly, they just did not believe him. But those who were in his presence when he spoke about his adventures, as was the King of Spain himself, were impressed by his obvious sincerity. Philip of Spain was convinced by hearing the man that Columbus was speaking the truth. Facial expressions have nothing to do with this theory. A blind man could just as well be convinced of the truthfulness of a person by listening to his voice, as could a sighted man.

I subscribe to this theory, and think of the moment when one accepts the authenticity of what a person is saying as the moment of truth.

The moment of truth as far as Satu Raa and I were concerned came when we sat in the grounds of my hotel, that late October night of nineteen sixty four, after we had visited the Children of God. Until that moment of truth, there were certain things that he had said that I had taken with the proverbial grain of salt. After the moment of truth, I was prepared to accept everything he said as gospel. Hence forth, as far as I was concerned, he, and Xiti for that matter, was always a witness of the truth.

I don't know what alchemy it was that brought us to the moment of truth. It might have been the whisky. It might well have been that, in the quiet of that Indian night, we came to the point in time when we unreservedly accepted each other for what we were. Whatever the cause, on that memorable night, I accepted that Satu Raa had come from another planet named Itibi Raa 2, and that his people had discovered Earth in much the same way that Columbus had discovered the New World: by a deliberate voyage of exploration.

As I recall it, we had been talking about the Children of God and the bone structure of the body: how essential it was in every country, to have the correct diet when young. in order that the bone structure of the body should be healthy and not twisted or stunted, or suffer from calcium deficiency. I had then thrown in some remarks about bone structure determining physical beauty, particularly the facial bones in women, I had also said how western people prized a good set of teeth.

Satu Raa had smiled at this. Now, his smile, although attractive and charming, had always bothered me slightly. At first, I could not pinpoint the slight feeling of unease that I had because of his smile. Then, I think it was the second time I met the man, I understood. *He never showed his teeth when he smiled.* Indeed, because of that slightly different jaw formation about which I have already remarked, his fine, sensitive lips always seemed to cover his teeth completely.

Naturally, Satu Raa had noticed my curiosity *and with absolute frankness explained that, for many thousands of years, men and women on their planet have lived without teeth like the appendix and similar organs, as not really being necessary.* I found out that on our planet Satu Raa and Xiti did use some artificial support that obviously, like a plastic-type insert, kept the shape of their mouths similar to ours. At closer sight, I noticed, as a minor difference, the smaller shape of the tongue and those long, thin sensitive lips.

*As perhaps one of the nicest gestures of friendship, my friends voluntarily took off the protective*

*finger-tip covering in order to show me their very strange hands.* In contrast to the feminine hand, the male finger-tips are flat and round, like little discs. Extremely sensitive they must be *as there are no nails whatever*, with the very rosy, fine and soft flesh extending to the very end of each finger. Xiti's hands were a true masterwork of nature: pointed and extremely thin, very long, *entirely different from her brother's.*

They both seemed to be very amused at my complete mystification and spoke in their own language for a long time. Because of their kindness and frankness they came so much closer to my heart. **They spoke to me like real friends, telling me also the reason for these differences.** It seems that they are able to analyse sound, and perhaps are even able to hear through the sensitive nerves of their finger-tips. Also, at later times, I became sure of the fact, that they were using their fingers as we would use our tongues for tasting and exploring, specially when doing biological research work.

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I did not see Satu Raa and Xiti again in India. Perhaps the lack of privacy forced them suddenly to disappear. Until the time I first met the brother and sister, I had never kept a diary. But these events were so moving and followed each other so quickly and ideas were tumbling over in my mind to such an extent, that I felt I had to put them in order in a diary.

What I wrote into the first pages of a little booklet, I bought in Benares, was the following: We humans must really be devoid even of common sense, if we keep living in continuous pain inflicted by ourselves on a thousand different occasions throughout all life. On another planet, perhaps the fear of death has been replaced by the desire to find peace. Just to have known Satu Raa and his sister made me realise that none of us at the present time has the slightest notion of peace, REAL peace: so great was their relaxed and modest humanism. So great their contentment with Time.

They just seemed to Live' every hour, every minute, without being Time-conscious'. They gave you the feeling of supreme, superior and unforgettable friendship. To have been with these wonderful people gave me the deepest feelings in my entire life.



# PASTURES NEW

## CHAPTER 4. AMAZON SWAMPS

Sipping hot coffee, whilst everybody else on a jet flight to Rome was sound asleep, I left India on the 27th of October 1964.

I had taken the local plane from Benares to New Delhi and there, late at night, had taken one of the huge international airplanes on flight from Asia to Europe making one of its scheduled stops.



<< As the airplane droned effortlessly over India towards Europe *the picture of Satu Raa and Xiti floated into my subconscious mind, invading my every thought.*

Away from their influence several questions had to be answered. Questions leading to many more.

There was no doubt that I had been impressed specially by those painkilling tablets and ointments, by their devotion to the old and sick and most of all to those dying in pain. *Also, the ring!* How it lit up, the metal insert of it, without any physical cause. ***The amazing thing was, that I had this evidence which had not cost me one single dollar, right in front of my very eyes.*** These things I had done, had seen, had touched, and I decided to have some expert check on the ring which seemed to me the most clinching evidence.

On the 6th of November, I had this done in Zurich, Switzerland. The jeweller who saw it first at once became very interested, and asked me where I had bought the strange looking ring. He said that the preColumbian design *and gold work of the God on its surface were unlike anything he had ever seen or had knowledge of.* He suggested me seeing a friend of his dealing with antique jewellery. I saw this man on the same day, late at night. The diagnosis of this expert was, that he believed this to be a masterwork of great value, belonging to one of the earliest pre-Columbian dynasties. He could not pin down a particular civilization but suggested that the ring might have come from a nobleman.

Naturally this did not answer my questions, Anybody, I thought, could guess that such a valuable piece of jewelry must have been the property of some king or nobleman.

What intrigued them to the point of utmost curiosity was the metal insert, which I believe to be of extraterrestrial origin, Presumably a professional metallurgist would have been able to identify the insert, but he would have had to take the ring apart.



As for myself, because of all this I had neglected my business. There had been several technical innovations in pulverizing and fine-grinding machinery. I found out that my office in a Latin American country received a great deal of competition by a new type of mill which was manufactured in Spain and sold at a competitively low price throughout all Latin America.

So, I hopped over to Barcelona to have a look at this machinery, It was an uncomplicated piece of machinery, not bad at all with a profit margin obviously cut to the bone. This might have been done with the sole purpose of forcing an entry into the market. During the entire year 1965, and again in the

summer of 1966, I urged our machine-manufacturing company to start constructing a simple, less expensive mill for the Latin American countries. I didn't mind the Spanish horning in on our newly established markets, after all, they had an historical interest in that area, but I objected most strongly to their cutting in on what we ourselves could easily avoid.

During the last years I installed pulverizing plants, one in Argentina, three in Mexico and two in Columbia and the Republic of Peru. **It so happened that at the end of 1966 my office in Lima had received an enquiry from a Swiss company registered in Tingo Maria, right on the fringe of the upper Amazon contributory.** The company there had plans to fine-grind the yucca root in order to produce starches for the chemical fields on a large scale. The difficulties of this new assignment in Tingo Maria situated next to the fissures of a thousand swamps and rivers, made me decide to handle this interesting deal all by myself.

In the upshot, I had no trouble in making a sale, I got on famously with the company representatives. Specifications, schedules and prices were agreed, delivery dates from Europe worked out. Before the time of the first cropping, a pulverizing plant for the handling of vast quantities of yucca would be ready.

Back in Lima, I reported my experiences with the yucca roots to some of my friends at the Agricultural University and they were highly delighted, for they had been researching on further uses of the yucca, but could not find the right equipment to do the pulverizing correctly. The Agricultural University of Lima, Peru, during the year 1966-67 was doing important research work on one of the greatest national projects that the Peruvian government had inaugurated in order to try to feed the masses of people living in the Andes areas. The cry was for inexpensive, high-protein value food-stuffs, but they must be acceptable to the palate, I reminded my friends of an interesting fish-flour project. It is possible to obtain vast quantities of fish-flour in Peru. The trouble is that no human beings would ever make bread from it. The experiment was tried by a group of European scientists, who succeeded in deodorizing fish-flour. They tried to market it, but word soon got round that the new flour was fish in origin. That was the end of that project.

Because of my specialist knowledge of milling and pulverizing machinery, I was invited to work with the university people on a whole series of experiments. I gladly accepted the invitation, and helped in making many grinding tests using different components. Finally, we settled for a fine mixture of cotton-seed and corn flour, with one or two other ingredients added in small quantities. This flour was excellent for making tortilla patties and bread. More to the point, my organization's machinery could cope with the grinding process, as I was able to show the authorities.

The Peruvians were very well satisfied with the equipment my organization sent over. The result was that the Government authorized me to erect a pilot plant in the University itself, earmarking a large area of the grounds for this purpose.

Now, the work at Tingo Maria and Lima during the last months of 1966 had been intensive and exhausting. It had lasted for something like three months, and during that time I don't think I had a full day off. So while waiting for the preparatory work to be carried out on the University campus, I took a few days' busman's holiday, and set off for nearby Columbia in order to have a brief change and also to inspect a Bakelite pulverizing plant which I had installed some years before. The American manager of the plant was an old business acquaintance of mine. He would welcome the chance to hear my suggestions which might enable them to increase the output of the pulverizing equipment of their plant.

I also welcomed the opportunity to spend Christmas in Columbia, a country which I like very much.

I left the comforts of Lima and set off for Cali, in Columbia, where the plant was located. Mr. Jenson, the president of the firm, was pleased to see me. The plant was in good nick, the

maintenance first class. I went over it with a small tooth-comb, however, and satisfied myself that, barring accidents, the machinery would last a good number of years.



It took the two of us the best part of all day to inspect the installation. When we had finished our work, Jenson drove me in his jeep to the country club, which was situated on the <<River Cauca (also picture below). I remember that as we drove there, we chatted about the paradox of the Indians of that area living in abject poverty, while the vast Amazonian backlands were a potential source of unlimited vegetable and mineral wealth. Extraction was the problem.

The country club provided all the amenities of civilization, and I was able to relax for three whole days in Cali. I felt much refreshed, and would have liked to have stayed there for a longer time, but I was working to a fine schedule. The foundation work for the pilot scheme in Lima was due to be completed within the week.

I had heard so much about the endless tropical hell of the American jungle that I decided to return to Lima by the craziest route imaginable. There was one snag. There were no jet flights in those territories. True, there were local air lines, but you could well find yourself in a plane where the doors were locked with a strip of telephone wire. If you went to the toilet, you lifted the seal and found yourself looking straight down at the ground, some twelve thousand feet below. As well as carrying passengers, these local lines also hump freight, so you could well be sitting among old kitchen equipment: metal tables, rusty chairs, ancient refrigerators.



The plane I took on my crazy journey back to Lima was grossly overloaded. This was reflected in take-off. The plane hurtled down the runway, and seemed reluctant to leave it. When the end of the runway was perilously close, the plane was a grudging yard off the ground. I prayed to all the saints that there were no hoardings, trees or tall obstructions in the take-off path.

My prayers must have been answered, for the plane eventually gained height without stalling. I breathed once more.

These old-time planes are piloted by the best-dressed pilots I have ever encountered in all my travels. They are perfumed and moustachio'd, wear white gloves, and have a charm and nonchalance all their own. They are not in the least bit worried about the lack of altitude when hurtling down a runway. It takes a little more time to get a load into the air, and that is all that concerns them.

The flight from Cali is an endless one over treetops until altitude has to be gained in order to cross the backbone of the Andes. Once over the towering peaks, there is a descent until the flight path levels once more over the jungle, the endless jungle, the last remaining, unconquered natural wonder of the world: a land with its thousands of rivers and lakes, its deadly snakes and insects, its horrible piranas, the most carnivorous of all fish: this cursed part of the last estancia del diablo - *the last remaining foothold of the Devil on Earth*, with its clean-picked skeletons along the river banks, its fevers, cannibals and constant death.

This region is a challenge to the few remaining adventurers. It is the land of the mighty Amazon, the labyrinthine Caqueta, Marañon, Jurua, Purua, Putumayo and Ucayali. From the air, it seems as if no living soul could remain alive one single day within this inhospitable murderous jungle.

Most of the area is still unexplored, unvisited by modern man. This fact is indicated by white patches on even the best maps, a convention in map making that hides the vastness of the swamps, and the countless tributaries of the many mighty rivers. But those self-same swamps have given birth to Indians, at once the most stoical and most cruel on Earth. It has been known for one of them to wander in from the forest with a hand hacked off at the wrist. There is just no way to tell from his face how he is reacting. There is just no way to make these Indians show emotion if they do not want to do so.

Incas or Aztecas of the highlands are just as impassive as their brothers of the swamps. When the Spanish inquisition burned the feet off the Indians, after they had stolen their land, they simply would not believe that mortal man could be possessed of such courage. Some Spaniards went back to Spain and told their compatriots that they had murdered the rain or sun Gods in person! Under the most acute pain they looked at them with loathing as the flames consumed the lower parts of their bodies.

Perhaps it is the effect of the coca-chewing habit of the Amazon Indians that makes them impervious to emotion. Whatever it is, their conduct under stress remains one of the mysteries of human behaviour.

After some hours of jungle hopping, and with the necessary modicum of luck, the endless waves of tree tops give way to the mightiest river in the world. The plane lands, and you step into the natural Turkish bath of the Amazonian interior. Now you know why most of the Amazon Indians wander around naked. With that heat, who needs clothes?



At the small airport, I was met by Mr. Mike Tsalickis, a dealer in animals, birds, reptiles and fish. He was great as a host, and, incidentally, the perfect amphitryon to those in need of adventure. He took me along to his estancia, where he keeps a fine collection of snakes, monkeys, and other elements of his stock-in-trade. He also has an office there, from which he functions as consular agent of the U.S.A.

I mention Mr. Tsalickis's secondary occupation of amphitryon because he acts as go-between for many people who briefly seek escape from the pressures of modern civilization, and who come to take a quick look at this part of the still natural savage world. These people do not come merely to hunt and to fish. Many of them wish to see how the Amazonian Indian lives in his native habitat.

Providing all these services is the work of an amphitryon because he acts as go-between for many in good measure. In his office he keeps a printed list of excursions which are available for the adventure seekers - he refers to them as trippers. On page three of this list, there is the following information:-

*SERVICE No. 5 : Thirty minute boat trip to Mari-Acu Indian village in nearby Brazil, home of the Ticuna Indians. Here is an opportunity to observe their traditions, customs, and items used in their everyday living. By chance, the hair-pulling ceremony may also be observed if scheduled by the family concerned. Duration - four hours.*

The list does not explain if those four hours are devoted entirely to the hair-pulling ceremony! This ceremony is, in fact, performed on some naked forest beauty's private parts. You would imagine that, with all the teeming life in the forests, a lot of fellows from Chicago and the other North American cities would be coming down to this neck of the woods for the hunting and fishing. Mr.

Tsalickis assures me, however, that his boatmen, who chaperon the visitors, tell him that they come down merely to take pictures of the hairpulling ceremony.

I would have liked to have gone on a hunting trip with Mike Tsalickis, some forty miles up-river, where the evergreen lakes of Loretoyacu are situated; but unfortunately I was taken ill and had to stay in bed when the others set off. The jaguars, ocelots, tapirs and capybaras would all have to wait until I got better.

I became so ill that I really thought I was going to die. Leticia, where Mike Tsalickis is stationed, is situated some two thousand miles from the mouth of the Amazon. It is just south of the Equator, and has a very small population. *I was suffering from kidney trouble, and a kidney operation in Leticia was just not on.* The town's industries, apart from catering for a small tourist trade, are making soap and soft drinks. This economy does not need a very large labour force, so there is no need for a fully equipped hospital in the town. *My best chance of survival was to take the military flying-boat to Iquitos, the capital of the state of Loreta in nearby Peru.*

I hope nobody else has to endure the torture of a severe kidney attack in the cockpit of a military flyingboat, with the temperature at a hundred and ten Fahrenheit. The ancient aircraft I flew in was nearly twenty years old, and looked it. ***But there was simply no other way of getting to***



***Iquitos from Mike Tsalickis's place.*** There are just no civilian air services between Leticia, which is in Columbia, and Iquitos, which, as I have said, is over the border in Peru.

Just to get into the ramshackle flying-boat was an adventure itself. You have to cross the tremendous Amazon swamp where the Indian river settlement is situated. There is a mighty splash of muddy water. A door opens, and you are invited to climb aboard. The Peruvian Air force unit stationed at Loreta's border with Ecuador offers this remarkable passenger service twice a week. The funny thing was that, when I clambered off the flying-boat at Iquitos, I felt a little better.



< not from book.

I was given a friendly warning about the poor service at the Iquitos hospital, so I decided to postpone the operation, and wait until I could catch a flight back to Lima.

In Iquitos, one hears all sorts of stories about the men who have dared to invade this sickening hell of the Amazon jungle. The name of Emanuel Cantu springs to mind, as does that of Colonel Fawcett, the famous British adventurer, who discovered many new rivers, lakes and Indian tribes. He was lost without trace, as are so many brave explorers having entered the Labyrinth of no return. Of course, it is not all jungle.

The big rivers, such as the Purua, Marañon, Ucayali, and the Amazon itself, have sizeable towns strung along their banks. In these towns there are schools and a certain standard of education. There are also the missions, and innumerable isolated villages strung like small beads along the thousands of miles of the water courses, from source to mouth.

A very large population live in these river towns, missions and villages. Unhappily, it is no exaggeration to say that for every ten people living in these communities, eight suffer from disease of one kind or another. The drug stores of the larger settlements do a very thriving business; there is one on every street corner. On the Upper Ucayali, a lot of victims, paralysed by the dreadful beri-beri sickness, may be seen. They hobble along on crutches everywhere, begging for a coin.

When anybody decides to wander into the jungle, it is fiesta time for the insects. They wait for their prey, even, I swear, working a shift system so as not to miss anybody. The insects working the night shift are not the same as those working the early morning and late afternoon shifts. There are thousands of different types of insect, carrying hundreds of different types of diseases. Some of the insects are so small that they cannot be detected by the naked eye. But they are just as deadly as the larger, visible ones.

Fish can be unpleasant as well. Again, they do not have to be big fish, I have already mentioned the pirana. This little monster's name is sometimes spelt piranha. No matter how the name is spelt, the fish is just deadly. The pirana attack in force whenever a hand or foot is put into the water. They haunt the vicinity of the riverside slaughter-houses; but the smell of blood from any animal anywhere at any time makes them the most deadly of living creatures. Within a matter of seconds, they are capable of stripping a man or an animal to the bone. But vegetation can be just as deadly: you have to watch out for poisonous leaves, sticks as sharp as needles, thorny vines as dangerous as barbed wire all competing in Nature's inexorable game: the fight to survive.

Whilst waiting for transport from Iquitos, I made the acquaintance of a delightful American lady and her husband, a retired army officer. They were both enthusiastic amateur anthropologists, and spent two hours telling me about their hobby.

A few days before I met them, Colonel and Mrs. Thompson, who came from Texas, had tried to locate a young guide, who was supposed to know all the answers concerning survival in the jungle, particularly if the intruders into the green hell were merely curious and inexperienced. The middle-aged colonel and his wife were both curious. They wanted to pay a short visit into the heart of the jungle, a risky venture that even the strongest and fittest young men of Iquitos fight shy of making. The Thompsons wished to contact the cannibals, who they believed, live happy and without a care inside the jungle and not near the river where civilisation has ruined their health and natural habits.

They told me that they found this particular guide in a carpenter's shop, where he was repairing his outboard motor boat. The guide was a most unlikely redhaired Austrian, who sported an eight months' beard. He had, my new friends informed me, wild, crazy eyes, and was prone to making nervous gestures. But the guide was, Colonel Thompson hastened to inform me, a very



interesting man indeed.

The Thompsons proved delightful raconteurs, so for my benefit, they re-enacted the scene at the Hotel de las Turistas where the three of them had gone to discuss the expedition over a round of drinks

I will take you for two hundred dollars each, said the guide. Payable in advance, he added as a trenchant afterthought.

Alright, replied the Colonel, You'll have to be prepared to live on monkey meat and snakes for a couple of weeks, continued the young Austrian.

Have you ever eaten monkey meat? asked Mrs, Thompson.

Many times, the red-haired Austrian replied. It tastes just like human flesh.

Mrs. Thompson reported that she had almost fainted on the spot.

Oh! It's all right, the guide assured her when she had recovered her composure. It isn't bad if it's roasted. As a matter of fact, my friends on the river know how to prepare a dead body so that it eats just like Christmas turkey.

The Colonel had tried to stop the guide from speaking in this vein, but the Austrian was not to be put off.:

If you return from the trip, you're never the same anymore. It is easy for you to shiver and look disgusted, but if you are forced to go hungry for weeks, why should the flesh of a dead, old woman be any different from the meat of any old bird?

I made a few conventional remarks after the Thompsons had related this anecdote. Did you make the trip? I asked, then immediately answered myself. No, of course you didn't, You say all this happened just a few days ago. You must have changed your minds.

You bet we did, said Colonel Thompson emphatically. Why, if we had gone on that tip, and had got lost in the jungle, that fellow would have eaten my wife, and thought nothing about it! Evidently, the amateur anthropologists must have been very shaken by the episode. The very next day they went along to the office of the Peruvian Airline in order to see about booking a return flight to Dallas, Texas.

I decided that the Colonel had been right. The redhaired Austrian guide seemed a most interesting character. After what I had seen and experienced in India and in other parts of the world, I did not think that I would turn squeamish over anything that this young man would be likely to tell me. So I sought him out, and found him in that same carpenter's shop that the Thompsons had described.

You know, he said, these people, not just the Thompsons, but all others like them who come to this outlandish spot - are alright in their way. But they take their prejudices with them like an extra skin wherever they go. You need years to prepare yourself for the jungle, and most white people turn savages themselves while doing so. Besides, who is to blame these Indians, if they eat their dead ones instead of cremating them? A piece of meat, carefully roasted over a hot fire, loses its identity, It could be beef, chicken, monkey , or man. And what's more, it's a natural way of getting rid of the dead. Perfectly natural, as you'll agree if you watch all the other creatures doing it. It's the natural justification of killing to appease hunger.

He paused for a moment, but I offered no comment. I was happy to let him ramble on, expounding his philosophy.

On the other side of the Yavari River, the redhaired guide continued, I saw several white explorers turned native. They were the craziest bunch of nuts I ever saw. I'd been down with the fever for several days when I ran into them. I thought I was still delirious when I first saw them. The funniest people I have ever met: with hands so strange, that I thought them to be from a different world.

I pricked up my ears at this, but again kept my mouth shut.

They might have talked a lot of nonsense, but they were such fine engineers. They even fixed a broken outboard propeller blade for me, so that I could get back to the Yavari. It was the last of four blades that I'd started with, so you can judge how glad I was. For all their craziness, they were good at doctoring as well. The Austrian accepted with alacrity my invitation to go across to the hotel for a drinking session, and did not mind at all when I started to pump him about his adventures.

This fellow with the funny mouth, a legacy of some fever, I suppose, wave me a tablet to swallow. I felt better almost immediately. Then he gave me some fruit juice. That was the best fruit juice I've ever tasted. Yes. ***They were white folk turned native all right. I told them to give it up, and come back to civilization, but they refused.*** As for me, as soon as I was completely well, I came back out of the jungle as though all the devils in hell were on my tail.

Did anybody else see these white natives? I asked.

I doubt it. I don't suppose anybody believed me when I told my tale. Later, I went upstream of the Yavari to Bolognesi. That's right up on the Brazilian border. I felt great. That tablet must have lasted a long time! I told the missionaries on the Brazil side of the border what I'd seen out there on the Yavari River. They wouldn't believe a word I said. Made out it was the fever. Said no white man would dare to go into cannibal country, and that, Christian or non-Christian, having your head shrunk to the size of an apple was no way of getting to heaven. I wouldn't argue with them. I know what I saw out there.

The pause this time was much longer, the pull on the glass much more lingering. Although I was dying to ask him any amount of questions, yet I refrained from doing so. It is considered bad manners in this part of the world to be too inquisitive. And yet, people do open up when they have spent several months in solitude. They are in need of conversation. If the guide wanted to confide in me, then he would, but in his own good time. Meanwhile, I was content to sit and think over the implications of the story of his attack of fever out there in the jungle by the Yavari river, and how he had been cured by the white men who had turned native.

I think you're like me, the Austrian finally said, putting aside his empty glass. You probably despise as much as I do the narrowness of your own home town. In our towns and villages, a son is expected to follow the same occupation as his father. My father was a musician. He played in the Vienna State Orchestra, so he must have been pretty good. So I had to become a musician. When I was only six years old, I was forced to learn the violin. Twice a week the professor came to our house in Innsbruck. In the late afternoon, when school was finished for the day. I hated that man. Other kids could play football in the street, but I was forced to listen to the most dreadful noises you can imagine, produced by me, against my will, on an instrument I found was becoming more and more repugnant to me. And to think my father put that violin under the Christmas tree. Imagine a

boy of six being landed with a violin when he'd been dreaming of a football!

I nodded my head in sympathy. I could well imagine the anguish of a football-mad six year old.

People in South America are not like the bourgeois Europeans. Here, they do what they want to do, not what their parents want them to do. It doesn't matter a great deal whether or not they make a lot of money. They're just happy doing what comes naturally, and they're proud of doing it.

Look at me for an example. I'm importing hardware by plane from Lima. I sell it down river, on credit. It isn't easy. When my customers see my boat coming, they disappear into the jungle, instead of paying me in rubber or with money. But in the end, I get paid, because we are all friends. It's a happy-go-lucky life. Most people in South America are like me. Think of the Brazilians in Rio. They really are a happy lot. They've got the finest harbour in all the world. What a place to see at night from the cable-car! What wonderful avenues, what luxurious hotels and shops. And they are courteous all the time.

If you compare that with the rat-race in Europe and in the United States: if you remember how the people who live there often have to dig themselves out of the snow and ice, then you begin to appreciate that here in South America *people really are living. They live in paradise on Earth.* It's unhygienic, of course. But people here just don't vegetate from one workday to the next. They're really swinging. That's how I feel about living in South America. Swinging in the sun. That's for me.

At last the Austrian had come to the end of his philosophising. He got up to go, a contented man because he had got things off his chest, and had passed a comfortable hour drinking with me, incidentally, at my expense, I thought that I had listened long enough to ask a question or two, so I detained him with yet another refill of his glass.

That was something like an adventure in the Yavari River, I remarked. Have you had any other adventures like that? Any with animals perhaps?

My intention was to draw him out into revealing some more details about the crazy white men who had turned native. ***Because of the pain-killing tablets he had received, there was little doubt in my own mind that he had perhaps encountered some people similar to Satu Raa.*** But the Austrian guide had exhausted that subject.

I've had many adventures, he admitted. Why, I had one the first week of arriving out here. I was only a youngster of eighteen or so. I told you I couldn't wait to leave Austria and my family. It was the Christmas of nineteen forty-six. I was in the Ucayali country then. I had my base at Pucallpa-Peru, and was just beginning to learn my trade. I had wandered down to the waterside. The river was in full spate, dirty, muddy, treacherous, and alive with piranas. I was watching some native boys searching for turtle eggs. We were on a small beach, smooth and sandy.

Suddenly, one of the boys shouted at the top of his voice. I thought he'd seen something big in the water. Then all the other lads started to make a fuss. They dashed into the water.

They weren't in the water very long. They picked up something and came hurrying back and I looked at what they'd found. It was a baby. A brown little baby girl!

I was shocked. Who would do a thing like that? Of course, I hadn't heard about the little custom of the upstream Indians in the Ucayali country. If the family is hungry: if there are too many babies, then they throw the newborn girls into the river. Ironically, this tribe does not believe in

killing, so they throw the live baby into the water knowing that the fish will get her.

After saving the little girl, those kids stood round looking at the baby. They weren't doing a thing about it. So I stepped in, picked up the baby, and took it along to the Catholic mission in Pucallpa. I explained what had happened to the sisters, and they took the baby in. They thanked me, and invited me along to the christening. They arranged that right away. Instant christening, in case the baby should die of exposure. Maria Navidad they named the child. Maria for the Mother of God, Navidad because she had been found on Christmas Day.

A remarkable story, I replied. As remarkable in its way as your story about the white natives.

He wasn't to be drawn. I took that baby girl a few presents before I left Pucallpa. A bonny kid she was.

Do you know what happened to her? I asked.

I left Pucallpa the following summer. I wrote once a few years later.

The sisters told me they were educating her at a mission school near Lima. I lost touch after that. I'm not much of a letter writer.

At any rate, this story has a happy ending.

Only partly. The sisters told me the baby's mother had been beaten up by her own people. I understand the woman died soon after. Never heard tell of a father. So Maria Navidad must be an orphan.

But you left her in good hands. That was commendable of you, I don't want any medals! Any time you want to disappear into the jungle, just let me know.

He left the hotel. He must have been a hardened drinker, and he had finished a bottle with «gusto.»

I stayed at the bar for a longish time after he had gone. I didn't drink any more. I just wanted to think over the things he had told me. It made sense, what he had told people about his homeland. I had met many of them myself in my travels. Many of the northern people are desperate people with a host of complexes. He was also right, generally speaking, about South America, The climate did make a vast difference. Admittedly, he'd studiously refrained from mentioning the disgusting poverty of the peasant people, and the filthy slums of Caracas, Lima, Bogota, Rio and the other major cities. His point was that as long as there is sunshine the people are, in the main, happy. You rarely find a depressed, desperate person in the sunny South American states. There are people living there as poor as European slum dwellers, but the South American peasant accepts his poverty with a smile. Nor do they fee] their poverty to be a personal disgrace, with an accompanying psychopathic complex, as do the poor of the more northerly countries.

As a matter of interest, I'd noticed that the majority of South Americans seem to work at the happy-go-lucky type of job. They work as fruit juice sellers. The beggars strum guitars. There are the wandering tin-can collectors, the shoe-shine boys, the coconut and candy salesmen, the sellers of onions and rotten vegetables: the third-class meat salesmen: the travellers and representatives who try to get rid of carbon paper, cheap perfume, candlesticks, plastic flowers, cigarette lighters and a host of other junk. Then there are the repairers of fountain-pens, umbrellas, broken windows, and a host of other broken articles, There are the sellers of lottery tickets, newspapers, and funny stories, There are the revendedores of the theatre, the cinema and the other places of entertainment.

There are the cattle minders and the dog watchers, These are the people with the thousand and one happy-go-lucky type jobs. There is simply no end to the imaginative work that will go to the filling of an empty stomach in South America.

I remember one particular fellow I saw in Guayaquil. It was during my previous trip to South America, and I had to go up to Ecuador in connection with the installation of a medium sized milling plant. I had finished work for the day, and after dinner I wandered around the town for an hour or so. I was in the harbour area when I came across a dentist. Late as it was, he was busy at work. His surgery was a table and chair in the forecourt of a large gas station.

His light came from a decrepit gasoline pump. He was dirty looking for a dentist. I discovered that during the day he went from house to house buying up all unwanted dentures. In the evening, he came along and set up his primitive surgery at the gas station. The only instrument this dentist had was a pair of pliers. With these pliers, he yanked out the teeth of his Indian patients. There was no fuss, no bother, no office, no waiting room, no laboratory! just the man, his pliers, his table and his chair. This dentist did not believe in anaesthetics either.

Sometimes, he did give a patient a swig from a bottle of aguardiente, which he kept on the table by his elbow. Aguardiente is ninety-eight per cent pure sugar-cane alcohol, so perhaps he intended the drink to be used for both antiseptic and analgesic purposes. If a patient needed dentures, then he had the choice of the dentist's second hand collection. It did not matter if the poor fellow had just had an extraction. The dentist rummaged among his stock, found a plate with the requisite number of teeth on it, thrust it into his patient's mouth, and told the fellow to bite hard, even though his gums were still bleeding. You could hear him yell with triumph as he found the right plate and rammed it home. That plate will last for ever, he announced, the wording never varying. It will never come out. Off you go, and buy yourself a bottle of aguardiente, alcohol, on your way home.

The dentist ended this exhortation with a great belly laugh, in which his patient nearly always joined. As I say, the South Americans are, basically, a very happy people.

## CHAPTER 5. LIMA.

When I first began to tell about the rather uncomfortable pains of my kidney illness, it was not my intention to bother my readers with a medical history. There is hardly a life without sickness and if everyone of us would start writing about it, there would be no end to it. However, the following pages, I hope, will show my patient friends the reason behind all this.



I have to explain, that at the beginning of the year 1967 after an endless and miserable flight over the snowcovered Andes mountains from Iquitos to Lima, the doctors of the Maison Francais Hospital in Lima ordered an operation.

I went through the usual routine of checks, tests and X-ray pictures. The trouble was located in my right kidney. My doctor explained things to me, and I agreed to have the operation as soon as possible.

I was allocated a very nice room with a private bath on the ground floor of the hospital. An inner door led to an ante-chamber which gave on to the patio-garden, which is a characteristic feature of Latin-American architecture, and shows the Spanish influence that persists in Peru. My quarters were, indeed, very comfortable. I thought that, if I was doomed to die under the knife, then at least I would die in pleasant surroundings.

A friendly sister of Spanish origin took charge of me. At first, it was rather a silent friendship, for after all the tests I felt really wretched once more. However, as the pain subsided, a warm relationship developed between us.

Sister Marta, for that was her name, told me all about her work, and the history of this famous hospital. She also told me about her nostalgia for Spain. Strangely, the climate of Peru did not agree with her, and she longed to get back to Europe. *I was told that I would have my operation some three days after I had been admitted to the Maison Francais Hospital.* I would have liked to have had it right away, but there was little I could do to change the operating theatre time-table. So I resigned myself to putting up with the intermittent pain for another couple of days, and sweat it out in that very pleasantly decorated room.

When I say sweat it out, I really mean what I say. In the months of January and February 1967 Lima was enjoying a heat wave, and in the tropics that means that it is very hot indeed. I kept the windows and the door to the patio open in order to obtain the greatest advantage from what little breeze there was. On the second night that I spent in Maison Francais, I had a very severe bout of pain. *So strong was this agony of mine, that with the pain and the heat of the night, I felt that death would be a welcome relief.* I tried to reach the bell push by the side of my bed. My intention was to summon the night nurse and ask her to give me some pain-killing injection. Automatically, I registered the time by my bedside clock. It was almost three in the morning.

*My groping fingers failed to find the bell push that would summon help and relief. **But I did find something else: a hand that came from the pain-racked night and clasped my own.*** Tormented by pain as I was, I still felt a shock when I found my hand grasped by another slim, warm one. A tiny beam of light pierced the dark. I could make out the features of my nocturnal visitor. ***It was Xiti, Satu Raa's sister.** Without a word, she smiled at me, took off the ring and put one of those healing tablets in my mouth. Quickly, I looked at the ring she had taken. The metal inset, inserted in the band of gold, glowed with its warning light.* Because of the tremendous pain I had not felt the burning rays from my ring.

The red-haired Austrian had given me hope that the Itibi Raayans were still on our own planet. *Now here she was at my bedside, as if in answer to my prayers.* How she had known that I was sick: how she had known where to find me, I did not know. All I was conscious of was her nearness, the sense of utter relief that engulfed me as she sat down on my bed, and the thought that now she was with me, to take from me the horrible pain. *A faint light reflected from the jeweled talking device that I had last seen in Benares.* Still without speaking, Xiti stretched out her hands to me. Her sensitive fingers, from which she had removed the protective finger-tip gloves, ran lightly over my face with gossamer touch. I did not know how long she had been in the room before she revealed her presence. I do not know how long her healing fingers soothed my sweating, fevered face. But I do know that what with her ministrations and the swift effect of the tablet, the pain eased



from my body and I wallowed in the peace.

**I was free of pain.** Even the fever left me. In that moment, I took Xiti into my arms, inhaling the sweet strangeness of her lovely body. Because of the closeness of our embrace, Xiti, hiding her mouth behind a minute veil of silk, I later found out that they use this in order to avoid infection, struggled to free herself, pouring broken little melodic nothings into my receptive ears.

Xiti stayed with me. We saw dawn come grey-rose, saw the Catholic sisters make their way to chapel, heard their singing to welcome the new tropical day. It was then that I asked her the question that had been bothering me: ***how did she know I was in South America, in Lima, in this hospital?*** She told me about a nurse called Maria Navidad she wanted to see, but had hesitated to do so because of several problems involved. It so happened, that this was the young lady rescued by the mestizos and the Austrian guide near the town of Pucallpo on the Ucayali river, rescued as a baby and raised as an orphan by the sisters. «We knew her mother», Xiti informed me, and what she told me is almost impossible to believe: the mother of the baby had been terribly beaten. Near death, the Indian woman had been rescued by the out-of-space biologists, having found her near their first landing site. After healing the Indian woman, she was taken to Itibi Raa 2, where she died soon after. *She could not adjust herself to the different planet and yet had not wanted to return to earth, so great her fear had been.* But, as Xiti later informed me, she died the way all Itibi Raayans die: in peace and happiness.

The mother of Maria Navidad must have been some kind of a celebrity on that planet and the humanistic people had wanted to know as much about the former life she had led on earth and in particular about the baby, that Xiti asked me to talk to Maria Navidad as she hesitated to do so herself.

As I considered myself a very sick man, I told Xiti about the coming operation, but she smiled softly and said: *You shall be free of pain for six of your months. And right she was. All this may be checked by any one of my readers: I became the miracle patient of the famous Maison Francais Hospital in Lima, Peru.* When the doctors came around to put me on the operating table, I had already eaten a very heavy breakfast, a thing I had not done for almost three weeks. I had gotten out of bed, a new man in need of a hot and cold bath. Feeling perfectly well, I had ventured outside and eaten in one of the little Chinese coffee-shops, the Chifas, as they are called in Ecuador, Bolivia and Peru.

**Xiti was right. I was able to report that I had not so much as a single twinge of pain: nor, although I was not to know it at that time, despite Xiti's optimism, did I have any symptoms of kidney trouble for almost exactly the time she had indicated. I never enjoyed such good health as I experienced during the ensuing year, without so much as a cold, a headache, toothache, or any other ache or pain to which man is heir.**

You should have seen the raised eyebrows, the looks of disbelief among the medical people when, instead of being wheeled into the operating theatre, I told them I was going to discharge myself as cured. They could tell just by looking at me that I was infinitely better, and although they agreed to postpone the operation, they insisted that I should remain in the hospital at least until the next day in order to make another series of exhaustive tests, and also to ensure themselves that I did not have a relapse. This I agreed to do, for I had to kill time for a day until an appointment I had with Xiti, to be at the sky-room of the Hotel Grillon.

For the rest of the day I submitted myself to all the tests and checks that the doctors could

devise. They were all negative. The Catholic sisters were ready to believe in a miracle, the doctors continued to raise their eyebrows. Well, Hm, Well, said a puzzled surgeon. You're as fit as a flea.

Then I can be discharged tomorrow morning, I said.

I see no reason why not.

I shall be grateful then if you would arrange it.

Certainly. This really is baffling, the doctor said again. Yesterday you were a very sick man, and to-day you seem to be a different person.

I must have been visited by an angel during the night, I replied, making a feeble joke.

You must have been, he agreed, looking at me sharply. But my face gave nothing away, and he left me in order to make the necessary arrangements for my discharge from hospital.

Sister Marta was much more positive when she came back to my room. The saints be praised, she announced. A very miracle if ever I've seen one.

Whatever it is, I am profoundly thankful, I told her. Not that I'm ungrateful for what you've done for me. I really felt very ill when I arrived here.

You were, she affirmed.

Sister Marta, I asked, do you know a colleague of yours who works in this hospital. Sister Maria Navidad?

Indeed I do. Not a nursing sister, you understand, she finished her finals at the beginning of this year. She's over in Men's Medical. Sister Marta favoured me with a very shrewd look. Do you think I could have a word with her, please? I returned it as blandly as I could.

Very well. I will see to it.

She was as good as her word. I was sitting on the patio after lunch, luxuriating in the hot sunshine, when a young nurse, who could hardly have been more than twenty, came up to my patio bench.

Good afternoon, she began. Sister Marta informs me you wanted to see me.

Indeed I do, nurse, I replied in Spanish, getting to my feet, forgive my taking this very personal interest in you, but I would like to take some pictures of you and Sister Marta before I have to go.

Naturally, good natured as all the Latins are, she agreed and even smiled together with Sister Marta as I took the photos.

Neither sister Marta nor Maria Navidad could possibly understand this sudden interest, but when Sister Marta left the patio I immediately turned to Maria Navidad and told her about the Austrian guide and how I was informed about the rescue of a tiny little baby so many years ago. I wanted to make her talk, to hear her version of all this, but the young lady did not say a word. She just stood there as struck by thunder and suddenly, after I had said something about having heard from other people about her mother, I saw two tiny little pearls, the tears of a motherless child, running down her cheeks.

I felt deeply ashamed.





At 10 a.m. the flowing morning, I paid my hospital bill, said goodbye to Sister Marta, caught a taxi, and checked in at the Hotel Crillon. There were no vacancies, so I had to content myself by making a reservation for the earliest possible time, and took myself to the Savoy, where I was given a room on the tenth floor.

I unpacked, strolled on to the balcony, and << admired the view. It was a stupendous, panoramic view of most of Lima, a magnificent kaleidoscope that stretched as far as the eye could see to the

protecting hills of Chosica. I was on top of the world again and in more senses than one.

I have always liked to let things simmer before making new decisions, and I therefore decided not to go to my office. Instead, I went to the movies, had a good dinner and, as soon as the clock struck twelve at night, I left my room and made my way to the Crillon nearby. The laggard lift delayed my entrance to the Sky Room, where an orchestra was playing Mexican melodies.

Xiti had arrived before me, and this surprised me very much, as a decent young lady wouldn't venture into a night-club unaccompanied, even though the night-club of the Sky Room at the Hotel Crillon is to be considered as one of the best, if not the very best, in all Peru. Sure enough, there were suspicious and curious glances from well dressed people nearby.

Immediately, and because of the minute blue veil she wore, people noticed the subtle difference between her and 'ourselves', our people, from our planet. By this, I mean not just cultured Peruvians, or the many Europeans and North Americans staying at this famous first class hotel, but even the less instructed bell-boys and lift-operators, stared at Xiti, But, instead of finding her embarrassed or shy, she looked at me and everybody with the greatest of ease.

I ordered a Tom Collins for her and had a double scotch, which made me ask her to dance. I am old fashioned enough to think that our nervous system, on which we depend so much for our erotic titillation, cannot be unknown territory to those from another world. I found this to be correct and particularly correct with the soft music and the wonderful theme-song of Pedro Infante: *Amorcito Corazon*.



Outside the Sky Room window millions of lights, the lights of a fairyland Lima, the lights of Lima by <night -which is a different light to the daylight of the endless slums, the lights of human illusions, were blazing and glittering while the music was playing. An unforgettable evening and I left her, floating on air.

During the next few days, I was able to find out many things concerning the precautionary measures protecting Xiti. It is an interesting fact that Xiti's feeling of security is connected with the kindness and

superior intelligence of these people. Their belief that no human being on earth can really harm them because of what she called **amat mayna**, or their science of soul, we do not understand. *They are able to read our very thoughts and not only are they able to take their precautions but may be able to influence our thoughts should this be necessary because of security reasons.* It is evident that I was very curious about this.

When I asked her about it, she did not want to explain, and only much later was I able to get the details about their precautionary measures.

For two days I had the pleasure of wandering through public and private libraries, museums, an English club, churches, shops, supermarkets, up and down the famous Calle de la Union. As we could not speak to each other while in public, we appraised everything by the touch of our hands or little gestures. Because of the wonderful physical and mental well being after days and weeks of pain, *I looked upon this short time I spent with Xiti as the happiest couple of days in my entire life.* A period of convalescence. Perhaps this was all due to the life-saving tablet she had given me. If I come to think of it, my mental clairvoyance during these days was simply extraordinary. It was the first time that I understood the way these people feel about time. I really understood how they feel about 'life'.

You see, we human beings think of life as a period, where we have to hurry things. To our friends from out of space this looks as if we are afraid of life itself. As if life was the worst part of our destiny, as if it were a great misfortune. Of course, as so many people still suffer on our planet, how can this be considered otherwise? But being with Xiti, I suddenly began to see things their way: relaxed, they are, and perhaps more than relaxed, they are just infallibly considerate to everything. Xiti's interest, for instance, in music was something wonderful to experience. At the entrance of the Calle de la Union in Lima there is a record shop. Already, passing the Hotel Bolivar on the Placa de San Martin, Xiti's acoustic nerves had taken up the rhythm of this shop's loudspeaker playing some Columbian cumbias. She really liked that and there is reason to suppose that it would have been no better, or let's say cultured, if she had listened to Beethoven instead. She simply liked the rhythm of cumbia. Seldom have I seen a happier look on someone's face as this strange woman passed the record store. How many people on our earth, I thought, are able to enjoy the forces of rhythm as much as Xiti did?

At the time in Lima, I did not know that I would soon be able to experience the great sensitive activities of these people; that I would hear about their work, their beneficial and health-restoring religion, their very life and death. The highly abnormal circumstances into which I was drawn, were never exhausting; as a matter of fact, they were agreeable to my health. I simply liked to be with Xiti, and when she asked me if I would want to meet her brother, I was very pleased to accept her invitation.

Footnote here: one of the most enjoyable pleasures was offering several beautifully carved gold ingots, which Xiti asked me to exchange for the local currency. This rare and rather novel method of converting into local currency took place on the second floor of one of the old Spanish style commercial houses in **union street in Lima.**>

Even though quite a few adventurers and not too well dressed Indian natives are still trading in gold, like in the old western times, in Bolivia, Equador and Peru, the beautifully melted and carved ingots, surprised the specialists.

*(picture not from book, but from this street.)*



On the 17th of February 1967, the week of the summer zenith of the Peruvian year, we left Lima at a quarter to eight. Loaded with packages and suit-cases crammed full of books, records, seeds, and God knows what else that Xiti had bought, our train journey was to take us over the highest railroad pass which has ever been constructed.

continues.