



FERNANDO MORAIS WITH FIDEL CASTRO.

Jose R. Myar Baruecos



PIETRO DI DONATO WITH ALDO MORO'S CONFESSOR



TOM EYEN



PHILIP CIOFFARI

Giuseppe Ruggeri

Betty Ann Mosser

# HOUSECALL

"The Italian government keeps coming up with *cafones* ["clowns"], like that little printer they caught in September," says novelist **Pietro Di Donato**, author of "Christ in Plastic" (page 74). "But the real killers of Aldo Moro will never be found. Neither side will permit it." Last spring, after Moro was kidnapped and executed by Red Brigades terrorists, *Penthouse* sent Di Donato, author of the classic proletarian novel *Christ in Concrete*, to Italy. He had a slim lead: a five-year acquaintance with a political radical who had access to the *Brigate Rosse*. For two months Di Donato interviewed friends of the Moro family, police, politicians, priests, and two men directly involved in the Moro abduction. From the assembled material, Di Donato has reconstructed Moro's last days, and he paints a picture of a modern, synthetic crucifixion—a soulless political drama that has more in common with television entertainment than with ideology. "The Italian people didn't care about Moro until he was killed," says Di Donato. Afterward, they felt sorry for his family. What about the Red Brigades? There is a lot of sympathy for them in the streets, just because the people know how corrupt the government is. In Rome they tell a joke that expresses the cynicism of the common man: "If the Red Brigades win, the Vatican will simply bless them and everything will go on as usual."

Since the revolution in 1959, Cuba has united in the shadow of **Fidel Castro**, an improbable giant on the twentieth-century political landscape. In this month's *Penthouse* interview (page 96), conducted by Brazilian political reporter **Fernando Morais**, Castro emerges as a calmly logical, if not persuasive, salesman—as willing to praise as he is to condemn. Castro calls President Carter a "man of ethics" but denounces the capitalistic society that he leads as a system "written in blood and in war." Although welcoming the possibility of a thaw in Cuban-American relations, Castro insists on a total abolishment of a blockade he considers outrageously irrational and unjust. When asked to explain the presence of Cuban troops in Africa, Castro claims that they are there only to fight racism and colonialism; he then asks in turn how we can justify stationing American troops in Cuban territory against the Cuban will. It's a compelling discussion with one of today's most adroit political leaders.

If tough, self-made megalomaniacs tend to rule the world, similar men, on a smaller stage, tend to run the movie business. Earl Owensby, a self-made entrepreneur now producing and directing unabashed B movies, was a red-neck, born-again Baptist from Selby, N.C., who decided that he didn't have to do things the established "professional" way in order to make a killing. It seems

not. This self-made mogul has gotten so rich by making low-budget blood-and-violence action films that he now puts Hollywood on hold, rather than vice versa. In "Earl Owensby" (page 108), journalist and film columnist **Tom Buckley** profiles this colorful teetotaler who drives a Rolls-Royce, calls his own shots, and isn't at all reluctant to pat himself on the back.

Such self-importance may be amusing, but it can also be tragic. In "Guarding the Body of the King" (page 104), author **Philip Cioffari** explores the tormented and distorted mind of a rock star's chief bodyguard, who sees his job as one of earthshaking importance and predictably crumbles when his legendary employer suddenly dies. This story is one in a forthcoming collection by Cioffari in which all the stories spring from actual events in contemporary American life.

Another contemporary phenomenon inspiring fictional treatment this month is the disco craze, satirized to a Travolta turn by playwright **Tom Eyden**, who is best known for his Off-Broadway send-ups of sleaze *The Neon Woman* and *Women behind Bars*. Eyden has received an Emmy nomination for his scripting of the Bette Midler NBC television special. Here, in "Silva Mirrors: A Disco Disaster" (page 156), an excerpt from an upcoming book by the same name, Eyden pokes fun at the beautiful disco people who worship their mirrors, boogie to anyone's drummer, and measure their worth by the number of times they make a gossip column—or a superstar.

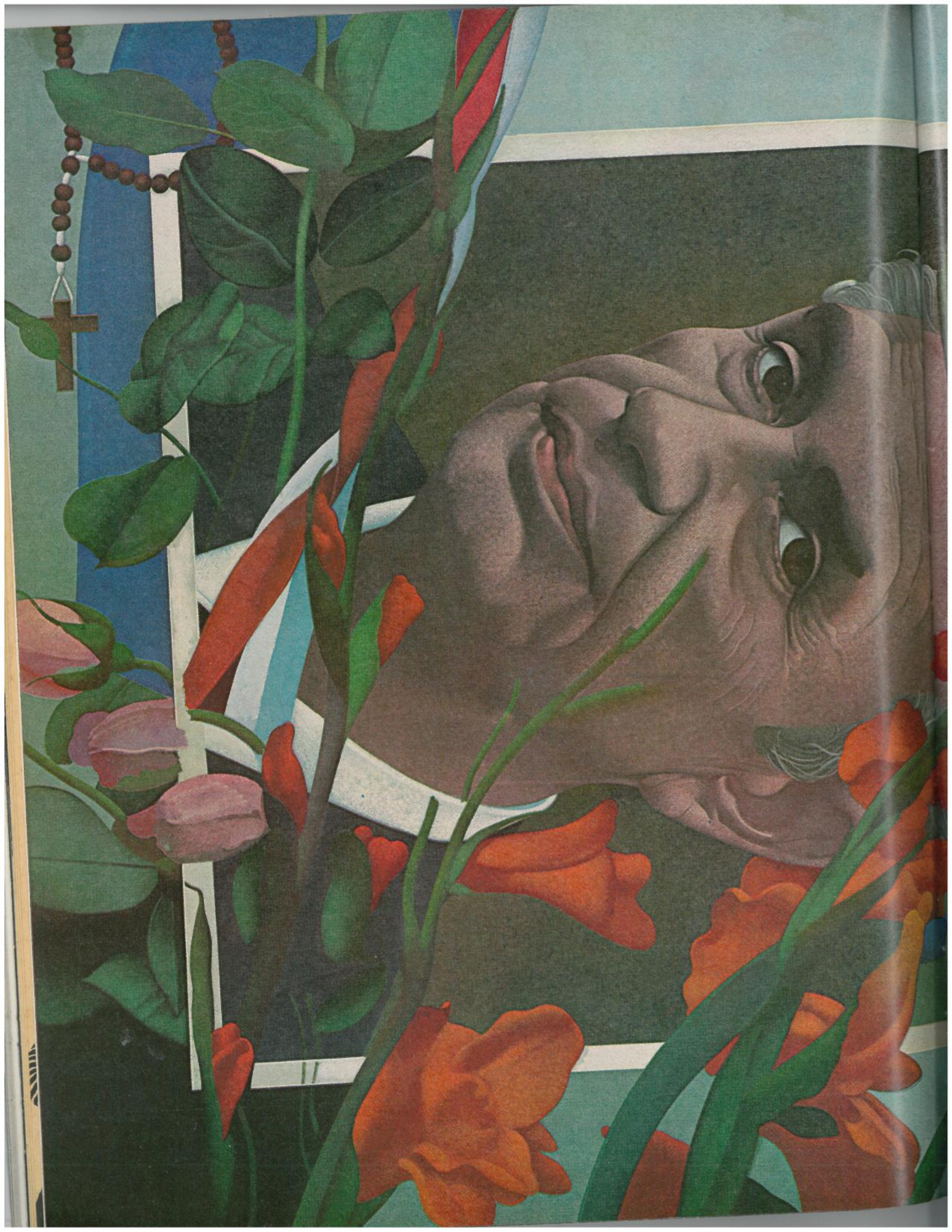
Set in some hypothetical future, "I Remember Christmas," a satire by **Jeff Greenfield** (page 164), looks longingly back on a Christmas when the kiddies curled up on Trevira polyester rugs before the annual Christmas special on the Trinitron, when holiday feasts came prepackaged in decorative foil and warmed in a microwave oven, and when Christmas "snow" came in grams instead of drifts.

And while you're still chuckling at Greenfield's "Bah, humbug!" attitude, take a look at "Drenched in Sexual Shame" (page 152), an important essay by regular *Penthouse* contributor **Robert S. Wieder**, who deplores the fact that the sexual revolution, while taking the sin out of sex, simultaneously robs it of much of its fun. "All the taboos are gone," laments our jaded author, "so long as you don't draw crowds and clean up afterward."

And then, turning from humor to the solemnity of the season, **Bill Lee** once again offers his traditional spiritual message to *Penthouse* readers (page 144), wherever they may be.

Finally, as an extra added attraction to one and all, let those visions of sugarplums step aside while you behold our sumptuous December Pets—the kind of glittery Yuletide companions that would melt the heart of Ebenezer Scrooge. And as a special gift to our loyal readers, we are including herewith a delightful 1979 desk calendar, adorned with the kind of pet reminders that make the merest date a memorable one. Merry Christmas and, of course, a most prosperous and happy New Year! ☺









# CHRIST IN PLASTIC

Crucified, Aldo Moro was worth more votes to the Christian Democrats than he was breathing; the Red Brigades shot him eleven times, then wrapped him in orange vinyl.

On March 16, 1978, Aldo Moro, president of Italy's ruling party, the Christian Democrats, was kidnapped by terrorists, an act setting off the greatest manhunt in history and seriously shaking the Italian government. On May 8 Moro was killed when the government refused to exchange thirteen terrorist leaders for him. *Penthouse* sent Pietro Di Donato, an Italian-American novelist and the author of *Christ in Concrete*, to cover the story.

For months the Aldo Moro case called worldwide attention to the existence of the *Brigate Rosse*—Italy's Red Brigades—but for all of its saturation coverage, the media never talked to a BR member. Small wonder. Italians talk only to other Italians.

Five years ago, while writing a movie script in Italy, I met, through a Communist senator (who would today like to forget the whole thing), a man whom I'll call R1. He was a successful

BY PIETRO DI DONATO



businessman; he was also a revolutionary, though there was no talk of the then-non-violent Red Brigades.

Since I travel to Italy frequently, we kept in touch. When I began to believe that R1 was in earnest, was really involved in antigovernment actions, my interest deepened; I'd joined the Communist party on August 23, 1927, the day capitalism killed Sacco and Vanzetti; I was sixteen. Out of their deaths and the earlier death of my father, Geremio, came my novel *Christ in Concrete*. Since then I've grown more sophisticated about the nature of all political groups—I'm no longer a card carrier—but I've kept on searching.

Last May I returned to Rome for the Moro affair. I was prepared to try to use R1 and to let him try to use me, and I think the bargain worked out fine. Through R1 I met another man—I might as well call him R2—who had access to the master cell that kidnapped and executed Aldo Moro. I spent two months interviewing the two Brigatisti, friends of the Moro family, police, journalists, political observers, priests—whichever would talk to me. From the material I gathered I allowed myself the license to portray Moro's fifty-four-day ordeal and crucifixion.

The word sacrifice, from the Latin, means "to make holy." R1 and I discussed the taking of life—the bloodiest and cruelest and perhaps the most necessary act visited upon man by man—from the little Jewish carpenter of Nazareth, to the never-ending bloodbath of war, to my illiterate bricklayer father, sacrificed in concrete to the Great God Job, to Aldo Moro, the synthetic savior of the Christian Democrats, the crucified politician, the modern plastic Christ.

The killers of Aldo Moro will never be found. . . . His mutual sacrificers will not permit it.—P. D. D.

ROME, MARCH 16, 1978

Aldo Moro, the Godfather of the ruling Christian Democrats, has espresso and pastry, shaves, dresses in a conservative suit, and listens to the cautionary counsel of his homely wife, Eleonora.

It is 8:30 A.M. The bell rings; the voice from the intercom at the street entrance is that of Marshal Oreste Leonardi, Moro's protecting shadow. Eleonora Moro tells him to come up with his boys for coffee. The ritual occurs every morning as though for the first time.

Hats in hand, the bodyguards enter. They wear civilian clothes. With the marshal are Domenico Ricci, the son of peasants and Moro's chauffeur for twenty years; young Giulio Rivera, from a Campobasso farm; chunky Raffaele Iozzino, a laborer's son; and Francesco Zizzi, also from a poor family. Zizzi is elated. It is his first day in the envious job; he is replacing Officer Gentiluomo, who has suddenly and inexplicably left Moro's employ (and who subsequently disappears). "My whole family lit candles to Our Lady of Fatima in gratitude for my being given the honor of guarding the precious life of the president of the

Christian Democrat party," Zizzi babbles to Mrs. Moro.

In the Balduina section of Rome, four men of the Red Brigades (*Brigate Rosse*), wearing the blue hats, insignia, and uniforms of Alitalia pilots, pack machine guns in airline bags.

At 8:30 A.M. they are driven in a white Fiat 128, with a Diplomatic Corps license plate, toward Monte Mario, the Roman suburb where Moro lives. Simultaneously, from separate points of departure, three more Fiats, carrying seven men and a blonde, and a motorcyclist dressed as a policeman head for Monte Mario. The white Fiat stops at the curb on upper Via Mario Fani. The two men in front remain in the car. The four "pilots" casually walk one block to the intersection of Via Mario Fani and Via Stresa and stand chatting in front of a closed bar. The corner is a bus stop for Alitalia limousine service to Leonardo da Vinci airport. The three other cars and the "policeman"

6

Zucor told Moro:  
"You are an  
embarrassment now to  
church and state.  
Crucified, you may be  
of more use."

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on his high-powered motorcycle park behind the white Fiat. Several other commandos, dressed as telephone workers, stand by to sabotage telephone lines.

Two housewives come out of the corner apartment building opposite the bus stop. One has a dog on a leash. They comment on the absence of a florist, Antonio Spiritichio, and his wife. In any weather the two arrive in a van each morning to set up flowers on the sidewalk. Today is crisp and sunny. They should be here.

An old man on a balcony feeds and talks to his canaries. A police car filled with carabinieri races by, speeding dangerously for no reason, as usual. A few middle-aged professional men leave home.

The BR has worked on this operation for months. In Czechoslovakia they rehearsed the ambush to come with cars and dummies—each move laid out geometrically, pinpointed and timed. The night before, two of them had gone to Via Angelo Brunetti 38, where the florist Spiritichio lives, and slashed the tires of his Ford van so that it wouldn't obstruct their shooting. (They planned to do a lot of it.)

Aldo Moro bids his wife and three of his four

grown children *adieu*. Eleonora goes about her chores.

The leader of the Christian Democrats leaves his house at Via del Forte Trionfale 79 and gets into his blue Fiat 130. Moro is a methodical man. People in the neighborhood are familiar with his habits and route. Each morning he stops to pray at the church of Santa Chiara, pauses at his favorite newsstand to buy the official organs of the six Italian political parties, and then goes on to government business. (On the night before, however, Moro had told Leonardi that, for safety's sake, they would use a new, devious way to get to the seat of government in the center of Rome. Then he phoned Leonardi and told him he'd decided to go along Via Mario Fani, as usual. The Red Brigades commandos were apprised of both changes. They also knew neither of Moro's cars was bulletproof.)

Domenico Ricci drives carefully. By his side is Marshal Leonardi; Aldo Moro is in the left rear seat. The official escort car, a white 130 Alfa Romeo "Alfetta" model, carrying Rivera, Zizzi, and Iozzino, follows.

Many aviation personnel live in Monte Mario. An airline employee, spotting the four Alitalia "pilots," stops his sports car and says he has room for two passengers. They thank him and say they'll wait for the Alitalia limousine, due shortly, because they want to stay together.

At the newsstand the vendor praises Moro for having shaped the new coalition—meaning Moro's "historic compromise" with Enrico Berlinguer and the Communists. This very morning a new government will be formed; forty-six elected officials, members of Moro's Christian Democrats and Berlinguer's *Partito Comunista Italiano* (PCI), will be selected.

The two Moro cars leave the newsstand at 8:55. Moro hates fast driving. He glances at *Paesa Sera*, the Communist paper, and *Il Messaggero*, then reads about himself in *Il Giorno*. *Il Giorno* emphasizes the loyalty to Moro of Italian President Giovanni Leone, Prime Minister Giulio Andreotti, Senate President Amintore Fanfani, and Christian Democrat Secretary Benigno Zaccagnini. Moro has to smile. Fanfani is openly maneuvering for his job. They are all about as trustworthy as vampires.

At 9:00 Ricci drives by the landmark of Forte Trionfale; three minutes later he turns left on Via Mario Fani.

The commandos' white Fiat begins to trail the Moro cars. The other three BR cars follow it. Ahead, on the corner, the pilots unzip their bags and step into the street. A few yards from the intersection of Via Stresa and Via Fani, the white Fiat speeds up, passes Moro's car, swerves in front of it, and stops dead. Ricci jams on the brakes to avoid a collision, and the second Moro guard car bangs into him, shaking everyone slightly. Moro, engaged with the political news, pays little attention.

Before Moro's guards can react, the BR commandos open fire. The telephone lines are cut at the precise moment the shooting



starts. The two men from the white Fiat and the pilots are blasting away from the front and street sides, the fake motorcycle cop and commandos from the other three cars from the rear. They fire hundreds of bullets, riddling each guard from head to waist. Only young Iozzino makes it out of the second Moro car, and the automatic-weapons fire nearly cuts him in half.

Moro, cringing, is spattered with the blood and brains of his guards. He is dragged from his car. In his fright he clings to his portfolio, as if it can save him, but in the street he drops it and begins crying: "Please let me go—what do you want of me?" The BR commandos abandon their white car, shove Moro into one of the others, then screech out of Via Fani, turning right at the corner, and roaring up Via Stresa. The motorcyclist brings up the rear.

The whole operation takes less than a minute.

The BR cars turn on Via Trionfale and race to Via Casale De Bustis. Two of the cars stop and transfer Moro to a waiting car. Then everyone goes in different directions.

Moro is held on the floor and drugged; taking him any distance is hazardous, despite the sabotaging of the telephone lines. The car containing Moro and two of the Alitalia "pilots," who have now ditched their hats and coats, slows down and pulls into the cavernous underground garage of a large apartment complex in Balduina, just ten minutes away. The garage attendants

are BR, prepared to receive Moro.

There was an unnatural quiet in Via Fani. Then the residents came out to safely view the bodies. Young, fat Iozzino was sprawled in the gutter with outstretched arms, red openings in his groin, chest, arms, and face. A woman placed *Il Giorno* over him, but a breeze blew the sports section from his indifferent face. In the escort car, Zizzi and Rivera, painted with blood, looked like they'd been flung by the hand of God or the devil. In Moro's car Marshal Leonardi's head was pressed on driver Ricci's chest, and Ricci's bloody mouth was on Leonardi's forehead, as though kissing him.

Via Mario Fani became a Verdi opera; police, carabinieri, and the army came careening at breakneck speed, sirens screaming. Armed helicopters hovered, as though they could fight and destroy the Red Brigades at the scene of the crime. Then came Cardinal Poletti, vicar of Rome, reinforced by his monsignors and priests.

Eleonora Moro and her four children arrived. The poor woman went from corpse to corpse. She said to people: "I knew each. They were good boys. I would rather have wept the death of my husband than to see these so young dead."

Before RAI Telegiornale television cameras, the politicians came and held Eleonora's hands. They vowed fidelity and solidarity, love and prayers. They vowed all aid

to redeem her kidnapped husband.

In his high voice, fascist Republican Ugo La Malfa said, "We are in a state of war. We need the death penalty returned!" Socialist Bettino Craxi brayed incomprehensibly. Prime Minister Andreotti, in his government building, vomited with excitement and had to change his clothes. Francesco Cossiga, minister of the interior and head of security, became hysterical. He called the Pentagon and the CIA, the *Bundeskriminalamt* specialists in Wiesbaden, Scotland Yard, the French Secret Service, the League of Private Detectives, and all departments of his police. He ordered thousands of carabinieri, granatieri, and bersaglieri from such distant places as Sicilia, Calabria, and Sardegna called out. "I want every telephone in Italy controlled!" he shouted.

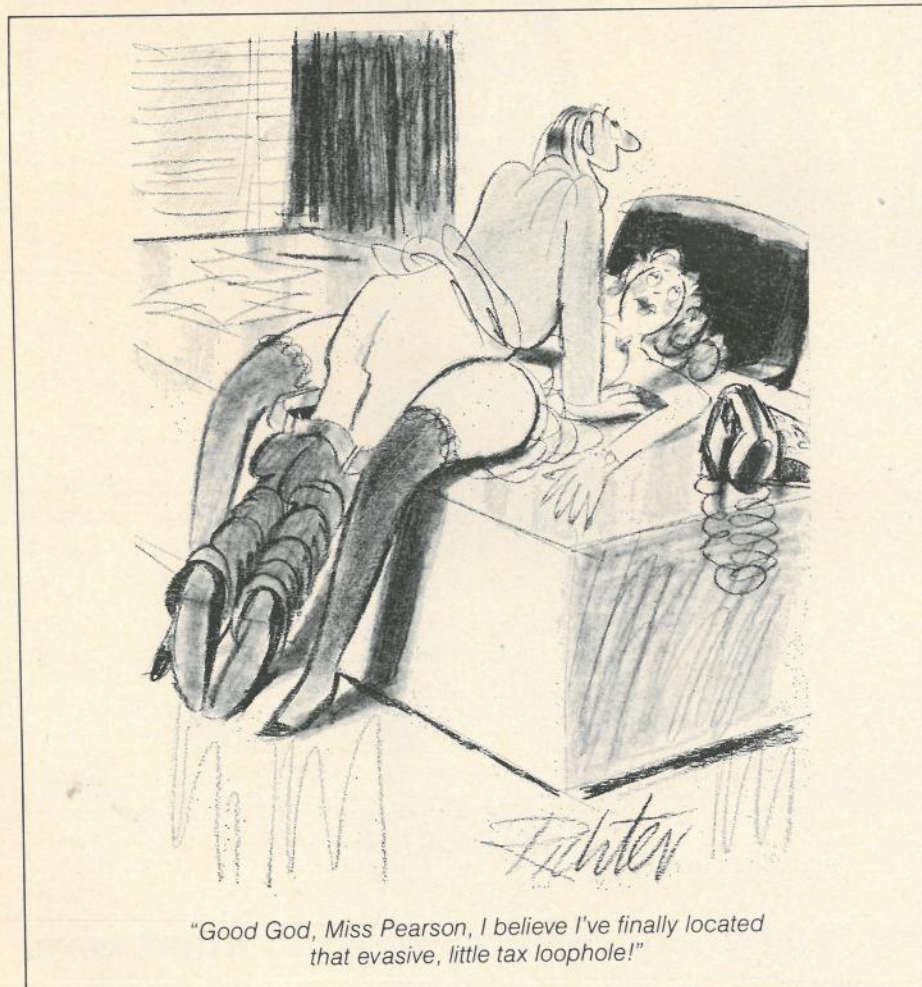
The BR called the major newspapers, saying they had killed "Cossiga's leather-heads" and kidnapped Aldo Moro. But so did the Walter Alasia Column of Revolutionary Action, the Armed Proletarian Cells (NAP), the Group Action Partisans (GAP), and the Baader-Meinhof gang.

The little Sardinian duke and millionaire head of Italy's Communist party, "the father of Euro-Communism," Enrico Berlinguer, swore that it was all a plot by multinational conglomerates. According to "the cybernetics of probabilities," it was the "last psychological chess move of universal capitalism" that was subsidizing the "fake Communists" of the Red Brigades to commit atrocities in order to shock the good people of the world and turn them against his Italian Communist party.

The families of the guards came to Via Fani to identify the bodies. Detectives and reporters questioned residents. An old lady said a woman had been in command of the *Brigatisti*, a blonde who barked orders in German. The Secret Police received a call from a guttural female voice: "Aldo mit uns!" A man at a window said the leader had been a bearded fat man who shouted with a Milanese accent. A woman reported that she had photographed the ambush and turned the film over to the police, but it "disappeared." No two stories agreed.

The florist, Antonio Spiriticchio, and his wife were seized and given the third degree. A neighbor who had a grudge against him said Spiriticchio was a *Brigatista*. Another swore she'd taken her dog out at dawn to pee and had seen two men slashing the tire of Spiriticchio's Ford van. She'd called the police. They did not appear. Other neighbors spoke on the florist's behalf. Antonio Spiriticchio, then was treated as a hero. Mrs. Spiriticchio was even interviewed on television. She said she had seen the killings and the kidnapping of Aldo Moro and gave a stirring, detailed account—never mind that she was ten miles away, helping her husband remove the flat tires of the van, when the slaughter happened. Italians don't care whether a story is true or not so long as it is well told.

In his Turin prison, Renato Curcio, founder of the Red Brigades, and twelve other BR members under charges of "kneecap-





ping" (shooting government officials and businessmen in the knees) and subversion, heard the news on the radio while in the exercise yard. They raised their fists, shouted revolutionary slogans, and sang "The Red Flag."

Pope Paul VI sent Eleonora Moro a telegram: "I desire to express my alarm and unity with you at the ambush that snatched your beloved consort and cut off the lives of five innocents. . . ." Fanfani, Berlinguer, Zaccagnini, and the rest of Aldo's comrades and "friends to the end" called Eleonora in the night. Their messages were like that of the pope: saccharine hope and no commitment.

Eleonora talked with her children: Maria Fida, a journalist with the *Gazzetta del Mezzogiorno*; Anna, a pediatrician; Agnese, a librarian; and Giovanni, a law student. Each was a child of our time, an intellectual of the far left who had condemned the father's reactionary establishment. They spoke of the kidnapping in 1974 of the hated Genovese prosecutor, fascist Mario Sossi, in the BR's Operation Sunflower.

The BR had tried Sossi, sentenced him to death, and then said they would release him if certain BR prisoners were freed. Sossi and his wife implored the government to negotiate. It refused. So Sossi and his wife clamored to the newspapers that his fellow politicians had cynically signed his death warrant. The only moral government in Italy was the press. The BR in Genoa,

having made their point and using the propaganda to gain sympathy with the people, released Sossi without condition after holding him for a month.

"But," said Eleonora, "the situation with Papa is different. Until now the BR has not killed anyone. With Papa, they went past the point of no return. Now they will go all the way. I had a chill from the ambiguous demeanor of Pope Paul and Zaccagnini and the others. They will stand, cowardly, on the mythical honor of church and state and become our mortal enemies."

It was Eleonora who had said in 1964: "To me the political world is inhuman. Within these walls [the Moro apartment] shall prevail only human sentiments!" Hard to believe, but Moro was forbidden to talk politics in his own home.

Security head Cossiga—who owed his career to Moro and claimed to love him with all his heart—overnight turned Italy into a police state. The police actually searched the labyrinthine underground garage in the apartment building where the master cell held Aldo Moro, but their inspection was superficial. They chatted with the *Brigatisti* garage attendants, then cleared the place of suspicion. In a gesture of contempt, the BR drove back to within a block of the scene of the massacre on Via Fani and abandoned the three ambush cars.

MARCH 18

At noon the BR called Ezio Pasera, who is a

reporter for *Il Messaggero*.

"This is the Red Brigades."

"If you're the Red Brigades," said Pasera, "I'm Buffalo Bill."

But the caller was calm and serious: "In the underpassage between Largo Argentina and Via Arenual there is a booth with a Xerox machine. On top, under a ream of paper, is a yellow business envelope. In it you will find Communication Number One and a photo."

Pasera hastened, knowing that all press phones were tapped. He got there before the cops and found the envelope. The message was a declaration of war upon the system of "corrupt clowns" of the government and announced the beginning of a protracted trial of the prisoner before the so-called peoples' tribunal. Reactionaries subsequently said that the BR had already slain Moro and that the photo was a montage. But experts said it was an authentic Polaroid: Moro with an open white shirt was seated before a big banner that said BRIGATE ROSSE; the BR emblem, a five-pointed star in a circle, was clearly visible. Moro had a querulous, mocking, anti-climactic expression: lucid apprehension confronting grotesque destiny.

That afternoon saw the funeral of the guards in the church of San Lorenzo.

*The Red Brigades are referred to by the "Sbirri" and "Sgherri"—the police and their agent provocateurs—as the "Bierre," the Italian phonetic pronunciation for the letters B and R. Italians like laconic labels, and so the press and magazines always reduce "Brigate Rosse" to the simple "BR."*

*In its fledgling days the BR had no precise setup. But after two notable betrayals by alleged members Marco Pisetta and an unsavory ex-priest, Silvano Girotto, that led to the arrest of Renato Curcio, the BR perfected an organic structure of autonomous cells. Each cell has three members. Six cells in a pyramid form a nucleus. The national pyramid is a foolproof construction of all the successive, autonomous pyramids. The BR is like a worm cut into many parts. It exists as separate entities. When police chance upon a cell, the captured don't know the whole BR operation and thus cannot betray it. The Sbirri don't get blood from stones. So they content themselves with irrelevant units. For cosmetic reasons they falsify their findings.*

*It is not easy to get into the BR. Leading members include psychologists, who critically evaluate prospective joiners. The traitors Pisetta and Girotto proved a lesson.*

"Zucor"—not his real name—the director of the master cell in charge of the March 16 operation, received the president of the Christian Democrats with civility. The BR, Zucor told Moro, were not brigands like the bums kidnapping wealthy industrialists throughout the country. The BR was an as yet unrecognized political group at war with the "legitimate" régime. No matter what you called the régime, it was dominated, as through the centuries, by family



"We've walked four blocks at 2:00 AM without being mugged, molested, or panhandled. Now THAT'S what I call a miracle on 34th street!"



dynasties, landowners, corporations, and foreigners—particularly American interests. Moro had to admit that, no? So Moro was not kidnapped for money; he was a political prisoner. Moro grunted at Zucor and asked if political prisoners needed to be trussed up like chickens.

The BR master-cell hideout in which Moro was to be held for the next fifty-four days had been a year in preparation. It was a soundproof dead-storage space in a huge, anonymous apartment building; entry was made through a false wall. It was stocked with enough provisions so that entries were minimal—once a day at most, at a prearranged hour that changed constantly. *Brigatisti* attendants working in the underground garage were on guard twenty-four hours. Zucor did not even chance an illegal telephone.

A doctor examined Moro. He was anemic and had a cyst of the thyroid and some degeneration of the left kidney. Otherwise, he wasn't too bad.

Italy is a small place. It turned out that Zucor and Moro were not strangers.

Zucor and Moro recalled meeting through the Communist writer, Carlo Levi. Moro had been minister of public education, Fanfani was president, and Angelo Roncalli had just become Pope John XXIII. Moro and Zucor, both attractive men (Zucor was a few years younger), had talked about their mistresses and then about the per-

petual politics. Zucor had said he was a revolutionary: "When you were a young, compliant officer in the Fascist army, I was underground, hiding Communists and Jews and killing Blackshirts and Nazis." In 1970 he'd left the "corrupt Communists" and joined the Brigade Rosse, a younger, less "intellectual" group that purged itself regularly, and had come to believe in violence "when necessary."

Captor and prisoner now had graying hair. Moro looked at Zucor and said, "Politics means life to me. It is my art, more a methodology than a system of ideas."

Zucor said, "I had all the pleasures and a chain of infatuations, but I had an empathy for the deprived, and that became my sensuality. We are opposite parts, polarized forces, but I feel for you and your family."

Moro watched Zucor, who made a solemn ritual of cooking. The food was good, but Moro hardly ate and lost weight. He thought of his villa, "Three Geese," and little farm in Torrita Tiberina, where only recently Eleonora had planted fava beans, artichokes, tomatoes, peppers, greens, and herbs.

Eventually, Moro had the run of the confined space. He was given reading material, a television set, and a record player, but the sound on the latter two were fixed on low.

As time passed, Zucor and Moro developed a curious fraternity. Moro did not have

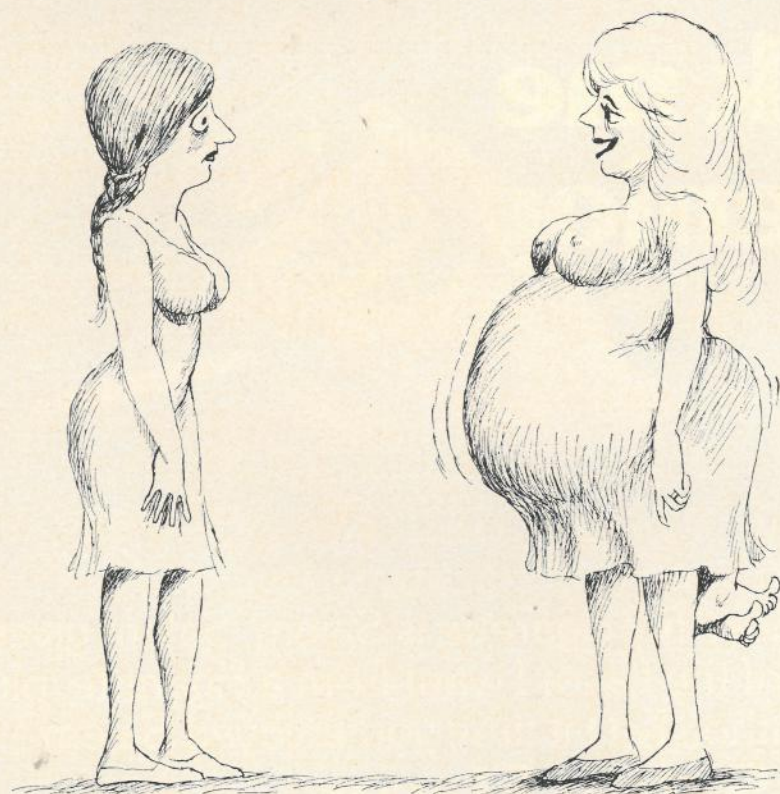
to be pressured, just spoken to. He was not toyed with. Zucor told him, "We are not your brutal Cossiga police. In your trial you will cooperate and give us the inner workings of the crimes your government has committed. If condemned to die, you may live, if exchanged for the BR prisoners in Turin. We would rather see you live. We expect you to help yourself and do hope you are saved by your friends."

Moro's trial was informal and grave. He thought of Raskolnikov and his affable prosecutor. There was nothing Zucor and his jury could tell him about himself. In thirty years of political juggling, the press had already caricatured him as the Levantine Clausewitz, the Latin Kerensky, the Trojan Horse of Clerical Marxism, the Pygmalion of Liberalism, the Machiavelli of Pasta Politics, the Theorist of Doubt, the Hamlet of Dialectics, the Last Bus for the Italian Bourgeoisie . . . Moro's irony asserted itself. He grinned at the avalanche: "You have presided at the councils that decided upon reactionary laws. You are responsible for the killings of striking workers in Scelba, Modena, Reggio Emilia, Palermo, Catania, and many other places; and for the murder of Mara, Renato Curcio's wife, and the students Roberto Franceschi and Giordiana Masi. You are guilty of involvement in countless scandals involving oil deals, coffee purchases, Lockheed, arms traffic. You've held every government post; therefore you're guilty of every crime."

The interrogation began. Moro's answers were recorded. His denials were futile. "Leone embezzled large sums, is it not so?" "No." "You lie!" "His wife, Vittoria, conducted sex orgies in the president's country mansion, 'Le Rughe,' is it not true?" "No!" "You lie!"

Moro was regularly inundated with radical literature: the publication *Counterinformation* and four books about the Red Brigades: *Criminalization of the Class Struggle*, *BR—Documents and Chronicles of the Red Brigades*, *Red Emergency*, and *Never Again Without a Rifle!—Origin of the BR*. He read about himself, the BR's analysis of the phrases of the Moro-esque style that was fashioned to "mesmerize the mediocre Senate": "linguistic modules sent into political orbit," "parallel convergence," "convergence of postures," "convergence of squared circles," "convergence of contrary rationales," "reciprocal comprehension of diverse fronts." Then there was that term so dear to him, *pluralismo*, used in combinations: "juridical pluralism," "practical and polemical pluralism." Moro had coined "interclassism," "centrism," "experimental caution," "operation without trauma," "fluid situational rapport," "angularity of confluent visions." In a circumstance beyond his control (the first time this had happened to him since, as a student, he'd learned the political poetry of duplicity), Moro was reading about another Aldo Moro. This one was the Father of Lies. He saw his words covered with flies.

At night, in what he'd hoped would be merciful slumber, he began to dream of



"No, I'm not pregnant. It's my husband."



# CHRIST IN PLASTIC

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 82

Eleonora and his children in the villa "Three Geese." But his wife was scowling, and the children were sneering. More and more often, he found himself in the realm of dormant phantasmagoria, wandering and conferring with grinning Zaccagnini and fawning Cossiga in the Palazzo Chigi, Montecitorio, the Viminale, the Department of Justice, or in Christian Democrat headquarters on the Piazza di Gesù. Moro dreamed of himself scheming without end: Malvolio, or as they called him in Naples and the south, "Lenguanero" ("Black tongue").

He, Fanfani, Andreotti, and Cossiga, in the name of democracy, had struck laws more unjust than those of Il Duce. Moro had long felt the hate of the young, but in recent years hate seemed universal. Zucor and his jurors now reminded Moro of how indifferent the Italian masses were to his plight. He was far from a popular man. His kidnapping, like any other circus act, was welcomed as a diversion from the bleak boredom of life without work, money, or dreams.

Moro and Zucor were both very Catholic, a fact overlooked by many commentators on the case, including the shrill bitch journalist Oriana Fallaci. As Moro began to see

how abandoned he was by politicians, religionists, and friends, he came to savor his imprisonment, the absence of power. Gradually, as he talked to Zucor and observed the BR, a curious romanticism, the basis of Moro's occult Catholicism, long buried, reasserted itself, perhaps reawakened by the stress that flooded him. According to Zucor, Moro seemed glad he was being punished.

At the BR's direction, Moro wrote letters in his scholarly, middle-class manner to each of his associates, trying to convince them that the people's court was serious, that the guerrillas of the Red Brigades were at war with the government, and that the international rules of warfare applied. An exchange of prisoners was necessary. He wrote nearly eighty letters. On the outside, people assumed he was being tortured and drugged.

Moro and the BR watched the news of their drama daily on Telegiornale. Autonomous BR cells called in spurious leads, and the police raced madly through the streets and countryside to raid barns and cellars. They even searched congregations at Mass. The affair was made for television, and Moro began to see his life as a soap opera. Each day, following the exacting ordeal of his own trial, Moro watched the televised legal proceedings against Renato Curcio, Roberto Ognibene, and Alberto Franceschini, the chiefs of the

BR. They were in chains, caged like birds in a Turin courtroom. Two of their lawyers, suave Guisa and falcon-faced Di Giovanni, questioned prospective jurors. The process had been going on for a long time, since no one wanted to sit in judgment of the BR. Italian *Christiani* knew their Ecclesiastes: "A time to kill—a time to keep one's mouth shut."

Moro watched Cossiga, his former protégé, justify the Italian government's implacable stand against making any deal with the BR to save him. Cossiga, viewed by millions, mouthed a quote from the Catholic martyr Thomas More: "In our moral purpose we must proceed with utmost firmness not apparent to the public." Moro saw his iron-faced wife talking with the bizarrely attired, skinny old man of the Vatican, the absurd claimant to infallibility and intimacy with the Creator of the cosmos. Eleonora asked the pope for the deliverance of her husband. The pope broke wind on her burning heart; he bestowed pietist vaporings upon her. Moro, immersed in a fathomless moment of truth, reasoned: "The pope has a language difficulty—he does not know how to utter simple words: 'I, the spiritual guide of 700 million followers, can and will save Aldo Moro.'" And Moro saw Fanfani and Zaccagnini, protected by a small army, enter his home to warn his wife and children not to negotiate with the BR. He saw them then as false faces and the mirror of his soul told him that he too had been the master of masks.

Zucor told Moro that after a strategy of tension his life could be exchanged for the Turin comrades. However, in analyzing Moro's position, he minced no words. "You are an embarrassment now to church and state. Crucified, you may be of more use." This situation was exacerbated by Aniello Coppola's biography, *Moro*. It had been selling well before the kidnapping, and it brought to light the minutiae of thirty years of Mephisto manipulation of Italy—Italians called Italy, "*Italia Morotea*." Moro and his government had been mute about Vietnam, Chile, and the South American dictatorships manufactured in the White House. Worse, they had daily loused up Italy. In their weekly pre-Communion confessions, there was never the breath of *mea maxima culpa*.

At one point, Moro asked Zucor the significance of his being snatched on March 16. "Giangiacomo Feltrinelli [the GAP revolutionary] was murdered by your government and the CIA on the sixteenth," Zucor replied.

Feltrinelli and Zucor, very wealthy and of the nobility, had long been friends. For a brief period Zucor and Feltrinelli had been playboys, sniffing coke with the industrial royalty. Zucor's father was a dilettante poet, and to their palazzo came Benedetto Croce and the towering thinkers and artists. By the time he was twelve, Zucor had read the 2,000 books in his father's library. Zucor's mother wrote love stories under a pen name. To Zucor, she was queen of the universe. Zucor went to mass because his





mother loved Christ. She died at ninety-five, a few months before the Via Fani venture. Zucor's space in the Moro hideout was hung with his mother's worn crucifixes and rosaries.

Brilliant Feltrinelli expanded his family's publishing house and founded an institute documenting the history of workers' movements. He joined the Communists, but uncompromising revolution was in his blood; in 1957 he broke with Palmiro Togliatti and the Italian Communist party, contending that it "pissed on the heads of the workers."

He visited Castro in the Sierra Maestra and went with Ché Guevara and Regis Debray to the jungles of Bolivia (where, ironically, only his fortune and status saved him). He later tracked down one of Ché's assassins, Roberto Quintanilla, in the Bolivian Consulate in Hamburg. The gun that killed Quintanilla was Feltrinelli's Colt Cobra.

The United States' military intervention in South America and Indochina convinced Feltrinelli that at any moment the CIA would turn Italy into another Chile. In Italy he went underground. Under many names, he furnished seed money for various radical groups: the "Hammer and Sickles," "Italian Marxist-Leninist Party," "G.A.P.," "XXII Ottobre." In 1969 at the University of Trento and in the factories of Turin, Genoa, and Milan, through Feltrinelli, Zucor, Curcio, and Curcio's wife, Mara, the Brigade Rosse was born.

The soul and nucleus of the BR is now the imprisoned *Brigatisti*. Somehow they communicate with anonymous, sympathetic intellectuals, professional people, and workers, sending out guidelines to the molecular network of terrorism. Zucor spoke of articulation in "capillary circles" of "simpatizzanti" — adherents interconnected according to the sophisticated techniques of modern clandestine war. The BR has gone from minor to major bloody episodes relatively quickly. But the ruthless character of its attacks, Zucor points out, is in the great tradition of political killings in Italy—even the Jesuits claimed the right to murder rulers who opposed the "will of God and the people." Power has its own logic.

Moro was the brains of the Catholic and dollar democratic hierarchy. "Go with the times and absorb the adversary," said Moro, who had begun his career in Bari as a sycophant of the Catholic Fascist party. Systematically, the BR maintained, he'd brought the mundane methods of the Holy Roman Empire and the age of the degenerate popes to the modern Italian ruling class. Even now street cynics sneer: "The Holy Roman Empire can never die; if the BR wins, the Vatican will simply bless it."

MARCH 29

Moro's letter to Cossiga: "Caro Francesco . . ." After bourgeois amenities, he broaches the realism of a deal.

In the *Corriere della Sera*, Zaccagnini says, "Did the maximum leader and inspirer of Italian politics write it, or an Aldo

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Moro reduced to impotence in a vile prison, stunned by drugs and psychological brainwashing? . . . Surely the BR wrote the letter and forged his signature—or Moro has gone insane. The Christian Democrats extend their profound sentiments of moral and political solidarity . . . to Aldo Moro, but the government judges it unthinkable to have any dialogue with criminal enemies of the state."

In the Cossiga letter, Moro cited the agreement between Leonid Brezhnev and Augusto Pinochet for the exchange of renegade dissident Vladimir Bukowski and the Chilean Communist leader Luis Corvalan. He also condemned the inflexible stand of Israel and the Federal Republic of Germany for refusing to negotiate with the terrorists of the Black September group after their attack on the Israeli Olympic team.

On Easter, television crews focus long-distance lenses on the windows of Moro's home, but they are curtained. Eleonora and the children have locked themselves away from the circus. Only steadfast friends come and go at Via Forte Trionfale 79. Nicolo Rana and Corrado Guerzoni maintain secret communications with the BR, negotiating for Moro's life. The police hound them.

MARCH 31  
Moro's Christian Democrats formally

abandon him. A statement is issued: "As long as the party stands firm against any negotiations, the killing of Moro will represent a spiritual victory for Italy and a definite defeat for the terrorists." Knowing that there are secret communications between the BR and the family, Attorney General De Matteo goes to the Moro home in order to grill Eleonora subtly. She considers him an enemy. Then the pope belches again: "The Church deplores Aldo Moro's predicament, but we do not despair; we pray."

Zaccagnini goes to Eleonora Moro and tries to persuade her that the honor and dignity of the state take precedence over her emotions. Eleonora all but throws him out.

APRIL 2

Now consciousness became Moro's nightmare. He often daydreamed. He was in a strange land, surrounded by menacing blacks; he couldn't find the police, and there was no way back to Eleonora.

Eleonora had often said that politicians were not human. He himself was not capable of compassion, only of the chess of statecraft. He rarely saw his family. Once, Eleonora found a love letter in his coat. From then on she went no more to the beauty shop, nor used cosmetics, nor bought dresses. She mourned his infidelity and linked it to his indifference to the fate of the victims of the powerful.

In some ways "Anna"—that is not her real name—the one female member of Zucor's cell (who wore the blonde wig at Via Fani) reminded Moro of Eleonora. She had her strength. Anna was part of the Trento University political larva of 1967–69 that evolved from the dialectical "*Universita Negativa*" into the BR. Anna had been Margharita ("Mara") Cagol's bridesmaid when she married Renato Curcio. Anna, Mara, Curcio, Mauro Rostagno, and the German student leader Peter Schneider were the prenatal BR.

Anna had no illusions about a Castro-type victory. She had written, "This is our prerevolutionary moment. Italy's situation is not similar to the experience of the Russians, Chinese, or Cubans. We must adjust to a long period of bloody struggle. We must not be . . . intellectual voyeurs . . . who sit on the sidelines and 'interpret.' The capitalist enemy kills, as they killed my father in the police-provoked Milan riot of December 12, 1969. Either we kill them or they kill us."

By accident, Anna happened not to be with Mara when Mara was trapped and shot to death by the police. Anna could have passed for Mara Cagol Curcio: small, frail, soft spoken. But it was Anna who gave Renato Curcio his nickname, "Pippo," because of his big nose.

During Moro's trial, Anna brought the evidence of the charges, along with photos and films of police terrorism. She presented "proof" of government frauds, of its liaisons with the Mafia and the Vatican to "keep Italy feudal." She made Moro feel very old.

Once, feverishly, he dared whisper to Anna that if she would help him, he'd give his word to exempt her from prosecution "Your word!" As valueless as government treaties with Indians! As valueless as summit conferences with the unconscious! We will not hesitate to tear your word to shreds! Write your confession! Cough up your identity and restore the magical balance of memory and desire!" She actually spat at Moro.

They brought much—too much—against him. He no longer answered at all. He became as ingenuous as Prince Myshkin in *The Idiot*.

APRIL 10

Moro told Zucor he had a premonition of death. President Leone had cynically named his water spaniel "Moro."

APRIL 15

The editor of *La Repubblica* receives a phone call: Communication Number Six is in a certain garbage can on Via dell' Annunciata. It begins: "*L'interrogatorio al prigioniero Aldo Moro e' terminato,*" and ends, "*Non ci sono dubbi. ALDO MORO E COLPEVOLE E VIENE PERTANTO CONDANNATO A MORTE.*" Moro's trial is completed. He is guilty beyond doubt and forthwith condemned to die.

Charity Italy, Amnesty International, and Kurt Waldheim of the United Nations im-

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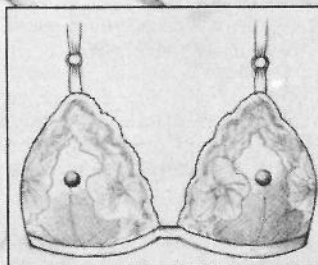
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mediately offer to mediate. The Italian government refuses. A clown sends an alleged BR message: Moro committed suicide; his body can be found in Lake Duchessa, high in the Abruzzi Mountains. The government doesn't hesitate to spend lavishly on a search operation that could relieve it of its Moro problem.

Moro's son, Giovanni, however, secretly in touch with the BR, knows his father is alive. He organizes a petition of antipapal prelates for an appeal to the government. It is ignored.

Choosing to believe him dead, Moro's comrades in government feel the relief of catharsis; they quickly begin their felonious chatter: "hero of the nation with grandiosity of soul," "genius of conciliation," "Aldo lives on in our breasts!" Via Mario Fani has its name changed to Via Martyr of March 16.

#### APRIL 19

A corpse is found under the ice of Lake Duchessa, but it is that of a local man. The disappointment in Roman power circles is palpable.

The BR strikes all over Italy, knee-capping—"turning powerful reactionaries into lame horses." They chill Lorenzo Cotugno, the sadistic warden of Curcio's prison.

#### APRIL 20

Communication Number Seven: Moro's death sentence can be commuted if BR

prisoners are freed. The government is allowed forty-eight hours. To erase any doubts about Moro's being alive, the BR calls the editor of *Il Messaggero*. Nearby, on Via Tritone, is an envelope with a photo. In it Moro has a tranquil expression. Behind him is the Brigade Rosse banner; propped in front of him is *La Repubblica* with the headline HAS MORO BEEN KILLED?

The BR sends xerox copies of eight pages written by Moro to cities throughout Italy. Moro insists on the government's making a deal. He has departed from his old schoolteacher grammar; his words are anguished and plain: "You—Zaccagnini, Andreotti, Fanfani, Berlinguer, Leone, and Cossiga—are all guilty along with me and must rise to the manliness of sharing my fate. I am here for all of you, and should you not agree to the prisoner exchange, I shall hold you and the government as my murderers. Aldo Moro."

#### APRIL 21

The pope addresses an appeal to the BR: "I write you, men of the Red Brigades, and pray of thee on bended knees to restore to the common brotherhood of man our faithful son of the Church of Christ, the Honorable Aldo Moro, without conditions. Paul VI." But the following day, from his balcony, the pope squeals harshly of Moro's keepers. This does not help the Moro family's efforts. However, the BR does not act upon

its deadline. The government leaders seem smug. Berlinguer, not to be outdone, pulls out all the stops. He shrieks against "the assassins of the Brigade Rosse." Berlinguer is particularly offended that the BR are calling themselves "the true Communists."

#### APRIL 22

The Bishop of Ivrea, Luigi Bettazzi, working with the Moro family, offers his life as hostage to the BR. The pope indignantly squelches the bishop's involvement. But the bishop defies the pope; he and anonymous rich friends raise \$10 million ransom and pledge an additional \$20 million. Church and state negate the attempt as an act demeaning to the government's inviolable stance. A statement is issued: "With the saving of Moro, the lawless BR will kill and kidnap continually."

The BR turn down the ransom offer. They are not interested in money. They want the recognition of political status.

A group of impotent actors, buffoon directors, narcissistic writers, and discarded celebrities, such as Federico Fellini, Eugenio Montale, Sergio Amidei, and Alberto Moravia, sign an anti-BR sermon. The Communist Bernardo Bertolucci keeps his mouth shut.

#### APRIL 24

Communication Number Eight: Thirteen prisoners are to be freed, including Brigatisti, Nappisti, and members of the October Twenty-second Group—"the flower of flowers of terrorism." If not, Moro dies.

Minister Marco Pannella wants the situation debated in Parliament. Cabinet President Pietro Ingrao says no. Ingrao takes his orders from Fanfani and Berlinguer.

#### APRIL 25

Moro's third letter to Zaccagnini: "Zac . . . we are at the moment of my slaughter. The DC must depart from its attachment to mythomania, admit to reality, and accept the conditions of the Brigade Rosse. . . . I do not accept the inequity and ingratitude and the atrocious death sentence visited upon me by the Christian Democrat party, which is not the people but you, my friends of thirty years—and, as I see now . . . little men who will have to account to my family, the nation, history, and God for your participation in my murder . . . for what you have committed against us. I demand that no State authorities or men of the DC desecrate my funeral with their presence. I wish my corpse to be attended only by the few who in God's eyes were good and true to me. . . . Aldo Moro."

As answer, church and state make imaginative gestures to show the people that they are aiding Aldo and Eleonora. The pope has a helicopter containing a beautiful statue of Our Lady of Fatima and a priest saying a Salvation Mass hover over Moro's home; the Air Force has six jets paint the red, white, and green Italian flag in the skies over the Via Martyr.

In Torrita Tiberina the white-haired pastor, Agostino Mancini, Moro's confessor,



"Remind me to vacuum underneath the tree the next time!"



speaks sadly over Marlboros and wine: "In the twenty-five years that I confessed the Honorable Aldo Moro, God and I heard things about government that would make your hair stand on end. Signora Eleonora begged him to retire from what she called the inhumanity of his pursuit, but he had given his soul as bail to the state he designed. The common people unanimously say that Moro will be immolated by the fad of Italian democracy. I will not comment on the pontiff—he is not Pope John . . . but the BR prisoners could be released. Panama has offered them sanctuary, and after Moro is home, the government could do like the Israelis and West Germans: track them down and 'justice' them. Poor Moro. He has not even picked out a tomb. . ."

#### APRIL 26

Privately, Socialist Craxi speaks of an "autonomous initiative" bargain with the BR. Zaccagnini goes crazy: "What the hell do you mean by 'autonomous initiative'?" Craxi suggests one or two prisoners be allowed to dig a tunnel and escape; then let others out on the pretended grounds of endangered health. The plan leaks to the papers. There is a furor among the fascists. Craxi modifies his plan: suspend a few sentences and give paroles; also, reform the Dark Ages prison conditions. The Communist party thunders no!

#### APRIL 27

Moro's personal secretary, Nicolo Rana, family friends Corrado Guerzoni and Sereno Freata, and Eleonora and the children come up with a scheme: BR prisoners could be transferred from the Turin jail to a provincial prison no more secure than a chicken coop; BR commandos could raid the prison and free the comrades, with the blame placed on the rural authorities. Moro is released, everybody is happy, and the government's face is saved.

Zaccagnini and his boys fiercely reject the idea. Eleonora appeals to Paul VI, but the pope clasps his ringed hands deplorably and shakes his head.

#### APRIL 28

Moro has never watched so much television. Along with 25 million other TV fans, he sees a series, "Madame Bovary." He discusses it with Zucor and his keepers.

#### APRIL 30

*Il Messaggero* publishes another Moro message. As president of the DC, he wants a convocation of the National Council. "I want the impossible done to save my life! The Socialists have shown more humanity. . . . I wish Misasi to preside in my place.

"My social views and the dialectics and ideals of the BR have hardly anything in common, but all my public life I have retained as humanely feasible the merciful exchange of prisoners of war. The Christian Democrats have judged that Aldo Moro must die." Moro repeats that he does not want the men of power, not even the pope,

at his funeral. Then: "I see that my party wants my destruction—assumes that I am writing under the dictation of the BR. Why do you lie? . . ."

#### MAY 1

A satyricon begins: the Italian soccer team is eliminated from World Cup competition. Television shows the result of the defeat. All over Italy, there is rage, depression, drinking.

Zaccagnini, whose hobby is the study of Nostradamus, announces that Nostradamus prophesied the Moro ambush. This seems to comfort Zaccagnini.

The Society of Jesuits accuses DIGOS—the secret service—of effeminate weakness and muddling. Fascist Republicans Massimo De Carolis and La Malfa vow that there is undeniable collusion between the police and the BR.

#### MAY 2

Magistrate Mario Daniele of Milan proposes that in exchange for Moro, the government commute the sentences of all BR prisoners to a maximum of two years. Zaccagnini, no doubt thinking of Nostradamus, thunders "No!" again.

Yassir Arafat defines the BR terrorism as "military operations."

Idi Amin Dada, over Radio Kampala in Uganda, says he will convince the BR to release Moro, since he believes, along with

Jimmy Carter, in upholding human rights.

President Carter's representative, Joe Califano, who doesn't know his ass from a hole in the ground in Italy, applauds Zaccagnini's no.

Russia's *Pravda* calls the Brigade Rosse "Red Bandits" and bad-mouths Socialist Craxi for trying to save Moro.

An American novelist describes for an Italian magazine a *Sgherri* headquarters in Trastevere: ". . . in their bare rooms they waste away the time like cretins, playing with balls of paper, making airplanes, practicing fast draws like their heroes in American cop movies, holding masturbation contests."

The Communist saint, Enrico Berlinguer, informs on "extreme leftists" who have left his party "to, most likely, ally themselves with the clandestine political terrorists!"

#### MAY 5

The ninth and final BR communication arrives: "The action initiated March 16 is properly now reaching its climax with the fulfillment of the sentence to which Aldo Moro was condemned. . . . The Moro battle is the first of many. This is only the beginning."

#### MAY 6

Eleonora receives a call: "This is the BR. You have a few hours left in which to save your husband, Aldo Moro, the father of your





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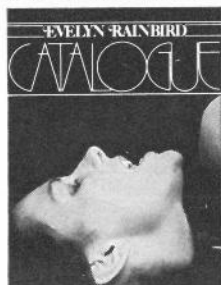
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children."

The phone is tapped by Cossiga's police, but the message is just code anyway: deciphered, it means that a note from Aldo awaits. The daughter, Anna, leaves the house. Anna takes bus 446 to Ponte Milvio. She bides her turn patiently at a phone booth, enters, does not make a call, finds a letter in one of the directories, returns home by bus.

"Dearest Norina, This is it . . . they have told me that in a little while they are going to kill me. The DC and the government, had they wanted, could easily have saved me. This is the end. I am to die very soon. I kiss you for the last time. Kiss the children for me."

Eleonora immediately gives the letter to all the papers. They publish special editions.

The arch-reactionaries in the DC severely criticize Moro's farewell missive and pressure the pope to tell Moro that it's God's will for him to die and that he should face death happily, as have many Catholics before him.

Most government leaders have left Rome on their election campaigns.

The populace are fixed to their television sets as usual, watching an Agatha Christie murder mystery. The Aldo Moro show is getting boring.

The DC sends the unctuous paunch, Fanfani, to Eleonora, and Paul VI sends Cardinal Poletti. She is to resign herself to the martyrdom of her man for the ineffable glory of The Law and Jesus Christ. Eleonora Chiavarelli Moro, erudite daughter of a physician, Montessorian teacher, finally explodes with truths. In her rage, she calls the pope and the politicians charlatans, pederasts, whores, and cowards. They are traitors, who are soon to be stained with the blood of Aldo Moro so that Italy won't lose face before the rotten superpowers and stinking multinational corporations. In her wrath she curses man-made church and state and smashes a large vase filled with flowers against the wall near Cardinal Poletti and Fanfani.

The Christian Democrats had preferred Moro as a martyr prior to the regional and national elections. They had calculated that the shocked public would react emotionally for law and order, increasing the power of the DC and diminishing notably, if not disastrously, the standings that the radical parties had. Indeed, they were right. In the subsequent election, the DC picked up 8 percent of the national vote, raising its share to 46. The Communists, to Berlinguer's chagrin, dropped down to 30 percent.

MAY 8

A BR source in police intelligence reports that a German criminologist has correctly deduced the area of the Moro hideout. At night the master cell vacates. Moro is taken in a van to a temporary hideout near the sea. It's an area of summer homes for the rich, relatively uninhabited until June, an hour from Rome.

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MAY 9

Zucor tells Moro that this is it.

Moro admits that he is tired. He has been thinking of a message, sent by Eleonora. "You have been abandoned by Church and man. Only Aldo Moro can help you now. . . ." Moro thinks of defecting, then rejects the idea. "I'd look bad in khaki," he tells Zucor.

He doesn't eat his last meal. He refuses sedation. He just wants to pray; he has no other desire.

A priest is sent for, a young radical who will never inform. He is brought in a closed van, then blindfolded from the van to Moro's room. Moro softly confesses his sins, but his Act of Contrition is fervent. The young priest celebrates Mass and gives Moro the last sacraments. The priest weeps:

For collation Moro has a cup of water. Anna gives him a haircut. He showers and brushes his teeth, but he doesn't bother to shave. He dresses in the clothes he wore when kidnapped. He puts on his socks of midnight blue (which, he does not notice, are inside out), the white shirt with blue stripes made by La Ninarelli in Bologna, suspenders, the beige Swiss sweater, the carefully knotted tie with tiny, white designs, the dark blue suit, flexible shoes called "mocassini." He puts his scapular, rosary, as well as some medals of saints in his pockets.


Zucor tells him, "You will go now with Anna and Franco." Anna wears a red wig this time. Moro meekly follows them out of the house and along a driveway to a red Renault 4 station wagon. Zucor says: "Please get in and lie down." Aldo Moro obeys. The space in the back is so cramped that he has to fold his legs under him.

Zucor gives the following orders to Anna and Franco: "Park and lock the car on Via Caetani, in the ancient Jewish ghetto between Moro's Christian Democrats and the building of Berlinguer's Communists. Walk slowly away with your weapons in the shopping bag."

Franco drives, while Anna covers Moro from the front seat. The Renault, with the stolen license "Roma N57686," is passed by a few cars and trucks on the highway by the sea. It turns onto an isolated, sandy road. No one says anything.

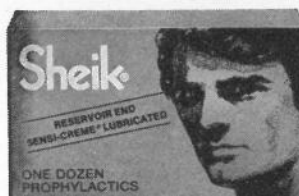
Franco and Anna get out. He holds a 9 mm. pistol; she, a scorpion machine pistol. Both are fitted with silencers. They lift the station wagon's rear door and fix the latch. Moro looks at them. To die in such a shabby way . . .

Eleven bullets slam through Moro's chest, leaving a path of punctures. They wrap him in a large sheet of orange-colored plastic and place him on a heavy, soiled overcoat. They put their guns in a STANDA store bag and drive back onto the highway toward Rome.

Not one bullet touched Aldo Moro's heart. It took him from five to ten minutes to bleed to death. 



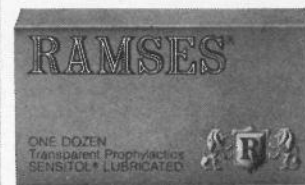
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