

"THE TIME A SECRET GOVT. AGENCY SUSPECTED ME
OF KNOWING SECRETS AND HAD AGENTS FOLLOWING ME."

Part I

This event took place in July of 1964. Let me explain the setting. During the summers I work for my father who has a plant in San Francisco which he owns and operates and since my parents are divorced I stay with him summers full time and he allows me great freedom. This particular summer he rented an apartment in San Rafael, one of these great concrete communal buildings named Bellvue Ocean Spray Lumar Keys or something like that. He figured we could go over there after work and enjoy the sun and the swimming pool that came with the apt. It was a nice place with four rooms and a kitchen, and we furnished it and installed TV and stereo phone-radio stuff.

Unfortunately the only time my father was able to get over there was weekends, so he let me commute and have it for my own most of the week. This gave me a great feeling of Power and I immediately realized the possibilities of such an arrangement. During my 3 months there I had many interesting experiences, one of which I am about to describe. The perceptiveness you will have noticed that San Rafael is also the home town of Phil Salin. Naturally, I often had him over for Wild Parties (someday I must tell you about my variety of Wild Party, but this isn't the place).

One time at one of these parties we were playing around with the telephone, which as you know can be a lot of fun. We were trying special numbers, which often have interesting results, when we happened upon the number G16 (the local prefix) 5555. We were answered with one of those phone recordings which said: "The Analyzer's Desk is now open. Please feel free to drop in at any time. You may leave a message at the beep." We thought about it awhile, then called back several times and at the sound of the beep left messages, some clever, some humorous, some dumb, and many asinine. After awhile we gave up but decided to try again tomorrow.

The next morning Phil went home. I was expecting to be picked up and brought to the city about 2 hours later by one of my father's drivers who passes thru San Rafael. To kill time I tried the Analyzer again. The same recorded message greeted me, and this time I left some messages worthy of myself. I had several interesting records there; sound effects, rock & roll songs with weird noises, and a record of Dave Garoway talking. I recorded segments of these into the phone, then hung up and ~~called~~ called Salin to tell him about it.

Then I called the Analyzer again, this time to talk into his recorder and ask him questions about himself that I hoped he'd answer. I told him his message sounded subversive and that if he

XXXX didn't explain himself I'd report him to the authorities. I asked him why he invited people to visit him and gave no address. I asked why he had a phone if he never answered it and how the hell ~~he~~ one was to ever talk to him with a tape recorder answering his phone. I paused for breath, and got the shock of my life. A voice spoke to me: "I answer the phone sometimes."

In a panic I hung up, very frightened, knowing he had been listening all the time. I had been very bold when talking to an impersonal recorder; but having said these things to what was obviously a very powerful man, I felt abashed. But my fear soon left me, because I knew that unless he had special favor with the telephone company, he would never know who I was.

Then the phone rang.

I picked it up and held it to my ear, saying nothing. His voice said, "Hello? Who are you?" I hung up and stepped back from the phone, trembling. What had I gotten myself into? The phone rang again, and stopped after ringing over 30 times. Ten minutes later it started again, then stopped again.

I was sure he would give up now. He had somehow found my number, but he couldn't do anything else if I didn't answer. But I was worried nonetheless. To pass time I checked every govt. type phone number in the book, but it was none of these. I concluded it must be either The Underworld, or a Top-Secret Govt Agency. Then I tried to read. But I jittered so much I had to close the book, and I found myself drifting between the porch and the kitchen, peering down at the street and stuffing myself with food.

The building was very thin. From the porch on one side of the living room you could see the street approaching. On the other side of the room, through the front door, you could see the parking lot below and the street on the other side.

PART II

"What To Do 'Til The Analyzer Comes"

For what was probably a half hour I inspected with fluttering heart every car that passed along the seldom-used street. Finally, one came that I knew contained assassins, stalking me. It proceeded down the street at a suspicious 10 mph, pausing before each building (as if to check the number). It was a modern, steel-blue sedan, containing two blue-collar types, wearing white shirts with the sleeves rolled up, and their elbows resting on the windows of the car. I lost sight of the car as it passed in front of the building, and I rushed to the front door and opened it just a crack, and peered out. The car ~~xxxxxx~~ turned into my driveway, paused, then, after a quick look around, they backed out and returned along the street they had approached on. Back I hurried to the porch and watched. At the next corner they stopped, and parked. Then they sat there.

I was shaking with fear. I knew any moment the door would burst open and I would either be shot or carried off Kafkaesquely to stand trial. Luckily for my nerves, the truck showed up shortly to pick me up. I ran out to meet it, jumped in, and closed the door with a sigh of relief, my eyes fixed on the car. I figured they wouldn't know which apartment I had come out of and therefore couldn't take a chance on following me and losing their quarry. But I figured wrong. The car

~~SEE~~ started up and pulled into the street directly in front of us. After a few blocks it pulled over again and again I thought I was spared, but watching through the mirror I saw it swing in behind us.

I stared into that rear view mirror for most of an hour as the car followed me onto Highway 101 through Marin county to the Golden Gate, into San Francisco, through hundreds of blocks of turning and maneuvering, through alleys, to out of the way places, and finally to my father's plant. We turned and entered the big garage, and the car hesitated a moment, then shot off down the street, turned a corner, and went out of my life.

But not my mind. I didn't sleep a wink that night. It was the most terrifying night of my life. For, as we all know, night is the best time, indeed the time preferred by professionals, for coming and carrying people off. I am reminded now of the Bob Dylan lyric "at midnight all the agents and the superhuman crew/ come out and round up everyone who knows more than they do."

But thankfully nobody came. I was never aware of Analyzer agents again, though I checked constantly for the next few days, and though they do know where my father's plant is and have probably watched it.

I have since, however, called GL6-5555 several times, though I said nothing. His recorded messages have changed several times, each one more mysterious-sounding than the last.

"I will be out of town until August 21. Bring any special problems to the attention of the Chief."

"This is the Analyzer's Desk. Agents may leave reports at the beep or come in during hours."

And several others I've forgotten. Early in 1965 the number was disconnected.

When I told Phil Salin about my adventure, he didn't believe me. Gradually I convinced him. Why would I invent something like that? He would like to know why I didn't take down the license number of the car. I would also like to know why I didn't. The only other fan who has any evidence that the Analyzer exists is Fred Lerner, who also heard the telephone recording. I'll probably never be able to find out for sure just who it was I contacted, since they now have a new phone number, but this experience will remain in my memory for a long time, and I hope I will think of it whenever I become too smug in the illusion that the world is a safe friendly place where everything is as it appears to be.

THE END

MORDOR



