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YEVGENY ZAMYATIN

ЕВГЕНИЙ ЗАМЯТИН

МБ

ИЛЛЮСТРИРОВАННОЕ ИЗДАНИЕ

Yevgeny Zamyatin. We

Евгений Замятин. Мы

"Evgeny Zamyatin's We is a fascinating read flavored with dystopian intellectualism. This bilingual edition is an intriguing solution for those wishing to learn Russian and English."

The exhilarating dystopian novel that foreshadowed the worst excesses of Soviet Russia.

Yevgeny Zamyatin's We is a powerfully inventive vision. In a glass-enclosed city of absolute straight lines, ruled over by the all-powerful 'Benefactor', the citizens of the totalitarian society of OneState live out lives devoid of passion and creativity - until D-503, a mathematician who dreams in numbers, makes a discovery: he has an individual soul.

Set in the twenty-sixth century AD, We is the classic dystopian novel and was the forerunner of works such as George Orwell's 1984 and Aldous Huxley's Brave New World and influenced Ayn Rand.

Изучать русский и английский языки путём увлекательного чтения с высоким интеллектуальным тонусом поможет эта книга-билингва "Мы" Евгения Замятина.

"Мы" Евгения Замятина - это мощное фантастическое провидение. Увлекательный роман-антиутопия, предсказавший худшие драмы Советской России.

В застекленном городе абсолютных прямых линий, которым правит всемогущий "Благодетель", обезличенные, пронумерованные особи тоталитарного общества в некоем государстве живут жизнью, лишенной страсти и творчества, пока D-503, математик, мечтающий о числах, не делает открытие: у него есть индивидуальная душа.

Действие происходит в двадцать шестом веке нашей эры.

"Мы" - классический роман-антиутопия, который был предшественником таких произведений, как "1984" Джорджа Оруэлла и "Дивный новый мир" Олдоса Хаксли, и оказал влияние на Айн Рэнд.

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Yevgeny Zamyatin

WE

Authorized Translation from the Russian
By Gregory Zilboorg

RECORD ONE

An Announcement

The Wisest of Lines

A Poem

This is merely a copy, word by word, of what was published this morning in the State newspaper:

“In another hundred and twenty days the building of the *Integral* will be completed. The great historic hour is near, when the first *Integral* will rise into the limitless space of the universe. A thousand years ago your heroic ancestors subjected the whole earth to the power of the United State. A still more glorious task is before you, the integration of the indefinite equation of the Cosmos by the use of the glass, electric, fire-breathing *Integral*. Your mission is to subjugate to the grateful yoke of reason the unknown beings who live on other planets, and who are perhaps still in the primitive state of freedom. If they will not understand that we are bringing them a mathematically faultless happiness, our duty will be to force them to be happy. But before we take up arms, we shall try the power of words. “In the name of The Well-Doer, the following is announced herewith to all Numbers of the United State: “Whoever feels capable must consider it his duty to write treatises, poems, manifestoes, odes and other compositions on the greatness and the beauty of the United State. “This will be the first load which the *Integral* will carry. “Long live the United State! Long live the Numbers!! Long live the Well-Doer!!!”



I feel my cheeks are burning as I write this. To integrate the colossal, universal equation! To unbend the wild curve, to straighten it out to a tangent-to a straight line! For the United State is a straight line, a great, divine, precise, wise line, the wisest of lines!

I, D-503, the builder of the *Integral*, I am only one of the many mathematicians of the United State. My pen, which is accustomed to figures, is unable to express the march and rhythm of consonance; therefore I shall try to record only the things I see, the things I think, or to be more exact, the things *we* think. Yes, *we*; that is exactly what I mean, and “*We*” shall, therefore, be the title of my records. But this will only be a derivative of our life,-of our mathematical, perfect life in the United State. If this be so, will not this derivative

be a poem in itself, despite my limitations? It will. I believe, I know it.

I feel my cheeks are burning as I write this. I feel something similar to what a woman probably feels when for the first time she senses within herself the pulse of a tiny, blind, human being. It is I, and at the same time it is not I. And for many long months it will be necessary to feed it with my life, with my blood, and then with a pain at my heart, to tear it from myself and lay it at the feet of the United State.

Yet I am ready, as everyone, or nearly everyone of us, is. I am ready.

RECORD TWO

Ballet

Square Harmony

X

Spring. From behind the Green Wall from some unknown plains the wind brings to us the yellow honeyed pollen of flowers. One's lips are dry from this sweet dust. Every moment one passes one's tongue over them. Probably, all women whom I meet in the street (and men certainly also), have today sweet lips. This disturbs somewhat my logical thinking. But the sky! The sky is blue. Its limpidness is not marred by a single cloud. (How primitive was the taste of the ancients, since their poets were always inspired by these senseless, formless, stupidly rushing accumulations of steam!) I love, I am sure it will not be an error if I say we love, only such a sky-a sterile, faultless sky. On such days the whole universe seems to be moulded of the same eternal glass, like the Green Wall, and like all our buildings. On such days one sees into the very blue depth of things. One sees their wonderful equations, hitherto unknown. One sees them in everything, even in the most ordinary everyday things.

Here is an example: this morning I was on the dock where the *Integral* is being built, and I saw the lathes; blindly, with abandon, the balls of the regulators were rotating; the cranks were swinging from side to side with a glimmer; the working-beam proudly swung its shoulder; and the mechanical chisels were dancing to the melody of an unheard Tarantella. I suddenly perceived all the music, all the beauty, of this colossal, of this mechanical ballet, illumined by light blue rays of sunshine. Then the thought

came: why beautiful? Why is a dance beautiful? Answer: because it is an *unfree* movement. Because the deep meaning of the dance is contained in its absolute, ecstatic submission, in the ideal *non-freedom*. If it is true that our ancestors would abandon themselves in dancing at the most inspired moments of their lives (religious mysteries, military parades) then it means only one thing: the instinct of non-freedom has been characteristic of human nature from ancient times, and we in our life of today, we are only consciously-

I was interrupted. The switchboard clicked. I raised my eyes,-O-90, of course! In half a minute she herself will be here to take me for the walk.

Dear O-! She always seems to me to look like her name, O-. She is approximately ten centimeters shorter than the required Maternal Norm. Therefore she appears all round; the rose-colored O of her lips is open to meet every word of mine. She has a round soft dimple on her wrist. Children have such dimples. As she came in, the logical fly-wheel was still buzzing in my head, and following its inertia, I began to tell her about my new formula which embraced the machines and the dancers and all of us.

"Wonderful, isn't it!" I asked.

"Yes, wonderful... Spring!" she replied, with a rosy smile.

You see? Spring! She talks about Spring! Females!... I became silent.

We were down in the street. The avenue was crowded. On days when the weather is so beautiful the afternoon personal hour is usually the hour of the supplementary walk. As always the big Musical Tower was playing with all its pipes, the March of the United State. The Numbers, hundreds, thousands of Numbers in light blue unifs (probably a derivative of the ancient *uniform*) with golden badges on the chest,-the State number of each one, male or female,-the Numbers were walking slowly, four abreast, exaltedly keeping the step. I, we four, were but one of the

innumerable waves of a powerful torrent. To my left, O-90 (if one of my long-haired ancestors were writing this a thousand years ago, he would probably call her by that funny word, *mine*), to my right, two unknown Numbers, a she-Number and a he-Number.

Blue sky, tiny baby suns in each one of our badges; our faces are unclouded by the insanity of thoughts. Rays... Do you picture it? Everything seems to be made of a kind of smiling, a ray-like matter. And the brass measures: Tra-ta-ta-tam... Tra-ta-ta-tam... stamping on the brassy steps which sparkle in the sun; with every step you rise higher and higher into the dizzy blue heights... Then, as this morning on the dock, again I saw as if for the first time in my life, the impeccably straight streets, the glistening glass of the pavement, the divine parallelopipeds of the transparent dwellings, the square harmony of the grayish-blue rows of Numbers. And it seemed to me that not past generations, but I myself, had won a victory over the old god and the old life, that I myself had created all this. I felt like a tower: I was afraid to move my elbow, lest the walls, the cupola and the machines should fall to pieces.

Then without warning-a jump through centuries: I remembered (apparently through an association by contrast) a picture in the museum, a picture of an avenue of the twentieth century, a thundering many-colored confusion of men, wheels, animals, bill-boards, trees, colors, and birds... They say all this once actually existed!

It seemed to me so incredible, so absurd, that I lost control of myself and laughed aloud. A laugh, as if an echo of mine, reached my ear from the right. I turned. I saw white, very white, sharp teeth, and an unfamiliar female face.

"I beg your pardon," she said, "but you looked about you like an inspired mythological god on the seventh day of creation. You look as though you are sure that I, too, was created by you, by no one but you. It is very flattering."

All this without a smile, even with a certain degree of respect-(she may know that I am the builder of the *Integral*). In her eyes nevertheless, in her brows, there was a strange irritating X, and I was unable to grasp it, to find an arithmetical expression for it. Somehow I was confused; with a somewhat hazy mind, I tried logically to motivate my laughter.

"It was absolutely clear that this contrast, this impassable abyss, between the things of today and of years ago-"

"But why impassable?" (What bright, sharp teeth!) "One might throw a bridge over that abyss. Please imagine: a drum battalion, rows,-all this existed before and consequently-"

"Oh, yes, it is clear," I exclaimed.

It was a remarkable intersection of thoughts. She said almost in the same words the things I wrote down before the walk! Do you understand? Even the thoughts! It is because nobody is *one*, but *one of*. We are all so much alike-

"Are you sure?" I noticed her brows which rose to the temples in an acute angle,-like the sharp corners of an X. Again I was confused, casting a glance to the right, then to the left. To my right-she, slender, abrupt, resistantly flexible like a whip, I-330 (I saw her number now). To my left, O-, totally different, made all of circles with a child-like dimple on her wrist; and at the very end of our row, an unknown he-Number, double-curved like the letter S. We were all so different from one another...

The one to my right, I-330, apparently caught my confused eye, for she said with a sigh, "Yes, alas!"

I don't deny that this exclamation was quite in place, but again there was something in her face or in her voice...

With an abruptness unusual for me, I said, "Why 'alas'? Science is developing and if not now, then within fifty or one hundred years-"

"Even the noses will-"

“Yes, noses!” This time I almost shouted, “Since there is still a reason, no matter what, for envy... Since my nose is button-like and someone else’s is-”

“Well your nose is rather classic, as they would say in the ancient days, although your hands-No, no, show me your hands!”

I hate to have anyone look at my hands; they are covered with long hair,-a stupid atavism. I stretched out my hand and said as indifferently as I could, “Ape-like.”

She glanced at my hand, then at my face.

“No, a very curious harmony.”

She weighed me with her eyes as though with scales. The little horns again appeared at the corners of her brows.

“He is registered in my name,” exclaimed O-90 with a rosy smile.

I made a grimace. Strictly speaking, she was out of order. This dear O-, how shall I say it? the speed of her tongue is not correctly calculated; the speed per second of her tongue should be slightly less than the speed per second of her thoughts,-at any rate not the reverse.

At the end of the avenue the big bell of the Accumulating Tower resounded seventeen. The personal hour was at an end. I-330 was leaving us with that S-like he-Number. He has such a respectable, and I noticed then, such a familiar face. I must have met him somewhere, but where I could not remember. Upon leaving me I-330 said with the same X-like smile:

“Drop in day after tomorrow at auditorium 112.”

I shrugged my shoulders: “If I am assigned to the auditorium you just named-”

She, with a peculiar, incomprehensible certainty: “You will.”

The woman had upon me a disagreeable effect, like an irrational component of an equation which you cannot eliminate. I was glad to remain alone with dear O-, at least for a short while. Hand in hand with her, I passed four lines

of avenues; at the next corner she went to the right, I to the left. O- timidly raised her round blue crystalline eyes:

“I would like so much to come to you today and pull down the curtains, especially today, right now...”

How funny she is. But what could I say to her? She was with me only yesterday and she knows as well as I that our next sexual day is day-after-tomorrow. It is merely another case in which her thoughts are too far ahead. It sometimes happens that the spark comes too early to the motor.

At parting I kissed her twice-no, I shall be exact, three times, on her wonderful blue eyes, such clear, unclouded eyes.

RECORD THREE

A Coat

A Wall

The Tables

I looked over all that I wrote down yesterday and I find that my descriptions are not sufficiently clear. That is, everything would undoubtedly be clear to one of us but who knows to whom my *Integral* will some day bring these records? Perhaps you, like our ancestors, have read the great book of civilization only up to the page of nine hundred years ago. Perhaps you don't know even such elementary things as the Hour Tables, Personal Hours, Maternal Norm, Green Wall, Well-Doer. It seems droll to me and at the same time very difficult, to explain these things. It is as though, let us say, a writer of the twentieth century should start to explain in his novel such words as coat, apartment, wife. Yet if his novel had been translated for primitive races, how could he have avoided explaining what a coat meant? I am sure that the primitive man would look at a coat and think, "What is this for? It is only a burden, an unnecessary burden." I am sure that you will feel the same, if I tell you that not one of us has ever stepped beyond the Green Wall since the Two Hundred Years' War.

But, dear readers, you must think, at least a little. It helps.

It is clear that the history of mankind as far as our knowledge goes, is a history of the transition from nomadic forms to more sedentary ones. Does it not follow that the most sedentary form of life (ours) is at the same time, the most perfect one? There was a time when people were rushing from one end of the earth to another, but this was

the prehistoric time when such things as nations, wars, commerce, different discoveries of different Americas still existed. Who has need of these things now?

I admit humanity acquired this habit of a sedentary form of life not without difficulty and not at once. When the Two Hundred Years' War had destroyed all the roads which later were overgrown with grass, it was probably very difficult at first. It seemed uncomfortable to live in cities which were cut off from each other by green debris. But what of it? Man soon after he lost his tail probably did not learn at once how to chase away flies without its help. I am almost sure that at first he was even lonesome without his tail, but now, can you imagine yourself with a tail? Or can you imagine yourself walking in the street naked, without clothes? (It is possible you go without clothes still.) Here we have the same case. I cannot imagine a city which is not clad with a Green Wall; I cannot imagine a life which is not clad with the figures of our Tables.

Tables... Now even, purple figures look at me austere yet kindly from the golden background of the wall. Involuntarily I am reminded of the thing which was called by the ancients, "Sainted Image," and I feel a desire to compose verses, or prayers which are the same. Oh, why am not I a poet, so as to be able properly to glorify the Tables, the heart and pulse of the United State!

All of us and perhaps all of you read in childhood while in school, that greatest of all monuments of ancient literature, the Official Railroad Guide. But if you compare this with the Tables, you will see side by side graphite and diamonds. Both are the same, carbon. But how eternal, transparent, how shining the diamond! Who does not lose his breath when he runs through the pages of the Guide? The Tables transformed each one of us, actually, into a six-wheeled steel hero of a great poem. Every morning with six-wheeled precision, at the same hour, at the same minute, we wake up, millions of us at once. At the very same hour millions

like one we begin our work, and millions like one, we finish it. United into a single body with a million hands, at the very same second, designated by the Tables, we carry the spoons to our mouths; at the same second we all go out to walk, go to the auditorium, to the halls for the Taylor exercises and then to bed.

I shall be quite frank: even we have not attained the absolute, exact solution of the problem of happiness. Twice a day, from sixteen to seventeen o'clock and from twenty-one to twenty-two, our united powerful organism dissolves into separate cells; these are the personal hours designated by the Tables. During these hours you would see the curtains discreetly drawn in the rooms of some; others march slowly over the pavement of the main avenue or sit at their desks as I sit now. But I firmly believe, let them call me an idealist and a dreamer, I believe that sooner or later we shall somehow find even for these hours, a place in the general formula. Somehow, all of the 86,400 seconds will be incorporated in the Tables of Hours.

I have had opportunity to read and hear many improbable things about those times when human beings still lived in the state of freedom, that is, an unorganized primitive state. One thing has always seemed to me the most improbable: how could a government, even a primitive government, permit people to live without anything like our Tables,-without compulsory walks, without precise regulation of the time to eat, for instance? They would get up and go to bed whenever they liked. Some historians even say that in those days the streets were lighted all night; and all night people went about the streets.

That I cannot understand; true, their minds were rather limited in those days. Yet they should have understood, should they not, that such a life was actually wholesale murder, although slow murder, day after day? The State (humanitarianism) forbade in those days the murder of one person, but it did not forbid the killing of millions slowly and

by half. To kill one, that is, to reduce the general sum of human life by fifty years, was considered criminal, but to reduce the general sum of human life by fifty million years was not considered criminal! Is it not droll? Today this simple mathematical moral problem could easily be solved in half a minute's time by any ten-year-old Number, yet *they* couldn't do it! All their Immanuel Kants together couldn't do it! It didn't enter the heads of all their Kants to build a system of scientific ethics, that is, ethics based on adding, subtracting, multiplying and dividing.

Further, is it not absurd that their State (they called it State!) left sexual life absolutely without control? However, whenever and as much as they wanted... Absolutely unscientific like beasts; and like beasts they blindly gave birth to children! Is it not strange to understand gardening, chicken-farming, fishery (we have definite knowledge that they were familiar with all these things), and not to be able to reach the last step in this logical scale, namely, production of children, -not to be able to discover such things as Maternal and Paternal Norms?

It is so droll, so improbable, that while I write this I am afraid lest you, my unknown future readers, should think I am merely a bad jester. I feel almost as though you may think I simply want to mock you and with a most serious appearance try to relate to you absolute nonsense. But first, I am incapable of jesting, for in every joke a lie has its hidden function. And second, the science of the United State contends that the life of the ancients was exactly what I am describing, and the science of the United State cannot make a mistake! Yet how could they have State logic, since they lived in a condition of freedom like beasts, like apes, like herds? What could one expect of them, since even in our day one hears from time to time, coming from the bottom, the primitive depths, the echo of the apes?

Fortunately it happens only from time to time, very seldom. Happily it is only a case of small parts breaking;

these may easily be repaired without stopping the eternal great march of the whole machine. And in order to eliminate a broken peg we have the skillful heavy hand of the Well-Doer, we have the experienced eyes of the Guardians...

By the way, I just thought of that Number whom I met yesterday, the double-curved one like the letter S; I think I have seen him several times coming out of the Bureau of the Guardians. Now I understand why I felt such an instinctive respect for him and a kind of awkwardness when that strange I-330 at his side... I must confess that, that I... they ring the bell, time to sleep, it is twenty-two-thirty. Till tomorrow, then.

RECORD FOUR

The Wild Man with a Barometer

Epilepsy

If

Until today everything in life seemed to me clear (that is why, I think, I always had a sort of partiality toward the word “clear”), but today... I don’t understand. First, I really was assigned to auditorium 112 as she said, although the probability was as 500:10,000,000 or 1:20,000. (500 is the number of auditoriums and there are 10,000,000 Numbers.) And second... but let me relate things in successive order. The auditorium: an enormous half-globe of glass with the sun piercing through. The circular rows of noble, globe-like, closely-shaven heads. With joy in my heart I looked around. I believe I was looking in the hope of seeing the rose-colored scythe, the dear lips of O-, somewhere among the blue waves of the unifs. Then I saw extraordinarily white, sharp teeth like the... But no! Tonight at twenty-one o’clock O- was to come to me; therefore my desire to see her was quite natural. The bell. We stood up, sang the Hymn of the United State, and our clever phono-lecturer appeared on the platform with a sparkling golden megaphone.

“Respected Numbers, not so long ago our archaeologists dug up a book written in the twentieth century. In this book the ironical author tells about a Wild Man and a barometer. The Wild Man noticed that every time the barometer’s hand stopped on the word ‘rain,’ it actually rained. And as the Wild Man craved rain, he let out as much mercury as was necessary to put it at the level of the word ‘rain’ (on the screen a Wild Man with feathers, letting out the mercury. Laughter).

“You are laughing at him, but don’t you think the ‘European’ of that age deserves more to be laughed at? He, like the Wild Man, wanted rain,-rain with a little r, an algebraic rain; but he remained standing before the barometer like a wet hen. The Wild Man at least had more courage and energy and logic, although primitive logic. The Wild Man showed the ability to establish a connection between cause and effect: by letting out the mercury he made the first step on the path which...”

Here (I repeat, I am not concealing anything, I am setting down everything) I suddenly became impermeable to the quickening currents coming from the megaphone. I suddenly felt I had come here in vain (why in vain and how could I not have come here, where I was assigned?). Everything seemed to me empty like a shell. I succeeded with difficulty in switching my attention in again when the phono-lecturer came to the main theme of the evening,-to our music as a mathematical composition (mathematics is the cause, music the effect). The phono-lecturer began the description of the recently invented musicometer.

“... By merely rotating this handle any one is enabled to produce about three sonatas per hour. What difficulties our predecessors had in making music! They were able to compose only by bringing themselves to strokes of inspiration,-an extinct form of epilepsy. Here you have an amusing illustration of their achievements: the music of Scriabin, twentieth century. This black box,” (a curtain parted on the platform, and we saw an ancient instrument) “this box they called the ‘Royal Grand.’ They attached to this the idea of *regality*, which also goes to prove how their music...”

And I don’t remember anything further. Very possibly because... I’ll tell you frankly, because she, I-330, came to the “Royal” box. Probably I was simply startled by her unexpected appearance on the platform.

She was dressed in a fantastic dress of the ancient time, a black dress closely fitting the body, sharply delimiting the white of her shoulders and breast and that warm shadow waving with her breath between... And the dazzling, almost angry teeth. A smile, a bite, directed downward. She took her seat; she began to play something wild, convulsive, loud like all their life then,-not a shadow of rational mechanism. Of course all those around me were right; they were laughing. Only a few... but why is it that I too, I...?



Yes, epilepsy, a mental disease, a pain. A slow, sweet pain, bite, and it goes deeper and becomes sharper. And then, slowly, sunshine,-not our sunshine, not crystalline, bluish and soft, coming through the glass bricks. No, a wild

sunshine, rushing and burning, tearing everything into small bits...

The Number at my left glanced at me and chuckled. I don't know why but I remember exactly how a microscopic saliva bubble appeared on his lips and burst. That bubble brought me back to myself. I was again I.

Like all the other Numbers I heard now only the senseless, disorderly cracking of the chords. I laughed; I felt so light and simple. The gifted phono-lecturer represented to us only too well that wild epoch. And that was all.

With what a joy I listened afterward to our contemporary music. It was demonstrated to us at the end of the lecture for the sake of contrast. Crystalline, chromatic scales converging and diverging into endless series; and synthetic harmony of the formulae of Taylor and McLauren, wholesome, square and massive like the "trousers of Pythagoras." Sad melodies dying away in waving movements. The beautiful texture of the spectrum of planets, dissected by Fraunhofer lines... what magnificent, what perfect regularity! How pitiful the wilful music of the ancients, not limited except by the scope of their wild imaginations!

As usual in good order, four abreast, all of us left the auditorium. The familiar double-curved figure passed swiftly by. I respectfully bowed.

Dear O- was to come in an hour. I felt agitated, -agreeably and usefully. Home at last! I rushed to the house-office, handed over to the controller on duty my pink ticket and received a certificate permitting the use of the curtains. This right exists in our State only for the sexual days. Normally we live surrounded by transparent walls which seem to be knitted of sparkling air; we live beneath the eye of everyone, always bathed in light. We have nothing to conceal from one another; besides, this mode of living makes the difficult and exalted task of the Guardians much easier. Without it many bad things might happen. It is

possible that the strange opaque dwellings of the ancients were responsible for their pitiful cellish psychology. "My (*sic!*) home is my fortress!" How did they manage to think of such things?

At twenty-two o'clock I lowered the curtain and at the same second O- came in smiling, slightly out of breath. She extended to me her rosy lips and her pink ticket. I tore off the stub but I could not tear myself away from the rosy lips up to the last moment,-twenty-two-fifteen.

Then I showed her my diary and I talked; I think I talked very well on the beauty of a square, a cube, a straight line. At first she listened so charmingly, she was so rosy, when suddenly a tear appeared in her blue eyes, then another, and a third fell straight on the open page (page 7). The ink blurred; well, I shall have to copy it again.

"My dear O-, if only you, if..."

"What if? If what?"

Again the old lament about a child or perhaps something new regarding, regarding... the other one? Although it seems as though some... but that would be too absurd!

RECORD FIVE

The Square

The Rulers of the World

An Agreeable and Useful Function

Again with you, my unknown reader; I talk to you as though you were, let us say, my old comrade, R-13, the poet with the lips of a negro,-well, everyone knows him. Yet you are somewhere on the moon, or on Venus, or on Mars. Who knows you? Where and who are you?

Imagine a square, a living, beautiful square. Imagine that this square is obliged to tell you about itself, about its life. You realize that this square would hardly think it necessary to mention the fact that all its four angles are equal. It knows this too well. This is such an ordinary, obvious thing. I am in exactly the same square position. Take the pink checks for instance, and all that goes with them: for me they are as natural as the equality of the four angles of the square. But for you they are perhaps more mysterious and hard to understand than the binom of Newton. Let me explain: an ancient sage once said a clever thing (accidentally, beyond doubt). He said, "Love and Hunger rule the world." Consequently, to dominate the world, man had to win a victory over hunger after paying a very high price. I refer to the great Two Hundred Years' War, the war between the city and the land. Probably on account of religious prejudices, the primitive peasants stubbornly held on to their "bread." ^[1] In the 35th year before the foundation of the United State, our contemporary petroleum food was invented. True, only about two-tenths of the population of the globe did not die out. But how beautifully

shining the face of the earth became when it was cleared of its impurities!

[1] This word came down to us for use only as a poetic form, for the chemical constitution of this substance is unknown to us.

Accordingly the 0.2 which survived, have enjoyed the greatest happiness in the bosom of the United State. But is it not clear that supreme bliss and envy are only the numerator and the denominator respectively, of the same fraction, happiness? What sense would the innumerable sacrifices of the Two Hundred Years' War have for us if a reason were left in our life for jealousy? Yet such a reason persisted because there remained button-like noses and classical noses (*Cf.* our conversation during the promenade). For there were some whose love was sought by everyone and others whose love was sought by no one.

Naturally, having conquered hunger (that is, algebraically speaking, having achieved the total of bodily welfare), the United State directed its attack against the second ruler of the world, against love. At last this element also was conquered, that is, organized and put into a mathematical formula. It is already three hundred years since our great historic Lex Sexualis was promulgated: "A Number may obtain a license to use any other Number as a sexual product."

The rest is only a matter of technique. You are carefully examined in the laboratory of the Sexual Department where they find the content of the sexual hormones in your blood, and they make out for you accordingly a Table of sexual days. Then you file an application to enjoy the services of Number so and so, or Numbers so and so. You get for that purpose a check-book (pink). That is all.

It is clear that under such circumstances there is no more reason for envy or jealousy. The denominator of the fraction of happiness is reduced to zero and the whole fraction is thus converted into a magnificent infiniteness. The thing

which was for the ancients the source of innumerable stupid tragedies has been converted in our time into an harmonious, agreeable and useful function of the organism, a function like sleep, like physical labor, the taking of food, digestion, etc., etc. Hence you see how the great power of logic purifies everything it happens to touch. Oh, if only you unknown readers can conceive this divine power! If you will only learn to follow it to the end!

It is very strange: while I was writing today of the loftiest summit of human history, all the while I breathed the purest mountain air of thought, but within me it was and remains cloudy, cobwebby, and there is a kind of cross-like, four-pawed X. Or perhaps it is my paws and I feel like that only because they are always before my eyes, my hairy paws. I don't like to talk about them. I dislike them. They are a trace of a primitive epoch. Is it possible that there is in me...?

I wanted to strike out all this because it trespasses on the limits of my synopsis. But then I decided: no, I shall not! Let this diary give the curve of the most imperceptible vibrations of my brain, like a precise seismograph, for at times such vibrations serve as forewarnings... Certainly this is absurd! This certainly should be stricken out; we have conquered all the elements; catastrophes are not possible any more.

Now everything is clear to me. The peculiar feeling inside is a result of that very same square situation of which I spoke in the beginning. There is no X in me. There can be none. I am simply afraid lest some X will be left in you, my unknown readers. I believe you will understand that it is harder for me to write than it ever was for any author throughout human history. Some of them wrote for contemporaries, some for the future generations but none of them ever wrote for their ancestors, or beings like their primitive, distant ancestors.

RECORD SIX

An Accident

The Cursed "It's Clear"

Twenty-four Hours

I must repeat, I made it my duty to write concealing nothing. Therefore I must point out now that sad as it may be, the process of hardening and crystallization of life has evidently not been completed even here in our State. A few steps remain to be made before we reach the ideal. The ideal (it's clear), is to be found where nothing *happens*, but here... I will give you an example: in the State paper I read that in two days the holiday of Justice will be celebrated on the Plaza of the Cube. This means that again some Number has impeded the smooth run of the great State machine. Again something that was not foreseen, or forecalculated *happened*.

Besides, something *happened* to me. True, it occurred during the personal hour, that is during the time specifically assigned to unforeseen circumstances, yet...

At about sixteen (to be exact, ten minutes to sixteen), I was at home. Suddenly the telephone: "D-503?"-a woman's voice.

"Yes."

"Are you free?"

"Yes."

"It is I, I-330. I shall run over to you immediately. We shall go together to the Ancient House. Agreed?"

I-330!... This I- irritates me, repels me. She almost frightens me; but just because of that I answered, "Yes."

In five minutes we were in an aero. Blue sky of May. The light sun in its golden aero buzzed behind us without