

XII. As Dirty as anything I can remember

Mailer's writing in this book is as dirty as anything I can remember. Cunningly, ^{intentionally} professionally dirty. It is more, much more, ^{worse} than a few reviewer^s referring to how ~~he~~ he "conjectures" so much, ^{he} does that, but he does ^{more}. He ¹⁵⁸⁴ begins with suggestions, various kinds of hints even denials of what he is saying but falls short of saying literally. But over his 828 pages he says what he wants to say about those he wants to defame and does defame. He builds ^{CASES} ~~cases~~ ^{he} knows are fake and presents them as true.

We saw some of this in his abuse of de Mohrenschildt but in the course of the parts of his book dealing with de Mohrenschildt, in those two chapters addressed in the preceding ^{and elsewhere} chapter he intends to ^{have} no doubt in the readers' mind that de Mohrenschildt was a CIA employee. He falls short of saying that but only the most cautious reader making a careful reading will not get that impression, will not believe that during the time he knew Oswald de Mohrenschildt was working for the CIA and not as an occasional contact ~~or~~ source, ^{as an employe.}

Mailer writes

But it is not until he gets to the very end ^{to make} that ~~Mailer does make this explicit.~~ ^{without adding anything, even any reason to believe it at all. He wants it to be so it is.}

In ~~the~~ first chapter of his last part, VIII, Mailer's title ^{is} "The Punishment of Hosty and the Death of the handler." That the two are not in any way related is minor but in referring to de Mohrenschildt as Oswald's "handler" Mailer is saying that de Mohrenschildt was a CIA employee who "handked" its spy Oswald.

No "handler" is some occasional Tom Dick or Harry picked up without being knowⁿ and they ^{as Oswald's (de Mohrenschildt had to be a CIA)} controlled thoroughly. The "handler" ^{is} an employee. Not only is there no proof of this, ^{there} there isn't even a rational basis for suspecting it.

And, finally, after all the pretense that there was not a thing ^{wrong} going with de Mohrenschildt, after all the dirtiness of his writing, he admits ^{at the end} ~~it~~ ^{de Mohrenschildt was not only} to then poochpooch it and make on it was little more than a common cold. But he has covered himself by the admission that is in the form of a quotation from Gerald Posner's Case Closed:

He is dirty in misrepresenting the facts of the assassination and its investigations²
and he is dirty in dealing with peoples' private lives and reputations.

1) Here Mailer discloses what he is capable of in building ^{his} a series of phony cases ^{ings} that he then builds ^{into a} phony book. The professional finds of the experts at a fine teaching hospital's psychiatric unit have no value at all, not when he has that good ol' boy of years past Sam Ballin, albeit ^{third} ~~third~~-hand, as his expert. Ballin ^{of} without any medical education or training of any kind is what Mailer needs so he becomes, in Mailer's writing, the ^{only} ~~dependable~~ source. Not the psychiatrists who found de Mohrenschildt ^{so} ~~de~~ "psychotic" their treatment of him included "two months of intensive ~~shock~~ shock therapy."

2) 3) AND after that deMohrenschildt was so out of contact with reality that "he said he had been with Oswald the day of the assassination though he was actually with dozens of guests at the Bulgarian embassy in Haiti the day JFK was killed" means nothing at all ~~to~~ the bankrupt Mailer when for his dishonest need in his dishonest book he cannot have de Mohrenschildt as mentally ill as he was. So, as is true throughout his book, the lies required for it to appear to be other than the ^{fraud} ~~trash~~ it is become real and the truth does not exist for Mailer. Not, of course, here alone. *This is true throughout his book.*

159
include
single
page

Posner, picking up on this deterioration in De Mohrenschildt, does his best to render him permanently incompetent:

Posner: . . . de Mohrenschildt was quite mad by the time he gave his final [Epstein] interview. For nearly a year before his death, he was paranoid, fearful that the "FBI and Jewish mafia" were out to kill him. He twice tried to kill himself with drug overdoses, and another time cut his wrists and submerged himself in a bathtub. After he began waking in the middle of every night, screaming and beating himself, his wife finally committed him to Parkland Hospital psychiatric unit, where he was diagnosed as psychotic and given two months of intensive shock therapy. After his treatment he said he had been with Oswald on the day of the assassination, though he was actually with dozens of guests at the Bulgarian embassy in Haiti the day JFK was killed. Despite de Morenschildt's imbalance, Epstein and others still quote the final interview as though it were an uncontested fact.¹³

De Morenschildt does not deserve the label "quite mad" at the time he gave his final interview. Once again, Posner is not including those sources who would indicate that De Mohrenschildt in the last month of his life was depressed but not delusional. (page 707)

Mailer's source for his deprecating of Posner's accurate report is ~~the~~ third hand rendering of the opinion of a man who had not seen de Mohrenschildt in years and later said, in effect, he looked pretty much as he always had. His source is McMillan's version of what the House assassins committee said was Sam Ballen's opinion.

159A

But if Mailer acknowledges the medical truth about de Mohrenschildt can he then say that he killed himself to avoid testimony that would expose him as Oswald's "handler" for the CIA, not because the persecutions were too much to continue to bear?

The kind of writing is vile. There was no basis for Mailer's suspicion which was not his to begin with. But take that away and how much remains that he can ever pretend is of some value in his book?

Who gives a damn about Lee Harvey Oswald other than as the official assassin?

If he was not that he was essentially no different than most of the people in the country, and that is no excuse for a book allegedly about him- ^{which} and it isn't even that. Mailer uses the same crooked trick to slither into his assault on Oswald's widow's character.

3/ His first "Volume" is titled "Oswald with marina in Minsk." The first Part of that "Volume" is titled "The Adventures of Valya." Who is Valya? She is Marina's aunt.

3/ As noted above, ^{opened} Mailer does not tell the reader how it came about that the KGB ^{opened} its files, at least some of them, to him, ^{and talked to him. How that happened is not important, but that about Marina's relatives and friends of 30 years ago, that is what is important.} Nor does he begin the book with the slightest mention of Oswald. Instead he ^{talks} about ^{others} some of Marina's family and by the time he gets to the end his first chapter, titled "Volchuk," he sneaks in ^{the first of his} some dirtiness about Marina. He has her advising her aunt that with her husband ^{on her} two-timing/ she should two-time on him. (page 24)

Source? None indicated. This by the man who as we saw above criticized Posner for exactly that, ^{not sourcing - as Mailer imagined it.}

Consistency is the hobgoblin of small minds? Mailer's mind is not small.

As he wanders around with a partial story of Oswald's "defection" ^{that Oswald} he saw to it ^{Mailer} was not a defection, playing Posner, so to speak, he just sneaks into the KGB giving him and him only what he wanted, what he needs for this book ^{that} in the end was not enough for a book.

All of a ~~suff~~ sudden, in his Part III's chapter titled "Igor," he and the KGB are buddies and it is helping him. "atural as breathing," needs no explanation. (Part ^{III} ~~three~~ has a stacked title, "Oswald's Work" the top line and below it "Oswald's Sweetheart.")

So, what we would not expect ^e at the beginning of the book, the beginning of his campaign against Marina, ¹ id ~~not~~ there, and what for an honest man writing an honest book ^{what alone made it} ~~the~~ what should be there, ~~he~~ it was possible ^{for} him to ~~do the book, it is not there.~~ even think he could have a book after all the other assassination and supposed assassination books, the deal with the ~~the~~ KGB, is not there.

Mailer's first words in one of ^{his} these de Mohrenschildt chapters we discussed in the preceding chapter, his "The Well-born Firmed Friend," are descriptive of his book, not of the mythologies essential to it. They are,

"If ~~her~~ there is any place where a narrative of Oswald's life is bound to take ^{the} on seductive ambiguity of a spy novel, it is with the entrance into Lee's affairs of Baron ^{George} De Mohrenschildt..."

malint angle from

As we have ^{seen} ~~seen~~, not a word of this is true. What is true in it is that Mailer describes his ~~project~~ project for what it really is, an inferior "spy novel."

eff D/60X

5) The only real spying in it is the KGB's on Oswald. All the rest is imagined and it did not exist. Mailer

161fols

folo 16 AX

of even a spy novel

and he would not have even this shabby pretense of ~~that~~ if it were not for the "seductive ambiguity" of his ~~riting~~ writing.

4 The actuality is that Oswald's life in Minsk was essentially humdrum. Even as M^uailer t^ries to ~~jas-jax-jax~~ jazz it up it is dull. The only information M^uailer got about Oswald's life there ~~is~~ that has any possible significance, was not new. I published it two decades earlier and I had a good, official source for what I wrote.

The KGB was concerned that Oswald might be an American ^{spy} of some kind. It covered him like ~~the~~ dew covers a pasture. It could find ~~no indication~~ ^{not even a suspicion} that Oswald had the slightest interest in the kind of information a spy would go for. It baited him with the prospect of getting significant military information and he was totally indifferent. ~~He~~ ^{He} ignored it. ~~Had~~ ^{He} no interest at all in it.

Sp^y, faded with this abankruptcy, what remained for M^uailer for his Oswald in Minsk? ^{of what his and Schill's costs for living there six months were?}

Of whatever investment had been made with the KGB and the people M^uailer paid for ^{some of} interviews? ^{To} of which, naturally, he makes no reference. Why let his readers know if ^{those} he paid to talk tried to earn their money by "improving" on truth and reality?

What ^{ed} remain is the "seductive ambiguity" of the spy novel that M^uailer wrote and ~~zzzzzzzzzzzzzzzz~~ only to find that it failed.

To spice that up, to relieve the ~~humdrum-humdrum~~ humdrum of the dull ^{and boring} lives people led in Minsk (^{for M^uailer's writing} "boring" is the word used in that daily New York Times review) M^uailer resorted to sex, and for that he used, really misused, Marina. Whether of or not he had some unmet expectation of getting something interesting, some kind of confession, some hint that Oswald ^{was} as some kind of spy -whatever his ^{reason}, whether or not vengeance, he goes after her with ~~a~~ vengeance and with unrestrained, deliberate dishonesty ^{enhanced} ^{of the} with a little trickery that he uses ~~throughout~~ throughout this long book.

Nowhere in it ~~with~~ ^{is} there the slightest ⁱⁿ sympathy for or understanding of the truly ^{deperate} ^{Marina} separate situation in which ~~she~~ found herself when at 22, in a strange land and so utterly alone, with two young children, she became the widow of the man accused of assassinating the President of the United States.

All the means she then had, another fact that in 828 pages M^uailer could not mention

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6

162A

big in its 828 pages,

In all of this book ^{the} Mailer does not once ^{refer} ~~refer~~ to Marina as what she was, another victim of the assassination.

4

at some point to mention 'conclusion' that she was 2 top 'hands'

IX.

138 next
140

6/ and still have his Oswald mythology, is the less than \$200 he left for her to ~~buy~~ buy a washing machine ~~with which to buy~~ she she would not have to wash the diapers by hand when as they planned they had their own apartment.

^{marina} How was ~~she~~, speaking only a few words of English and without any skill she could use in getting a job, ^{here} to survive and to care for those two infants?

How many young women have ever faced such daunting, terrifying straits & so alone and still managed to survive and to care for her infants, ~~and~~ to raise and educate ~~them~~ ^{lives and} so as they have they could lead successful careers of their own?

162A- This had no appeal for the successful novelist writing what he ^{assumes} pretends is nonfiction and an account of the lives of Marina and Oswald. ^{He makes no mention of any of this.}

2/ What did appeal to him was slandering ^{Marina} her when she was a grandmother with five ~~grandchildren~~ ^{when she was} as an insatiable sex kitten ~~as~~ a teenager and doing that with what he ~~knew~~ not only knew was lies in which he featured a liar who had trouble telling the truth even by accident but in which the proof that it was lies ^{is obvious in} can be picked from what he used of what those he paid to be interviewed ~~said~~ and others told him.

Scattering this as he does throughout the book helps the reader not detect it.

Shame, as we see, is an emotion as foreign to Mailer as is decency. ^{or concern for truth}

6/ (Mailer does refer to the long statement "Marina wrote in longhand in Russian when she as held captive, ^{for several months,} referred to as for her "protection," by the Secret Service, until until after her complaint to Commission chairman Earl Warren when she testified she was turned free. Nor does Mailer mention her months of captivity and of the isolation that meant. ^{her statement} In ~~it~~ Marina referred to their plans for getting an apartment and the purpose for which Lee left ^{her} than money. The reason is obvious: he would not have left that money for a ~~washing machine~~ if he had expected any need for money for flight.)

He oozes into the slime of his Part IV, "Marina's Friends, Marina's Loves," with his two-page chapter bearing the names of two young women with whom marina worked at the ~~hospital~~ hospital in Minsk, "Yanina and Sonia." (pages 135-6) Chapter 2 is "Neighbors." (pages ¹³⁹ 135ff) Then comes "Larissa" (pages 145-6). "Mischa" is chapter 4. (Pages 147-8) Chapters 5, 6 and ^{are} 7, "Leonid," "Inessa", and "Kostya", the latter the only one taking more than a single page,

Chapter 8 is the only one with more than a first name. It is "Yuri Merezhinsky," (pages 154ff). The ninth chapter in this "part" of such brief chapters as of a single page, is "Anatoly" (pages 159-64)

For all of this "Mailer has ~~but~~ a single source note in "Anatoly." And then, this being

the Mailer's concept of responsible nonfiction writing so eulogized by so many reviewers, that single source note is at least second hand ⁱⁿ the book he refers to, "McMillan's. *Real scholarship that.*

~~Like~~ Like a prosecutor building a case by pretending impartiality, he begins with the expressed liking and respect ^{had for Marina,} Yanina and Sonia. ^{of her} They spoke "not without loves,"

Mailer says. ^{They} ~~And~~ he does quote Yanina as saying that Marina's backward stepfather shouted "whore" at her when she was a girl, and when as Yanina said that was not at all true.

So Mailer sneaks that suggestion in ^{that way, carefully cunning, Mailer's concept of nonfiction}. He sneaks a little more suggesting that ^{a source of extra} Marina had money that let her afford what ^{other girls} they could not when they all got the same wages: somehow Marina had better dresses and looked better than they. There was an obvious reason for Marina having a little more money than they; ^{she} she had no rent to pay and (also ate without cost with her uncle and aunt.

But sneaky, dirty Mailer sneaks these dishonest suggestions in at the very ~~first~~ beginning of this Part on "Marina's Friends, Marina's Loves."

In "Neighbors" he digresses into unrelated family histories that are not connected with Marina. *He likes big books and this one needs padding desperately.*

Slipsliding more prejudice in Mailer next says that when Marina went to live with her uncle and aunt in 1959, "New problems came with her." He does not note in his supposed account of Marina and Lee that four years later, only four years later, she was a widow at 22 in a strange land and with two infant girls to keep and raise, beginning with less than \$200 for all she had in the world. She then was utterly alone on the other side of the world and without any means of making a living. Perhaps "Mailer does not mention this, because it is inconsistent with what he is edging to allege about her. *all those "new problems" that "came with her" he makes them up.*

He next does that by suggesting that her ^{a concern} aunt Valya did not rust Marina to go anywhere alone and wanted Larissa with her. That is so unusual for a girl of 18? *with what*

Mailer's next provocative suggestion is that Marina had an entirely undescribed

91 That happened to a male cousin of mine but not until his first year in medical school. It was not really that unheardof, in Minsk or anywhere else.

9 (Of French ancestry and from New Orleans, Sidney's name was Bechet. He was world famous
in Mailer's youth and in mine.)

8/ ~~intimate~~ "intimacy" with Leonid, ^{only} albeit intermittently for five to six ~~month~~ months.

Leonid "never calls" that undescribed but highly suggestive "intimacy" as Mailer quotes him as ~~an~~ "an affair."

9 What was it then? Why does Mailer ~~him and~~ suggest and not say what he means when he soon gets explicit enough?

The only possibility is that it was not anything like what ^{Mailer} ~~he~~ infers and ~~these~~ thus can resort only to tricky, dirty writing to give it a meaning he wants the reader to take from it that it does not have.

^{undetermined} ~~threatened~~ ^{of his} Inessa gave Mailer's ^{prize} "witness" who is really a ^{prize} package in saying that Marina "had naturally bright lips." She said Marina's lips were ^{very} "very bright lips with no makeup ~~to~~ just naturally bright lips." (page 150)

With quoting Kostya as saying he and Marina had sex (page 153) Mailer has done all the ^{contrive} ~~suggest~~ prejudicial suggesting he can ^{as} he builds his prosecution-type indictment ^{introduction} up to his star witness, Yuri Merezhinsky. ^{Really} has only alleged "witness."

Neither Marina nor any other of these Russian teenagers with a few young adults, even with ^{deliberately} Mailer's prejudicial treatment of them, appears to differ in any major way from their peers ^{out} through the entire western world except in their cultural interests. Except that as compared with their peers in this country a higher percentage of them were familiar with and liked ^{and in writing} the classics in ~~as~~ music, very much, most of them.

They had some of the same hangups. Larissa, for ~~example~~ example, longed to become a doctor. "She ~~was a good student~~ ^{with} did well in school, but then in their ~~high~~ grade discovered that she could not look at blood." (page 145) 164A here

9 Mischa told Mailer that he and his friend like to "listen to Bach, "rokofiev" and other classical composer, as did others of that group, and they also like classical American jazz. He mentioned ^{the} "(Louis) Armstrong, Sidney Becket(sic), (Benny) Goodman, Bing Crosby, Frank Sinatra." (page 148) 164B here

10 For most of them as teenagers living under infinitively more ~~disc~~ difficult conditions the worst he can say of them, ^M Marina included, is that their behavior, their personal

10/ But

(That was phony self-deprecation by Yuri and it is phony for Mailer to ~~emphasize~~ ^{emphasize} it, to give this false self-portrait of Yuri at the outset, to influence the reader that way with what he knew was ~~false~~ false. But the reporter in Mailer, and that is how he began ^{of} years ago, recognized how that could form the readers' minds the way he wanted so he not only began ^{ins} that way, he repeated ^s those same word a dozen lines later. Yuri is anything but self-deprecating, he knew it, he knew he was pretending and he was lucky, Mailer loved it:

~~Mazzuztuzgo~~

10/ Next, at least as Mailer presents it next, Yuri is abused, a much-abused man
beginning as a ~~child~~ child and by his "cream of society" parents:

conduct, was at least as socially acceptable as was his when he was a grown man and a professional success.

With all the hinting he can cook up he finally gets to his "Yuri Merezhinsky" chapter (page 154) He begins it, perhaps intending to build sympathy for a man much in need of it and deserving none, referring to him as

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"... He is a handsome man of about fifty and may once have been as good-looking as a movie star. But now, he is ravaged by illness and his shoulders are hunched. To meet his interviewers, he has come from a hospital several hundred kilometers away, and has been drinking all day; at night, he is still drinking with the harsh pride of a Russian who measures his prowess by the slugs of vodka he can continue to mix with powerful emotions."

He then quotes Yuri as saying "My story will be very boring, not interesting" when to Mailer it is the exact opposite. ~~Yuri~~ He then quotes Yuri as saying what is true.

165 A

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"... I can tell you this should be called 'Story of Children Who Come from Cream of Society.' My father was a great scientist; he became part of our Soviet scientific history. My mother, the same—Honorable Scientist of Byelorussian Republic. Immediately after Gagarin was launched into space on Sputnik, my mother was interviewed, my father was interviewed, I was interviewed."

165 B

Yuri had complaints about everything, especially about his parents. They were, as he and Mailer say, eminences of science, His mother was part of a delegation to the UN with Khrushchev.

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Yuri then goes into when he met Marina. That was at a dance after a lecture by his mother and in the same building. Again using those suggestive words so indispensable to the dishonest writer Mailer quotes him as say of Marina, "I knew her before, I knew her after," when in fact that was the night he first met her. Mailer never says who was doing the interviewing, whether it was he or was Schiller. He always has "Interviewer" in the transcripts he uses.

11/ Young and vigorous boys tired of sex? Not just perhaps an individual one but the entire "group" of ~~them~~ them? All tired of sex, all bored by it, all at the same time?

What made those Minsker boys and young men so different from all of their age almost anywhere in the world? Than those of their age in World War II ^{some perhaps their fathers,} so many of raped their way across Europe? Is that how Mailer ^{was} as at Yuri's age?

11/ ^{if} Mailer ^{used} believed anything Yuri said after that it was not because he believed it!

12/ It ~~also~~ is obvious that whenever Yuri tripped himself in a lie Schiller/Mailer let him get away with it ^{It is obvious that} and Mailer was so desperate for what he could use in his campaign against marina when this was so apparent ^{he} used it anyway. ^{up} If ^{with} this ^{if} he ~~was~~ correct in ~~his~~ ^{his} understanding ^{of} what he could get away with with his publisher and with the coming ~~new~~ reviewers of his coming book .

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Knowing that it is a lie, as ^{we} have seen but with it nonetheless a rather convenient lead into ^{renewed} Mailer's assault on Marina's character when she was still a teenager, here is how Mailer worked his transcripts over to begin with a relatively slight criticism of Marina. Why he asked this question, whichever the interviewer was, is ~~the~~ cause for wonder because they knew from Inessa that as a girl Marina had naturally bright lips with no makeup at all;

intend single space

INTERVIEWER: Was she wearing lipstick?

YURI MEREZHINSKY: She painted her lips all of the time.

INT: All the time?

YM: Yes.

INT: That's interesting, because the word we get is that she never used lipstick.

YM: She was very attractive. Effective.

INT: How long had you known her then?

YM: It doesn't matter—one day, two days, a year—I knew her long enough to know who was who. She was a woman, not a girl. Not a young woman. She was older. We were tired of her in sex.

INT: Tired of her in sex? We? Let's be precise here.

YM: I don't know about other people. I can talk only about myself. I never went with her to bed. But I could sleep with her even on a staircase. (ages 15-6)

12 (No 6A)

To Mailer, world-class ~~teats-a-te teats-and-tussie~~ write and to his world-class interviewer there is no contradiction between his ~~Yr~~ Yuri saying that he "knew" Marina and had sex with her until, and he here includes his friends, "We were tired of her in^sex" and then, when asked to be ~~precise~~, "precise" responded that "I never went to bed with him her"?

Obviously both cannot be true and equally obviously Mailer used it after ~~that~~ Yuri at the least contradicted himself. Not only was Mailer unfazed by this but he liked Yuri's next self-contradiction so much he also used it uncritically. I omit nothing in ^{quotation} ~~quotation~~. This follows what I quoted above:

INT: You say you had her any way you wanted?

YM: Yes, sure.

INT: Your friends had her?

YM: Sure.

INT: For certain?

YM: Sure.

(page 15 to) 204 + 156

Yet Mailer does not report asking his KGB chums who were so anxious to provide him with what he wanted to titillate those X-rated minds to which ^{with} ~~by~~ this kind of writing he appeals. Surely ~~they~~ ^{KGB} when they gave him their transcripts of their eavesdropping on Marina and Oswald ^{when} when they were in bed they would not have been reluctant to provide - if it existed - any confirmation of what so interested ~~them~~ Schiller and Mailer from their own selections of their own interrogations.

Here Mailed asks a question he knows Yuri will contradict from McMillan's book, *Mailed refers to McMillan but to it*
 for which he has no citation, and then from even the Mailer we have been looking at, *is a*
 really low one beginning with Yuri's volunteering of it

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YM: She was sent out from Leningrad in twenty-four hours for prostitution with a foreigner, and she came to Minsk.

INT: For prostitution? Literally?

YM: With a foreigner. Then she came to Minsk. Because she had an uncle here. She was lucky. *(page 156)*

That alleged "luck" was as Yuri put it not being sent to a labor camp, *a gulag.*

Remember, the KGB was giving Schiller and Mailer access to their files. When ~~Os~~

Oswald was sent to Minsk the KGB there was alerted to the possibility he presented a

danger to the Soviet Union. They spied on him all the time. They knew who he went out

with and the nature of their relations. And if Oswald had become friends with the woman

Yuri makes Marina out to be, can it possibly be believed that the KGB would not have

looked her up, learned what it would?
~~learned that?~~ Of course it cannot be believed and it cannot be believed that Mailer

was not aware of that.

167A here

Note in what is next quoted that when Mailer makes a pretense of seeking proof, of asking Yuri for his source Yuri first, having ~~so~~ *horrible* made these allegations against

Marina first claims he should not answer because the answer would be so "intimate" and

then when he agrees to answer does Not and Schiller/Mailer are satisfied with that:

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INT: Who told you she was a prostitute in Leningrad?

YM: You ask a question which I consider very intimate.

INT: Let me ask it in a different way.

YM: No, it was right question to ask. She came here with four other people who were sent out of Leningrad together. She was in group. Two young men, two women. And her uncle worked for Ministry of Internal Affairs, MVD, that's why she was privileged to come to Minsk and not 101 Kilometers. What it means, 101 Kilometers, you have to cut trees in forest.

INT: A labor camp?

(page 156)

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single space

YM: Job for prostitutes and people who don't work. You were sent out of big cities to work, hard labor. At that time, anybody could be accused of any type of prostitution. (page 157)

Being a pharmacist apparently was not work to Yuri et al or, if Marina was not yet a pharmacist, they had no question about her being trusted by the Soviets if she had the record Yuri attributes to her. ^{Yuri easily} ~~having gotten~~ past that fabled Schiller diligence as that "world-class" ^{as} "interviewer", the media ^{party boy} /stouted him as and Mailer's fabulous reputation as a "reporter", including getting a Pulitzer for his writing of the Gary Gilmore story, because he never did answer.

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Bad enough as it is to this point. Mailer uses Yuri to make it worse, knowingly

worse:

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Now, said Yuri, there was a problem—he and his group, he would say, were fed up with Marina. They didn't know how to get rid of her. She was good at sex, but when a woman is always with her legs spread, sometimes you resent it. She never worried about anything like reputation. (page 157)

It is not odd that Yuri, bent for whatever reason on character assassination, was encouraged to pile his defamations on but it surely is odd that not a single one of the men Mailer and Schiller interviewed said anything like this at all. Most portrayed Marina as a fine and caring person. ^{when they asked} ~~When Yuri was asked~~ "how she could conceal her reputation" if it ^{was} as as he says and once again those remon interrogaters let him add more insults and not respond in any way:

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It was asked how she could conceal her reputation. After she met Lee at this dance, how did she manage that?

Yuri: "You know, we are now three men here in this room, okay? Then a woman comes. Then a fourth fellow comes who is getting interested in some woman. You don't tell this new guy, 'Man, you know, I fucked her in different positions so many times...' You don't pass this information. Sasha was the only one who was not her lover. Sasha was ready to marry her. He was in love up to his ears. Everybody fucked her but Sasha." (page 157)

Mailer had interviewed all those others in Yuri's "group" without getting any confirmation of all this slop from Yuri and of course Mailer knew that.

It did not discourage him from repeating what Yuri said and worse, treating it as solid, factual, dependable information when he knew it was not that at all.

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But as Mailer should know and Random House's lawyers do know for ~~the~~ "public figure," which Marina could be alleged to have become without doing a thing ~~she~~ be one, to sue successfully for libel, she has to establish "malice", and the courts have held, as they did in the case Mark Lane handled for Willis Garto, his Liberty Lobby and his weekly Spotlight, if the writer has a source, no matter how undependable a source, and quotes that source accurately, there is no libel. *under the law and controlling decisions*

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That is how Mark Lane went for those extremists of the farout-right when they were sued by former CIA spook and Watergate conspirator. *E. Howard Hunt.* The article *by* another former CIA man wrote, Victor Marchetti, *write,* could hardly have been more libellous, more grossly inaccurate and indeed impossible, but Marchetti had those ~~see~~ sources, he repeated what they had said and he got away with really vicious libel in charging that Hunt was part of the conspiracy that killed the President.

There was nothing too impossible for Yuri to say and for Mailer to repeat ~~he~~ ~~says verbatim~~ if it in any way maligned Marina. This is what follows:

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Marina, he told them, had access in her pharmacy to grain alcohol. Yuri didn't want to boast, but he could say that, as a man, he satisfied all women, and Marina brought him bottles, big bottles of alcohol, from her pharmacy. *(Page 157)*

Whatever Yuri may have meant by "big bottles", in this country ^N alcohol alcohol for medical medicinal purposes comes in "bottles" that are quite large and quite heavy. They would have been impossible to steal. Assuming, of course, that Marina ~~he~~ was willing to risk the gulaks to steal alcohol for Yuri. But if it was ~~as~~ ~~small~~ a ~~bottle~~ as what here is a quart, small a girl and woman ^{that} as she ^{as in particular}, how easy would have been to hide that ^{on herself} (and not get caught? And to run that risk regularly and not expect the shrinkage of that stock to be noticed when it was not accounted for?

Especially if as ~~the~~ Mailer next quote Yuri ~~sa~~ as saying, men were waiting in line if she had wanted one:

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Asked about Lee, Yuri said he wanted to explain. "We are one team, and we are ten people, and we have one, two, three, ten women, and they are all very beautiful. They are always just between us, touching us. And everybody on our team is fucking these women. At one o'clock she's fucking one, then another

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one—we all know it. It is not a secret. And we are tired of these women. We are bored by them."

So why did Lee become serious about her?
Yuri replied: "Every woman has her own raisin."

(pages 157-8)

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These world-callers interviewed Kosta Bondarin:

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He knows Yuri would say that he slept with her, but Kostya is not sure it happened. The fact is that Anatoly Shpanko did have intimate contact with her. That much Kostya knows for sure. Tolya was a serious man and, unlike Yuri, would never talk to others about an affair. Yuri, after all, was the same age as Kostya, seventeen, and so he would have been more likely to say, "Well, I got fucked, I really got fucked," but in this situation, Kostya didn't believe him. Tolya and Marina really had it for each other, and he doesn't believe she would have allowed Yurka to get into the middle of that. (page 158)

Mailer concludes his ~~Yuri~~ Yuri Merezhinsky chapter with these words, his own, not attributed to anyone:

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"It could ~~possibly~~ all be grossly exaggerated. Easily, it could be exaggerated."

But did that discourage him when he felt the need to malign the ^{as a girl} grandmother to save the book his greed ~~as a~~ was not enough to get him?

All of this is at least "can be at the least "grossly exaggerated" and he could bring himself to write it and then submit it for publication and then hit the promotions train to draw even more attention to it? Which also means, of course, to sell more copies of it?

Not a bit too soon Mailer ends this Part with his "Anatoly" chapter. (pages 159-64)

Anatoly was a medical student when he met Marina. "His first memory of Marina is of a very, very pleasant woman and he still remembers her that way. ... she never insulted him and he never insulted her. ...he likes kind-hearted women and modest girls."

(page 159)

"At his Medical Institute (Mailer's words) there were more girls than men, so male students usually ~~found~~ had a large choice." (page 160)

16

16 17 "Speaking of Marina," again Mailer's words, " he cannot say anything bad. She was just a simple girl, very simple, ~~ord~~ ordinary, positive. ...All he can remember is that there was nothing negative from ~~his~~^{her} side to his." (pages 160-1)

Anatoly proposed to Marina but on her uncle's advice ~~Mar~~^{Mar} Marina decided not to marry any man "with no money ~~and~~ and, even more important, no apartment."

16 Anatoly does not even remember Marina's kisses. (page 161)

17 "He also does not remember" what Schiller/Mailer keep going back to without ever consulting their cooperative KGB chums "anything negative about Marina" and "nobody ever said to him that Marina had some history in Leningrad." (page 162) These are Mailer's own words. So also are these, the last I quote from this disgusting Part:

Anatoly told him "they didn't hav sex." (page 162)

But Mailer, like the smut-merchant he is, doesn't let go of this. ~~This~~^{His} next Part, V, ~~begin~~ titled "Courtship and Marriage" (pages 167 ff), begins with the chapter he titled "Alik." That was Lee's nickname in the Soviet Union. Mailer ~~g~~ does not get far into it when he uses their interviews with Marina. ~~That~~^{They were} was after returning from Belarus. And, it seems, al/Schiller and Mailer were interested in is sex. (Page 169)

What follows is from the middle of the next page:

She didn't want to talk about her experiences. Catherine the Great had lots of lovers and was considered okay; that did not mean Marina had lots—she was not saying that. She just didn't want to talk about sex. Everybody was looking for bad; then they trash you. It wasn't that she'd done something she was ashamed of, nothing horribly wrong, but she knew when she first came to Minsk that maybe she needed advice. Because she was not that experienced. Maybe men thought she was something that she was not.

She talked to her friend Misha Smolsky, who had never laid a finger on her. They were friendly, just friends. He said, "Come on, I won't touch you. You're not Anita Ekberg." That said it all. He told her: "Marina, there's a guy spreading gossip around that you're sleeping with him. Is it true or not?" She told him, "Misha, I'm asking you what can I do if I have nothing to hide? I cannot defend myself door to door if a guy is lying."

So Misha said, "I cannot punch him in the nose, because it is not my business"—meaning she was not his girl—"but I'm going to tell him it is baloney."

She did not know why Merezhinsky—if that was the guy, Yuri Merezhinsky—talked about her that way. Maybe it was because he was always drunk and liked to make a fuss. Maybe it was rejection. Was this the person that Misha was talking about? She felt humiliated in front of all the world.

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How did she feel after what Mailer was doing to her?

Again, this is Mailer's paraphrase of what she said, "How her reputation felt like ugly clothing, smelly, that she was condemned to wear."

Mailer begins Chapter 3 of this part repeating that same Leningrad rumor with no source indicated. That is not unusual for these ~~chap~~ Parts. This one of 25 pages has only three citations of any source at all.

Mailer persists for several pages and then ~~the~~ this on page 182:

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M: I never once in my life was paid money.

INT: I'm sure you weren't.

M: I was looking for love in some wrong places and sometimes I had to pay for that. I actually was raped by a foreigner.

INT: What?

M: I mean, I was trapped in a room. He locked the door. And you know how they have those *dezurnayas* that sit over there in the hallways of hotels holding keys for people who are out? I couldn't scream. I thought, what would this woman think of me? So I fought this man. He finally threw me against him. He said, "Well if I knew you were a virgin, I would not have touched you." . . . Lee didn't ask me, but on my wedding night, I pretended. I was terrified, I said to myself, When night comes, what am I going to do? I mean, what? It's a clean-cut life from now on. I want to be serious, and I was terrified. But Lee did not ask me.

Inessa knew of Marina's concern because she was not a virgin and that is the basis for the Schiller/Mailer questioning.

In Mailer's own word she told them off, giving put up with it for five days:

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INTERVIEWER: One person responded to a question by saying: You're right, she wasn't a virgin on her wedding night. She was worried that Lee would find out, and she went to the pharmacy and got something. She was protecting her marriage.

MARINA: Okay.

INT: That's exactly what was said.

M: Okay. It's true. So? So you are a sex pervert to spend five days to get somebody to talk about subject like this . . . I mean, isn't it enough?

This and more like it, mind you, in a book ostensibly about the ~~sex~~ assassination of the President as Mailer seeks to ~~to~~ prove what he "decided ~~decided!~~ the evidence

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19 because, ^mremember that Goodman report on Mailer's days at Penn, he said, and omniscient as he who, who dares dispute him? the evidence itself is ~~simple~~ "impenetrable."

How ^{could} ~~what~~ Oswald did not know could possibly be a factor in Mailer's "basic question" for which he ^went to Belarus, seeking proof that Oswald was the assassin from his life in the Soviet Union (page 315))

Mailer's

Of course it has no relevance. None at all! As ^{it} also would not have had from ~~the~~ poppycock that did not originate with him, that Oswald killed JFK, for whom he had great respect and admiration, to become a famous man thereby.

That is the most amateurish of the ~~amateurish-sh~~ amateur shrinkery of the supporters of the official theory of the assassination - and little understood as it is, it is only a theory.

But Mailer was apparently lost enough in his all-consuming ego and his sense of his own omnipotence and omniscience, that he went for and had faith in this silliness that would ~~so~~ disgrace a reasonable intelligent high-school child.

These are the words of the twice-Pulitzered Mailer as he ends his Part VIII of his first volume:

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By the logic of our narrative, we have just come to the end of Volume One. It is obvious that whatever we have learned about Oswald in Russia is not enough to answer our basic question. For that we will have to follow his adventures in America. The changes in Oswald's life have already been large and abrupt, and now we will have to accompany him on future adventures in Fort Worth, Dallas, New Orleans, Mexico City, Dealey Plaza, and the Dallas city jail. Since we have gone from Russia to America with a minimum of ceremony, and have just taken a quick visit back, perhaps we can obtain a more satisfactory farewell by observing the reactions of Oswald's friends and acquaintances in Minsk after they encountered the news of Kennedy's assassination. (page 315)

1.

XII " AS DIRTY AS ANYTHING I CAN REMEMBER!

Mailer's writing in this book is as dirty as anything I can remember. Cunningly, professionally, intendedly, dirty. It is worse, much worse, than a few reviewers say in referring to how he "conjectures" so much. He does that, but he does more. He is dirty in misrepresenting the facts of the assassination and its investigations and he is dirty in dealing with peoples' private lives and reputations. He begins with suggestions, various kinds of hints, even denials of what he is saying but falls short of saying literally. Over his 828 pages he says what he wants to say about those he wants to defame and does defame. He builds cases he knows are false and presents them as true.

We saw some of this in his abuse of de Mohrenschildt, but in the course of the parts of his book dealing with de Mohrenschildt, in those two chapters addressed in the preceding chapter and elsewhere, he intends to leave no doubt in the reader's mind that de Mohrenschildt was a CIA employee. He falls short of saying that but only the most cautious reader making a careful reading will not get that impression, will not believe that during the time he knew Oswald de Mohrenschildt was working for the CIA and not as an occasional contact or source, as an employee.

Mailer waits until he gets to the very end to make this explicit. Without adding any evidence, even any reason to believe it at all. He wants it to be so it is.

The first chapter of his last part, VIII, Mailer titles "The Punishment of Hosty and the Death of the Handler." That the two are in no way related is minor, but in referring to de Mohrenschildt as Oswald's "handler" Mailer is saying that de Mohrenschildt was a CIA employee who "handled" its spy Oswald. *end/216*

No "handler" is some occasional Tom, Dick or Harry picked up without being known and then controlled thoroughly. As Oswald's "handler" de Mohrenschildt

had to be a CIA employee. Not only is there no proof of this, there is not even a rational basis for suspecting it.

And, finally, after all the pretense that there was not a thing wrong with de Mohrenschildt, after all the dirtiness of his writing, at the end he admits de Mohrenschildt was sick only to then pooh-pooh it and make on it was little more than a common cold. But he has covered himself by the admission that is in the form of a quotation from Gerald Posner's Case Closed:

J / Posner, picking up on this deterioration in De Mohrenschildt, does his best to render him permanently incompetent: *P*

Posner: ... de Mohrenschildt was quite mad by the time he gave his final [Epstein] interview. For nearly a year before his death, he was paranoid, fearful that the "FBI and Jewish mafia" were out to kill him. He twice tried to kill himself with drug overdoses, and another time cut his wrists and submerged himself in a bathtub. After he began waking in the middle of every night, screaming and beating himself, his wife finally committed him to Parkland Hospital psychiatric unit, where he was diagnosed as psychotic and given two months of intensive shock therapy. After his treatment, he said he had been with Oswald on the day of the assassination, though he was actually with dozens of guests at the Bulgarian embassy in Haiti the day JFK was killed. Despite de Morenschildt's imbalance, Epstein and others still quote the final interview as though it were an uncontested fact."

De Mohrenschildt does not deserve the label "quite mad" at the time he gave his final interviews. Once again, Posner is not including those sources who would indicate that De Mohrenschildt in the last months of his life was depressed but not delusional. (page 767)

Mailer's source for his deprecating of Posner's accurate report is the third-hand rendering of the opinion of a man who had not seen de Mohrenschildt in years and later said, in effect, he looked pretty much as he always had. His source is McMillan's version of what the House assassins committee said was Sam Ballen's opinion. *end 217*

Here Mailer discloses what he is capable of in building his series of phony cases that he then builds into a phony book. The professional findings of the experts at a fine teaching hospital's psychiatric unit have no value at all, not when he has that good ol' boy of years past, Sam Ballen, albeit third-hand, as his "expert." Ballen, without any medical education or training of any kind, is what Mailer needs so he becomes, in Mailer's writing, the only

dependable source. Not the psychiatrists who found de Mohrenschildt so "psy-chotic" their treatment of him included "two months of intensive shock therapy."

And after that de Mohrenschildt was so out of contact with reality that "he said he had been with Oswald the day of the assassination though he was actually with dozens of guests at the Bulgarian embassy in Haiti the day JFK was killed" means nothing at all to the bankrupt Mailer when for his dishonest need in his dishonest book he cannot have de Mohrenschildt as mentally ill as he was. So, as is true throughout his book, the lies required for it to appear to be other than the fraud it is become real and the truth does not exist for Mailer. Not, of course, here alone. This is true throughout his book.

If Mailer acknowledges the medical truth about de Mohrenschildt, can he then say that he killed himself to avoid testimony that would expose him as Oswald's "handler" for the CIA, not because the persecutions were too much to continue to bear? *th*

This kind of writing is vile. There was no basis for Mailer's suspicion which was not his to begin with. But take that away and how much remains that he can ever pretend is of some value in his book?

Who gives a damn about Lee Harvey Oswald other than as the official assassin? *end 218*

It he was not that he was essentially no different than most of the people in the country, and that is no excuse for a book allegedly about him--which it isn't even that. Mailer uses the same crooked trickery to slither into his assault on Oswald's widow's character.

His first "Volume" is titled "Oswald with Marine in Minsk." The first Part of that "Volume" is titled "The Adventures of Valya." Who is Valya? She is Marina's aunt.

As noted above, Mailer does not tell the reader how it came about that the KGB opened its files, at least some of them, to him and talked to him. How that happened is not important. Chit-chat about Marina's relatives and friends of 30 years ago, that is what is important.

Nor does he begin the book with the slightest mention of Oswald. Instead, he talks about others of Marina's family and by the time he gets to the end of his first chapter, titled "Volchuk," he sneaks in the first of his dirtiness about Marina. He has her advising her aunt that with her husband two-timing on her she should two-time on him. (page 24)

Source? None indicated. This by the man who, as we saw above, criticized Posner for exactly that, not sourcing - as Mailer imagined it.

Consistency is the hobgoblin of small minds? Mailer's mind is not small.

As he wanders around with a partial story of Oswald's "defection" that Oswald saw to it was not a defection, playing Posner, so to speak, Mailer just sneaks into the KGB giving him and him only what he wanted, what he needs for this book that in the end was not enough for a book.

All of a sudden, in his Part III chapter titled "Igor," he and the KGB are buddies and it is helping him. Natural as breathing. Needs no explanation. (Part III has a stacked title, "Oswald's Work" the top line and below it "Oswald's Sweetheart.")

So what we would not expect at the beginning of the book, the beginning of his campaign against Marina, is not there, and what for an honest man writing an honest book what should be there, what alone made it possible for him to even think he could have a book after all the other assassination and supposed assassination books, the deal with the KGB, is not there.

Mailer's first words in one of his de Mohrenschildt chapters we discussed in the preceding chapter, his "The Well-born Friend," are descriptive of his book, not of the mythologies essential to it. They are

"If there is any place where a narrative of Oswald's life is bound to take on the seductive ambiguity of a spy novel, it is with the entrance into Lee's affairs of Baron George De Mohrenschildt...."

As we have seen, not a word of this is true. What is true in it is that Mailer describes his project for what it really is, an inferior "spy novel."

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219

The only real spying in it is the KGB's on Oswald. All the rest is imagined and it did not exist. Mailer would not have even this shabby pretense of even a spy novel were it not for the "seductive ambiguity" of his writing.

The actuality is that Oswald's life in Minsk was essentially humdrum. Even as Mailer tries to jazz it up it is dull. The only information Mailer got about Oswald's life there that has any possible significance was not new. I published it two decades earlier and I had a good, official source for what I wrote, ^{not FBI}

The KGB was concerned that Oswald might be an American spy of some kind. It covered him like dew covers a pasture. It could find not even a suspicion that Oswald had the slightest interest in the kind of information a spy would go for. It baited him with the prospect of getting significant military information and he was totally indifferent. He ignored it. He had no interest at all in it.

So, faced with this bankruptcy, what remained for Mailer for his Oswald in Minsk? end 220

Of what his and Schiller's costs for living there for six months were?

Of whatever investment had been made with the KGB and the people Mailer paid for interviews? To which, naturally, he makes no reference. Why let his readers know if some of those he paid to talk tried to earn their money by "improving" on truth and reality?

What remained is the "seductive ambiguity" of the spy novel that Mailer wrote only to find that it failed.

To spice this up, to relieve the humdrum of the dull and boring lives people led in Minsk ("boring" is the word used in that daily New York Times review for Mailer's writing), Mailer resorted to sex and for that he used, really misused, Marina. Whether or not he had some unmet expectation of getting something interesting, some kind of confession, some hint that Oswald was some kind of spy - whatever his reason, whether or not vengeance, he goes after her with a vengeance and with unrestrained, deliberate dishonesty enhanced with a

He makes no mention of any of this.

What did appeal to him was slandering Marine when she was a grandmother with five grandchildren as an insatiable sex kitten when she was a teenager and doing that with what he not only knew was lies in which he featured a liar who had trouble telling the truth even by accident but in which the proof that it was lies is obvious in what he used of what those he paid to be interviewed and others told him.

Scattering this as he does throughout the book helps the reader not to detect it.

Shame, as we see, is an emotion as foreign to Mailer as is decency. Or concern for truth.

end zzz

He oozes into the slime of his Part IV, "Marina's Friends, Marina's Loves," (pages 135-64) with his two-page chapter bearing the names of two young women with whom Marina worked at the hospital in Minsk, "Yanina and Sonia." (pages 135-6) Chapter 2 is "Neighbors." (page 139ff.) Then comes "Larissa" (pages 145-6). "Mischa" is chapter 4. (pages 147-8) Chapters 5, 6 and 7 are "Leonid," "Inessa" and "Kostya," the latter the only one taking more than a single page. Chapter 8 is the only one with a person's first name. ~~8 is the only one with a person's first name. It is "Yuri Merezhinsky."~~ It is "Yuri Merezhinsky." (pages 154ff.) The ninth chapter in this "Part" of such brief chapters as of a single page, is "Anatoly." (pages 159-64)

For all of this Mailer has but a single source note, in "Anatoly." And then, this being Mailer's concept of responsible nonfiction writing so eulogized by so many reviewers, that single source note is at least secondhand in the book he refers to, McMillan's.

Real scholarship that.

Like a prosecutor building a case by pretending impartiality, Mailer begins with the expressed liking and respect Yanina and Sonia had for Marine. They spoke of her "not without love," Mailer says. Then he does quote Yanina as saying that Marina's backward stepfather shouted "whore" at her when she was

a girl and when as Yanina said that was not at all true.

So Mailer sneaks that suggestion in that way. Careful, cunning Mailer's concept of nonfiction.

He sneaks a little more suggesting that Marina had a source of extra money that let her afford what the other girls could not when they all got the same wages: somehow Marina had better dresses and looked better than they. There was an obvious reason for Marina having a little more money than they: she had no rent to pay and she also ate with her uncle and aunt.

But sneaky, dirty Mailer sneaks these dishonest suggestions in at the very beginning of this Part on "Marina's Friends, Marina's Loves."

end 223

In "Neighbors" he digresses into unrelated family histories that are not connected with Marina. He likes big books and this one needs padding desperately.

Slipsliding more prejudice in, Mailer next says that when Marine went to live with her uncle and aunt in 1959, "New problems came with her." He does not note in his supposed account of Marina and Lee that four years later, only four years later, she was a widow at 22 in a strange land and with two infant girls to keep and raise, beginning with less than \$200 for all she had in the world. She then was utterly alone on the other side of the world and without any means of making a living. Perhaps Mailer does not mention this because it is inconsistent with what he is edging to allege about her. All those "new problems" that "came with her"? He made them up.

He next does that by suggesting that her aunt Valya did not trust Marina to go anywhere alone and wanted Larissa with her. That is so unusual a concern for a girl of 18? With what Mailer soon says of the boys and young men?

Mailer's next provocative suggestion is that Marina had an entirely undescribed "intimacy" with Leonid, albeit only intermittently, for five to six months. Leonid "never calls" that undescribed but highly suggestive "intimacy" as Mailer quotes him as "an affair."

What was it then? Why does Mailer suggest and not say what he means when he soon gets explicit enough?

The only possibility is that it was not anything like what Mailer infers and thus ^{he} can resort only to tricky, dirty writing to give it a meaning he wants the reader to take from it that it does not have. end 224

Inessa undermines Mailer's coming prize "witness" who is really a prize package in saying that Marina "had naturally bright lips." She said Marina's lips were "very bright lips with no makeup - just naturally bright lips." (page 150)

With quoting Kostya as saying he and Marina had sex (page 153) Mailer has done all the prejudicial suggesting he can contrive as he builds his prosecution-type indictment up to his introduction of his star witness, ^{Yuli} Yui Merezhin-sky. Really his only alleged "witness."

Neither Marina nor any other of these Russian teenagers with a few young adults, even with Mailer's deliberately prejudicial treatment of them, appears to differ in any major way from their peers throughout the entire western world except in their cultural interests. Except that as compared with their peers in this country a higher percentage of them were familiar with and liked the classics in music and in writing very much, most of them.

They had some of the same hangups. Larissa, for example, longed to become a doctor. "She did well in school, but then in ninth grade discovered that she could not look at blood." (page 145)

That happened to a male cousin of mine but not until his first year in medical school. It was not really that unheard-of, in Minsk or anywhere else.

Mischa told Mailer that he and his friend like to "listen to Bach, Prokofief" and other classical composers, as did others of that group, and they also like classical American jazz. He mentioned "(Louis) Armstrong, Sidney Becket (sic), (Benny) Goodman, Bing Crosby, Frank Sinatra." (page 148) (Of French ancestry and from New Orleans, Sidney's name was Bechet. He was world-famous in Mailer's youth and in mine.) end 225

For most of them as teenagers living under infinitively more difficult conditions, the worst he can say of them, Marina included, is that their behavior, their personal conduct, was at least as socially acceptable as was his when he was a grown man and a professional success. *Is not more so!*

With all the hinting he can cook up, he finally gets to his "Yuri Merzhinsky" chapter. (page 154) He begins it, perhaps intending to build sympathy for a man much in need of it and deserving none, referring to him as

"...a handsome man of about fifty and may once have been as good-looking as a movie star. But now, he is ravaged by illness and his shoulders are hunched. To meet his interviewers, he has come from a hospital several hundred kilometers away, and has been drinking all day; at night, he is still drinking with the harsh pride of a Russian who measures his prowess by the slugs of vodka he can continue to mix with powerful emotions."

He then quotes Yuri as saying, "My story will be very boring, not interesting" when to Mailer it is the exact opposite. He then quotes Yuri as saying what is true.

But that was phony self-deprecation by Yuri and it is phony for Mailer to emphasize it, to give this false self-portrait of Yuri at the outset, to influence the reader that way with what he knew was false. But the reporter in Mailer, and that is how he began years ago, recognized how that could form the readers' minds the way he wanted so he not only begins that way, he repeats those same words a dozen lines later. Yuri is anything but self-deprecating, he knew it, he knew he was pretending and he was lucky, Mailer loved it:

"...I can tell you this should be called 'Story of Children Who Come from Cream of Society.' My father was a great scientist; he became part of our Soviet scientific history. My mother, the same --Honorable Scientist of Byelorussian Republic. Immediately after Gagarin was launched into space on Sputnik, my mother was interviewed, my father was interviewed, I was interviewed." end 226

Next, at least as Mailer presents it next, Yuri is abused, a much-abused man beginning as a child and by his "cream of society" parents.

Yuri had complaints about everything, especially about his parents. They were, as he and Mailer say, eminences of science. His mother was part of a delegation to the UN with Khrushchev.

Yuri then goes into when he met Marina. That was at a dance after a lecture by his mother and in the same building. Again using those suggestive words so indispensable to the dishonest writer, Mailer quotes him as saying of Marina, "I knew her before, I knew her after," when in fact that was when he first met her. (Mailer never says who was doing the interviewing, whether it was he or Schiller. He always has "Interviewer" in the transcripts he uses.)

Knowing that it is a lie, as we have seen but with it nonetheless a rather convenient lead into Mailer's renewed assault on Marina's character when she was still a teenager, here is how Mailer worked his transcripts over to begin with a relatively slight criticism of Marina. Why he asked this question, whichever the interviewer was, is cause for wonder because they knew from Inessa that as a girl Marina had naturally bright lips with no make-up at all:

Interviewer: Was she wearing lipstick?

Yuri Merezhinsky: She painted her lips all of the time.

Int: All the time?

YM: Yes.

Int. That's interesting, because the word we get is that she never used lipstick.

YM: She was very attractive. Effective.

Int: How long had you known her then?

YM: It doesn't matter--one day, two days, a year--I knew her long enough to know who was who. She was a woman, not a girl. Not a young woman. She was older. We were tired of her in sex.

Int: Tired of her in sex? Let's be precise here.

YM: I don't know about other people. I can talk only about myself. I never went with her to bed. But I could sleep with her even on a staircase. (pages 155-6)

end 227

Young and vigorous boys tired of sex? Not just perhaps an individual one but the entire "group" of them? All tired of sex, all bored by it, all at the same time?

What made those Minsker boys and young men so different from all of their age almost anywhere in the world? Than those of their age in World War II, some perhaps their fathers, so many of whom raped their way across Europe? Is that how Mailer was at Yuri's age?

If Mailer used anything Yuri said after that, it was not because he believed it!

It also is obvious that whenever Yuri tripped himself up in a lie, Schiller/Mailer let him get away with it. It is obvious that Mailer was so desperate for what he could use in his campaign against Marina when this was so apparently false he used it anyway. In this Mailer correctly understood what he could get away with with his publisher and with the coming reviewers of his coming book.

To Mailer, world-class teats-and-tushie writer and to his world-class interviewer there is no contradiction between Yuri saying that he "knew" Marina and had sex with her until, and he here includes his friends, "We were tired of her in sex" and then, when asked to be "precise" responded that "I never went to bed with her"?

Obviously, both cannot be true and equally obviously Mailer used it after Yuri at the least contradicted himself. Not only was Mailer unfazed by this but he liked Yuri's next self-contradiction so much he also used it uncritically. I omit nothing in quotation. This follows what I quoted above:

Int: You say you had her any way you wanted?

YM: Yes, sure.

Int. Your friends had her?

YM: Sure.

Int: For certain?

YM: Sure. (page 156)

end 228

Here Mailer asks a question he knows from McMillan's book Yuri will contradict. Mailer refers to McMillan but he has no citation to it. Then, from even the Mailer we have been looking at, is a really low beginning with Yuri's volunteering of it:

YM: She was sent out from Leningrad in twenty-four hours for prostitution with a foreigner, and she came to Minsk.

Int: For prostitution? Literally?

YM: With a foreigner. Then she came to Minsk. Because she had an uncle here. She was lucky. (page 156)

That alleged "luck" was as Yuri put it not being sent to a labor camp, a gulag.

Remember, the KGB was giving Schiller and Mailer access to their files. When Oswald was sent to Minsk the KGB was alerted there to the possibility he

presented a danger to the Soviet Union. They spied on him all the time. They knew who he went out with and the nature of their relations. And if Oswald had become friends with the woman Yuri makes Marine out to be, can it possibly be believed that the KGB would not have looked her up, learned what it could? Of course it cannot be believed and it cannot be believed that Mailer was not aware of that.

Yet Mailer does not report asking his KGB chums who were so anxious to provide him with what he wanted to titillate those X-rated minds to which with this kind of writing he appeals. Surely when the KGB gave him their transcripts of their eavesdropping on Marina and Oswald even when they were in bed they would not have been reluctant to provide - if it existed - any confirmation of what so interested Schiller and Mailer from their own selections of their own interrogations.

Note in what is next quoted that when Mailer makes a pretense of seeking proof, of asking Yuri for his source, Yuri first, having made these horrible allegations against Marina first claims he should not answer because the answer would be so "intimate" and then when he agrees to answer does not and Schiller/Mailer are satisfied with that: end 229

Int: Who told you she was a prostitute in Leningrad?

YM: You ask a question which I consider very intimate.

Int: Let me ask it in a different way.

YM: No, it was right question to ask. She came here with four other people who were sent out of Leningrad together. She was in group. Two young men, two women. And her uncle worked for Ministry of Internal Affairs, MVD, that's why she was privileged to come to Minsk and not 101 Kilometers. What it means, 101 Kilometers, you have to cut trees in forest.

Int: A labor camp? (page 156)

YM: Job for prostitutes and people who don't work. You were sent out of big cities to work, hard labor. At that time, anybody could be accused of any type of prostitution, (page 157)

Being a pharmacist B apparently was not work to Yuri et al or, if Marina P was not yet a pharmacist, they had no question about her being trusted by the Soviets if she had the record Yuri attributed to her. Yuri easily got past that fabled Schiller diligence as that "world-class" interviewer, as the media

touted him. Past, too, Mailer's fabulous reputation as a "reporter." including getting a Pulitzer for his writing of the Gary Gilmore story, because he never did answer.

Bad enough as it is to this point, Mailer uses Yuri to make it worse, knowingly worse:

Now, said Yuri, there was a problem--he and his group, he would say, were fed up with Marina. They didn't know how to get rid of her. She was good at sex, but when a woman is always with her legs spread, sometimes you resent it. She never worried about anything like reputation. (page 157)

It is not odd that Yuri, best for whatever reason on character assassination, was encouraged to pile his defamations on but it surely is odd that not a single one of the men Mailer and Schiller interviewed said anything like this at all. Most portrayed Marina as a fine and caring person. When they asked Yuri "how she could conceal her reputation" if it was as he says once again those demon interrogators let him add more insults and not respond in any way: end
230

It was asked how she could conceal her reputation. After she met Lee at this dance, how did she manage that?

Yuri: "You know, we are now three men here in this room, okay? Then a woman comes. You don't tell this new guy, 'Man you know, I fucked her in different positions so many times ...' You don't pass this information. Sasha was the only one who was not her lover. Sasha was ready to marry her. He was in love up to his ears. Everybody fucked her but Sasha." (page 157)

Mailer had interviewed all those others in Yuri's "group without getting any confirmation of all this slop from Yuri and of course Mailer knew that. It did not discourage him from repeating what Yuri said and worse, treating it as solid, factual, dependable information when he knew it was not that at all.

But as Mailer should know and Random House's lawyers do know for a "public figure," which Marina could be alleged to have become without doing a thing to become one, to sue successfully for libel, she has to establish "malice," and the courts have held, as they did in the case Mark Lane handled for Willis Carto, his Liberty Lobby and his weekly Spotlight, if the writer has a source, no matter how undependable a source, and quotes that source accurately, there is no libel under the law and controlling decisions.

That is how Mark Lane won for those extremists of the farout-right when they were sued by former CIA spook and Watergate conspirator, E. Howard Hunt. The article by another former CIA man, Victor Marchetti, could hardly have been more libellous, more grossly inaccurate and indeed impossible, but Marchetti had those sources, he repeated what they had said and he got away with really vicious libel in charging that Hunt was part of the conspiracy that killed the President. end 231

There was nothing too impossible for Yuri to say and for Mailer to repeat if it in any way maligned Marina. This is what follows:

Marina, he told them, had access in her pharmacy to grain alcohol. Yuri didn't want to boast, but he could say that, as a man, he satisfied all women, and Marina brought him bottles, big bottles of alcohol, from her pharmacy. (page 157)

Whatever Yuri may have meant by "big bottles" in this country alcohol for medicinal purposes comes in "bottles" that are quite large and quite heavy. They would have been impossible to steal. Assuming, of course, that Marina was willing to risk the gulags to steal alcohol for Yuri. But if it was as small a bottle as what here is a quart, small a girl and woman that she is, how easy would it have been to hide that on herself and not get caught? And to run that risk regularly and not expect the shrinkage of that stock to be noticed when it was not accounted for?

Especially if as Mailer next quotes Yuri as saying, men were waiting in line if she had wanted one:

Asked about Lee, Yuri said he wanted to explain: "We are one team, and we are ten people, and we have one, two, three, ten women, and they are all very beautiful. They are always just between us, touching us. And everybody on our team is fucking these women. At one o'clock she's fucking one, then another one--we all know it. It is not a secret. And we are tired of these women. We are bored by them."

So why did Lee become serious about her?

Yuri replied, "Every woman has her own raisin." (pages 157-8)

These world-classers interviewed Kosta Bondarin:

He knows Yuri would say that he slept with her, but Kostya is not sure it happened. The fact is that Anatoly Shpanko did have

intimate contact with her. That much Kostya knows for sure. Tolya was a serious man and, unlike Yuri, would never talk to others about an affair. Yuri, after all, was the same age as Kostya, seventeen, and so he would have been more likely to say, "Well, I got fucked, I really got fucked," but in this situation, Kostya didn't believe him. Tolya and Marina really had it for each other, and he doesn't believe she would have allowed Yurka to get into the middle of that. (page 158)

Mailer concludes his "Yuri Merezhinsky" chapter with these words, his own, not attributed to anyone:

"It could all be grossly exaggerated. Easily, it could be exaggerated."

But did that discourage him when he felt the need to malign the grandmother as a girl to save the book his greed was not enough to get him?

All of this is at least can be at the least "grossly exaggerated" and he could bring himself to write it and then submit it for publication and then hit the promotions trail to draw even more attention to it? Which also means, of course, to sell more copies of it?

Not a bit too soon Mailer ends this Part with his "Anatoly" chapter. (pages 159-64)

Anatoly was a medical student when he met Marine. "His first memory of Marine is of a very, very pleasant woman and he still remembers her that way. ... she never insulted him and he never insulted her ... he likes kind-hearted women and modest girls." (page 159)

"At his Medical Institute (Mailer's words) there were more girls than men, so male students usually had a large choice." (page 160)

"Speaking of Marina," again Mailer's words, "he cannot say anything bad. She was just a simple girl, very simple, ordinary, positive. ... All he can remember is that there was nothing negative from her side to his." (pages 160-1)

Anatoly proposed to Marina but on her uncle's advice Marina decided not to marry any man with no money and, even more important, no apartment.: end 233

Anatoly does not even remember Marina's kisses. (page 161)

"He also does not remember" what Schiller/Mailer keep going back to without ever consulting their cooperative KGB chums "anything negative about Marina" and "Nobody ever said to him that Marina had some history in Leningrad." (page 162) These are Mailer's own words. So also are these, the last I quote from this disgusting Part:

Anatoly told him "they didn't have sex." (page 162)

But Mailer, like the smut-merchant he is, doesn't let go of this. His next Part, V, titled "Courtship and Marriage" (pages 167 ff), begins with the chapter he titled "Alik." That was Lee's nickname in the Soviet Union. Mailer does not get far into it when he uses their interviews with Marina. They were after returning from Belarus. And, it seems, all Schiller and Mailer are interested in is sex. (page 169) ~~What~~ follows is from the middle of the next page:

She didn't want to talk about her experiences. Catherine the Great had lots of lovers and was considered okay; that did not mean Marina had lots--she was not saying that. She just didn't want to talk about sex. Everybody was looking for bad; ~~they they~~ trash you. It wasn't that she'd done something she was ashamed of, nothing horribly wrong, but she knew when she first came to Minsk that maybe she needed advice. Because she was not that experienced. Maybe men thought she was something that she was not.

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She talked to her friend Misha Smolsky, who had never laid a finger on her. They were friendly, just friends. He said, "come on, I won't touch you. You're not Anita Ekberg." That said it all. He told her: Marina, there's a guy spreading gossip around that you're sleeping with him. Is it true or not?" She told him, "Misha I'm asking you what can I do if I have nothing to hide? I cannot defend myself door to door if a guy is lying."

So Misha said, "I cannot punch him in the nose, because it is not my business"--meaning she was not his girl--"but I'm going to tell him it is baloney."

*going
end 234*

She did not know why Merezhinsky--if that was the guy, Yuri Merezhinsky--talked about her that way. Maybe it was because he was always drunk and liked to make a fuss. Maybe it was rejection. Was this the person that Misha was talking about? She felt humiliated in front of all the world.

How did she feel after what Mailer was doing to her?

Again, this is Mailer's paraphrase of what she said, "Now her reputation felt like ugly clothing, smelly, that she was condemned to wear."

Mailer begins Chapter 3 of this part repeating that same Leningrad rumor, still with no source indicated. That is not unusual for these Parts. This one of 25 pages has only three citations of any source at all.

Mailer persists for several pages and then this on page 182:

M: I never once in my life was paid money.

Int: I'm sure you weren't

M: I was looking for love in some wrong places and sometimes I had to pay for that. I actually was raped by a foreigner.

Int: What?

M: I mean, I was trapped in a room. He locked the door. And you know how they have those dezhurnayas that sit over there in the hallways of hotels holding keys for people who are out? I couldn't scream. I thought, what would this woman think of me? So I fought this man. He finally threw me against him. He said, "Well if I knew you were a virgin, I would not have touched you." ... Lee didn't ask me, but on my wedding night, I pretended. I was terrified. I said to myself, When night comes, what am I going to do? I mean, what? It's a clean-cut life from now on. I want to be serious, and I was terrified. But Lee did not ask me.

Inessa knew of Marina's concern because she was not a virgin and that is the basis for the Schiller/Mailer questioning.

In Mailer's own words she told them off, having put up with it for five days:

Interviewer: One person responded to a question by saying: You're right, she wasn't a virgin on her wedding night. She was worried that Lee would find out, and she went to the pharmacy and got something. She was protecting her marriage. end 235'

Marina: Okay.

Int: That's exactly what was said.

M. Okay. It's true. So? So you are a sex pervert to spend five days to get somebody to talk about subject like this...I mean, isn't it enough?

This and more like it, mind you, in a book ostensibly about the assassination of the President as Mailer seeks to prove what he "decided" is the evidence because, remember that Goodman report on Mailer's days at Penn, he said, and omniscient as he is, who dares dispute him? The evidence itself is "impenetrable."

How could what Oswald did not know possibly be a factor of Mailer's "basic question" for which he went to Belarus, seeking proof that Oswald was the assassin from his life in the Soviet Union? (page 315)

Of course it has no relevance. None at all! As it also would not have had from Mailer's poppycock that did not originate with him, that Oswald killed JFK, for whom he had great respect and admiration, to become a famous man thereby.

That is the most amateurish of the amateur shrinkery of the supporters of the official theory of the assassination - and little understood ^{that} as it is, it is only a theory.

But Mailer was apparently lost enough in his all-consuming ego and his sense of his own omnipotence and omniscience, that he went for and had faith in this silliness that would disgrace a reasonably intelligent high-school child.

These are the words of the twice-Pulitzered Mailer as he ends his Part VIII of his first volume:

By the logic of our narrative, we have just come to the end of Volume One. It is obvious that whatever we have learned about Oswald in Russia is not enough to answer our basic question. For that we will have to follow his adventures in America..The changes in Oswald's life have already been large and abrupt, and now we will have to accompany him on future adventures in Fort Worth, Dallas, New Orleans, Mexico City, Dealey Plaza, and the Dallas city jail. Since we have gone from Russia to America with a minimum of ceremony, and have just taken a quick visit back, perhaps we can obtain a more satisfactory farewell by observing the reactions of Oswald's friends and acquaintances in Minsk after they encountered the news of Kennedy's assassination. (page 315)

end 236

end 237

At that time, he didn't have even an idea that women could have orgasms. She wasn't shy, and she dressed herself in front of him, and now he would certainly have been happy to continue their relationship, but when he went up to her and tried to caress her, she said, "No, no, no—don't take it too fast." And he understood that something didn't sit well with her, that it would not go any further. This haste with which she got ready to go home put him on his guard, and she only allowed him to see her as far as the bridge where they had met on this early New Year's night.

8

Yuri Merezhinsky

"My story will be very boring," Yuri says, "not interesting."

He is a handsome man of about fifty and may once have been as good-looking as a movie star. But now, he is ravaged by illness and his shoulders are hunched. To meet his interviewers, he has come from a hospital several hundred kilometers away, and has been drinking all day; at night, he is still drinking with the harsh pride of a Russian who measures his prowess by the slugs of vodka he can continue to mix with powerful emotions.

Speaking Russian combined with English, he proceeds to his narration, proud, aggressive, contemptuous of any specific reality he has to relate.

"My story will be very boring, not interesting. My parents and I lived in a building called House of Scientists near Minsk railway station, and I can tell you this should be called 'Story of Children Who Come from Cream of Society.' My father was a great scientist; he became part of our Soviet scientific history. My mother, the same—Honorable Scientist of Byelorussian Republic. Immediately after Gagarin was launched into space on *Sputnik*, my mother was interviewed, my father was interviewed, I was interviewed.

"I will tell you long story about myself. When I was small, I played football in an apartment. It was apartment of First Secre-

tary of Commun because their ro mental delegatio

"As for me, I "whether rock on from Western co Louis Armstrong heard was tape-re radio, too—BBC, in clothes then, v

"During that ti there was a custo visit to another Trade Union Pa slides. It was a lar one came up to n Alik Oswald. Said speak English. At

After Yuri's mo where a dance ha was a very attract say?—attracted p looked—the worc ple. This evening looked before. I l looked so attracti high, very high."

INTERVIEWER: Was

YURI MEREZHINSKY:

INT: All the time?

YM: Yes.

INT: That's intere used lipstick.

YM: She was very a

INT: How long ha

YM: It doesn't mat enough to know v young woman. Sh

tary of Communist Party of Byelorussia, and football was possible because their rooms were so big. My mother was part of governmental delegation to United Nations, together with Khrushchev.

"As for me, I liked Elvis Presley. Not important," said Yuri, "whether rock or jazz. Important was that something came to us from Western countries." Personally, he liked Ella Fitzgerald, and Louis Armstrong—but Elvis Presley even more. Most of what they heard was tape-recorded, although he and his friends listened to radio, too—BBC, Voice of America. He was very much interested in clothes then; was always well dressed.

"During that time, I was a student at our Medical Institute and there was a custom for prominent people to give a lecture after a visit to another country. So, my mother prepared one for our Trade Union Palace, and everything was demonstrated with slides. It was a large hall, maybe five hundred people, and someone came up to me then—Lee Oswald. Just introduced himself as Alik Oswald. Said he had come from America, and he started to speak English. At that time my English was good."

After Yuri's mother's lecture, they went upstairs to a ballroom, where a dance had started, and Alik got interested in Marina. "She was a very attractive, impressive person, effective. She—how you say?—attracted people. She looked right; she was not gray. She looked—the word we use is *effektnaya*—a powerful effect upon people. This evening she had to look like very best, like she never looked before. I knew her before. I knew her after. But she never looked so attractive as this evening. It was like from God—it was high, very high."

INTERVIEWER: Was she wearing lipstick?

YURI MEREZHINSKY: She painted her lips all of the time.

INT: All the time?

YM: Yes.

INT: That's interesting, because the word we get is that she never used lipstick.

YM: She was very attractive. Effective.

INT: How long had you known her then?

YM: It doesn't matter—one day, two days, a year—I knew her long enough to know who was who. She was a woman, not a girl. Not a young woman. She was older. We were tired of her in sex.

INT: Tired of her in sex? We? Let's be precise here.

YM: I don't know about other people. I can talk only about myself. I never went with her to bed. But I could sleep with her even on a staircase.

INT: You say you had her any way you wanted?

YM: Yes, sure.

INT: Your friends had her?

YM: Sure.

INT: For certain?

YM: Sure.

INT: I ask because, in her biography, she told the writer, Priscilla Johnson McMillan, that she was a virgin when she was married.

YM: I already told you Marina was not very precise in her biography.

INT: I wanted to be sure.

YM: She was sent out from Leningrad in twenty-four hours for prostitution with a foreigner, and she came to Minsk.

INT: For prostitution? Literally?

YM: With a foreigner. Then she came to Minsk. Because she had an uncle here. She was lucky.

INT: She was in such a jam?

YM: We call it 101 Kilometers—which means being sent very far away. From Leningrad.

INT: This is a matter we would like to clear up.

YM: System now is different.

INT: Who told you she was a prostitute in Leningrad?

YM: You ask a question which I consider very intimate.

INT: Let me ask it in a different way.

YM: No, it was right question to ask. She came here with four other people who were sent out of Leningrad together. She was in group. Two young men, two women. And her uncle worked for Ministry of Internal Affairs, MVD, that's why she was privileged to come to Minsk and not 101 Kilometers. What it means, 101 Kilometers, you have to cut trees in forest.

INT: A labor camp?

YM: Job for pros out of big cities be accused of a Hotel Leningra of foreigners. Sl

One of her fr ger than me. F dom, wide con for one—and clothes. Then F hair from his br and then he pu sold it to prosti That's why the women happy, y taches. So, that large profit, of

Now, said Yu would say, were rid of her. She her legs spread, anything like re

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Yuri: "You kn Then a woman interested in so know, I fucked don't pass this her lover. Sash ears. Everybody

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one—we all know it. It is not a secret. And we are tired of these women. We are bored by them.”

So why did Lee become serious about her?

Yuri replied: “Every woman has her own raisin.”

Kostya Bondarin told Anatoly Shpanko about his experience with Marina. He doesn't know when she and Anatoly first had a rendezvous, but it was not more than a few weeks later. Afterward, Kostya would introduce her to Yuri Merezhinsky.

He knows Yuri would say that he slept with her, but Kostya is not sure it happened. The fact is that Anatoly Shpanko did have intimate contact with her. That much Kostya knows for sure. Tolya was a serious man and, unlike Yuri, would never talk to others about an affair. Yuri, after all, was the same age as Kostya, seventeen, and so he would have been more likely to say, “Well, I got fucked, I really got fucked,” but in this situation, Kostya didn't believe him. Tolya and Marina really had it for each other, and he doesn't believe she would have allowed Yurka to get into the middle of that.

Later, Kostya did hear that Marina was forcibly expelled from Leningrad by the authorities for allegedly having relations with some Georgian, an unpleasant incident in a hotel. Now, he can't remember if he heard it from Sasha or Yuri, but he did hear this story at that time, that much he remembers well. It was very simple in those days—once the authorities came down on you, you had twenty-four hours to collect your things, then you were out. Of course, Marina's uncle did work for MVD in Minsk and had helped her to hush it up. At least, that's what people were saying. It could all be grossly exaggerated. Easily, it could be exaggerated.

Anatoly Shpanko seems dazed—work. He is a doctor, and he de- passed over the this, or for othe- sings Russian so voice, a bemuse-

His childhood been very prou- later, in Byeloru- take him along- whistle and keep-

Years later, af- wanted to beco- took exams the- them failed to p- exactly what hap- home. Anatoly h- observed it, and- Soviet Army and- last months, he v- to take his exam- whereupon he r- best marks.

His first memo- and he still reme- never insulted h- women with grea- sex is rude—and- her and leave. V- hearted women :

He was serious- he hardly ever w- can tell you that i- for walking. All I- in those days to :

lies in those days had a single room to offer—so he lived with a couple who had no children. In his second year, however, he lived in a private house near his Medical Institute—Konstantin's house, in fact—and his time became more relaxed. He could socialize much more.

He didn't date one girl but a number. At that time, women were not conservative—if you went out with a girl, she didn't tell you, "Don't go to a movie with any other girl." But then, his relations with women were always individual. Not like a system where he had to be the exact same man with everybody. He might go to a movie with one, and it was understood—no kissing; then, another movie with another girl—lots of kissing. You could be found anywhere between petting and absolute; he didn't have a system.

At his Medical Institute there were more girls than men, so male students usually had a large choice, but it was a tradition that students usually found their marriages inside the Institute. However, it was virtually excluded that you could have sex and live together while students. Especially for him. He was an officer in Komsomol. You could be accused at Komsomol meetings if you lived in such a way. They didn't have a cult of Stalin any longer, but they certainly had their cult concerning Komsomol, and Anatoly was *komsorg*. That means he was in charge of half of his Komsomol organization. He was Secretary of the *potok*. If you had a thousand students, the *potok* made up a group of five hundred, and if you were their leader, that meant you could expect to receive some special appointment later. Upon graduation, students were usually assigned to miserable places far out in the USSR, but people who were high in Komsomol could choose first. You might even be asked, "Where do you want to go?" When they came to him, however, he said, "Where is there need for a doctor?"

As far as women go, he would say that if you lived openly with a woman, you could be discussed endlessly. So, you did things underground. Who would want to be some main topic of discussion at a Komsomol meeting criticizing improper sexual behavior? One's biological need to have sex had to be satisfied, but you did it underground. Nobody had to know whom you were seeing that way.

Now, Marina was one of the first girls he met. His opening year of medical school had been so tough for him that he had hardly dated in 1959. But in the following year, Marina was one of the first, yes.

Speaking of Marina, he cannot say anything bad: She was just a simple girl, very simple, ordinary, positive. And he just treated her

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Priscilla Johnson McMillan's book, *Marina and Lee*, amplifies this spare account from Marina's point of view:

. . . She consented to be Sasha's date for New Year's, but she promised herself that she would dance with anyone who came along . . . That evening she found herself in the arms of Anatoly Shpanko, a lanky fellow with unruly, dark blond hair and a wide, appealing smile. Tolya, as she soon called him, was a twenty-six-year-old medical student who had already served his term in the army. He was whimsical, yet deferential, to Marina, and from the moment of their first kiss—they were standing in a dimly lit courtyard, with snow swirling all around them and a lantern creaking in the doorway—she was deliriously in love with him. "He was a rare person," Marina recalls. "He was honest in everything he did."

There was only one drawback. Attracted as she was to Anatoly, Marina did not think he was handsome. Nor did she like the way he dressed. He simply did not fit the image she had created for herself of a girl who goes out only with handsome men. Not wanting to be made fun of, fearful that her friends might think less of her, she steered Anatoly along back streets when they were together as surreptitiously as if they were engaged in a clandestine affair. But she forgot her calculations when he kissed her. His kisses made Marina's head spin. **Finally he proposed**, but there were obstacles. Anatoly had two or three more years in medical school, no money and, even more important, no apartment. Marina consulted Valya and Ilya. "No, my dear," Ilya said. "Let him finish the institute first. He can talk about getting married then."¹

Anatoly does remember kissing in a dimly lit courtyard, but there was no snow coming down. The snow was already there. He remembers nothing special—it was routine, nothing special. You remember details when something was not ordinary.

Being told that Marina did remember his kisses, he said, "She appreciated it, I think, ha, ha, ha." Then he added, "I am trying to be honest. I don't want to invent. **I am sorry if I can't be helpful.**"

When asked why Marina singled him out as being "a rare person . . . honest in everything he did," he replied, "I think maybe

anatomy

she got this information from some of my friends. She didn't get it out of my behavior, but something she heard from other people." He would add, "That's why everybody wanted me to be Secretary of Komsomol, because many of them were younger and had not been in the Soviet Army." So when he would say, "This is fair," people would often accept it. When asked if he was considered by most people to be honest, he replied, "Even today." Asked about how he dressed in those days, he said, "I never worried about clothes. If someone said, 'I don't like this way you're dressed,' I'd say, 'Okay, buy what you want me to wear and I'll wear it.'" He would not get dressed up just to please a woman. His opinion: A woman should like a man's soul, not some clothes he is wearing. "We have a saying here that you greet a person by how they are dressed, but by the time you say goodbye, you respect a person for how they are."

As he recalls, nobody told him anything negative about Marina. Nobody ever said to him that Marina had some history in Leningrad. "People knowing me, like I am, never passed on rumors. You can't come close to me this way." He would tell them, "You want to talk about this person? Bring that person here and then say it, but don't talk to me alone without this person." It was my rule."

Besides, they didn't have sex. He would say they didn't achieve such a desire. He has no recollection of proposing to her, and if she gave as her reason for rejecting him that he didn't have his own apartment, he would say that was not exactly true. Because he had an aunt in Minsk who did have a house with land, and on this plot was another small house that was empty. So, if he had really wanted to marry, he could have lived with his wife in that small house, although while still dating he would not bring a girl there, because he would never do such a thing to his aunt. It would be an insult.

When asked if he was more moral than others, he said, "In those days—our Khrushchev era—there were young men like me, but not many, not many." As for a wife, he wanted a woman who was simple, average, very human. Marina would have fit his idea of whom to marry. If he did propose to her once and was turned down, he thinks he would have joked about it later.

He finds it hard to believe that on a night in March of 1961, at a long-forgotten dance, some Trade Union dance, Marina told him to meet her at ten o'clock outside the Trade Union Palace.

He cannot see a possibility more than five minutes, minutes, but never more leaves—that's it. Maybe out to look for her at that time, he thought many being egotistical, either privileged educational students there.

When told that, according and he said, "I have to tell can't you see? Go away," collection of her speaking to she walked out of his life would marry. So his respect she married her man and for me. She found another

Of course, he is amazed large interest. Even now, interviewers from America marry him. In response to band is accused of killing to tell me, because I'm not

His interviewers assure and that they would tell like to go on with their in

They reminded him that but she told him that she recalled that they had on they met on the street in America. He had joked, "interviewers, he added, "can say, 'Good, you have a"

Sasha said: "You know, e respect women in general should pet a woman also should love a woman."

Yet, how does he feel about looked at me as just a you and had been patient en

Larissa

Ludmila's sister, Larissa, fourteen years younger than Ludmila, is now a lovely, even voluptuous, woman. Her manners are formal, but she smiles a good deal, and it offers a hint of that state of bliss in which she claims to have lived when young. In that time, due to great crowding at home, because Larissa's mother and her mother's sister and that sister's husband all lived in one room nine square meters in size, it was decided that Larissa should stay with Ludmila and her husband, Misha, and she adored them both.

In those years of early adolescence, Larissa wanted to become a doctor. She wanted to emulate Ludmila. She did well in school, but then in the ninth grade discovered that she could not look at blood. So, she could never go into a dissecting room or a morgue. After that, she even gave the Medical Institute a wide berth. There were corpses in that building.

In adolescence she dated a lot of boys and had some favorites, but essentially they were all part of a group, and one boy, Misha Smolsky, not to be confused with Ludmila's husband, Misha Kuzmich, happened to be the soul of their company, one in a million. Misha Smolsky was interested in Western culture. Everything he wore was elegant yet never flashy. It was a beautiful group; they knew how to spend their time tastefully. A lot of dancing went on, and in fact they formed a dancing group called Minchanka, which means "a female inhabitant of Minsk." She even traveled to other republics with her group. Larissa was slim then, very slim.

Now, Larissa knew Marina for a long time. She first knew her as a thirteen-year-old schoolgirl who came from Leningrad to Minsk to visit her grandmother in 1954, and that was at a time when Valya and Ilya dwelt across the hall.

Larissa admired Marina. At thirteen, she was so beautiful, and so curious. And very bright. You looked at her and you were attracted. So, they were friends. At that time, embroidery was popular and they did a lot of that, and took walks together or went to movies. And when Marina went back to Leningrad to live again with her mother and stepfather, Larissa found it hard to part.

Then Marina came again for a summer visit in 1957, and she had become more practical. She had matured. Larissa was still

XII "AS DIRTY AS ANYTHING I CAN REMEMBER!"

Mailer's writing in this book is as dirty as anything I can remember. Cunningly, professionally, intendedly, dirty. It is worse, much worse, than a few reviewers say in referring to how he "conjectures" so much. He does that, but he does more. He is dirty in misrepresenting the facts of the assassination and its investigations and he is dirty in dealing with peoples' private lives and reputations. He begins with suggestions, various kinds of hints, even denials of what he is saying but falls short of saying literally. Over his 828 pages he says what he wants to say about those he wants to defame and does defame. He builds cases he knows are false and presents them as true.

We saw some of this in his abuse of de Mohrenschildt, but in the course of the parts of his book dealing with de Mohrenschildt, in those two chapters addressed in the preceding chapter and elsewhere, he intends to leave no doubt in the reader's mind that de Mohrenschildt was a CIA employee. He falls short of saying that but only the most cautious reader making a careful reading will not get that impression, will not believe that during the time he knew Oswald de Mohrenschildt was working for the CIA and not as an occasional contact or source, as an employee.

Mailer waits until he gets to the very end to make this explicit. Without adding any evidence, even any reason to believe it at all. He wants it to be so it is.

The first chapter of his last part, VIII, Mailer titles "The Punishment of Hosty and the Death of the Handler." That the two are in no way related is minor, but in referring to de Mohrenschildt as Oswald's "handler" Mailer is saying that de Mohrenschildt was a CIA employee who "handled" its spy Oswald.

No "handler" is some occasional Tom, Dick or Harry picked up without being known and then controlled thoroughly. As Oswald's "handler" de Mohrenschildt

had to be a CIA employee. Not only is there no proof of this, there is not even a rational basis for suspecting it.

And, finally, after all the pretense that there was not a thing wrong with de Mohrenschildt, after all the dirtiness of his writing, at the end he admits de Mohrenschildt was sick only to then pooh-pooh it and make on it was little more than a common cold. But he has covered himself by the admission that is in the form of a quotation from Gerald Posner's Case Closed:

J Posner, picking up on this deterioration in De Mohrenschildt, does his best to render him permanently incompetent: *S*

Posner: ... de Mohrenschildt was quite mad by the time he gave his final [Epstein] interview. For nearly a year before his death, he was paranoid, fearful that the "FBI and Jewish mafia" were out to kill him. He twice tried to kill himself with drug overdoses, and another time cut his wrists and submerged himself in a bathtub. After he began waking in the middle of every night, screaming and beating himself, his wife finally committed him to Parkland Hospital psychiatric unit, where he was diagnosed as psychotic and given two months of intensive shock therapy. After his treatment, he said he had been with Oswald on the day of the assassination, though he was actually with dozens of guests at the Bulgarian embassy in Haiti the day JFK was killed. Despite de Morenschildt's imbalance, Epstein and others still quote the final interview as though it were an uncontested fact."

De Mohrenschildt does not deserve the label "quite mad" at the time he gave his final interviews. Once again, Posner is not including those sources who would indicate that De Mohrenschildt in the last months of his life was depressed but not delusional. (page 767)

Mailer's source for his deprecating of Posner's accurate report is the third-hand rendering of the opinion of a man who had not seen de Mohrenschildt in years and later said, in effect, he looked pretty much as he always had. His source is McMillan's version of what the House assassins committee said was Sam Ballen's opinion.

Here Mailer discloses what he is capable of in building his series of phony cases that he then builds into a phony book. The professional findings of the experts at a fine teaching hospital's psychiatric unit have no value at all, not when he has that good ol' boy of years past, Sam Ballen, albeit third-hand, as his "expert." Ballen, without any medical education or training of any kind, is what Mailer needs so he becomes, in Mailer's writing, the only

dependable source. Not the psychiatrists who found de Mohrenschildt so "psychotic" their treatment of him included "two months of intensive shock therapy."

And after that de Mohrenschildt was so out of contact with reality that "he said he had been with Oswald the day of the assassination though he was actually with dozens of guests at the Bulgarian embassy in Haiti the day JFK was killed" means nothing at all to the bankrupt Mailer when for his dishonest need in his dishonest book he cannot have de Mohrenschildt as mentally ill as he was. So, as is true throughout his book, the lies required for it to appear to be other than the fraud it is become real and the truth does not exist for Mailer. Not, of course, here alone. This is true throughout his book.

If Mailer acknowledges the medical truth about de Mohrenschildt, can he then say that he killed himself to avoid testimony that would expose him as Oswald's "handler" for the CIA, not because the persecutions were too much to continue to bear? *th*

This kind of writing is vile. There was no basis for Mailer's suspicion which was not his to begin with. But take that away and how much remains that he can ever pretend is of some value in his book?

Who gives a damn about Lee Harvey Oswald other than as the official assassin?

It he was not that he was essentially no different than most of the people in the country, and that is no excuse for a book allegedly about him--which it isn't even that. Mailer uses the same crooked trickery to slither into his assault on Oswald's widow's character.

His first "Volume" is titled "Oswald with Marine in Minsk." The first Part of that "Volume" is titled "The Adventures of Valya." Who is Valya? She is Marina's aunt.

As noted above, Mailer does not tell the reader how it came about that the KGB opened its files, at least some of them, to him and talked to him. How that happened is not important. Chit-chat about Marina's relatives and friends of 30 years ago, that is what is important.

Nor does he begin the book with the slightest mention of Oswald. Instead, he talks about others of Marina's family and by the time he gets to the end of his first chapter, titled "Volchuk," he sneaks in the first of his dirtiness about Marina. He has her advising her aunt that with her husband two-timing on her she should two-time on him. (page 24)

Source? None indicated. This by the man who, as we saw above, criticized Posner for exactly that, not sourcing - as Mailer imagined it.

Consistency is the hobgoblin of small minds? Mailer's mind is not small.

As he wanders around with a partial story of Oswald's "defection" that Oswald saw to it was not a defection, playing Posner, so to speak, Mailer just sneaks into the KGB giving him and him only what he wanted, what he needs for this book that in the end was not enough for a book.

All of a sudden, in his Part III chapter titled "Igor," he and the KGB are buddies and it is helping him. Natural as breathing. Needs no explanation. (Part III has a stacked title, "Oswald's Work" the top line and below it "Oswald's Sweetheart.")

So what we would not expect at the beginning of the book, the beginning of his campaign against Marina, is not there, and what for an honest man writing an honest book what should be there, what alone made it possible for him to even think he could have a book after all the other assassination and supposed assassination books, the deal with the KGB, is not there.

Mailer's first words in one of his de Mohrenschildt chapters we discussed in the preceding chapter, his "The Well-born Friend," are descriptive of his book, not of the mythologies essential to it. They are

"If there is any place where a narrative of Oswald's life is bound to take on the seductive ambiguity of a spy novel, it is with the entrance into Lee's affairs of Baron George De Mohrenschildt...."

As we have seen, not a word of this is true. What is true in it is that Mailer describes his project for what it really is, an inferior "spy novel."

The only real spying in it is the KGB's on Oswald. All the rest is imagined and it did not exist. Mailer would not have even this shabby pretense of even a spy novel were it not for the "seductive ambiguity" of his writing.

The actuality is that Oswald's life in Minsk was essentially humdrum. Even as Mailer tries to jazz it up it is dull. The only information Mailer got about Oswald's life there that has any possible significance was not new. I published it two decades earlier and I had a good, official source for what I wrote, ^{the FBI})

The KGB was concerned that Oswald might be an American spy of some kind. It covered him like dew covers a pasture. It could find not even a suspicion that Oswald had the slightest interest in the kind of information a spy would go for. It baited him with the prospect of getting significant military information and he was totally indifferent. He ignored it. He had no interest at all in it.

So, faced with this bankruptcy, what remained for Mailer for his Oswald in Minsk?

Of what his and Schiller's costs for living there for six months were?

Of whatever investment had been made with the KGB and the people Mailer paid for interviews? To which, naturally, he makes no reference. Why let his readers know if some of those he paid to talk tried to earn their money by "improving" on truth and reality?

What remained is the "seductive ambiguity" of the spy novel that Mailer wrote only to find that it failed.

To spice this up, to relieve the humdrum of the dull and boring lives people led in Minsk ("boring" is the word used in that daily New York Times review for Mailer's writing), Mailer resorted to sex and for that he used, really misused, Marina. Whether or not he had some unmet expectation of getting something interesting, some kind of confession, some hint that Oswald was some kind of spy - whatever his reason, whether or not vengeance, he goes after her with a vengeance and with unrestrained, deliberate dishonesty enhanced with a

little of the trickery that he uses throughout this long book.

Nowhere in it is there the slightest sympathy for or understanding of the truly desperate situation in which Marina found herself at 22, in a strange land and so utterly alone, with two young children, she became the widow of the man accused of assassinating the President of the United States.

All the means she then had, another fact that in 828 pages Mailer could not mention and still have his Oswald mythology, is the less than \$200 he left for her to buy a washing machine so she would not have to wash the diapers by hand when as they planned they had their own apartment. (Mailer does refer to the long statement Marina wrote in longhand in Russian when she was held captive for several months, referred to as for her "protection", by the Secret Service. until after her complaint to Commission chairman Earl Warren when she testified she was turned free. ^{But Mailer does not mention} ~~Not does Mailer refer to~~ her months of captivity and the isolation that meant. In her statement Marina referred to their plans for getting an apartment and the purpose for which Lee left her that money. The reason is obvious: he would not have left that money for a washing machine if he had expected any need for money for flight.)

How was Marina, speaking only a few words of English and without any skill she could use in getting a job here, to survive and to care for those two infants?

How many young women have ever faced such daunting, terrifying straits so alone and still managed to survive and to care for her infants, to raise and educate them so as they have they could lead successful lives and careers of their own?

In all of this big book, in its 828 pages, Mailer does not once refer to Marina as what she was, another victim of the assassination.

This had no appeal for the successful novelist writing what he pretends is assassination nonfiction and an account of the lives of Marine and Oswald.

He makes no mention of any of this.

What did appeal to him was slandering Marine when she was a grandmother with five grandchildren as an insatiable sex kitten when she was a teenager and doing that with what he not only knew was lies in which he featured a liar who had trouble telling the truth even by accident but in which the proof that it was lies is obvious in what he used of what those he paid to be interviewed and others told him.

Scattering this as he does throughout the book helps the reader not to detect it.

Shame, as we see, is an emotion as foreign to Mailer as is decency. Or concern for truth.

He oozes into the slime of his Part IV, "Marina's Friends, Marina's Loves," (pages 135-64) with his two-page chapter bearing the names of two young women with whom Marina worked at the hospital in Minsk, "Yanina and Sonia." (pages 135-6) Chapter 2 is "Neighbors." (page 139ff.) Then comes "Larissa" (pages 145-6). "Mischa" is chapter 4. (pages 147-8) Chapters 5, 6 and 7 are "Leonid," "Inessa" and "Kostya," the latter the only one taking more than a single page. Chapter 8 is the only one with a person's first name. ~~8 of the part, it is not just a first name, it is "Yuri Merezhinsky."~~ It is "Yuri Merezhinsky." (pages 154ff.) The ninth chapter in this "Part" of such brief chapters as of a single page, is "Anatoly." (pages 159-64)

For all of this Mailer has but a single source note, in "Anatoly." And then, this being Mailer's concept of responsible nonfiction writing so eulogized by so many reviewers, that single source note is at least secondhand in the book he refers to, McMillan's.

Real scholarship that.

Like a prosecutor building a case by pretending impartiality, Mailer begins with the expressed liking and respect Yanina and Sonia had for Marine. They spoke of her "not without love," Mailer says. Then he does quote Yanina as saying that Marina's backward stepfather shouted "whore" at her when she was

a girl and when as Yanina said that was not at all true.

So Mailer sneaks that suggestion in that way. Careful, cunning Mailer's concept of nonfiction.

He sneaks a little more suggesting that Marina had a source of extra money that let her afford what the other girls could not when they all got the same wages: somehow Marina had better dresses and looked better than they. There was an obvious reason for Marina having a little more money than they: she had no rent to pay and she also ate with her uncle and aunt.

But sneaky, dirty Mailer sneaks these dishonest suggestions in at the very beginning of this Part on "Marina's Friends, Marina's Loves."

In "Neighbors" he digresses into unrelated family histories that are not connected with Marina. He likes big books and this one needs padding desperately.

Slipsliding more prejudice in, Mailer next says that when Marine went to live with her uncle and aunt in 1959, "New problems came with her." He does not note in his supposed account of Marina and Lee that four years later, only four years later, she was a widow at 22 in a strange land and with two infant girls to keep and raise, beginning with less than \$200 for all she had in the world. She then was utterly alone on the other side of the world and without any means of making a living. Perhaps Mailer does not mention this because it is inconsistent with what he is edging to allege about her. All those "new problems" that "came with her"? He made them up.

He next does that by suggesting that her aunt Valya did not trust Marina to go anywhere alone and wanted Larissa with her. That is so unusual a concern for a girl of 18? With what Mailer soon says of the boys and young men?

Mailer's next provocative suggestion is that Marina had an entirely undescribed "intimacy" with Leonid, albeit only intermittently, for five to six months. Leonid "never calls" that undescribed but highly suggestive "intimacy" as Mailer quotes him as "an affair."

What was it then? Why does Mailer suggest and not say what he means when he soon gets explicit enough?

The only possibility is that it was not anything like what Mailer infers and thus ^{he} can resort only to tricky, dirty writing to give it a meaning he wants the reader to take from it that it does not have.

Inessa undermines Mailer's coming prize "witness" who is really a prize package in saying that Marina "had naturally bright lips." She said Marina's lips were "very bright lips with no makeup - just naturally bright lips." (page 150)

With quoting Kostya as saying he and Marina had sex (page 153) Mailer has done all the prejudicial suggesting he can contrive as he builds his prosecution-type indictment up to his introduction of his star witness, ^{Yui} Merezhinsky. Really his only alleged "witness."

Neither Marina nor any other of these Russian teenagers with a few young adults, even with Mailer's deliberately prejudicial treatment of them, appears to differ in any major way from their peers throughout the entire western world except in their cultural interests. Except that as compared with their peers in this country a higher percentage of them were familiar with and liked the classics in music and in writing very much, most of them.

They had some of the same hangups. Larissa, for example, longed to become a doctor. "She did well in school, but then in ninth grade discovered that she could not look at blood." (page 145)

That happened to a male cousin of mine but not until his first year in medical school. It was not really that unheard-of, in Minsk or anywhere else.

Mischa told Mailer that he and his friend like to "listen to Bach, Prokofief" and other classical composers, as did others of that group, and they also like classical American jazz. He mentioned "(Louis) Armstrong, Sidney Becket (sic), (Benny) Goodman, Bing Crosby, Frank Sinatra." (page 148) (Of French ancestry and from New Orleans, Sidney's name was Bechet. He was world-famous in Mailer's youth and in mine.)

For most of them as teenagers living under infinitively more difficult conditions, the worst he can say of them, Marina included, is that their behavior, their personal conduct, was at least as socially acceptable as was his when he was a grown man and a professional success. *It's not more so!*

With all the hinting he can cook up, he finally gets to his "Yuri Merzhinsky" chapter. (page 154) He begins it, perhaps intending to build sympathy for a man much in need of it and deserving none, referring to him as

"...a handsome man of about fifty and may once have been as good-looking as a movie star. But now, he is ravaged by illness and his shoulders are hunched. To meet his interviewers, he has come from a hospital several hundred kilometers away, and has been drinking all day; at night, he is still drinking with the harsh pride of a Russian who measures his prowess by the slugs of vodka he can continue to mix with powerful emotions."

He then quotes Yuri as saying, "My story will be very boring, not interesting" when to Mailer it is the exact opposite. He then quotes Yuri as saying what is true.

But ^{that} that was phony self-deprecation by Yuri and it is phony for Mailer to emphasize it, to give this false self-portrait of Yuri at the outset, to influence the reader that way with what he knew was false. But the reporter in Mailer, and that is how he began years ago, recognized how that could form the readers' minds the way he wanted so he not only begins that way, he repeats those same words a dozen lines later. Yuri is anything but self-deprecating, he knew it, he knew he was pretending and he was lucky, Mailer loved it:

"...I can tell you this should be called 'Story of Children Who Come from Cream of Society.' My father was a great scientist; he became part of our Soviet scientific history. My mother, the same --Honorable Scientist of Byelorussian Republic. Immediately after Gagarin was launched into space on Sputnik, my mother was interviewed, my father was interviewed, I was interviewed."

Next, at least as Mailer presents it next, Yuri is abused, a much-abused man beginning as a child and by his "cream of society" parents:

Yuri had complaints about everything, especially about his parents. They were, as he and Mailer say, eminences of science. His mother was part of a delegation to the UN with Khrushchev.

Yuri then goes into when he met Marina. That was at a dance after a lecture by his mother and in the same building. Again using those suggestive words so indispensable to the dishonest writer, Mailer quotes him as saying of Marina, "I knew her before, I knew her after," when in fact that was when he first met her. (Mailer never says who was doing the interviewing, whether it was he or Schiller. He always has "Interviewer" in the transcripts he uses.)

Knowing that it is a lie, as we have seen but with it nonetheless a rather convenient lead into Mailer's renewed assault on Marina's character when she was still a teenager, here is how Mailer worked his transcripts over to begin with a relatively slight criticism of Marina. Why he asked this question, whichever the interviewer was, is cause for wonder because they knew from Inessa that as a girl Marina had naturally bright lips with no make-up at all:

Interviewer: Was she wearing lipstick?

Yuri Merezhinsky: She painted her lips all of the time.

Int: All the time?

YM: Yes.

Int. That's interesting, because the word we get is that she never used lipstick.

YM: She was very attractive. Effective.

Int: How long had you known her then?

YM: It doesn't matter--one day, two days, a year--I knew her long enough to know who was who. She was a woman, not a girl. Not a young woman. She was older. We were tired of her in sex.

Int: Tired of her in sex? Let's be precise here.

YM: I don't know about other people. I can talk only about myself. I never went with her to bed. But I could sleep with her even on a staircase. (pages 155-6)

Young and vigorous boys tired of sex? Not just perhaps an individual one but the entire "group" of them? All tired of sex, all bored by it, all at the same time?

What made those Minsker boys and young men so different from all of their age almost anywhere in the world? Than those of their age in World War II, some perhaps their fathers, so many of whom raped their way across Europe? Is that how Mailer was at Yuri's age?

If Mailer used anything Yuri said after that, it was not because he believed it.

It also is obvious that whenever Yuri tripped himself up in a lie, Schiller/Mailer let him get away with it. It is obvious that Mailer was so desperate for what he could use in his campaign against Marina when this was so apparently false he used it anyway. In this Mailer correctly understood what he could get away with with his publisher and with the coming reviewers of his coming book.

To Mailer, world-class teats-and-tushie writer and to his world-class interviewer there is no contradiction between Yuri saying that he "knew" Marina and had sex with her until, and he here includes his friends, "We were tired of her in sex" and then, when asked to be "precise" responded that "I never went to bed with her"?

Obviously, both cannot be true and equally obviously Mailer used it after Yuri at the least contradicted himself. Not only was Mailer unfazed by this but he liked Yuri's next self-contradiction so much he also used it uncritically. I omit nothing in quotation. This follows what I quoted above:

Int: You say you had her any way you wanted?
 YM: Yes, sure.
 Int. Your friends had her?
 YM: Sure.
 Int: For certain?
 YM: Sure. (page 156)

Here Mailer asks a question he knows from McMillan's book Yuri will contradict. Mailer refers to McMillan but he has no citation to it. Then, from even the Mailer we have been looking at, is a really low beginning with Yuri's volunteering of it:

YM: She was sent out from Leningrad in twenty-four hours for prostitution with a foreigner, and she came to Minsk.
 Int: For prostitution? Literally?
 YM: With a foreigner. Then she came to Minsk. Because she had an uncle here. She was lucky. (page 156)

That alleged "luck" was as Yuri put it not being sent to a labor camp, a gulag.

Remember, the KGB was giving Schiller and Mailer access to their files. When Oswald was sent to Minsk the KGB was alerted there to the possibility he

presented a danger to the Soviet Union. They spied on him all the time. They knew who he went out with and the nature of their relations. And if Oswald had become friends with the woman Yuri makes Marine out to be, can it possibly be believed that the KGB would not have looked her up, learned what it could? Of course it cannot be believed and it cannot be believed that Mailer was not aware of that.

Yet Mailer does not report asking his KGB chums who were so anxious to provide him with what he wanted to titillate those X-rated minds to which with this kind of writing he appeals. Surely when the KGB gave him their transcripts of their eavesdropping on Marina and Oswald even when they were in bed they would not have been reluctant to provide - if it existed - any confirmation of what so interested Schiller and Mailer from their own selections of their own interrogations.

Note in what is next quoted that when Mailer makes a pretense of seeking proof, of asking Yuri for his source, Yuri first, having made these horrible allegations against Marina first claims he should not answer because the answer would be so "intimate" and then when he agrees to answer does not and Schiller/Mailer are satisfied with that:

Int: Who told you she was a prostitute in Leningrad?

YM: You ask a question which I consider very intimate.

Int: Let me ask it in a different way.

YM: No, it was right question to ask. She came here with four other people who were sent out of Leningrad together. She was in group. Two young men, two women. And her uncle worked for Ministry of Internal Affairs, MVD, that's why she was privileged to come to Minsk and not 101 Kilometers. What it means, 101 Kilometers, you have to cut trees in forest.

Int: A labor camp? (page 156)

YM: Job for prostitutes and people who don't work. You were sent out of big cities to work, hard labor. At that time, anybody could be accused of any type of prostitution. (page 157)

Being a pharmacist apparently was not work to Yuri et al or, if Marina was not yet a pharmacist, they had no question about her being trusted by the Soviets if she had the record Yuri attributed to he. Yuri easily got past that fabled Schiller diligence as that "world-class" interviewer, as the media

touted him. Past, too, Mailer's fabulous reputation as a "reporter." including getting a Pulitzer for his writing of the Gary Gilmore story, because he never did answer.

Bad enough as it is to this point, Mailer uses Yuri to make it worse, knowingly worse:

Now, said Yuri, there was a problem--he and his group, he would say, were fed up with Marina. They didn't know how to get rid of her. She was good at sex, but when a woman is always with her legs spread, sometimes you resent it. She never worried about anything like reputation. (page 157)

It is not odd that Yuri, best for whatever reason on character assassination, was encouraged to pile his defamations on but it surely is odd that not a single one of the men Mailer and Schiller interviewed said anything like this at all. Most portrayed Marina as a fine and caring person. When they asked Yuri "how she could conceal her reputation" if it was as he says once again those demon interrogators let him add more insults and not respond in any way:

It was asked how she could conceal her reputation. After she met Lee at this dance, how did she manage that?

Yuri: "You know, we are now three men here in this room, okay? Then a woman comes. You don't tell this new guy, 'Man you know, I fucked her in different positions so many times ...' You don't pass this information. Sasha was the only one who was not her lover. Sasha was ready to marry her. He was in love up to his ears. Everybody fucked her but Sasha." (page 157)

Mailer had interviewed all those others in Yuri's "group without getting any confirmation of all this slop from Yuri and of course Mailer knew that. It did not discourage him from repeating what Yuri said and worse, treating it as solid, factual, dependable information when he knew it was not that at all.

But as Mailer should know and Random House's lawyers do know for a "public figure," which Marina could be alleged to have become without doing a thing to become one, to sue successfully for libel, she has to establish "malice," and the courts have held, as they did in the case Mark Lane handled for Willis Carto, his Liberty Lobby and his weekly Spotlight, if the writer has a source, no matter how undependable a source, and quotes that source accurately, there is no libel under the law and controlling decisions.

That is how Mark Lane won for those extremists of the farout-right when they were sued by former CIA spook and Watergate conspirator, E. Howard Hunt. The article by another former CIA man, Victor Marchetti, could hardly have been more libellous, more grossly inaccurate and indeed impossible, but Marchetti had those sources, he repeated what they had said and he got away with really vicious libel in charging that Hunt was part of the conspiracy that killed the President.

There was nothing too impossible for Yuri to say and for Mailer to repeat if it in any way maligned Marina. This is what follows:

Marina, he told them, had access in her pharmacy to grain alcohol. Yuri didn't want to boast, but he could say that, as a man, he satisfied all women, and Marina brought him bottles, big bottles of alcohol, from her pharmacy. (page 157)

Whatever Yuri may have meant by "big bottles" in this country alcohol for medicinal purposes comes in "bottles" that are quite large and quite heavy. They would have been impossible to steal. Assuming, of course, that Marina was willing to risk the gulags to steal alcohol for Yuri. But if it was as small a bottle as what here is a quart, small a girl and woman that she is, how easy would it have been to hide that on herself and not get caught? And to run that risk regularly and not expect the shrinkage of that stock to be noticed when it was not accounted for?

Especially if as Mailer next quotes Yuri as saying, men were waiting in line if she had wanted one:

Asked about Lee, Yuri said he wanted to explain: "We are one team, and we are ten people, and we have one, two, three, ten women, and they are all very beautiful. They are always just between us, touching us. And everybody on our team is fucking these women. At one o'clock she's fucking one, then another one--we all know it. It is not a secret. And we are tired of these women. We are bored by them."

So why did Lee become serious about her?

Yuri replied, "Every woman has her own raisin." (pages 157-8)

These world-classers interviewed Kosta Bondarin:

He knows Yuri would say that he slept with her, but Kostya is not sure it happened. The fact is that Anatoly Shpanko did have

intimate contact with her. That much Kostya knows for sure. Tolya was a serious man and, unlike Yuri, would never talk to others about an affair. Yuri, after all, was the same age as Kostya, seventeen, and so he would have been more likely to say, "Well, I got fucked, I really got fucked," but in this situation, Kostya didn't believe him. Tolya and Marina really had it for each other, and he doesn't believe she would have allowed Yvka to get into the middle of that. (page 158)

Mailer concludes his "Yuri Merezhinsky" chapter with these words, his own, not attributed to anyone:

"It could all be grossly exaggerated. Easily, it could be exaggerated."

But did that discourage him when he felt the need to malign the grandmother as a girl to save the book his greed was not enough to get him?

All of this is at least can be at the least "grossly exaggerated" and he could bring himself to write it and then submit it for publication and then hit the promotions trail to draw even more attention to it? Which also means, of course, to sell more copies of it?

Not a bit too soon Mailer ends this Part with his "Anatoly" chapter. (pages 159-64)

Anatoly was a medical student when he met Marine. "His first memory of Marine is of a very, very pleasant woman and he still remembers her that way. ... she never insulted him and he never insulted her ... he likes kind-hearted women and modest girls." (page 159)

"At his Medical Institute (Mailer's words) there were more girls than men, so male students usually had a large choice." (page 160)

"Speaking of Marina," again Mailer's words, "he cannot say anything bad. She was just a simple girl, very simple, ordinary, positive. ... All he can remember is that there was nothing negative from her side to his." (pages 160-1)

Anatoly proposed to Marina but on her uncle's advice Marina decided not to marry any man with no money and, even more important, no apartment.:

Anatoly does not even remember Marina's kisses. (page 161)

"He also does not remember" what Schiller/Mailer keep going back to without ever consulting their cooperative KGB chums "anything negative about Marina" and "Nobody ever said to him that Marina had some history in Leningrad." (page 162) These are Mailer's own words. So also are these, the last I quote from this disgusting Part:

Anatoly told him "they didn't have sex." (page 162)

But Mailer, like the smut-merchant he is, doesn't let go of this. His next Part, V, titled "Courtship and Marriage" (pages 167 ff), begins with the chapter he titled "Alik." That was Lee's nickname in the Soviet Union. Mailer does not get far into it when he uses their interviews with Marina. They were after returning from Belarus. And, it seems, all Schiller and Mailer are interested in is sex. (page 169) What follows is from the middle of the next page:

She didn't want to talk about her experiences. Catherine the Great had lots of lovers and was considered okay; that did not mean Marina had lots--she was not saying that. She just didn't want to talk about sex. Everybody was looking for bad; they they trash you. It wasn't that she'd done something she was ashamed of, nothing horribly wrong, but she knew when she first came to Minsk that maybe she needed advice. Because she was not that experienced. Maybe men thought she was something that she was not.

She talked to her friend Misha Smolsky, who had never laid a finger on her. They were friendly, just friends. He said, "come on, I won't touch you. You're not Anita Ekberg." That said it all. He told her: Marina, there's a guy spreading gossip around that you're sleeping with him. Is it true or not?" She told him, "Misha I'm asking you what can I do if I have nothing to hide? I cannot defend myself door to door if a guy is lying."

So Misha said, "I cannot punch him in the nose, because it is not my business"--meaning she was not his girl--"but I'm going to tell him it is baloney."

She did not know why Merezhinsky--if that was the guy, Yuri Merezhinsky--talked about her that way. Maybe it was because he was always drunk and liked to make a fuss. Maybe it was rejection. Was this the person that Misha was talking about? She felt humiliated in front of all the world.

How did she feel after what Mailer was doing to her?

Again, this is Mailer's paraphrase of what she said, "Now her reputation felt like ugly clothing, smelly, that she was condemned to wear."

Mailer begins Chapter 3 of this part repeating that same Leningrad rumor, still with no source indicated. That is not unusual for these Parts. This one of 25 pages has only three citations of any source at all.

Mailer persists for several pages and then this on page 182:

M: I never once in my life was paid money.

Int: I'm sure you weren't

M: I was looking for love in some wrong places and sometimes I had to pay for that. I actually was raped by a foreigner.

Int: What?

M: I mean, I was trapped in a room. He locked the door. And you know how they have those dezhurnayas that sit over there in the hallways of hotels holding keys for people who are out? I couldn't scream. I thought, what would this woman think of me? So I fought this man. He finally threw me against him. He said, "Well if I knew you were a virgin, I would not have touched you." ... Lee didn't ask me, but on my wedding night, I pretended. I was terrified. I said to myself, When night comes, what am I going to do? I mean, what? It's a clean-cut life from now on. I want to be serious, and I was terrified. But Lee did not ask me.

Inessa knew of Marina's concern because she was not a virgin and that is the basis for the Schiller/Mailer questioning.

In Mailer's own words she told them off, having put up with it for five days:

Interviewer: One person responded to a question by saying: You're right, she wasn't a virgin on her wedding night. She was worried that Lee would find out, and she went to the pharmacy and got something. She was proteding her marriage.

Marina: Okay.

Int: That's exactly what was said.

M. Okay. It's true. So? So you are a sex pervert to spend five days to get somebody to talk about subject like this...I mean, isn't it enough?

This and more like it, mind you, in a book ostensibly about the assassination of the President as Mailer seeks to prove what he "decided" is the... evidence because, remember that Goodman report on Mailer's days at Penn, he said, and omniscient as he is, who dares dispute him? The evidence itself is "impenetrable."

How could what Oswald did not know possibly be a factor of Mailer's "basic question" for which he went to Belarus, seeking proof that Oswald was the assassin from his life in the Soviet Union? (page 315)

Of course it has no relevance. None at all! As it also would not have had from Mailer's poppycock that did not originate with him, that Oswald killed JFK, for whom he had great respect and admiration, to become a famous man thereby.

That is the most amateurish of the amateur shrinkery of the supporters of the official theory of the assassination - and little understood ^{that} as it is, it is only a theory.

But Mailer was apparently lost enough in his all-consuming ego and his sense of his own omnipotence and omniscience, that he went for and had faith in this silliness that would disgrace a reasonably intelligent high-school child.

These are the words of the twice-Pulitzered Mailer as he ends his Part VIII of his first volume:

By the logic of our narrative, we have just come to the end of Volume One. It is obvious that whatever we have learned about Oswald in Russia is not enough to answer our basic question. For that we will have to follow his adventures in America..The changes in Oswald's life have already been large and abrupt, and now we will have to accompany him on future adventures in Fort Worth, Dallas, New Orleans, Mexico City, Dealey Plaza, and the Dallas city jail. Since we have gone from Russia to America with a minimum of ceremony, and have just taken a quick visit back, perhaps we can obtain a more satisfactory farewell by observing the reactions of Oswald's friends and acquaintances in Minsk after they encountered the news of Kennedy's assassination. (page 315)