

## WHAT MAKES KISSINGER RUN?

*Kissinger, The Adventures of Superkraut*  
by Charles Ashman  
(Lyle Stuart Inc., New York, 1972,  
\$2.95)

## HELEN KOBLIN

Probably, the most colorful and enigmatic personality to emerge from the rapidly populated American political arena in the last decade is embodied in Henry Kissinger. Presidents may come and go, but we all know who's minding the store. It is the German-Jewish Wunderkind, who beat the devil in Nazi Germany as a child to become the political Svengali to American leaders, in international negotiations, and with his celebrated amours.

What exactly does Kissinger do? His job is to think. And when he voices his thoughts, no one seems to argue. The self-styled genius is an untouchable whose loyalties, or lack of them, appear to bear no consequence with those he serves. He is a contemporary phenomenon, unique in thought and action. His aura has fertilized a growing cult of Kissinger-watchers, with Charles Ashman the high priest.

Fascinated by the Presidential adviser, whose position seems to be cemented in perpetuity by divine right while other powerseekers are forced to play musical thrones, a game based on the whim of a fickle electorate, Ashman has taken the plunge and written the first chronicle of the man. The biography, irreverently entitled, *Kissinger, The Adventures of Superkraut*, depicts the policy-maker as a combination Machiavellian fiend, Teutonic epic hero, and erotically insatiable Don Juan. The book at times penetrates the experiential elements and historical events that have intermingled to create the profound, complicated and brilliant product... a Kissinger.

The depth of the human probe is, however, underplayed and overshadowed by Ashman's persistent interjections of recounts of romantic intrigues, real and imagined, with women of glamour and notoriety from every social strata, age range and profession. The implication is that women, from Zsa Zsa Gabor to Jill St. John to Barbara Howar, all pantingly await their number to come up, so that when the Kissinger mood moves him, each will be available to bestow her highly specialized charismatic favors upon him, and then he, in turn, will be fortified to return to his duties as rightful ruler of the Universe.

According to the author, Gloria Steinem alone has withstood the onslaught of Superkraut advances without succumbing, to date. But Kissinger is quoted as saying, "I am not discouraged. After all, she did not say that if nominated, she would not accept, or if elected, she would not serve."

The accounts of the Kissinger capers are stylistically camp and cliché, and a vehicle for muscle-flexing to strengthen the fragile status of the masculine mystique in this country. Basically Ashman attributes Kissinger's success in politics to the same quality that allegedly renders him irresistible to women. That is domination and intimidation via a super-refined intellect.

If raw data is obscured at times by sensationalism, if you do not hold the images of public people sacrosanct, you will no doubt find a moderate balance of entertainment and information in Ashman's literary endeavor.

In the following taped interview, the author reveals his impressions of his subject in a more personalized and candid account than he attempted in the book.

**Koblin: Will you describe Henry Kissinger, the man, and his function in Government?**

Ashman: The man who has given the burden of trying to bring about world peace, nail down the political coffin of George McGovern and insure Richard Nixon's place in textbooks, doesn't like Nixon, is not a Nixon man, and probably should be called Palladin. I could have called my book, *Have Brain, Will Travel*. Henry Kissinger is a cross between a Prussian soldier of fortune and a wild West gunslinger, who sells protection to whatever village or Administration will pay his fare. Instead of a Colt 45, he uses an atomic arsenal and an uncanny knowledge of international power politics.

**Koblin: How did he obtain this knowledge?**

Ashman: He's probably the best trained academician in a very narrow field, that is, the balance between weaponry and international politics.

**Koblin: Does Kissinger support the President?**

Ashman: Fourteen hours before Richard Nixon received the Republican nomination in Miami, I stood within a few feet of Kissinger and heard him tell delegates, "I can't imagine living in a country with Richard Nixon as President." The man is totally incapable of closing the gaps in this country. We must nominate and elect Rockefeller."

The enthusiasm he had for Rockefeller was the same enthusiasm he had for Jack Kennedy when he went to work as his twice-a-week Cambridge adviser, and the same enthusiasm he had for Johnson when he went to work as his special adviser on Korea, and the same enthusiasm he has for the present occupant. Kissinger summed it up best, "You've seen one President, you've seen 'em all."

**Koblin: What are Kissinger's politics, at least philosophically?**

Ashman: He is truly a political Palladin with no place in his Germanic, Teutonic, Strangelovian attitudes for compassion. He is unencumbered with traditional American concerns, like Democracy, or is it popular? Or, what about the individual? This makes him as valuable a tool to a politician as a good-looking wife. The German accent is also an accent in thinking. If you ask Henry Kissinger, "Who is your idol," he wouldn't say "Washington," or "Jefferson." His idol is Metternich. He talks in old world concepts of balance of power.

**Koblin: How did he justify going to work for Nixon?**

Ashman: It is the man's ego. He would say, "Well, Nixon's not the man I want, but I could do the job for him." He is a ruthless, ambitious man who believes that not only is power the greatest aphrodisiac with women, but the only essential in any aspect of life. This has dominated his political life, his personal life and his family life. It cost him his marriage.

**Koblin: Will you explain this "power syndrome"?**

Ashman: He's probably the classic "overcompensator" of all time. This is a guy, who when he was fourteen years old, was thrown out of Germany for being a Jew. He came out of the obscurity of Jewish refugees in the thirties. He has lifted himself up now to where many Americans honestly feel that if anything happened to Kissinger, Nixon would become President. You've got to give the guy credit.

**Koblin: Does he aim for the Presidency?**

Ashman: He is ineligible. In one of the most blatant, irresponsible remnants of stupidity in the American Constitution, you cannot be a naturalized citizen and become President. You can be Vice-President, you can negotiate world peace, you can be Chief Justice, but not President.

**Koblin: How does he manage to wield such power?**

Ashman: He has intellectually intimidated the rest of the White House staff, because look who they are. They are all professional vote-getters. These are the men whose greatest ability is how to sell a President and keep him sold. Erlichman, Haldeman, Mitchell... you have to be grateful you've got Kissinger. If you sent one of those other guys over to negotiate world peace, he would say, "Well, we'll form a committee; everyone will give a hundred dollars, we'll take out an ad, get one of the agencies... it'll be a great peace, don't worry, everyone will love it." Kissinger is a great intellectual, and a man of conviction. He is not a "yes" man.

**Koblin: In spite of the fact that he works for a man in whom he has no confidence, why did Nixon hire him?**

Ashman: Now, when Richard Nixon got the nomination, he had some problems. He had to make amends with the liberal end of the Republican Party. That meant Rockefeller.

Secondly, the nation felt that Nixon was anti-immigrant. He wasn't ready for a Black, Indians were not fashionable yet, Chicanos had not come into their own... this was '69. So the closest to a minority that Nixon would consider having around was an intellectual Jew.

Thirdly, Nixon had been rejected by the Eastern academic establishment when he was Vice President, and thoroughly rejected when he lived in New York because he's always been thought of as a third rate brain, which Kissinger says he is.

uncle. Paul was the leader of the anti-Nazi Movement in Munich, and escaped from Dachau. They live here, and for ten years Henry Kissinger has been "too busy" to stop by. Ten years! That's why he lost his wife. She was a plain, nice Jewish girl who was told by

Secret Service right on time and parked two blocks away and deliberately waited, arriving at the theatre thirty minutes late. By the time he arrived it was no longer Brando's night. Rumors were on. What was happening at the White House? Why was Kissinger late? What world crisis was there? Then he walked in and stole the show.

It was Kissinger night. Brando gave way to Kissinger, Self-Superstar. He really does do Strangelove shticks at parties. As far as his sex life is concerned, the press does exaggerate it. He does ball Jill St. John, though.

**Koblin: What did you mean in your book by the line, "Zsa Zsa, you got the wrong Kissinger. Which one did she get?"**

Ashman: What I meant was, she went with Henry for awhile, but she should have gone for his brother Walter. Walter's a billionaire. Pat Nixon actually fixed Henry up with Zsa Zsa. Pat Nixon's got a pretty good sense of humor. Let's face it. They love Kissinger. He's the only color in this whole bland administration. He's fun, and it humanizes the Administration's austerity. The President asked, "Well, Zsa Zsa, how do you like my Kissinger?" She said, "Where is that darling?" She didn't know who he was, but she found out.

**Koblin: Perhaps the truly great men of the world become great...**

Ashman: ... to make up for their sexual inadequacy?

**Koblin: No, to score more women.**  
Ashman: I think he's more liberated than that.

**Koblin: Do you believe him to be a male chauvinist?**

Ashman: Oh, probably. Steinem thinks he is. Yes, he certainly is a chauvinist. There is an obvious vacuum of women on his staff. No department in the executive branch of Government has less women. There is great turnover too. He is a compulsive worker.

**Koblin: How old is he?**  
Ashman: Forty-eight. He was born in Furth, Germany, in 1923.

**Koblin: What inspired you to write this biography? Intrigue?**

Ashman: Yes, he is absolutely the best subject for biography since Winston Churchill. I did not know him well. Two years ago I started going to London, and Germany and tracing the Kissinger life. Then I traced him to the sidewalks of New York. I went to George Washington High School and found out about him being a monitor in the halls, which I thought was beautiful.

I fantasize a lot about this man. For two years of my life I gave up everything I had to retrace the steps of his life. When he was born in 1923, the part of Bavaria that he lived in was shifting toward Nazism. In 1938, he split to London with his mother, father, and brother, Walter. WEashington Heights, New York, was the next stop and the image of young Henry Kissinger delivering chopped liver there blows my mind. Then, his stint in the army... I fill in the gaps in research with fantasy in my mind.

**Koblin: How long have you lived vicariously like this?**

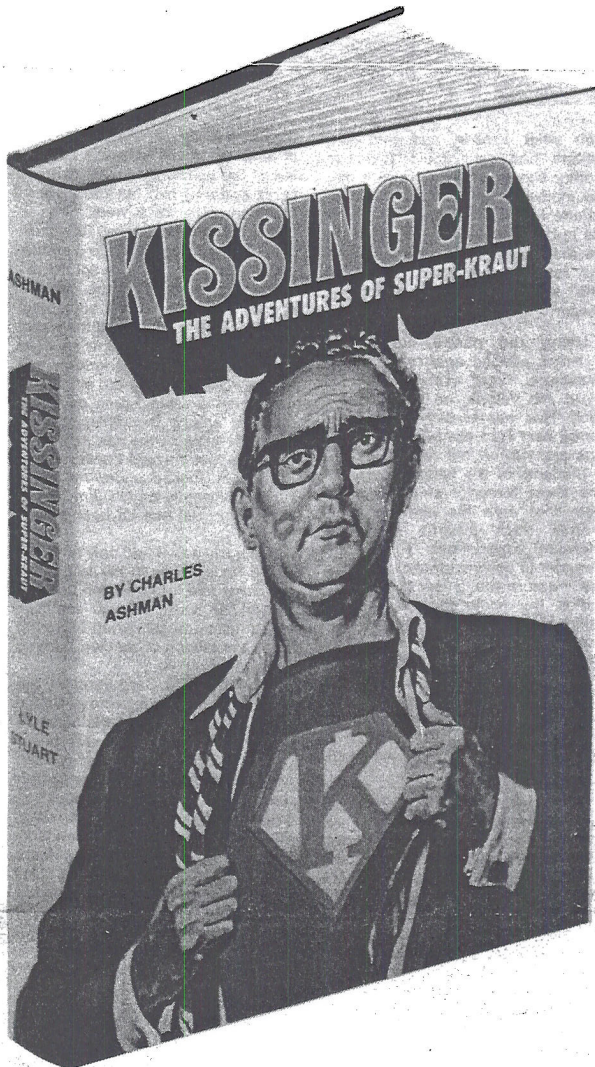
Ashman: Two years. I envy the guy. You know he claims that power is the greatest aphrodisiac. That's his explanation for his pursuit.

**Koblin: What do you think the future holds for him?**

Ashman: There will always be a need for a Kissinger. He would be just as believable an aide to President Spiro Agnew or President Ted Kennedy or President John Connolly. Probably not to McGovern, though, because of the unusual singularity of the gap between the two current candidates.

**Koblin: What do Kissinger's women say about him?**

(please turn to page 2)



Kissinger calls himself a first rate brain, and Nixon a third rate one.

**Koblin: What exactly is Kissinger's official status?**

Ashman: He is Chief of the National Security Council and the ranking Presidential adviser on foreign affairs. He is the confidante, the one-man brain trust. He is the principal advisor to the President of the United States on everything.

**Koblin: Does he advise on Internal Affairs as well?**

Ashman: Oh sure. The man's power is... is...

**Koblin: If Kissinger is such an intellectual, and wields unquestioned power, why did he allow the educational system to fall apart in this country?**

Ashman: The Germanic, Teutonic attitude means go straight ahead and look at the long range goal. You don't worry about minor things like an individual, a school system.

**Koblin: Are you saying he is an elitist?**

Ashman: Totally.

**Koblin: You say he is dispassionate and not concerned with human values.**

Ashman: Yes. For example, I just spent the weekend with two most charming beautiful people, Carl and Paula Kissinger, who helped raise Henry as a boy. They are his aunt and

her husband that when he came home at five o'clock, there would be no talking in the house.

**Koblin: In your book, you talk a lot about his liaisons with various beautiful and fascinating women. You refer to him as a stud. Is this "over-compensation" too?**

Ashman: It may be a Gemini tendency. He was once married to a very plain woman. He is a totally unattractive man—pudgy, bad skin, bad eyes, bad hair, dandruff, and he's short. Up until four months ago you weren't allowed to hear his voice. Mitchell had a memo out prohibiting microphones to be on while he spoke, because he thought it would be too much to hear "Ve vill have peace" in that accent.

**Koblin: You do create a Doctor Strangelove image of him with the addition of a lively sex life.**

Ashman: Yes, he does over-compensate, and he's diggin' it. He also combines the quiet academic charm of Harvard with his Teuton force when wooing women, and they love it.

**Koblin: He has star quality then?**

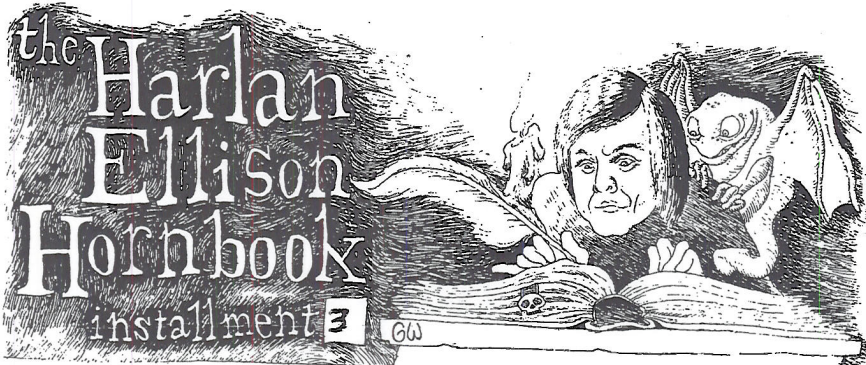
Ashman: At the world premiere of *The Godfather*, he was one of the guests. This was to be Marlon Brando's night. Kissinger arrived with the

LOS ANGELES

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**PART TWO**

**NOV. 10, 1972**



(continued from last week)

If I recall where I left off last week, I'd just recounted how Valerie, the Golden Girl, the Little Wonder of the Earth, having funded her way into my life, had cut out for San Francisco with a hundred dollars of my friend, Jim Sutherland's, money ... ostensibly to pick up her goods before her ex-old man could rip them off, and to buy a VW minibus from a friend.

She was to have driven back the next day.

When Jim returned from the Burbank airport, he told me he'd stopped off at his bank to draw out the hundred for Valerie, and I was terribly upset.

"Listen, man," I said, "I've known her a few years and she's not the most responsible female I've ever encountered."

Jim suddenly seemed disturbed. That hundred was about all he had to his name. He'd earned it assisting me in the teaching of a six-week writing workshop sponsored by Immaculate Heart College, and he'd worked his ass off for it. "She said she'd borrow it from a friend in San Francisco and get it back to me tomorrow," he said.

"You shouldn't have done it."

"Well, I figured she was your girl, and she was going to live here, so ..."

"You shouldn't have done it."

I felt responsible. He'd been trusting, and kind, and I had a flash of uneasiness. The old fable about the Country Mouse and the City Rat scuttled through my mind. Valerie had been known to vanish suddenly. But ... not this time ... not after her warmth and protestations of love for me ... that was unthinkable. It would work out. But if it didn't ...

"Listen, anything happens, I'll make good on the hundred," I told him.

And we settled down to wait for Val's return the next day.

Two days later, we reached a degree of concern that prompted me to call her mother. The story I got from her mother did not quite sync

with what Valerie had told me. Valerie had said she'd told her mother she was moving in with me; the mother knew of no such thing. Valerie had told her she was working in Los Angeles; Valerie had told me she would try and get a job when she returned from San Francisco. The worm of worry burrowed deeper.

Using the phone number of Valerie's alleged apartment in San Francisco, I got a disconnect. No word. No Valerie, no word of any kind. Had her ex-boy friend murdered her? Had she bought the VW bus and run off the road?

Students of the habit patterns of the lower forms of animal life will note that even the planarian flatworms learn lessons from unpleasant experiences. I was no stranger to ugly relationships with (a few, I assure you, a very few) amoral ladies. But *homo sapiens*, less intelligent than the lowest flatworm, the merest paramecium, repeats its mistakes, again and again. Which explains Nixon. And also explains why I was so slow to realize what was happening with Valerie. It took a sub-thread of plot to finally shine the light through my porous skull. Like this:

In company with Ray Bradbury, I was scheduled to make an appearance at the Artasia Arts Festival in Ventura, on May 13. That was the Saturday following Valerie's leavetaking. Ray and I were riding up to Ventura together, and though I'm the kind of realist who considers cars transportation, hardly items of sensuality or beauty, and for that reason never wash my 1967 Camaro with the 74,000 miles on it, I felt a magic man of Bradbury's stature should not be expected to arrive in a shitwagon. So I asked Jim to take my wallet with the credit cards, and the car, down to get it doused. I was still chained to the typewriter on a deadline, or I would have done it myself.

Jim took it to a car wash, brought it back, and returned my wallet to

the niche in my office where it's kept at all times. Aside from this one trip out of the house, the wallet (with all cards present) had not been out of my possession for a week.

The next day, Saturday, Ray came over and I drove us up to Ventura. After checking in, we went to get something to eat. At the table, I opened my wallet to get something — the first time I'd opened the wallet in a week — and suddenly realized some of the glassine windows that held my credit cards were empty. After the initial panic, I grew calm and checked around the table, covered the route back to the car, inspected the map-cubby where I always keep the wallet, looked under the seats ... and instantly called Jim in Los Angeles to tell him I'd been ripped off.

Since the wallet had only been out of the house once in the last week, the cards had to have been boosted at the car wash. Do you see how long it takes the planarian Ellison to smell the stench of its own burning flesh?

I called Credit Card Sentinel, the outfit that cancels missing or stolen cards, advised them of the numbers of the cards (I always keep a record of this kind of minutiae handy), and asked them to send the telegrams that would get me off the hook immediately. There's a law that says you can't get stuck for over fifty bucks on any one card, but there were five cards missing — Carte Blanche, BankAmericard, American Express, Standard Chevron Oil and Hertz Rent-A-Car — and that totaled two-hundred-fifty dollars right there; with Sentinel, the effective lead-time for use of the cards is reduced greatly.

Having deduced a *la Nero Wolfe* that the thief had to have been the dude who swabbed out the interior of the car at the washatorium, I called the West LA police, detective division, the area where the car wash was located, and put them on to it. I called the owners of the car wash and relayed the story, and tried to coordinate them with the detective who was going to investigate, advising them that they should check out the guys who'd worked interiors that previous Friday, noting especially any who hadn't shown up for work.

My detective work was flawless ... aside from the sheer stupidity of my emotional blindness.

You all know what happened.

But I didn't, until five days later, when I received a call from the BankAmericard Center in Pasadena asking me to verify a very large purchase of flowers sent to Mrs. Ellison in the Sacramento, California, Medical Center. I assured them there was no Mrs. Ellison, I was single, and the only Mrs. Ellison was my aged mother, in Miami Beach.

The charge, of course, was on my stolen card.

Then the light blinded me.

The next day, I received a bill for \$43 from the Superior Ambulance Service in Sacramento, a bill for having carted someone from a Holiday Inn to the Sacramento Medical Center on May 13. The name of the patient was Ellison Harlan and the charge had been made to my home address.

In rapid succession came the BankAmericard reports of huge purchases of toilet articles, mens' clothing, women's sportswear, hair dryers, and other goodies. Of course, I knew what had happened. At this point, pause with me, and join in a Handel chorus of *O What a Schmuck is The!*

Care to relive with me the last time you were fucked-over? The feeling that your stomach is an elevator, and the bottom is coming up on you fast? That peculiar chill all over, that is only approximated by the morning after you've stayed up

all night on No-Doz and hot, black coffee? The grainy feeling in the eyes, the uncontrollable clenching of the hands, the utter frustration, the wanting to board a plane to ... where? ... to *there!* ... to the place where something that can be hit exists. It's one thing to be robbed, it's quite another to be taken. Okay, no argument, it's all ego and crippled masculine pride, but God, it burns!

I pulled my shit together and dropped back into my Sam Spade, private eye, mode. First I called the Sacramento Medical Center and checked if there was a Valerie B. checked in. There wasn't. Then I asked for a Mrs. Ellison Harlan. There wasn't. Then I asked for Mrs. Harlan Ellison.

There was.

Then I called the Security station of the Sacramento Sheriff's Department, there at the Medical Center. I spoke to the officer in charge, laid the entire story on him, and asked him to coordinate with Officer Karalekis of the West LA Detective Division, as well as Dennis Tedder at the BankAmericard Center in Pasadena. I advised him — and subsequently advised the Administrative Secretary of the Center — that there was a fraud in progress, and that I would not be held responsible for any debts incurred by the imposter posing as "Ellison Harlan," "Harlan Ellison," or "Mrs. Harlan Ellison." Both of these worthies said they'd get on it at once.

Then I called Valerie. She was in the orthopedic section. They got her to the phone. Of course, she answered: the only one (as far as she knew) who had any idea she was there was the man who had purchased the flowers.

Is the backstory taking shape finally, friends? Yeah, it took me a while, too. And I'm dumber than you.

That was May 23, ten days after the ambulance had removed her from the Holiday Inn and she'd been admitted to the Center.

"Hello?"

"Valerie?"

Pause. Hesitant. Computer running on overload.

"Yes."

## K's brain is so charming

(continued from page 1)

Ashtman: They adore him. They say his brain is so charming that he becomes Cary Grant when he speaks.

Koblin: Few American men realize that women must be turned on with the mind for a total experience.

Ashtman: True. But those of us who have found out do very well. I do believe that the young people have brought that out into the open, seeing beyond the physical. Kissinger is singularly unattractive physically. But women delight in him. The Kissinger wit is also an extraordinary asset.

(Here Ashtman embarked on a series of unfunny anecdotes that revolved around sexy but dumb females who served as exploitive targets for one line cliché delivered unceremoniously and publicly by Kissinger. Here it became difficult to separate the author's admitted fantasies from credible realities. At these times, the author and his subject appear to merge, tastelessly. To quote the quote, "You've seen one male chauvinist, you've seen them all.")

Ashtman: Back to the more serious speculation. There are those who believe that the promulgation of war is really the toy of the intellectual. That all of the Henry Kissingers and the MacGeorge Bundys, when they were intellectual little boys that didn't play with cap guns, never saw western movies, didn't play stickball or get punched in the nose, now having grown up and been called in as advisers in power situations ... It's more of a game to them than a reality as it might be to someone who was not treated that way as a child.

Koblin: You are now speaking of men who are moved to create wars, but do not fight them.

Ashtman: That's right.

Koblin: Do you think Kissinger is a dangerous man?

Ashtman: Yes, he scares the shit out of me. The real President of the United States, if not having abdicated authority, has abdicated the appearance of authority more so than any Presidential aide in the history of the world. This is a man, who, if he gets a cramp, the war may go on an extra day; if he looks at a chick, she becomes a superstar; if

"Harlan."

Silence.

"How's San Francisco?"

"How did you find me here?"

"Doesn't matter. I get spirit messages. All you need to know is I found you, and I'll find you wherever you go."

"What do you want?"

"The cards, and the hundred bucks you conned out of Jim Sutherland."

"I haven't got it."

"Which?"

"Any of it."

"Your boy friend has the cards."

"He split on me. I don't know where he is."

"Climb down off it, Princess. If I'm a patsy once, that makes me a philosopher. Twice and I'm a pervert."

"I'm hanging up. I'm sick."

"You'll be sicker when the Sacramento Sheriff's Department there in the hospital visits you in a few minutes."

No hangup. Silence.

"What do you want?"

"I said what I wanted. And I want it quick. Jim's too poor to sustain a hundred buck ripoff. I can handle the rest but I want it all returned now."

"I can't do anything while I'm in here."

"Well, you're on a police hold as of ten minutes ago, so figure a way to do it, Operator."

"God, you're a chill sonofabitch! How can you do this to me?"

There is a moment when on watches something beloved sink beneath the waves, and resigns oneself. There is a moment when one decides to cut the devil loose, to let the fire consume the holy icons and the fucking temple itself.

"I'm the only one who can press charges against you, Valerie. Try and wriggle and I'll chew on your eyes, so help me God."

There was silence at the other end.

And silence, I now realize, till next week, when — because I've run over again — I'll conclude *Valerie, Come Home*.

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by Harlan Ellison

"Come Together," a new age celebration of the spirit, sponsored by the International Cooperation Council and more than fifteen New Age spiritual groups, will be held November 19, at 7:30 P.M. at the Los Angeles Convention Center.

Music, entertainment, and addresses by noted spiritual leaders will be part of the Celebration.

Featured speakers include Yogi BhaJan, leader of the Happy, Healthy, Holy organization (3HO), Dr. Rammamurti Mishra, director of the Yoga Society of San Francisco, and Muriel Isis, director of the Lighted Way.

The (3HO) "Sat Nam String Band" will perform and there will be "Sufi Dancing." The audience will be led in Kirtan chanting by the Integral

Yoga Institute and will view an audiovisual program presented by the Phenomenon of Man Project. Other activities include a yoga demonstration by the Sivananda Yoga Group and a film produced by the Sai Baba Center.

The public will have an opportunity to learn more about the New Age spiritual groups by visiting a variety of informational displays. Free literature will be available.

Tickets for "Come Together" are priced at \$2.00 and may be purchased from the International Cooperation Council, 17819 Rosecöe Blvd., Northridge (345-8325), Mutual Ticket Agencies, from the cooperating groups, or will be available at the door.

## New Age Celebration

## Everywoman's Village

Everywoman's Village in Van Nuys, is starting their tenth year as a cultural center by offering over 200 classes a week for women, men and children. The diversified curriculum offers a variety of classes in fine arts and crafts, beauty and health, exercise and dance, home economics, music, languages, psychology and lecture discussion seminars.

Other classes are: Real Estate as a Career for Women, Nostalgia & Small Collectables, Self-Hypnosis,

Tennis, Golf, Anthropology, Archaeology, Handwriting Analysis, Indoor Gardening, Organic Gardening, Automotive Service & Repair, Wallpaper Hanging and many more.

Pre-registration week starts November 13th and classes for the 8-week session will begin on November 27th. For further information and a free brochure, call Everywoman's Village, 787-5100 or 873-4406.

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