

CALL MEJOE

by Poul Anderson

The wind came whooping out of eastern darkness, driving a lash of ammonia dust before it. In minutes, Edward Anglesey was blinded.

He clawed all four feet into the broken shards which were soil, hunched down and groped for his little smelter. The wind was an idiot bassoon in his skull. Something whipped across his back, drawing blood, a tree yanked up by the roots and spat a hundred miles. Lightning cracked, immensely far overhead where clouds boiled with night.

As if to reply, thunder toned in the ice mountains and a red gout of flame jumped and a hillside came booming down, spilling itself across the valley. The earth shivered.

Sodium explosion, thought Anglesey in the drumbeat noise. The fire and the lightning gave him enough illumination to find his apparatus. He picked up tools in muscular hands, his tail gripped the trough, and he battered his way to the tunnel and thus to his dugout.

It had walls and roof of water, frozen by sun-remoteness and compressed by torn of atmosphere jammed onto every square inch. Ventilated by a tiny smoke hole, a lamp of tree oil burning in hydrogen made a dull light for the single room.

Anglesey sprawled his slate-blue form on the floor, panting. It was no use to swear at the storm. These ammonia gales often came at sunset, and there was nothing to do but wait them out. He was tired, anyway.

It would be morning in five hours or so. He had hoped to cast an axhead, his first, this evening, but maybe it was better to do the job by daylight.

He pulled a dekapod body off a shelf and ate the meat raw, pausing for long gulps of liquid methane from a jug. Things would improve once he had proper tools; so far, everything had been painfully

grubbed and hacked to shape with teeth, claws, chance icicles, and what detestably weak and crumbling fragments remained of the space-ship. Give him a few years and he'd be living as a man should.

He sighed, stretched, and lay down to sleep.

Somewhat more than one hundred and twelve thousand miles away, Edward Anglesey took off his helmet.

He looked around, blinking. After the Jovian surface, it was always a little unreal to find himself here again, in the clean, quiet order-liness of the control room.

His muscles ached. They shouldn't. He had not really been fighting a gale of several hundred miles an hour, under three gravities and a temperature of 140 absolute. He had been here, in the almost non-existent pull of Jupiter V, breathing oxynitrogen. It was Joe~ who lived down there and filled his lungs with hydrogen and helium at a pressure which could still only be estimated, because it broke aneroids and deranged piezoelectrics.

Nevertheless, his body felt worn and beaten. Tension, no doubt— psychosomatics. After all, for a good many hours now he had, in a sense, been Joe, and Joe had been working hard.

With the helmet off, Anglesey held only a thread of identification. The esprojector was still tuned to Joe's brain but no longer focused on his own. Somewhere in the back of his mind, he knew an inde-scribable feeling of sleep. Now and then, vague forms or colors drifted in the soft black—dreams? Not impossible that Joe's brain should dream a little when Anglesey's mind wasn't using it.

A light iflickered red on the esprojector panel, and a bell whined electronic fear. Anglesey cursed. Thin fingers danced over the con-trols of his chair, he slewed around and shot across to the bank of dials. Yes, there—K tube oscifiating again! The circuit blew out. He wrenched the face plate off with one hand and fumbled in a drawer with the other.

Inside his mind, he could feel the contact with Joe fading. If he once lost it entirely, he wasn't sure he could regain it. And Joe was an investment of several million dollars and quite a few highly skilled man-years.

Anglesey pulled the offending K tube from its socket and threw it on the floor. Glass exploded. It eased his temper a bit, just enough so he could find a replacement, plug it in, switch on the current again.

As the machine warmed up, once again amplifying, the Joeness in the back alleys of his brain strengthened.

Slowly, then, the man in the electric wheel chair rolled out of the room, into the hall. Let somebody else sweep up the broken tube. To hell with it. To hell with everybody.

Jan Cornelius had never been farther from Earth than some com-fortable Lunar resort. He felt much put upon that the Psionics Cor-poration should tap him for a thirteen-month exile. The fact that he knew as much about esprojectors and their cranky innards as any other man alive was no excuse. Why send anyone at all? Who cared?

Obviously the Federation Science Authority did. It had seemingly given those bearded hermits a blank check on the taxpayer's account.

Thus did Cornelius grumble to himself, all the long hyperbolic path to Jupiter. Then the shifting accelerations of approach to its tiny inner satellite left him too wretched for further complaint. And when he finally, just prior to disembarkation, went up to the greenhouse for a look at Jupiter, he said not a word. Nobody does, the first time.

Arne Viken waited patiently while Cornelius stared. It still gets me too, he remembered. By the throat. Sometimes I'm afraid to look.

At length Cornelius turned around. He had a faintly Jovian appearance himself, being a large man with an imposing girth. "I had no idea," he whispered. "I never thought. . . I had seen pictures, but..."

Viken nodded. "Sure, Dr. Cornelius. Pictures don't convey it."

Where they stood, they could see the dark broken rock of the satellite, jumbled for a short way beyond the landing slip and then chopped off sheer. This moon was scarcely even a platform, it seemed, and cold constellations went streaming past it, around it. Jupiter lay across a fifth of that sky, softly ambrosious, banded with colors, spotted with the shadows of planet-sized moons and with whirlwinds as broad as Earth. If there had been any gravity to speak of, Cornelius would have thought, instinctively, that the great planet was falling on him. As it was, he felt as if sucked upward, his hands were stiff sore where he had grabbed a rail to hold on.

"You live here.. . all alone.. . with this?" He spoke feebly.

"Oh, well, there are some fifty of us all told, pretty congenial," said Viken. "It's not so bad. You sign up for four-cycle hitches—four ship arrivals—and believe it or not, Dr. Cornelius, this is my third enlistment."

The newcomer forbore to inquire more deeply. There was something not quite understandable about the men on Jupiter V. They were mostly bearded, though otherwise careful to remain neat; their low-gravity movements were somehow dreamlike to watch; they hoarded their conversation, as if to stretch it through the year and a month between ships. Their monkish existence had changed them—or did they take what amounted to vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience because they had never felt quite at home on green Earth?

Thirteen months! Cornelius shuddered. It was going to be a long, cold wait, and the pay and bonuses accumulating for him were scant comfort now, four hundred and eighty million miles from the sun.

"Wonderful place to do research," continued Viken. "All the facilities, hand-picked colleagues, no distractions—and, of course.. ." He jerked his thumb at the planet and turned to leave.

Cornelius followed, wallowing awkwardly. "It is very interesting, no doubt," he puffed. "Fascinating. But really, Dr. Viken, to drag me way out here and make me spend a year-plus waiting for the next ship—to do a job which may take me a few weeks.. ."

"Are you sure it's that simple?" asked Viken gently. His face swiveled around, and there was something in his eyes that silenced Cornelius. "After all my time here, I've yet to see any problem, however complicated, which when you looked at it the right way didn't become still more complicated."

They went through the ship's air lock and the tube joining it to the station entrance. Nearly everything was underground. Rooms, laboratories, even halls, had a degree of luxuriousness—why, there was a fireplace with a real fire in the common room! God alone knew *what that* cost! Thinking of the huge chill emptiness where the king planet laired, and of his own year's sentence, Cornelius decided that such

luxuries were, in truth, biological necessities.

Viken showed him to a pleasantly furnished chamber which would be his own. "We'll fetch your luggage soon, and unload your psionic stuff. Right now, everybody's either talking to the ship's crew or reading his mail."

Cornelius nodded absently and sat down. The chair, like all low-gee furniture, was a mere spidery skeleton, but it held his bulk comfortably enough. He felt in his tunic, hoping to bribe the other man into keeping him company for a while. "Cigar? I brought some from Amsterdam."

"Thanks." Viken accepted with disappointing casualness, crossed long, thin legs and blew grayish clouds.

"Ah... are you in charge here?"

"Not exactly. No one is. We do have one administrator, the cook, to handle what little work of that type may come up. Don't forget, this is a research station, first, last, and always."

"What is your field, then?"

Viken frowned. "Don't question anyone else so bluntly, Dr. Cornelius," he warned. "They'd rather spin the gossip out as long as possible with each newcomer. It's a rare treat to have someone whose every last conceivable reaction hasn't been—no, no apologies to me. 'S all right. I'm a physicist, specializing in the solid state at ultra-high pressures." He nodded at the wall. "Plenty of it to be observed— there!"

"I see." Cornelius smoked quietly for a while. Then: "I'm supposed to be the psionics expert, but, frankly, at present I've no idea why your machine should misbehave as reported."

"You mean those, uh, K tubes have a stable output on Earth?"

"And on Luna, Mars, Venus—everywhere, apparently, but here." Cornelius shrugged. "Of course, psibeamers are always persnickety, and sometimes you get an unwanted feedback when—no. I'll get the facts before I theorize. Who are your psimen?"

"Just Anglesey, who's not a formally trained esman at all. But he took it up after he was crippled, and showed such a natural aptitude that he was shipped out here when he volunteered. It's so hard to get anyone for Jupiter V that we aren't fussy about degrees. At that, Ed seems to be operating Joe as well as a Ps.D. could."

"Ah, yes. Your pseudojovian. I'll have to examine that angle pretty carefully, too," said Cornelius. In spite of himself, he was getting interested. "Maybe the trouble comes from something in Joe's bio-chemistry. Who knows? I'll let you into a carefully guarded little secret, Dr. Viken: psionics is not an exact science."

"Neither is physics," grinned the other man. After a moment, he added more soberly: "Not my brand of physics, anyway. I hope to make it exact. That's why I'm here, you know. It's the reason we're all here."

Edward Anglesey was a bit of a shock the first time. He was a head, a pair of arms, and a disconcertingly intense blue stare. The rest of him was mere detail, enclosed in a wheeled machine.

“Biophysicist originally,” Viken had told Cornelius. “Studying at-mospheric spores at Earth Station when he was still a young man— accident, crushed him up, nothing below his chest will ever work again. Snappish type, you have to go slow with him.”

Seated on a wisp of stool in the esprojector control room, Cor-nelius realized that Viken had been soft-pedaling the truth.

Anglesey ate as he talked, gracelessly, letting the chair’s tentacles wipe up after him. “Got to,” he explained. “This stupid place is of-ficially on Earth time, GMT. Jupiter isn’t. I’ve got to be here when-ever Joe wakes, ready to take him over.”

“Couldn’t you have someone spell you?” asked Cornelius.

“Bali!” Anglesey stabbed a piece of prot and waggled it at the other man. Since it was native to him, he could spit out English, the com-mon language of the station, with unmeasured ferocity. “Look here. You ever done therapeutic esping? Not just listening in, or even com-munication, but actual pedagogic control?”

“No, not I. It requires a certain natural talent, like yours.” Cor-nelius smiled. His ingratiating little phrase was swallowed without being noticed by the scored face opposite him. “I take it you mean cases like, oh, re-educating the nervous system of a palsied child?”

“Yes, yes. Good enough example. Has anyone ever tried to sup-press the child’s personality, take him over in the most literal sense?”

“Good God, no!”

“Even as a scientific experiment?” Anglesey grinned. “Has any esprojector operative ever poured on the juice and swamped the child’s brain with his own thoughts? Come on, Cornelius, I won’t snitch on you.”

“Well. . .it’s out of my line, you understand.” The psionist looked carefully away, found a bland meter face and screwed his eyes to that. “I have, uh, heard something about. . .Well, yes, there were attempts made in some pathological cases to, uh, bull through.. .break down the patient’s delusions by sheer force—”

“And it didn’t work,” said Anglesey. He laughed. “Itcan’twork, not even on a child, let alone an adult with a fully developed per-sonality. Why, it took a decade of refinement, didn’t it, before the machine was debugged to the point where a psychiatrist could even ‘listen in’ without the normal variation between his pattern of thought and the patient’s—without that variation setting up an interference scrambling the very thing he wanted to study. The machine has to

make automatic compensations for the differences’ between individ-uals. We stifi can’t bridge the differences between species.

“If someone else is willing to cooperate, you can very gently guide his thinking. And that’s all. If you try to seize control of another brain, a brain with its own background of experience, its own ego, you risk

your very sanity. The other brain will fight back instinctively. A fully developed, matured, hardened human personality is just too complex for outside control. It has too many resources, too much hell the subconscious can call to its defense if its integrity is threat-ened. Blazes, man, we can't even master our own minds, let alone anyone else's!"

Anglesey's cracked-voice tirade broke off. He sat brooding at the instrument panel, tapping the console of his mechanical mother.

"Well?" said Cornelius after a while.

He should not, perhaps, have spoken. But he found it hard to re-main mute. There was too much silence—half a billion miles of it, from here to the sun. If you closed your mouth five minutes at a time, the silence began creeping in like fog.

"Well," giped Anglesey. "So our pseudojovian, Joe, has a physi-cally adult brain. The only reason I can control him is that his brain has never been given a chance to develop its own ego. IamJoe. From the moment he was 'born' into consciousness, I have been there. The psibeam sends me all his sense data and sends him back my motor-nerve impulses. Nevertheless, he has that excellent brain, and its cells are recording every trace of experience, even as yours and mine; his synapses have assumed the topography which is my 'personality pattern.'

"Anyone else, taking him over from me, would find it was like an attempt to oust me myself from my own brain. It couldn't be done. To be sure, he doubtless has only a rudimentary set of Anglesey-memories—I do not, for instance, repeat trigonometric theorems while controlling him—but he has enough to be, potentially, a distinct personality.

"As a matter of fact, whenever he wakes up from sleep—there's usually a lag of a few minutes, while I sense the change through my normal psi faculties and get the amplifying helmet adjusted—I have a bit of a struggle. I feel almost a . . . a resistance until I've brought his mental currents completely into phase with mine. Merely dreaming has been enough of a different experience to- . . ." "Anglesey didn't bother to finish the sentence.

"I see," murmured Cornelius. "Yes, it's clear enough. In fact, it's astonishing that you can have such total contact with a being of such alien metabolism."

"I won't for much longer," said the esman sarcastically, "unless you can correct whatever is burning out those K tubes. I don't have an unlimited supply of spares."

"I have some working hypotheses," said Cornelius, "but there's so little known about psibeam transmission—is the velocity infinite or merely very great, is the beam strength actually independent of dis-tance? How about the possible effects of transmission—oh, through the degenerate matter in the Jovian core? Good Lord, a planet where water is a heavy mineral and hydrogen is a metal! What do we know?"

"We're supposed to find out," snapped Anglesey. "That's what this whole project is for. Knowledge. Bull!" Almost, he spat on the floor. "Apparently what little we have learned doesn't even get through to people. Hydrogen is still a gas where Joe lives. He'd have to dig down a few miles to reach the solid phase. And I'm expected to make a scientific analysis of Jovian conditions!"

Cornelius waited it out, letting Anglesey storm on while he himself turned over the problem of K-tube

oscillation.

“They don’t understand back on Earth. Even here they don’t. Sometimes I think they refuse to understand. Joe’s down there with-out much more than his bare hands. He, I, we started with no more knowledge than that he could probably eat the local life. He has to spend nearly all his time hunting for food. It’s a miracle he’s come as far as he has in these few weeks—made a shelter, grown familiar with the immediate region, begun on metallurgy, hydrurgy, whatever you want to call it. What more do they want me to do, for crying in the beer?”

“Yes, yes,” mumbled Cornelius. “Yes, I.. .“

Anglesey raised his white bony face. Something ifimed over in his eyes.

“What—” began Cornelius.

“Shut up!” Anglesey whipped the chair around, groped for the hel-met, slapped it down over his skull. “Joe’s waking. Get out of here.”

“But if you’ll let me work only while he sleeps, how can I—”

Anglesey snarled and threw a wrench at him. It was a feeble toss, even in low gee. Cornelius backed toward the door. Anglesey was tuning in the esprojector. Suddenly he jerked.

“Cornelius!”

“Whatisit?” The psionistic tried to run back, •overdid it, and skidded in a heap to end up against the panel.

“K tube again.” Anglesey yanked off the helmet. It must have hurt like blazes, having a mental squeal build up uncontrolled and am-plified in your own brain, but he said merely: “Change it for me. Fast. And then get out and leave me alone. Joe didn’t wake up of himself. Something crawled into the dugout with me—I’m in trouble down there!”

It had been a hard day’s work, and Joe slept heavily. He did not wake until the hands closed on his throat.

For a moment then he knew only a crazy smothering wave of panic. He thought he was back on Earth Station, floating in null gee at the end of a cable while a thousand frosty stars haloed the planet before him. He thought the great I beam had broken from its moorings and started toward him, slowly, but with all the inertia of its cold tons, spinning and shimmering in the Earthlight, and the only sound him-self screaming and screaming in his helmet trying to break from the cable the beam nudged him ever so gently but it kept on moving he moved with it he was crushed against the station wall nuzzled into it his mangled suit frothed as it tried to seal its wounded self there was blood mingled with the foam his bloodJoe roared.

His convulsive reaction tore the hands off his neck and sent a black shape spinning across the dugout. It struck the wall, thunderously, and the lamp fell to the floor and went out.

Joe stood in darkness, breathing hard, aware in a vague fashion that the wind had died from a shriek to a low snarling while he slept.

The thing he had tossed away mumbled in pain and crawled along the wall. Joe felt through lightlessness after his club.

Something else scabbled. The tunnel! They were coming through the tunnel! Joe groped blind to meet them. His heart drummed thickly and his nose drank an alien stench.

The thing that emerged, as Joe's hands closed on it, was only about half his size, but it had six monstrously taloned feet and a pair of three-fingered hands that reached after his eyes. Joe cursed, lifted it while it writhed, and dashed it to the floor. It screamed, and he heard bones splinter.

"Come on, then!" Joe arched his back and spat at them, like a tiger menaced by giant caterpillars.

They flowed through his tunnel and into the room, a dozen of

them entered while he wrestled one that had curled itself around his shoulders and anchored its sinuous body with claws. They pulled at his legs, trying to crawl up on his back. He struck out with claws of his own, with his tail, rolled over and went down beneath a heap of them and stood up with the heap still clinging to him.

They swayed in darkness. The legged seething of them struck the dugout wall. It shivered, a rafter cracked, the roof came down. Anglesey stood in a pit, among broken ice plates, under the wan light of a sinking Ganymede.

He could see now that the monsters were black in color and that they had heads big enough to accommodate some brain, less than human but probably more than apes. There were a score of them or so, they struggled from beneath the wreckage and flowed at him with the same shrieking malice.

Why?

Baboon reaction, thought Anglesey somewhere in the back of him-self. See the stranger, fear the stranger, hate the stranger, kill the stranger. His chest heaved, pumping air through a raw throat. He yanked a whole rafter to him, snapped it in half, and twirled the iron-hard wood.

The nearest creature got its head bashed in. The next had its back broken. The third was hurled with shattered ribs into a fourth, they went down together. Joe began to laugh. It was getting to be fun.

"Yee-ow! Ti-i-i-iger!" He ran across the icy ground, toward the pack. They scattered, howling. He hunted them until the last one had vanished into the forest.

Panting, Joe looked at the dead. He himself was bleeding, he ached, he was cold and hungry and his shelter had been wrecked—but he'd whipped them! He had a sudden impulse to beat his chest and howl. For a moment he hesitated. Why not? Anglesey threw back his head and bayed victory at the dim shield of Ganymede.

Thereafter he went to work. First build a fire, in the lee of the spaceship—which was little more by now than a hill of corrosion. The monster pack cried in darkness and the broken ground, they had not given up on him, they would return.

He tore a haunch off one of the slain and took a bite. Pretty good. Better yet if properly cooked. Heh! They'd made a big mistake in caffing his attention to their existence! He finished breakfast while Ganymede slipped under the western ice mountains. It would be morning soon. The air was almost still, and a flock of pancake-shaped

sky-skimmers, as Anglesey called them, went overhead, burnished copper color in the first pale dawn streaks.

Joe rummaged in the ruins of his hut until he had recovered the water-smelting equipment. It wasn't harmed. That was the first order of business, melt some ice and cast it in the molds of ax, knife, saw, hammer he had painfully prepared. Under Jovian conditions, methane was a liquid that you drank and water was a dense hard mineral. It would make good tools. Later on he would try alloying it with other materials.

Next—yes. To hell with the dugout, he could sleep in the open again for a while. Make a bow, set traps, be ready to massacre the black caterpifiars when they attacked him again. There was a chasm not far from here, going down a long way toward the bitter cold of the metaffic-hydrogen strata: a natural icebox, a place to store the several weeks' worth of meat his enemies would supply. This would give him leisure to— Oh, a hell of a lot!

Joe laughed exultantly and lay down to watch the sunrise.

It struck him afresh how lovely a place this was. See how the small briffiant spark of the sun swam up out of eastern fog banks colored dusky purple and veined with rose and gold; see how the light strengthened until the great hollow arch of the sky became one shout of radiance; see how the light spilled warm and living over a broad fair land, the million square miles of rustling low forests and wave-blinking lakes and feather-plumed hydrogen geysers; and see, see, see how the ice mountains of the west flashed like blued steel!

Anglesey drew the wild morning wind deep into his lungs and shouted with a boy's joy.

"I'm not a biologist myself," said Viken carefully. "But maybe for that reason I can better give you the general picture. Then Lopez or Matsumoto can answer any questions of detail."

"Excellent." Cornelius nodded. "Why don't you assume I am to-tally ignorant of this project? I very nearly am, you know."

"If you wish," laughed Viken.

They stood in an outer office of the xenobiology section. No one else was around, for the station's clocks said 1730 GMT and there was only one shift. No point in having more, until Anglesey's half of the enterprise had actually begun gathering quantitative data.

The physicist bent over and took a paperweight off a desk. "One of

the boys made this for fun," he said, "but it's a pretty good model of Joe. He stands about five feet tall at

the head.”

Cornelius turned the plastic image over in his hands. If you could imagine such a thing as a feline centaur with a thick prehensile tail

-The torso was squat, long-armed, immensely muscular; the hairless head was round, wide-nosed, with big deep-set eyes and heavy jaws, but it was really quite a human face. The over-all color was bluish gray.

“Male, I see,” he remarked.

“Of course. Perhaps you don’t understand. Joe is the complete pseudojovian—as far as we can tell, the final model, with all the bugs worked out. He’s the answer to a research question that took fifty years to ask.” Viken looked sidewise at Cornelius. “So you realize the importance of your job, don’t you?”

“I’ll do my best,” said the psionist. “But if . . . well, let’s say that tube failure or something causes you to lose Joe before I’ve solved the oscillation problem. You do have other pseudos in re-serve, don’t you?”

“Oh, yes,” said Viken moodily. “But the cost.. -We’re not on an unlimited budget. We do go through a lot of money, because it’s expensive to stand up and sneeze this far from Earth. But for that same reason our margin is slim.”

He jammed hands in pockets and slouched toward the inner door, the laboratories, head down and talking in a low, hurried voice. “Perhaps you don’t realize what a nightmare planet Jupiter is. Not just the surface gravity—a shade under three gees, what’s that?—but the gravitational potential, ten times Earth’s. The temperature. The pressure. Above all, the atmosphere, and the storms, and the darkness!

“When a spaceship goes down to the Jovian surface, it’s a radio-controlled job; it leaks like a sieve, to equalize pressure, but otherwise it’s the sturdiest, most utterly powerful model ever designed; it’s loaded with every instrument, every servomechanism, every safety device the human mind has yet thought up to protect a million-dollar hunk of precision equipment. And what happens? Half the ships never reach the surface at all. A storm snatches them and throws them away, or they collide with a floating chunk of Ice Seven—small version of the Red Spot—or, so help me, what passes for a flock of birdsrams one and stoves it in! As for the fifty per cent which do land, it’s a one-way trip. We don’t even try to bring them back. If the stresses coming down haven’t sprung something, the corrosion has

doomed them anyway. Hydrogen at Jovian pressure does funny things to metals.

“It cost a total of about five million dollars to set Joe, one pseudo, down there. Each pseudo to follow will cost, if we’re lucky, a couple of million more.”

Viken kicked open the door and led the way through. Beyond was a big room, low-ceilinged, coldly lit and murmurous with ventilators. It reminded Cornelius of a nucleonics lab; for a moment he wasn’t sure why, then he recognized the intricacies of remote control, remote observation, walls enclosing forces which could destroy the entire moon.

“These are required by the pressure, of course,” said Viken, pointing to a row of shields. “And the cold. And the hydrogen itself, as a minor hazard. We have units here duplicating conditions in the Jovian, uh, stratosphere. This is where the whole project really began.”

“I’ve heard something about that. Didn’t you scoop up airborne spores?”

“Not I.” Viken chuckled. “Totti’s crew did, about fifty years ago. Proved there was life on Jupiter. A life using liquid methane as its basic solvent, solid ammonia as a starting point for nitrate synthesis:

the plants use solar energy to build unsaturated carbon compounds, releasing hydrogen; the animals eat the plants and reduce those compounds again to the saturated form. There is even an equivalent of combustion. The reactions involve complex enzymes and—well, it’s out of my line.”

“Jovian biochemistry is pretty well understood, then.”

“Oh, yes. Even in Totti’s day they had a highly developed biotic technology: Earth bacteria had already been synthesized and most gene structures pretty well mapped. The only reason it took so long to diagram Jovian life processes was the technical difficulty, high pressure and so on.”

“When did you actually get a look at Jupiter’s surface?”

“Gray managed that, about thirty years ago. Set a television ship down, a ship that lasted long enough to flash him quite a series of pictures. Since then, the technique has improved. We know that Jupiter is crawling with its own weird kind of life, probably more fertile than Earth. Extrapolating from the airborne micro-organisms, our team made trial syntheses of metazoans and—”

Viken sighed. “Damn it, if only there were intelligent native life! Think what they could tell us, Cornelius, the data, the—just think back

how far we’ve gone since Lavoisier, with the low-pressure chemistry of Earth. Here’s a chance to learn a high-pressure chemistry and physics at least as rich with possibilities!”

After a moment, Cornelius murmured slyly, “Are you certain there aren’t any Jovians?”

“Oh, sure, there could be several billion of them.” Viken shrugged. “Cities, empires, anything you like. Jupiter has the surface area of a hundred Earths, and we’ve only seen maybe a dozen small regions. But we do know there aren’t any Jovians using radio. Considering their atmosphere, it’s unlikely they ever would invent it for themselves—imagine how thick a vacuum tube has to be, how strong a pump you need! So it was finally decided we’d better make our own Jovians.”

Cornelius followed him through the lab into another room. This was less cluttered, it had a more finished appearance; the experimenter’s haywire rig had yielded to the assured precision of an engineer.

Viken went over to one of the panels which lined the walls and looked at its gauges. “Beyond this lies another pseudo,” he said. “Female, in this instance. She’s at a pressure of two hundred atmospheres and a temperature of 194 absolute. There’s a . . . an umbilical arrangement, I guess you’d call it, to keep her alive. She was grown to adulthood in this, uh, fetal stage—we patterned our Jovians after the terrestrial mammal. She’s never been conscious, she won’t ever be till she’s ‘born.’ We have a total of twenty males and sixty females waiting here. We can count on about half reaching the surface. More can be created as required. It isn’t the pseudos that are so expensive, it’s their transportation. So Joe is down there alone till we’re sure that his kind can survive.”

“I take it you experimented with lower forms first,” said Cornelius.

“Of course. It took twenty years, even with forced-catalysis techniques, to work from an artificial airborne spore to Joe. We’ve used the psibeam to control everything from pseudo insects on up. Inter-species control is possible, you know, if your puppet’s nervous system is deliberately designed for it and isn’t given a chance to grow into a pattern different from the esman’s.”

“And Joe is the first specimen who’s given trouble?”

“Yes.”

“Scratch one hypothesis.” Cornelius sat down on a workbench,

dangling thick legs and running a hand through thin sandy hair. “I thought maybe some physical effect of Jupiter was responsible. Now it looks as if the difficulty is with Joe himself.”

“We’ve all suspected that much,” said Viken. He struck a cigarette and sucked in his cheeks around the smoke. His eyes were gloomy. “Hard to see how. The biotics engineers tell me Pseudocentaurussapiens has been more carefully designed than any product of natural evolution.”

“Even the brain?”

“Yes. It’s patterned directly on the human, to make psibeam control possible, but there are improvements—greater stability.”

“There are still the psychological aspects, though,” said Cornelius. “In spite of all our amplifiers and other fancy gadgets, psi is essentially a branch of psychology, even today—or maybe it’s the other way around. Let’s consider traumatic experiences. I take it the . . . the adult Jovian fetus has a rough trip going down?”

“The ship does,” said Viken. “Not the pseudo itself, which is wrapped up in fluid just like you were before birth.”

“Nevertheless,” said Cornelius, “the two-hundred-atmospheres pressure here is not the same as whatever unthinkable pressure exists down on Jupiter. Could the change be injurious?”

Viken gave him a look of respect. “Not likely,” he answered. “I told you the J ships are designed leaky. External pressure is transmitted to the, uh, uterine mechanism through a series of diaphragms, in a gradual fashion. It takes hours to make the descent, you realize.”

“Well, what happens next?” went on Cornelius. “The ship lands, the uterine mechanism opens, the umbilical connection disengages, and Joe is, shall we say, born. But he has an adult brain. He is not protected by the only half-developed infant brain from the shock of sudden awareness.”

“We thought of that,” said Viken. “Anglesey was on the psibeam, in phase with Joe, when the ship left this moon. So it wasn’t really Joe who emerged, who perceived. Joe has never been much more than a biological waldo. He can only suffer mental shock to the extent that Ed does, because it is Ed down there!”

“As you will,” said Cornelius. “Still, you didn’t plan for a race of puppets, did you?”

“Oh, heavens, no,” said Viken. “Out of the question. Once we know Joe is well established, we’ll import a few more esmen and get him some assistance in the form of other pseudos. Eventually fe-

males will be sent down, and uncontrolled males, to be educated by the puppets. A new generation will be born normally—well, anyhow, the ultimate aim is a small civilization of Jovians. There will be hunters, miners, artisans, farmers, housewives, the works. They will support a few key members, a kind of priesthood. And that priesthood will be esp-controlled, as Joe is. It will exist solely to make instruments, take readings, perform experiments, and tell us what we want to know!”

Cornelius nodded. In a general way, this was the Jovian project as he had understood it. He could appreciate the importance of his own assignment.

Only, he still had no clue to the cause of that positive feedback in the K tubes.

And what could he do about it?

His hands were stiff and bruised. Oh God, he thought with a groan, for the hundredth time, does it affect me that much? While Joe was fighting down there, did I really hammer my fists on metal up here?

His eyes smoldered across the room, to the bench where Cornelius worked. He didn't like Cornelius, fat cigar-sucking slob, interminably talking and talking. He had about given up trying to be civil to the Earthworm.

The psionicist laid down a screwdriver and flexed cramped fingers. “Whuff!” He smiled. “I'm going to take a break.”

The half-assembled esprojector made a gaunt backdrop for his wide soft body, where it squatted toad fashion on the bench. Anglesey detested the whole idea of anyone sharing this room, even for a few hours a day. Of late he had been demanding his meals brought here, left outside the door of his adjoining bedroom-bath. He had not gone beyond for quite some time now.

And why should I?

“Couldn't you hurry it up a little?” snapped Anglesey.

Cornelius flushed. “If you'd had an assembled spare machine, instead of loose parts—” he began. Shrugging, he took out a cigar stub and relit it carefully; his supply had to last a long time. Anglesey wondered if those stinking clouds were blown from his mouth of malicious purpose. I don't like you, Mr. Earthman Cornelius, and it is doubtless quite mutual.

“There was no obvious need for one, until the other esmen arrive,”

said Anglesey in a sullen voice. “And the testing instruments report this one in perfectly good order.”

“Nevertheless,” said Cornelius, “at irregular intervals it goes into wild oscillations which burn out the K tube. The problem is why. I'll have you try out this new machine as soon as it is ready, but, frankly, I don't believe the trouble lies in electronic failure at all—or even in unsuspected physical effects.”

“Where, then?” Anglesey felt more at ease as the discussion grew purely technical.

“Well, look. What exactly is the K tube? It’s the heart of the espro-jector. It amplifies your natural psionic pulses, uses them to modulate the carrier wave, and shoots the whole beam down at Joe. It also picks up Joe’s resonating impulses and amplifies them for your bene-fit. Everything else is auxiliary to the K tube.”

“Spare me the lecture,” snarled Anglesey.

“I was only rehearsing the obvious,” said Cornelius, “because every now and then it is the obvious answer which is hardest to see. Maybe it isn’t the K tube which is misbehaving. Maybe it is you.”

“What?” The white face gaped at him. A dawning rage crept across its thin bones.

“Nothing personal intended,” said Cornelius hastily. “But you know what a tricky beast the subconscious is. Suppose, just as a working hypothesis, that way down underneath, you don’t want to be on Jupiter. I imagine it is a rather terrifying environment. Or there may be some obscure Freudian element involved. Or, quite simply and naturally, your subconscious may fail to understand that Joe’s death does not entail your own.”

“Um-m-m.” Mirabile dictu, Anglesey remained calm. He rubbed his chin with one skeletal hand. “Can you be more explicit?”

“Only in a rough way,” replied Cornelius. “Your conscious mind sends a motor impulse along the psibeam to Joe. Simultaneously, your subconscious mind, being scared of the whole business, emits the glandular-vascular-cardiac-visceral impulses associated with fear. These react on Joe, whose tension is transmitted back along the beam. Feeling Joe’s somatic fear symptoms, your subconscious gets still more worried, thereby increasing the symptoms. Get it? It’s exactly similar to ordinary neurasthenia, with this exception, that since there is a powerful amplifier, the K tube, involved, the oscillations can build up uncontrollably within a second or two. You

should be thankful the tube does burn out—otherwise your brain might do so!”

For a moment Anglesey was quiet. Then he laughed. It was a hard, barbaric laughter. Cornelius started as it struck his eardrums.

“Nice idea,” said the esman. “But I’m afraid it won’t fit all the data. You see, I like it down there. I like being Joe.”

He paused for a while, then continued in a dry impersonal tone:

“Don’t judge the environment from my notes. They’re just idiotic things like estimates of wind velocity, temperature variations, mineral properties—insignificant. What I can’t put in is how Jupiter looks through a Jovian’s infrared-seeing eyes.”

“Different, I should think,” ventured Cornelius after a minute’s clumsy silence.

“Yes and no. It’s hard to put into language. Some of it I can’t, because man hasn’t got the concepts. But . . . oh, I can’t describe

it. Shakespeare himself couldn’t. Just remember that everything about Jupiter which is cold and

poisonous and gloomy to us *isright* for Joe.”

Anglesey’s tone grew remote, as if he spoke to himself. “Imagine walking under a glowing violet sky, where great flashing clouds sweep the earth with shadow and rain strides beneath them. Imagine walking on the slopes of a mountain like polished metal, with a clean red flame exploding above you and thunder laughing in the ground. Imag-ine a cool wild stream, and low trees with dark coppery flowers, and a waterfall—methanefall, whatever you like—leaping off a cliff, and the strong live wind shakes its mane full of rainbows! Imagine a whole forest, dark and breathing, and here and there you glimpse a pale-red wavering will-o’-the-wisp, which is the life radiation of some fleet, shy animal, and.. .and.. .”

Anglesey croaked into silence. He stared down at his clenched fists, then he closed his eyestightand tears ran out between the lids. “Imagine beingstrong!”

Suddenly he snatched up the helmet, crammed it on his head and twirled the control knobs. Joe had been sleeping, down in the night, but Joe was about to wake up and—roar under the four great moons till all the forest feared him?

Cornelius slipped quietly out of the room.

In the long brazen sunset light, beneath dusky cloud banks brood-ing storm, he strode up the hill slope with a sense of day’s work done.

Across his back, two woven baskets balanced each other, one laden with the pungent black fruit of the thorn tree and one with cable-thick creepers to be used as rope. The ax on his shoulder caught the waning sunlight and tossed it blindingly back.

It had not been hard labor, but weariness dragged at his mind and he did not relish the household chores yet to be performed, cooking and cleaning and all the rest. Why couldn’t they hurry up and get him some helpers?

His eyes sought the sky resentfully. Moon Five was hidden; down here, at the bottom of the air ocean, you saw nothing but the sun and the four Galilean satellites. He wasn’t even sure where Five was just now, in relation to himself. Wait a minute, it’s sunsethere, but i/I went out to the viewdome i’d see Jupiter in the last quarter, or would 1, oh, hell, it only takes us half an Earthdayto swingaround theplanet anyhow—Joe shook his head. After all this time, it was stifi damnably hard,

now and then, to keep his thoughts straight. I, the essential I, am up in heaven, riding Jupiter Five between cold stars. Rememberthat. Open your eyes, if you will, and seethedead control room super-imposed on a living hillside.

He didn’t, though. Instead, he regarded the boulders strewn wind-blasted gray over the tough mossy vegetation of the slope. They were not much like Earth rocks, nor was the soil beneath his feet like ter-restrial humus.

For a moment Anglesey speculated on the origin of the silicates, aluminates, and other stony compounds. Theoretically, all such ma-terials should be inaccessiblely locked in the Jovian core, down where the pressure got vast enough for atoms to buckle and collapse. Above the core should lie thousands of miles of allotropic ice, and then the metallic-hydrogen layer. There should not be complex minerals this far up,

but there were.

Well, possibly Jupiter had formed according to theory, but had thereafter sucked enough cosmic dust, meteors, gases and vapors down its great throat of gravitation to form a crust several miles thick. Or more likely the theory was altogether wrong. What did they know, what could they know, the soft pale worms of Earth?

Anglesey stuck his—Joe's—fingers in his mouth and whistled. A baying sounded in the brush, and two midnight forms leaped toward him. He grinned and stroked their heads; training was progressing faster than he'd hoped, with these pups of the black caterpillar beasts

he had taken. They would make guardians for him, herders, servants. On the crest of the hill, Joe was building himself a home. He had

logged off an acre of ground and erected a stockade. Within the grounds there now stood a lean-to for himself and his stores, a methane well, and the beginnings of a large, comfortable cabin.

But there was too much work for one being. Even with the half-intelligent caterpillars to help, and with cold storage for meat, most of his time would still go to hunting. The game wouldn't last forever, either; he had to start agriculture within the next year or so—Jupiter year, twelve Earth years, thought Anglesey. There was the cabin to finish and furnish; he wanted to put a waterwheel, no, methane wheel, in the river to turn any of a dozen machines he had in mind, he wanted to experiment with alloyed ice and— And, quite apart from his need of help, why should he remain

alone, the single thinking creature on an entire planet? He was a male in this body, with male instincts—in the long run, his health was bound to suffer if he remained a hermit, and right now the whole project depended on Joe's health.

It wasn't right!

But I am not alone. There are fifty men on the satellite with me. I can talk to any of them, anytime I wish. It's only that I seldom wish it, these days. I would rather be Joe.

Nevertheless. . . I, the cripple, feel all the tiredness, anger, hurt, frustration, of that wonderful biological machine called Joe. The others don't understand. When the ammonia gale flays open his skin, it is! who bleed.

Joe lay down on the ground, sighing. Fangs flashed in the mouth of the black beast which humped over to lick his face. His belly growled with hunger, but he was too tired to fix a meal. Once he had the dogs trained.

Another pseudo would be so much more rewarding to educate.

He could almost see it, in the weary darkening of his brain. Down there, in the valley below the hifi, fire and thunder as the ship came to rest. And the steel egg would crack open, the steel arms—already crumbling, puny work of worms!—lift out the shape within and lay it on the earth.

She would stir, shrieking in her first lungful of air, looking about with blank mindless eyes. And Joe would come and carry her home. And he would feed her, care for her, show her how to walk—it wouldn't take long, an adult body would learn those things very fast.

In a few weeks she would even be talking, be an individual, a soul. Did you ever think, Edward Anglesey, in the days when you also

walked, that your wife would be a gray four-legged monster?

Never mind that. The important thing was to get others of his kind down here, female *and* male. The station's niggling little plan would have him wait two more Earth years, and then send him only another dummy like himself, a contemptible human mind looking through eyes which belonged rightfully to a Jovian. It was not to be tolerated!

If he weren't so tired.

Joe sat up. Sleep drained from him as the realization entered. He wasn't tired, not to speak of. Anglesey was. Anglesey, the human side of him, who for months had slept only in cat naps, whose rest had lately been interrupted by Cornelius—it was the human body which drooped, gave up, and sent wave after soft wave of sleep down the psibeam to Joe.

Somatic tension traveled skyward; Anglesey jerked awake.

He swore. As he sat there beneath the helmet, the vividness of Jupiter faded with his scattering concentration, as if it grew transparent; the steel prison which was his laboratory strengthened behind it. He was losing contact. Rapidly, with the skiff of experience, he brought himself back into phase with the neural currents of the other brain. He willed sleepiness on Joe, exactly as a man wills it on himself.

And, like any other insomniac, he failed. The Joe body was too hungry. It got up and walked across the compound toward its shack.

The K tube went wild and blew itself out.

The night before the ships left, Viken and Cornelius sat up late.

It was not truly a night, of course. In twelve hours the tiny moon was hurled clear around Jupiter, from darkness back to darkness, and there might well be a pallid little sun over its crags when the clocks said witches were abroad in Greenwich. But most of the personnel were asleep at this hour.

Viken scowled. "I don't like it," he said. "Too sudden a change of plans. Too big a gamble."

"You are only risking—how many?—three male and a dozen female pseudos," Cornelius replied.

"And fifteen J ships. All we have. If Anglesey's notion doesn't work, it will be months, a year or more, till we can have others built and resume aerial survey."

"But if it does work," said Cornelius, "you won't need any I ships, except to carry down more pseudos. You will be too busy evaluating data from the surface to piddle around in the upper atmosphere."

"Of course. But we never expected it so soon. We were going to bring more esmen out here, to operate

some more pseudos—”

“But they aren’t needed,” said Cornelius. He struck a cigar to life and took a long pull on it, while his mind sought carefully for words. “Not for a while, anyhow. Joe has reached a point where, given help, he can leap several thousand years of history—he may even have a radio of sorts operating in the fairly near future, which would eliminate the necessity of much of your esping. But without help, he’ll just have to mark time. And it’s stupid to make a highly trained human esman perform manual labor, which is all that the other pseudos are needed for at this moment. Once the Jovian settlement is well established, certainly, then you can send down more puppets.”

“The question is, though,” persisted Viken, “can Anglesey himself educate all those pseudos at once? They’ll be helpless as infants for days. It will be weeks before they really start thinking and acting for themselves. Can Joe take care of them meanwhile?”

“He has food and fuel stored for months ahead,” said Cornelius. “As for what Joe’s capabilities are—well, hm-m-m, we just have to take Anglesey’s judgment. He has the only inside information.”

“And once those Jovians do become personalities,” worried Viken, “are they necessarily going to string along with Joe? Don’t forget, the pseudos are not carbon copies of each other. The uncer-tainty principle assures each one a unique set of genes. If there is only one human mind on Jupiter, among all those aliens—”

“Onehuman mind?” It was barely audible. Viken opened his mouth inquiringly. The other man hurried on.

“Oh, I’m sure Anglesey can continue to dominate them,” said Cornelius. “His own personality is rather—tremendous.”

Viken looked startled. “You really think so?”

The psionicist nodded. “Yes. I’ve seen more of him in the past weeks than anyone else. And my profession naturally orients me more toward a man’s psychology than his body or his habits. You see a waspish cripple. I see a mind which has reacted to its physical handicaps by developing such a hellish energy, such an inhuman power of concentration, that it almost frightens me. Give that mind a sound body for its use and nothing is impossible to it.”

“You may be right, at that,” murmured Viken after a pause. “Not

that it matters. The decision is taken, the rockets go down tomorrow. I hope it all works out.”

He waited for another while. The whirring of ventilators in his little room seemed unnaturally loud, the colors of a girlie picture on the wall shockingly garish. Then he said slowly, “You’ve been rather close-mouthed yourself, Jan. When do you expect to finish your own esprojector and start making the tests?”

Cornelius looked around. The door stood open to an empty hall-way, but he reached out and closed it before he answered with a slight grin, “It’s been ready for the past few days. But don’t tell any-one.”

“How’s that?” Viken started. The movement, in low gee, took him out of his chair and halfway across the table between the men. He shoved himself back and waited.

“I have been making meaningless tinkering motions,” said Cornelius, “but what I waited for was a highly emotional moment, a time when I can be sure Anglesey’s entire attention will be focused on Joe. This business tomorrow is exactly what I need.”

“Why?”

“You see, I have pretty well convinced myself that the trouble in the machine is psychological, not physical. I think that for some reason, buried in his subconscious, Anglesey doesn’t want to experience Jupiter. A conflict of that type might well set a psionic-amplifier circuit oscillating.”

“Hm-m-m.” Viken rubbed his chin. “Could be. Lately Ed has been changing more and more. When he first came here, he was peppery enough, and he would at least play an occasional game of poker. Now he’s pulled so far into his shell you can’t even see him. I never thought of it before, but. . .yes, by God, Jupiter must be having some effect on him.”

“Hm-m-m.” Cornelius nodded. He did not elaborate—did not, for instance, mention that one altogether uncharacteristic episode when Anglesey had tried to describe what it was like to be a Jovian.

“Of course,” said Viken thoughtfully, “the previous men were not affected especially. Nor was Ed at first, while he was still contorting lower-type pseudos. It’s only since Joe went down to the surface that he’s become so different.”

“Yes, yes,” said Cornelius hastily. “I’ve learned that much. But enough shop talk—”

“No. Wait a minute.” Viken spoke in a low, hurried tone, looking

past him. “For the first time, I’m starting to think clearly about this. Never really stopped to analyze it before, just accepted a bad situation. There is something peculiar about Joe. It can’t very well involve his physical structure, or the environment, because lower forms didn’t give this trouble. Could it be the fact that Joe is the first puppet in all history with a potentially human intelligence?”

“We speculate in a vacuum,” said Cornelius. “Tomorrow, maybe, I can tell you. Now I know nothing.”

Viken sat up straight. His pale eyes focused on the other man and stayed there, unblinking. “One minute,” he said.

“Yes?” Cornelius shifted, half rising. “Quickly, please. It is past my bedtime.”

“You know a good deal more than you’ve admitted,” said Viken. “Don’t you?”

“What makes you think that?”

“You aren’t the most gifted liar in the universe. And then, you argued very strongly for Anglesey’s scheme, this sending down the other pseudos. More strongly than a newcomer should.”

“I told you, I want his attention focused elsewhere when—”

“Do you want it that badly?” snapped Viken.

Cornelius was still for a minute. Then he sighed and leaned back.

“All right,” he said. “I shall have to trust your discretion. I wasn’t sure, you see, how any of you old-time station personnel would re-act. So I didn’t want to blabber out my speculations, which may be wrong. The confirmed facts, yes, I will tell them; but I don’t wish to attack a man’s religion with a mere theory.”

Viken scowled. “What the devil do you mean?”

Cornelius puffed hard on his cigar; its tip waxed and waned like a miniature red demon star. “This Jupiter Five is more than a research station,” he said gently. “It is a way of life, is it not? No one would come here for even one hitch unless the work was important to him. Those who re-enlist, they must find something in the work, some-thing which Earth with all her riches cannot offer them. No?”

“Yes,” answered Viken. It was almost a whisper. “I didn’t think you would understand so well. But what of it?”

“Well, I don’t want to tell you, unless I can prove it, that maybe this has all gone for nothing. Maybe you have wasted your lives and a lot of money, and will have to pack up and go home.”

Viken’s long face did not flicker a muscle. It seemed to have con-gealed. But he said calmly enough, “Why?”

“Consider Joe,” said Cornelius. “His brain has as much capacity as any adult human’s. It has been recording every sense datum that came to it, from the moment of ‘birth’—maldng a record in itself, in its own cells, not merely in Anglesey’s physical memory bank up here. Also, you know, a thought is a sense datum, too. And thoughts are not separated into neat little railway tracks; they form a continu-ous field. Every time Anglesey is in rapport with Joe, and thinks, the thought goes through Joe’s synapses as well as his own—and every thought carries its own associations, and every associated memory is recorded. Like if Joe is building a hut, the shape of the logs might remind Anglesey of some geometric figure, which in turn would re-mind him of the Pythagorean theorem—”

“I get the idea,” said Viken in a cautious way. “Given time, Joe’s brain will have stored everything that ever was in Ed’s.”

“Correct. Now, a functioning nervous system with an engrammatic pattern of experience, in this case a nonhumannervous system—isn’t that a pretty good definition of a personality?”

“I suppose so, Good Lord!” Viken jumped. “You mean Joe is— taking over?”

“In a way. A subtle, automatic, unconscious way.” Cornelius drew a deep breath and plunged into it. “The pseudojovian is so nearly perfect a life-form: your biologists engineered into it all the ex-perience gained from nature’s mistakes in designingus. At first, Joe was only a remote-controlled biological machine. Then Anglesey and Joe became two facets of a single personality. Then, oh, very slowly, the stronger, healthier body.. .more amplitude to its thoughts.

do you see? Joe is becoming the dominant side. Like this business of sending down the other pseudos—Anglesey only thinks he has logical reasons for wanting it done. Actually, his ‘reasons’ are mere ration-alizations for the instinctive desires of the Joe facet.

“Anglesey’s subconscious must comprehend the situation, in a dim reactive way; it must feel his human

ego gradually being submerged by the steamroller force of Joe's instincts and Joe's wishes. It tries to defend its own identity, and is swatted down by the superior force of Joe's own nascent subconscious.

"I put it crudely," he finished in an apologetic tone, "but it will account for that ossification in the K tubes."

Viken nodded, slowly, like an old man. "Yes, I see it," he answered. "The alien environment down there. . . the different brain

structure... . Good God! Ed's being swallowed up in Joe! The puppet master is becoming the puppet!" He looked ifi.

"Only speculation on my part," said Cornelius. All at once, he felt very tired. It was not pleasant to do this to Viken, whom he liked. "But you see the dilemma, no? If I am right, then any esman will gradually become a Jovian—a monster with two bodies, of which the human body is the unimportant auxiliary one. This means no esman will ever agree to control a pseudo—therefore, the end of your project."

He stood up. "I'm sorry, Arne. You made me tell you what I think, and now you will lie awake worrying, and I am maybe quite wrong and you worry for nothing."

"It's all right," mumbled Viken. "Maybe you're not wrong."

"I don't know." Cornelius drifted toward the door. "I am going to try to find some answers tomorrow. Good night."

The moon-shaking thunder of the rockets, crash, crash, crash, leaping from their cradles, was long past. Now the fleet glided on metal wings, with straining secondary ram-jets, through the rage of the Jovian sky.

As Cornelius opened the control-room door, he looked at his tell-tale board. Elsewhere a voice tolled the word to all the stations, One ship wrecked, two ships wrecked, but Anglesey would let no sound enter his presence when he wore the helmet. An obliging technician had haywired a panel of fifteen red and fifteen blue lights above Cornelius' esprojector, to keep him informed, too. Ostensibly, of course, they were only there for Anglesey's benefit, though the esman had insisted he wouldn't be looking at them.

Four of the red bulbs were dark and thus four blue ones would not shine for a safe landing. A whirlwind, a thunderbolt, a floating ice meteor, a flock of mantalike birds with flesh as dense and hard as iron—there could be a hundred things which had crumpled four ships and tossed them tattered across the poison forests.

Four ships, hell! Think of four living creatures, with an excellence of brain to rival your own, damned first to years in unconscious night and then, never awakening save for one uncomprehending instant, dashed in bloody splinters against an ice mountain. The wasteful callousness of it was a cold knot in Cornelius' belly. It had to be done, no doubt, if there was to be any thinking life on Jupiter at all; but then

let it be done quickly and minimally, he thought, so that the next generation could be begotten by love and not by machines!

He closed the door behind him and waited for a breathless moment. Anglesey was a wheel chair and a coppery curve of helmet, facing the opposite wall. No movement, no awareness whatsoever. Good! It would be awkward, perhaps ruinous, if Anglesey learned of this most intimate peering. But he needn't, ever. He was blind-folded and ear-plugged by his own concentration.

Nevertheless, the psionist moved his bulky form with care, across the room to the new esprojector. He did not much like his snooper's role, he would not have assumed it at all if he had seen any other hope. But neither did it make him feel especially guilty. If what he suspected was true, then Anglesey was all unawares being twisted into some-thing not human; to spy on him might be to save him.

Gently, Cornelius activated the meters and started his tubes warm-ing up. The oscilloscope built into Anglesey's machine gave him the other man's exact alpha rhythm, his basic biological clock. First you adjusted to that, then you discovered the subtler elements by feel, and when your set was fully in phase you could probe undetected and— Find out what was wrong. Read Anglesey's tortured subconscious

and see what there was on Jupiter that both drew and terrified him. Five ships wrecked.

But it must be very nearly time for them to land. Maybe only five would be lost in all. Maybe ten would get through. Ten comrades for—Joe?

Cornelius sighed. He looked at the cripple, seated blind and deaf to the human world which had crippled him, and felt a pity and an anger. It wasn't fair, none of it was.

Not even to Joe. Joe wasn't any kind of soul-eating devil. He did not even realize, as yet, that he *was* Joe, that Anglesey was becoming a mere appendage. He hadn't asked to be created, and to withdraw his human counterpart from him would very likely be to destroy him.

Somehow, there were always penalties for everybody when men exceeded the decent limits.

Cornelius swore at himself, voicelessly. Work to do. He sat down and fitted the helmet on his own head. The carrier wave made a faint pulse, inaudible, the trembling of neurones low in his awareness. You couldn't describe it.

Reaching up, he turned to Anglesey's alpha. His own had a some-

what lower frequency, it was necessary to carry the signals through a heterodyning process. Still no reception. Well, of course he had to find the exact wave form, timbre was as basic to thought as to music. He adjusted the dials slowly, with enormous care.

Something flashed through his consciousness, a vision of clouds roiled in a violet-red sky, a wind that galloped across horizonless immensity—he lost it. His fingers shook as he turned back.

The psibeam between Joe and Anglesey broadened. It took Cornelius into the circuit. He looked through Joe's eyes, he stood on a hill and stared into the sky above the ice mountains, straining for sign of the first rocket; and simultaneously he was still Jan Cornelius, blurrily seeing the meters, probing about for emotions, symbols, any key to the locked terror in Anglesey's soul.

The terror rose up and struck him in the face.

Psionic detection is not a matter of passive listening in. Much as a radio receiver is necessarily also a weak transmitter, the nervous system in resonance with a source of psionic-spectrum energy is itself emitting. Normally, of course, this effect is unimportant; but when you pass the impulses, either way, through a set of heterodyning and amplifying units, with a high negative feedback.

In the early days, psionic psychotherapy vitiated itself because the amplified thoughts of one man, entering the brain of another, would combine with the latter's own neural cycles according to the ordinary vector laws. The result was that both men felt the new beat frequencies as a nightmarish fluttering of their very thoughts. An analyst, trained into self-control, could ignore it; his patient could not, and reacted violently.

But eventually the basic human wave timbres were measured, and psionic therapy resumed. The modern esprojector analyzed an incoming signal and shifted its characteristics over to the "listener's" pattern. Thereallydifferent pulses of the transmitting brain, those which could not possibly be mapped onto the pattern of the receiving neurons—as an exponential signal cannot very practicably be mapped onto a sinusoid—those were filtered out.

Thus compensated, the other thought could be apprehended as comfortably as one's own. If the patient were on a psibeam circuit, a skilled operator could tune in without the patient being necessarily aware of it. The operator could either probe the other man's thoughts or implant thoughts of his own.

Cornelius' plan, an obvious one to any psionicist, had depended

on this. He would receive from an unwitting Anglesey-Joe. If his theory was right and the esman's personality was being distorted into that of a monster, his thinking would be too alien to come through the filters. Cornelius would receive spottily or not at all. If his theory was wrong, and Anglesey was still Anglesey, he would receive only a normal human stream of consciousness and could probe for other troublemaking factors.

His brain roared!

What's happening to me?

For a moment, the interference which turned his thoughts to saw-toothed gibberish struck him down with panic. He gulped for breath, there in the Jovian wind, and his dreadful dogs sensed the alienness in him and whined.

Then, recognition, remembrance, and a blaze of anger so great that it left no room for fear. Joe filled his lungs and shouted it aloud, the hillside boomed with echoes:

"Get out of my mind!"

He felt Cornelius spiral down toward unconsciousness. The over-whelming force of his own mental blow had been too much. He laughed, it was more like a snarl, and eased the pressure.

Above him, between thunderous clouds, winked the first thin descending rocket flare.

Cornelius' mind groped back toward the light. It broke a watery surface, the man's mouth snapped after

air and his hands reached for the dials, to turn his machine off and escape.

“Not so fast, you.” Grimly, Joe drove home a command that locked Cornelius’ muscles rigid. “I want to know the meaning of this. Hold still and let me look!” He smashed home an impulse which could be rendered, perhaps, as an incandescent question mark. Re-membrance exploded in shards through the psionist’s forebrain.

“So. That’s all there is? You thought I was afraid to come down here and be Joe, and wanted to know why? But Itoldyou I wasn’t!”

I should have believed,whispered Cornelius.

“Well, get out of the circuit, then.” Joe continued growling it vo-cally. “And don’t ever come back in the control room, understand? K tubes or no, I don’t want to see you again. And I may be a cripple, but I can still take you apart cell by cell. Now sign off—leave me alone. The first ship will be landing in minutes.”

You a cripple—you, Joe Anglesey?

“What?” The great gray being on the hill lifted his barbaric head as if to sudden trumpets. “What do you mean?”

Don’t you understand?said the weak, dragging thought. You knowhowthe esprojector works. Youknow I could have probed Anglesey’s mind in Anglesey’s brain without making enough interference to be noticed.AndI could not have probed a wholly nonhuman mind at all, nor could it have been aware of me. The filters would not have passed such a signal. Yet you felt me in the first fractional second. It can only mean a human mind in a nonhuman brain.

You are not the half-corpse on Jupiter Fiveanylonger. You’re Joe—Joe Anglesey.

“Well, I’ll be damned,” said Joe. “You’re right.”

He turned Anglesey off, kicked Cornelius out of his mind with a single brutal impulse, and ran down the hill to meet the spaceship.

Cornelius woke up minutes afterward. His skull felt ready to split apart. He groped for the main switch before him, clashed it down, ripped the helmet off his head and threw it clanging on the floor. But it took a little while to gather the strength to do the same for Anglesey. The other man was not able to do anything for himself.

They sat outside sick bay and waited. It was a harshly lit barren-ness of metal and plastic, smelling of antiseptics—down near the heart of the satellite, with miles of rock to hide the terrible face of Jupiter.

Only Viken and Cornelius were in that cramped little room. The rest of the station went about its business mechanically, filling in the time till it could learn what had happened. Beyond the door, three biotechnicians, who were also the station’s medical staff, fought with death’s angel for the thing which had been Edward Anglesey.

“Nine ships got down,” said Viken dully. “Two males, seven fe-males. It’s enough to start a colony.”

“It would be genetically desirable to have more,” pointed out Cornelius. He kept his own voice low, in spite of its underlying cheerful-ness. There was a certain awesome quality to all this.

“I still don’t understand,” said Viken.

“Oh, it’s clear enough—now. I should have guessed it before, maybe. We had all the facts, it was only that we couldn’t make the simple, obvious interpretation of them. No, we had to conjure up Frankenstein’s monster.”

“Well,” Viken’s words grated, “we have played Frankenstein, haven’t we? Ed is dying in there.”

“It depends on how you define death.” Cornelius drew hard on his cigar, needing anything that might steady him. His tone grew pur-posedly dry of emotion.

“Look here. Consider the data. Joe, now: a creature with a brain of human capacity, but without a mind—a perfect Lockeantabularasafor Anglesey’s psibeam to write on. We deduced, correctly enough— if very belatedly—that when enough had been written, there would be a personality. But the question was, whose? Because, I suppose, of normal human fear of the unknown, we assumed that any per-sonality in so alien a body had to be monstrous. Therefore it must be hostile to Anglesey, must be swamping him—”

The door opened. Both men jerked to their feet.

The chief surgeon shook his head. “No use. Typical deep-shock traumata, close to terminus now. If we had better facilities, maybe. . .“

“No,” said Cornelius. “You cannot save a man who has decided not to live any more.”

“I know.” The doctor removed his mask. “I need a cigarette. Who’s got one?” His hands shook a little as he accepted it from Viken.

“But how could he—decide—anything?” choked the physicist. “He’s been unconscious ever since Jan pulled him away from that

that thing.”

“It was decided before then,” said Cornelius. “As a matter of fact, that hulk in there on the operating table no longer has a mind. I know. I was there.” He shuddered a little. A stiff shot of tranquil-izer was all that held nightmare away from him. Later he would have to have that memory exorcised.

The doctor took a long drag of smoke, held it in his lungs a mo-ment, and exhaled gustily. “I guess this winds up the project,” he said. “We’ll never get another esman.”

“I’ll say we won’t.” Viken’s tone sounded rusty. “I’m going to smash that devil’s engine myself.”

“Hold on a minute!” exclaimed Cornelius. “Don’t you understand? This isn’t the end. It’s the beginning!”

“I’d better get back,” said the doctor. He stubbed out his cigarette and went through the door. It closed

behind him with a deathlike quietness.

“What do you mean?” Viken said it as if erecting a barrier.

“Won’t you understand?” roared Cornelius. “Joe has all Anglesey’s habits, thoughts, memories, prejudices, interests. Oh, yes, the

different body and the different environment—they do cause some changes, but no more than any man might undergo on Earth. If you were suddenly cured of a wasting disease, wouldn’t you maybe get a little boisterous and rough? There is nothing abnormal in it. Nor is it abnormal to want to stay healthy—no? Do you see?”

Viken sat down. He spent a while without speaking.

Then, enormously slow and careful: “Do you mean Joe is Ed?”

“Or Ed is Joe. Whatever you like. He calls himself Joe now, I think—as a symbol of freedom—but he is still himself. What is the ego but continuity of existence?”

“He himself did not fully understand this. He only knew—he told me, and I should have believed him—that on Jupiter he was strong and happy. Why did the K tube oscillate? A hysterical symptom! Anglesey’s subconscious was not afraid to stay on Jupiter—it was afraid to come back!

“And then, today, I listened in. By now, his whole self was focused on Joe. That is, the primary source of libido was Joe’s virile body, not Anglesey’s sick one. This meant a different pattern of impulses—not too alien to pass the filters, but alien enough to set up interference. So he felt my presence. And he saw the truth, just as I did.

“Do you know the last emotion I felt as Joe threw me out of his mind? Not anger any more. He plays rough, him, but all he had room to feel was joy.

“*I knew* how strong a personality Anglesey has! Whatever made me think an overgrown child brain like Joe’s could override it? In there, the doctors—bah! They’re trying to salvage a hulk which has been shed because it is useless!”

Cornelius stopped. His throat was quite raw from talking. He paced the floor, rolled cigar smoke around his mouth but did not draw it any farther in.

When a few minutes had passed, Viken said cautiously, “All right. You should know—as you said, you were there. But what do we do now? How do we get in touch with Ed? Will he even be interested in contacting us?”

“Oh, yes, of course,” said Cornelius. “He is still himself, remember. Now that he has none of the cripple’s frustrations, he should be more amiable. When the novelty of his new friends wears off, he will want someone who can talk to him as an equal.”

“And precisely who will operate another pseudo?” asked Viken

sarcastically. “I’m quite happy with this skinny frame of mine, thank you!”

“Was Anglesey the only hopeless cripple on Earth?” asked Cornelius quietly.

Viken gaped at him.

“And there are aging men, too,” went on the psionicist, half to himself. “Someday, my friend, when you and I feel the years close in, and so much we would like to learn—maybe we too would enjoy an extra lifetime in a Jovian body.” He nodded at his cigar. “A hard, lusty, stormy kind of life, granted—dangerous, brawling, violent—but life as no human, perhaps, has lived it since the days of Elizabeth the First. Oh, yes, there will be small trouble finding Jovians.”

He turned his head as the surgeon came out again.

“Well?” croaked Viken.

The doctor sat down. “It’s finished,” he said.

They waited for a moment, awkwardly.

“Odd,” said the doctor. He groped after a cigarette he didn’t have. Silently, Viken offered him one. “Odd. I’ve seen these cases before. People who simply resign from life. This is the first one I ever saw that went out smiling—smiling all the time.”