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# THE SECRET AGENT

by Joseph Conrad  
Adapted by  
John K. Snyder III

PAPERCUT **Z**



VERLOC.

:Hurmpf:

WE ARE NOT SATISFIED WITH THE ATTITUDE OF THE POLICE HERE. WHAT IS DESIRED IS THE OCCURRENCE OF SOMETHING WHICH SHOULD STIMULATE THEIR VIGILANCE.

"I THINK THAT YOU HAD BETTER SEE MR. VLADIMIR."

HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN EMPLOYED BY THE EMBASSY HERE?

"ELEVEN YEARS."

YOU DON'T SEEM TO BE VERY SMART--

WHAT WE WANT NOW IS ACTIVITY. YOU ARE AN AGENT PROVOCATEUR. THE BUSINESS OF A PROVOCATEUR IS TO PROVOKE.

"YOU HAVE DONE NOTHING TO EARN YOUR MONEY."

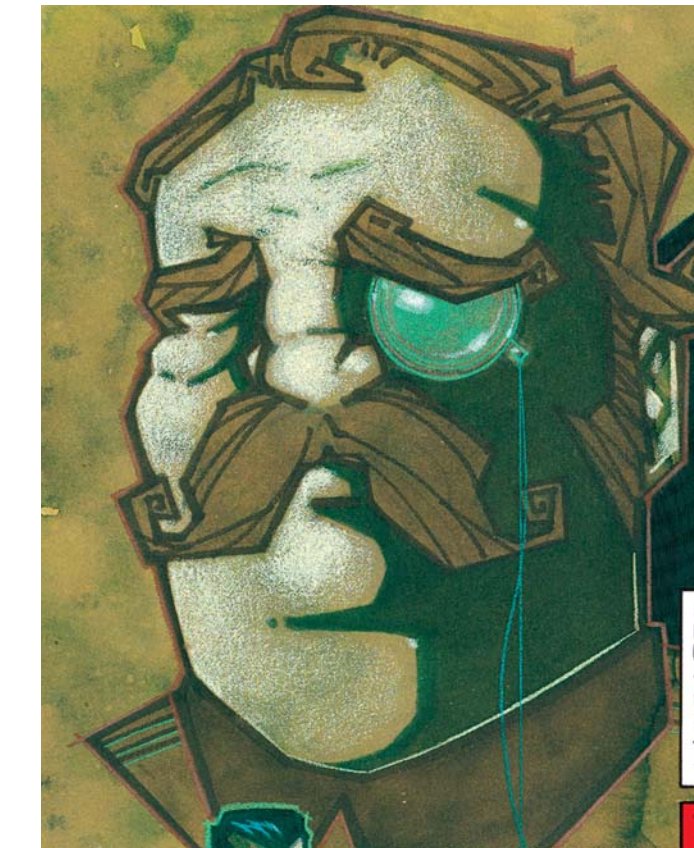
"NOTHING?? I HAVE SEVERAL TIMES PREVENTED WHAT--"

"DON'T BE ABSURD."

"WE DON'T WANT PREVENTION -- WE WANT CURE. THAT WORTHLESS ANARCHIST ORGANIZATION, THE FUTURE OF THE PROLETARIAT. ARE YOU IN IT?"

"ONE OF THE VICE PRESIDENTS..."

"THEN YOU OUGHT TO BE ASHAMED OF YOURSELF! LOOK HERE. I TELL YOU PLAINLY THAT YOU WILL HAVE TO EARN YOUR MONEY. THE GOOD OLD DAYS ARE OVER. NO WORK, NO PAY."



This then was the famous and trusty secret agent, so secret that he was never designated otherwise than by the symbol  $\Delta$  in the late Baron Stott-Wartenheim's official and confidential correspondence; the celebrated agent  $\Delta$  whose warnings had the power to change the schemes and dates of royal, imperial, grandducal journeys, and sometimes cause them to be put off altogether!

His excellency had had social revolution on the brain. His prophetic and doleful dispatches had been for years the joke of foreign offices. He was said to have exclaimed on his deathbed: "Unhappy Europe! That shalt perish by the moral insanity of thy children!" He was fated to be the victim of the first humbugging rascal that came along --

"WHAT WE WANT IS TO ADMINISTER A TONIC TO THE CONFERENCE IN MILAN. ITS DELIBERATIONS UPON INTERNATIONAL ACTION FOR THE SUPPRESSION OF INTERNATIONAL CRIME DON'T SEEM TO GET ANYWHERE."

"I SUPPOSE YOU AGREE THE MIDDLE CLASSES ARE STUPID?"

"THEY ARE."

"THEY HAVE NO IMAGINATION. THEY ARE BLINDED BY AN IDIOTIC VANITY. WHAT THEY WANT JUST NOW IS A JOLLY GOOD SCARE. THIS IS THE PSYCHOLOGICAL MOMENT TO SET YOUR ANARCHIST FRIENDS TO WORK."

"I HAVE HAD YOU CALLED HERE TO DEVELOP TO YOU MY IDEA."

"A SERIES OF OUTRAGES EXECUTED HERE IN THIS COUNTRY; NOT ONLY PLANNED HERE -- THAT WOULD NOT DO."

"THEY MUST BE SUFFICIENTLY STARTLING -- EFFECTIVE. LET THEM BE DIRECTED AGAINST BUILDINGS, FOR INSTANCE. WHAT IS THE FETISH OF THE HOUR THAT ALL THE BOURBOIS RECOGNIZE -- EH, MR. VERLOC?"

"YOU ARE TOO LAZY TO THINK. THE FETISH OF TODAY IS NEITHER ROYALTY NOR RELIGION. THEREFORE, THE PALACE AND THE CHURCH SHOULD BE LEFT ALONE."

"AN ATTEMPT UPON A CROWNED HEAD OR UPON A PRESIDENT IS SENSATIONAL ENOUGH IN A WAY, BUT NOT SO MUCH AS IT USED TO BE."

"PROPERTY SEEMS TO THEM AN INDESTRUCTABLE THING. YOU CAN'T COUNT UPON THEIR EMOTIONS EITHER OF PITY OR FEAR FOR VERY LONG. A BOMB OUTRAGE TO HAVE ANY INFLUENCE ON PUBLIC OPINION NOW MUST GO BEYOND THE INTENTION OF VENGEANCE OR TERRORISM. IT MUST BE PURELY DESTRUCTIVE."

"YOU ANARCHISTS SHOULD MAKE IT CLEAR THAT YOU ARE PERFECTLY DETERMINED TO MAKE A CLEAN SWEEP OF THE WHOLE SOCIAL CREATION, DIRECTING YOUR BLOWS TOWARDS SOMETHING OUTSIDE THE ORDINARY PASSIONS OF HUMANITY IS THE ANSWER."

"OF COURSE, THERE IS ART. A BOMB IN THE NATIONAL GALLERY WOULD MAKE SOME NOISE. THERE WOULD BE SOME SCREAMING OF COURSE, BUT FROM WHOM? ARTISTS -- ART CRITICS AND SUCH LIKE -- PEOPLE OF NO ACCOUNT. NOBODY MINDS WHAT THEY SAY."


"BUT THERE IS LEARNING -- SCIENCE. ANY IMBECILE THAT HAS GOT AN INCOME BELIEVES IN THAT. LET THE PROFESSORS KNOW THAT THEIR GREAT PAN-JANDRUM HAS GOT TO GO, TOO, FOR THE FUTURE OF THE PROLETARIAT. A HOWL FROM ALL OF THESE INTELLECTUAL IDIOTS IS BOUND TO HELP FORWARD THE LABORS OF THE MILAN CONFERENCE."

"THIS DEMONSTRATION SHOULD BE AGAINST LEARNING -- SCIENCE. WHAT DO YOU THINK AT HAVING A GO AT --"


"-- ASTRONOMY? "

tares.






"I HAVE ALWAYS DREAMED OF A BAND OF MEN STRONG ENOUGH TO GIVE THEM THE NAME OF DESTROYERS, AND FREE FROM THE TAINT OF THAT RESIGNED PESSIMISM WHICH ROTS THE WORLD. NO PITY FOR ANYTHING ON EARTH, INCLUDING THEMSELVES, AND DEATH ENLISTED FOR GOOD AND ALL IN THE SERVICE OF HUMANITY. THAT'S WHAT I WOULD HAVE LIKED TO SEE, AND I COULD NEVER GET AS MANY AS THREE SUCH MEN TOGETHER. SO MUCH FOR YOUR ROTTEN PESSIMISM."



"PREPOSTEROUS! OUTRAGEOUS! ALREADY I SEE THE END OF ALL PRIVATE PROPERTY BY THE MERE DEVELOPMENT OF ITS INHERENT VICIOUSNESS! THE POSSESSORS OF PROPERTY HAVE NOT ONLY TO FACE THE AWAKENED PROLETARIAT, BUT THEY MUST ALSO FIGHT AMONG THEMSELVES! I DO NOT DEPEND ON ANGER OR VISIONS OF BLOOD-RED FLAGS, WAVING TO KEEP UP MY BELIEF-- COLD REASON IS THE BASIS OF MY OPTIMISM. DON'T YOU THINK THAT IF I HAD NOT BEEN THE OPTIMIST I AM I COULD NOT HAVE FOUND IN FIFTEEN YEARS SOME MEANS TO CUT MY THROAT? THERE WERE ALWAYS THE WALLS OF MY CELL TO DASH MY HEAD AGAINST."



"DID YOU EVER SEE SUCH IDIOTS? FOR THEM THE CRIMINAL IS THE PRISONER. SIMPLE, IS IT NOT? WHAT ABOUT THOSE THAT SHUT HIM UP THERE? AND WHAT IS CRIME? I WOULD CALL THE NATURE OF ECONOMIC CONDITIONS A CRIME-CANNIBALISTIC."

**HAHAHAHA  
HAHAHAHA!**

Mr. Verloc saw his guests off the premises, closed the door and shot the bolt.