

It was on the first day in which I ^{was to take part} participated in the meetings of the Portuguese delegation. A Saturday morning. ^{took part} "Noone" works on Saturday here. For this reason there have to be special ^{are} provisions ^{to resolve} solutions for those ^{of those} who do decide to work on Saturday. The Meeting ^{was set} for 10 am, and five minutes before ^{that} the hour there I was looking for the special elevator (which works ^{at} nights and on Saturday in the enormous ^{28 story} building ~~28 stories!~~ which is part of the Rockefeller Center and where the ^{with} Portuguese Mission to the U.N. is situated (^{along side of} ~~beside~~ the B.B.C. and other wealthy enterprises!) I entered the elevator, carried out the formalities (you must sign ⁱⁿ, ^{say} indicate ^{to which apartment you are} where you are going going to, the ~~Fine~~ etc) and ~~left~~ got out on the 21st floor. These night elevators ^{let us off at a} different angle in the labyrinth of corridors of each floor; I remembered vaguely that last year on such occasions I crossed a service platform I saw the sign "EXIT" and ^{went out in a hurry.} ~~left it~~

However, it was not the platform that I knew but another smaller one, "stuck out" in the middle of space with another door in front which I ^{opened} pushed ^{and} but which ^{I read} left ^{and} perplexed by what I ^{said} read: "You may not reenter by the door you have just left."

I was on the service stairs. I turned around, and tried to open the door - impossible, it ^{had locked} was automatically locked. I returned to the stairs, it ^{for it had fire prevention} had ^{obviously} mechanical

against fires and I thought that there must be some way of calling the firemen. I went up to the 22nd floor. The same sign on the door. But a ~~slight hope~~ ^{slight hope} a small internal telephone ~~for contact~~ ^{between} the security departments of the building. I phoned ~~each one~~ ^{dept} despairingly + for a long time each one of them. No one answered ~~me~~. I returned to the 21st floor, hammered with all my might on the first door that ~~opened~~ ^{had} ~~opened~~ ^{screamed} at the top of my ~~lungs~~ ^{lungs}: "Help! Help!" But I knew that it was useless to ~~bang~~ ^{bang} or to bang on the door. No one could hear me. And after the initial error I remembered ~~very~~ ^{quite} clearly that the Portuguese Mission - the only one to occupy the floor on Saturday - was at the ~~extreme~~ ^{opposite} diagonal corner from ~~the corner~~ where I was. I returned ^{me} to the service stairs. And looked down.

The panic, fatalism, terror of staying there for ~~the~~ week-end? ~~for~~ ^{for} ~~whole~~ ^{whole} days, ~~until~~ ^{until} ~~someone~~ ^{some} accident brought ~~someone~~ ^{another} ~~living~~ ^{human} being to the emergency stairs? And in the middle of all this, the sensation of being caught, of ~~falling~~ ^{being part of} ~~into~~ a nightmare, of being in a situation without exit. (The experience of life in N.Y. led me to the conclusion that at the ~~foot~~ ^{bottom} of the 21 floors I would not come to the street but to ~~the~~ a

seller and double doors the keys to which would be in the hands of ~~a~~ ^a ~~single~~ person) Irritation ^{with} ~~against~~ things (^{why such a} ~~because~~ ^{this city is} so complicated by crime & violence that even its defences turn into traps?)

irritation ^{with} ~~with~~ the obligation of going to a meeting (how many lives have ~~not~~ disappeared in ^{carrying out} the completion of a duty (which they poorly understood the ^{implications?} ~~contours~~))

irritation with myself especially (how could I have trusted my reflexes & not analysed each step?)

It wasn't that I formulated everything in this way but it was all ^{there} underlying. What to do? Stay there & wait - but for whom? or begin to descend and multiply by 21 the attempts to find ^{a way out} ~~an exit~~ knowing that logically there was ^{no exit} ~~no exit~~.

It is obvious that there was a way out - g. e. d.!

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~~So~~ I began systematically (after a further attempt on the 25th floor to call the firemen) to go down and try the 2 doors on each platform... And I don't know by what miracle (wasn't there an angel who freed Peter & another who freed Paul?) the automatic door on the 18th floor had not been locked. And I returned to civilization! (???)

to the nice side of buildings with stairs-without-exits. And I practically kissed the elevator ~~man~~ ^{who} operator who couldn't understand where I had come from. (So for an anti climax: when I got back to the 21st floor, ^{there waiting for me} ~~was~~ ^{en masse} the ~~whole~~ ^{entire} security force of the building ~~was waiting for me~~ ~~en masse~~)

with pistols, & internal telephones & everything I

The story had a "happy" ending but I will not easily get rid of its psychological impact. For even if I had a terrific imagination I couldn't have imagined a situation which pictured more faithfully or more translated so faithfully, so vividly what I feel about my experience this year at the U.N.

Teacher's remarks : Imagination A.
Suspense A++

Have you ever seriously thought of writing suspense fiction?

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