Billy Bulger speaks Latin and Greek and dominates Massachusetts government. Whitey Bulger speaks the language of the streets and dominates the Irish Mob. Two proud sons of South Boston, they rule their respective realms with the same chilling technique: absolute fear

Blood

By John Sedgwick

It was a raw, blustery day on the South Boston waterfront, and the retired longshoremen stood in the lee of a coffee shop with their collars up and their caps down low over their brows to ward off the cold. They eyed me warily as I approached.

Mine was a fool's errand, I suppose. I wanted to hear from them about the neighborhood's famous pair of mismatched brothers: James J. "Whitey" Bulger, the reputed leader of the Irish Mafia, whose terrifying exploits fill no fewer than fourteen volumes of reports by the FBI's organized-crime unit, and William M. "Billy" Bulger, the Massachusetts senate president, who is, after the governor, the most powerful politician in the state government. Together, the two constitute one of Boston's fundamental mysteries, a snake twisted about the heart of the city. "It's exactly as if Al Capone's brother was president of the Illinois state senate," a previous senate president named John Powers once complained, "*and nobody ever mentioned it.*" Interestingly, when I called Powers to discuss the Bulgers, he refused even to come to the phone. Virtually everyone else in a position to know likewise clammed up, the ultimate tribute in a gossipy town to the Bulger brothers' overwhelming power to exact revenge, to instill fear and to silence. One South Boston hood got smacked by his father simply for mentioning the name of Whitey Bulger in the house.

Yet both Bulgers are lifetime Southie men, pure products of this harsh peninsula that reaches out like a lobster claw into the Atlantic. While both have risen to the

heights of their chosen professions, neither one has ever moved out of the neighborhood of his youth. I figured if anyone could tell me the truth about the Bulgers, it was these old men down by the sea, among whom the brothers have lived all their lives. Yet obviously these men did not welcome a stranger with the wrong accent asking audacious questions about two of their own. Their weathered faces, at first incredulous, turned blank, then cold, then mean.

I moved from one to another, finally reaching a kindly-looking man in tweed, who took me aside. "What's it you want to know, now?" he asked benignly. I told him, and a strange thing happened. When I asked about Whitey, he answered about Billy, speaking of the tremendous power he wielded in the senate. When I asked about Billy, he spoke of Whitey, saying how dangerous he was, how a fellow had to watch his step around a man like that. I thought the man was daft. But eventually I realized that he understood only too well. To know one Bulger brother, you have to know the other.

Brothers

It's an old story, this saga of brothers who went their separate ways in life, as old as Cain and Abel. Nowadays, the tale seems almost too melodramatic for contemporary tastes, rife as it is with such old-fashioned themes as the meaning of brotherhood, the pull of blood, the twists of fate. The story of the Bulger brothers is a B-movie barreling out of the 1940s, starring Spencer Tracy and James Cagney as the good and the bad sons. And in its own way, it is a saga almost as compelling as that of another old-fashioned Boston-Irish family, the Kennedys.

So it may be inevitable that the Bulgers are rooted in South Boston, a throwback neighborhood in America's most antique city. Pass over the narrow bridge that links South Boston to the rest of the city, head down the main thoroughfare of Broadway, and you have gone back at least a generation in time. It's quiet here, almost eerily so. "Southie's safe because it's so fuckin' dangerous," one lifelong resident told me. Most South Bostonians are lifelong residents, and many of them have devoted their lives to keeping things just the way they have always been. It is this determination that propelled the long, ferocious battle against forced busing in the Seventies, a fight led by local firebrand Louise Day Hicks but ardently supported by Billy Bulger, who repeatedly condemned the "unremitting, calculated, unconscionable portrayal of each of us, in local and national press, radio and television, as unreconstructed racists." At the peak of that struggle, some protesters considered hiring thugs to blow up the bridge to the mainland and insulate themselves from change forever. As it is, the trendiness that has taken over so much of the nation has made no impression here. There are no chocolate chip–cookie stores in Southie, no croissant-wich shoppes, no teddy bear boutiques, not even a movie theater. Instead, there are bars: more than thirty of them altogether, one virtually on every street corner, with good Irish names like Kelly's and P.J. Cronin's. Most of them are dreary, dimly lit places adorned with cardboard shamrocks and faded postcards of Ireland. Together with the monuments to the neighborhood's many war dead, they give Southie much of its tragic character.

Billy and Whitey Bulger are certainly not the first pair of famously disparate brothers from South Boston. The McCormacks of Andrew Square hold that honor. The gaunt, abstemious John W. McCormack rose from poverty to become speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives in 1962 and a sainted memory in the neighborhood. His 350-pound brother, Edward, a saloonkeeper better known as Knocko, offered illegal gambling upstairs at his Wave Cottage restaurant in Southie, and he ran with Paddy Coleman, the notorious bookie from Boston's South End.

Such stark contrasts should not be surprising. As with most ethnic neighborhoods, South Boston offers few routes to success, cut off as it is by geography, religion, class and temperament from the Brahmins who rule the city from Back Bay and Beacon Hill. Thomas O'Connor, a Boston College professor who grew up in Southie and has written a book about his hometown, says the career choices of an ambitious Southie resident were for a long time limited to three: politics, the priesthood and crime. In the case of the Bulger family, it was inevitable that two aspiring sons should select two different options. (As it happened, Billy Bulger briefly considered the priesthood before settling into politics.)

Looked at another way, the two Bulgers might simply be

Bright-eyed, charming and erudite, Billy Bulger regularly receives the public respects of a variety of household names, including, clockwise from left, *former Massachusetts Governor Michael Dukakis, tenor Luciano Pavarotti and Virginia Governor Douglas Wilder.*

considered the heirs to both halves of the great tradition of the Irish political rogue best embodied by James Michael Curley, who, back in the Forties, served a portion of his final term as Boston's mayor in the Danbury federal penitentiary, for mail fraud. He once assailed South Bostonians as "thugs, muckers, doormat thieves and milk-bottle robbers," but the neighborhood took him as an adopted son all the same. One might say that Billy represents the upstanding, front-parlor half of Curley; Whitey, the conniving, back-alley half. At least in the public mind, the two halves make one whole. Tempting as it must be politically, Billy has never publicly disavowed his brother, never washed his hands of him. Perhaps he knows that that would never go down in Southie, whose voters are his ultimate judge. After all, as Billy himself likes to say, quoting Seneca, "Loyalty is the holiest good in the human heart." Or perhaps a brother like Whitey adds a useful dimension to Billy's reputation. Or perhaps Billy simply loves him. Whatever the reason, the two are joined for life.

But the marvel is not that the Bulger brothers have headed in opposite directions but that they have pushed to such extremes. Knocko McCormack only dabbled in crime. Whitey is by most accounts a gangster, pure and simple. He is not believed to have ever held a legitimate job in his life, with the exception of a troubled two-year stint in the air force and some custodial work that Billy lined up for him after Whitey emerged from his only prison stretch, for armed robbery, in the mid-Sixties.

And he looks the part. The few photographs of him show an aging thug with thinning hair, the long, upturned nose that is a Bulger-family characteristic, steel-gray eyes that are usually hidden behind dark glasses, and a permanently unfriendly expression. A health nut and an exercise addict, Whitey is known for a powerful physique that is startling for a 62-year-old. "He's held his years better than I," grants Billy, 57. "All I do is walk."

One has to get by on other people's impressions of Whitey, because, unlike the John Gottis of the criminal world, Whitey Bulger does not make himself available to the press. The very idea of trying to speak to him is almost unthinkable. You don't call up Whitey Bulger requesting an interview. You don't drop by his apartment hoping to have a word with him. You don't ask his friends to line something up. The reason is simple: Whitey Bulger cultivates the image of someone who might kill you, and I now choose to believe the image.

Partly because of his reclusiveness, Whitey is hard to get a fix on as a mobster. He is not perched atop an intricate hierarchy of foot soldiers, like the usual Mafia don. But neither is he a niche player who confines himself to just one criminal market, be it marijuana importation or bookmaking. Investigators believe he participates in a full run of Mob activities—gaming, loan-sharking, money-laundering, illegal liquor distribution, cocaine sales, marijuana smuggling, pilferage, occasional Mob hits and whatever other odd-lot opportunities for making a quick buck might come his way. But questions persist about the range and

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: BOSTON HERALD; UPI/BETTMANN; DOUG BRUCE/PICTURE GROUP

"Loyalty is the holiest good in the human heart," says Billy, quoting Seneca.

nature of his undertakings. In a city where so much is known about so many, the fact that almost nothing is known definitively about Whitey is probably his greatest asset. It has kept him out of jail and in business. The essence of his public image is his lack of one: We picture whatever scares us the most.

While every newspaper brings fresh reports of the fall of yet another rival Mob chieftain—most recently, 60-year-old Joseph Russo, whose elaborate 1989 ceremony inducting other mobsters into Boston's Italian Mafia was taped by the FBI—Whitey has been collared only the one time, and that was at the beginning of his career. Since then, despite countless investigations by the U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency, the state police, the local police, the Internal Revenue Service, the U.S. attorney and various local district attorneys, he has neither been arrested for nor charged with a single crime, a fact that suggests that either he has been clean all these years or he has been unusually skillful. Most investigators incline toward the latter view. "The man is a career criminal," says Robert Long, a former state police detective lieutenant now with the investigative firm LCF Associates, who spent more than a decade fruitlessly chasing Whitey Bulger. "He has been the target of all these investigations, and he's still on the street. The guy has beaten the system. I don't know anybody else around here who has stayed up that high for that long. Whitey Bulger is the absolute, undisputed champion of Boston mobsters. I gotta hand it to him. He's played all his cards right—and he's pulled the right lottery ticket, too."

Long is alluding to Whitey's latest, possibly most impressive gambit, one that is designed to keep him on the street a good while longer. Whitey won the Massachusetts lottery. Or, more exactly, he was one of four men cashing in on the winning ticket of the "Mass Millions" lottery, bringing each of them $89,556 a year for the next twenty years. Although some people figure that, Whitey being Whitey, he somehow rigged the lottery (almost nobody thinks he won it honestly), the more likely explanation is that he simply muscled in on the winning ticket after the fact. After all, he used to be part owner of the building now housing the South Boston Liquor Mart, where the winning ticket was bought by a certain Michael Linskey. Whitey liked to sun himself out front of the store on summer afternoons. It wouldn't have been difficult for Whitey to introduce himself to Linskey between the Friday when Linskey learned he had won and the Monday when he showed up with the winning ticket at state-lottery headquarters. While Whitey no doubt is happy to have the money, he's happier still to finally provide a legitimate source for $89,556 worth of an annual income that had previously been completely inexplicable. As one disappointed investigator said, "[Whitey] just made himself bulletproof from the IRS."

But for a mobster, success is measured not only in dollars but also in square feet, by the territory he controls, and by that standard there is some uncertainty about just how successful Whitey is. Jerry Angiulo, the North End mobster now serving a life sentence in prison, was taped by the FBI in 1981 saying that "Whitey's got the whole of Southie" and that Whitey's longtime partner, Steve "the Rifleman" Flemmi, had "the whole of the South End." But that was probably just wishful thinking on Angiulo's part, since just the year before, Whitey had been headquartered in a garage on Lancaster Street around the corner from the Boston Garden and barely a mile from Angiulo's own North End offices. From a cockroach-infested flophouse across the way, Robert Long had watched Bulger for months, and he saw what he terms a "Who's Who of organized crime" coming by the garage—major marijuana importers, cocaine dealers, bookies, boxing promoters and much of the hierarchy of Angiulo's own organization. All of them paying homage, or money, to Whitey Bulger. A decade later, spooked by the many efforts that federal and state agents have made to bug his office, his car and his phone, Bulger conducts his business at night from no single headquarters, making his calls from pay phones around the city. Most law-enforcement officials believe that Whitey's turf extends through most of the eastern part of the state, from Lowell, in the north, down through Somerville, Roxbury and South Boston, south to Quincy and Brockton.

As an Irishman denied entrée to the traditional Mafia, with its arcane blood ties, Whitey has pretty much had to make it up as he's gone along. For a while, he worked his way up through the Winter Hill gang of Irish mobsters in Somerville, led by Howie Winter, but after that broke up in the late Seventies, following Winter's arrest for race-fixing, Whitey split off with Flemmi, an Italian. The two have been tight associates since, a pair of free-lancers with such fearsome reputations that they have been able to dictate terms to the more-established crime outfits, much to the irritation of the dues-paying Italians. Angiulo used to rage that Bulger and Flemmi never accorded him the tribute he expected. "When did they ever come down here and give me a quarter?" he once complained while FBI tapes were running. "I don't think they ever intend to pay it, if you want my honest opinion." There was some boozy talk one night of the Italians' going after the two with machine guns, but nothing ever came of it. If anything, Bulger and Flemmi played the Mafia's game more purely, because they didn't

Rarely photographed, Whitey Bulger, left, *and associate Steve Flemmi conducted their affairs from pay telephones while under surveillance by the Massachusetts State Police.*

Whitey Bulger is an invisible man casting a long shadow.

get bogged down in all the capo and *consigliere* crap. They forged alliances as they needed them, and broke them afterward. For Bulger, the mastermind, the situation was never fixed, but always fluid; loyalty was never permanent, but had to be reinforced—at gunpoint, if necessary—every day. Whitey never took anything for granted.

And when in doubt, he attacked with total fury. Late one night, Bulger spotted some men standing too close to his car, parked outside his place in Quincy, and figured it was some of his many enemies trying to plant a bomb. He came charging out of his house in a rage, scared the men away and then chased after them in his car, all the time screaming obscenities at them about their trying to kill him. Only when the car neared a police-operated safe house did Bulger realize the truth: The men were plainclothes police planting a bug in his car. Even then, he had a few choice words for the cops before taking off. The message was clear: Nobody fucks with Whitey Bulger.

In terms of his personal style, Whitey learned from the mistakes of the Old Guard, like Jerry Angiulo. Angiulo enjoyed playing the robber baron, with a big house in affluent Nahant and a kid in Little League. To Bulger's way of thinking, one can speculate, that life-style was what got Angiulo forty-five years for racketeering; it drew attention to him. Let the Mafia types strut and mouth off and go to prison. Whitey has laid low and stuck to basics. No house, no wife, no kids. He is an invisible man casting a long shadow. "It's almost like he doesn't exist," says one Boston police officer who should know better. "It's like there's a Whitey Bulger, but no one can find him." Few Bostonians would recognize Whitey if they passed him on the street; hardly any cops even know what he looks like. "He could walk right by me," says one thirty-year police officer, "and I wouldn't know." He has several apartments in South Boston and Quincy, all of them leased under the name of his girlfriend, making them untraceable by the IRS. The address he gave lottery officials is on Twomey Court, a modest two-story brick building in a complex filled mostly with senior citizens. Although he once splurged on a Cadillac and a Jaguar, he now drives a large blue LTD, also registered in his girlfriend's name. What money he spends, he unloads down in the Caribbean, where he won't be noticed. His invisibility has caught some people by surprise. For years, the local inflammatory radio personality Jerry Williams used to inveigh regularly against Whitey, apparently unaware that one of Whitey's crash pads was right next door to his own place in Quincy.

Although he is a notorious figure in most of the city, in South Boston Whitey is regarded as something of a patron saint. Everyone has a story of Whitey's doing something nice for somebody, whether it is helping an old lady up the steps with her bags, pressing money into the palms of grieving widows, warning young women about the dangers of walking alone at night or keeping drugs away. As one retiree puts it, "Whitey's nifty." No doubt, Whitey is capable of chivalry when it suits him, and he may even have an ennobled view of himself. In one of his few public utterances, he once told some DEA officials he came upon that "we're all good guys here. You're the good-good guys, and we're the bad-good guys."

But he has founded his professional life on something that is not so nice—his reputation as a cold, brutal killer. "Whitey handled a lot of problems that needed to be handled," says Robert Long. Problems like, guys needing to be killed? "Whatever problems there were," Long says. "I have to be careful what I say here." Whitey continues to live off of the fear that he can instill in others. Much of the cash that is toted over to him in suitcases and grocery bags, investigators say, is protection money, paying Whitey to keep other gangsters away—and, implicitly, to stay away himself. "You could see it in the way his associates approached him," says Long. "You could see that they were afraid." In one surveillance photo, Whitey stands with his legs spread, his arms gesturing forcefully. His minions cower in front of him, arms tight to their sides, seemingly scared to intrude upon Whitey's space.

They never know when his temper might blow. Investi-

gators were watching one day as a 240-pound underling named Nicky Femia, later murdered in a gangland hit, laid out an oozy Big Mac and some greasy fries on the hood of a black Chevy for a lunch that was way too high in calories and fat for Bulger's liking. He suddenly charged at Femia, swept up the food and threw it in the startled mobster's face.

Whitey's murderous reputation has not gone unnoticed in Billy Bulger's place of business, under the golden dome of the Massachusetts State House. In the course of an interview with one legislator, I asked if the name Whitey Bulger ever comes up in conversation. The man, who refused to be quoted by name, acted as though I had pulled out a gun and aimed it at his head. "No," he hastily replied. "Never."

"Why not?" I persisted.

"Because of who he is," he answered, unnerved by the conversation.

"You mean because he's a killer?" I pressed.

He nodded.

"Do you really mean that Whitey might kill you if you spoke about him?" I couldn't believe he was serious.

"Let's just say I've heard several threats, and that's all I want to say about them," he said, eager to change the subject. I just looked at him, amazed. "It's like walking under a ladder," he concluded. "Okay, it might be that nothing would happen to you if you walked under it, but why take chances?"

There are too many stories. Recently, when a couple of small-time hoods were found dead in South Boston—one shot in the back of the head, one shot in the face—people assumed that it was Whitey's work: Supposedly, the two had broken into a liquor store in which Whitey had had an interest. In a sense, they are the lucky ones. Others who have tried to muscle in on Whitey's territory have simply vanished without a trace. "Those guys just fuckin' disappeared," says one insider. "There was no corpus delicti. Fuck that."

If Whitey is a man of the shadows, Billy is, like any public figure, a man of the light. He has the air of a schoolboy—short, bright-eyed, fresh-scrubbed, almost irrepressibly eager. But that hasn't helped his reputation. When I asked James Michael Curley's son Frank, for example, if he saw anything of his father in Billy Bulger, he curtly replied, "Good God, no." Then he added, "If his name ended in a vowel, he'd be a South American dictator or the illegitimate son of Mussolini." Bulger claims such enmity stems from his disdain for the press. "If I have any mystique," he says, "it's because I have had the nerve, or the arrogance, not always to be available for comment on all the charges that have been leveled at me. I figure I can either answer them or ignore them, and I've ignored them. But they do pile up."

He is trying to stay above it all right now. He is upstairs at Anthony's Pier 4, a waterfront restaurant known for its political connections, microphone in hand, addressing a throng of Democratic loyalists whom he has tapped for $250 each to raise money for the party's state-senate candidates. This is a matter of no small concern to Bulger, whose senate presidency depends on a Democratic majority. Tonight, he has brought out the faithful, or the obligated, in quantity. The place is as big as a basketball court, and it is jammed wall-to-wall with cheap suits. Failed gubernatorial candidate John Silber is here, former Lieutenant Governor Tommy O'Neill, most of the state house and senate leadership and—in a coup—almost the entire Democratic congressional delegation: Barney Frank, Joe Moakley, Joseph Kennedy. . . . Only Ed Markey is missing, and he called to say he was stuck at the airport. Every Massachusetts politician knows to be respectful of Billy Bulger, but the congressmen are being especially nice these days, since redistricting is

RIGHT: JEFFREY SMITH

coming up, and Bulger will almost single-handedly decide their political future. Bulger can hardly contain his glee. "I lord it over them," he told me on the phone a few days earlier. "It's my one opportunity. I tell them I want to see them at Pier 4. They say 'Wherever you want us.' It makes me more insufferable than before."

And sure enough, Bulger is insufferable. As with his celebrated Saint Patrick's Day breakfasts at the Bayside Club, a tavern in South Boston, Bulger takes the opportunity to revel in his power—power to redistrict congressmen into oblivion, power to belittle them with his wit, power to hold them under his spell. Billy Bulger is a good speaker, with a voice so pleasant that when he once sang "The Isle of Innisfree" with the Boston Pops Orchestra, people snickered only at the beginning and were genuinely moved by the end. Tonight, he tosses the usual political bouquets, then he sights John Silber in his cross hairs. He helped Silber get on the ballot for the last gubernatorial election, only to see him blow his lead at the end of the campaign with some astonishingly intemperate remarks addressed to the first lady of Boston newscasting, Natalie Jacobson. Bulger assumes a cat-with-canary-in-mouth look and says he has a remedy: "Next time, I'll have a little whiff of chloroform ready." The crowd chortles. Bulger is warming to the task. He says he has nothing but admiration for Silber's aggressiveness. "If Silber had won, by now we'd have invaded Rhode Island. And by the end of his first term, all of New England would be ours." Some men watching beside me actually double over with laughter. And then Bulger spots Bob Crane, formerly the state treasurer, a job that involves overseeing the Massachusetts lottery, and one that, like so many other posts, fell to the other party in the last election. "I want to say one thing, Bob," Bulger says. "Until a Republican was treasurer, no one in my family ever won the lottery." Some of the air leaves the room, now that Billy has brought up Whitey. Then he addresses everyone: "Remember, you can too. Just take out a pen and a piece of paper, and write down this number, and play 'the Game.' " As he closes, I hear someone say "He sure has a lively sense of humor."

Billy Bulger has been senate president for thirteen years, the longest tenure in the history of the commonwealth, and he sometimes behaves like a man who has crowned himself king. Few other legislatures across the country grant as much power to their leader as the Massachusetts senate has to its president. Bulger has the power to control virtually every aspect of senate life, choosing the majority leadership, assigning the members' offices, deciding the salaries of their aides, even appropriating their office expenses. He prides himself on being an enlightened despot, though. He has banished television from his elegant little house in South Boston, and he reads Latin and Greek works in the original—and quotes from them often, knowing full well how much that irritates his rivals. In a culture-free zone like the state legislature, however, his erudition must make him a little lonely sometimes. (It may also have provided an unexpected bond with the new Republican governor, William F. Weld, a summa cum laude Harvard classics grad.) A reporter I know was once summoned into Bulger's office for a getting-to-know-you session that turned into a heady literary discussion for which she was wholly unprepared. "Seeing that I was a reporter," she says, "he started on a high intellectual plane with me, but then he ratcheted down, down, down." Since Bulger knew my friend was Catholic, he began by talking about a socialist Catholic theologian she had never heard of, then dropped to Willa Cather, whom she had heard of but had never read, and finally descended to Tom Wolfe's *Bonfire of the Vanities*, which, fortunately, she *had* read. But once his intellectual airs had been cleared away, he was left largely with his prejudices, which are deeply felt. These consist largely of a lifelong antagonism toward the press—"men of unsleeping malevolence," he likes to call them—and toward *The Boston Globe* in particular, since the paper dismissed him as a troglodyte for opposing forced busing. In conversation with my friend, he seized on *Bonfire*'s slimy journalist character, Peter Fallow. "He found that so fascinating," the reporter recalls. "Because Fallow was a dissolute, irresponsible, drunken, craven, manipulative asshole. That's what he thinks about all of us." Whatever Bulger's intentions, it proved to be an awkward conversation.

Bulger has been pleased to take his place among the rulers of the city, not just the pols. He is a member of the Union Club, one of the prestigious gentlemen's clubs on Beacon Hill, but the Union, a bastion of old Yankee Boston, has not taken him to its bosom. "I doubt they're proud of him," one Brahmin told me. Bulger is a trustee of the Massachusetts General Hospital and of the Boston Public Library, and an overseer of the Boston Symphony. Although he has made a political cause of South Boston High School, he has sent most of his nine children to private schools, such as Winsor, and private colleges, such as Harvard. "Billy is very upwardly mobile," says one fellow politician. "He's not a guy who thinks his kids should be the same as he is." His oldest son, William M. Bulger Jr., served as his campaign manager in the last election but has no interest in a political career.

While Whitey leads a fly-by-night existence, Billy spends his days in nearly Augustan splendor. When the senate is in session, he governs the proceedings from the tall chair at the front of its marble bust–filled chambers. Otherwise, he holds court in his sumptuous office, which he had restored with $160,000 of the taxpayers' money. With its delicate inlays and gilded finery, the room looks as if it emerged from the pages of an Edith Wharton novel. He proudly shows it off to visitors, observing that the new rug was specially commissioned from the English manufacturer of the nineteenth-century original, and pointing out the portraits of his many predecessors lining the wall—Samuel Adams, Horace Mann and Calvin Coolidge, among them. The taciturn Coolidge is a "great favorite of mine," Bulger says. "I love the story of him coming out of church. 'What did the minister speak on, Mr. President?' 'Sin.' 'And what did he say about it?' 'He agin it.' " Bulger beams with pleasure.

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Southie mobster hits $14M lottery jackpot

Whitey's number comes up – and elusive gangster cashes in!

By ERIC FEHRNSTROM

Reputed South Boston crime boss James "Whitey" Bulger, a trusted deputy, and two associates hit the Mass Millions for $14.3 million, embarrassing state Lottery officials and shock- ...federal agents who have pursued the elusive ...ster for more than two decades.
... to go down in crim- ... revealed yesterday ... that Bulger and ...-40-42 ticket. ... yes," said ...tor.

It was front-page news in Boston when Whitey Bulger shared in the winnings of the Massachusetts "Mass Millions" lottery. At left, *Bulger as captured by a video camera at the lottery office when he arrived to cash in.* Inset, *a rare portrait.*

BOSTON HERALD

For all his high-mindedness, Bulger has never entirely risen above the world of the down and dirty. The sharpest allegations leveled against him have to do with his role in the development of 75 State Street, a gilded marble office building in downtown Boston that was designed by Skidmore, Owings & Merrill. Bulger and his former law partner, Thomas E. Finnerty, each pocketed nearly $250,000 shortly after Finnerty had received $500,000 from the building's developer, Harold Brown, for few apparent services rendered. Brown claimed he was the victim of extortion, and it looked to many as if Bulger had taken part in a classic shakedown, a well-established practice in the city. Bulger has insisted that the money was merely an advance against an unspecified legal fee he was expecting. (He has always maintained a private law practice on the side.) Bulger repaid the money with interest, and no charges have ever been filed. This past January, the state attorney general, Scott Harshbarger, concluded his investigation by announcing that "no crime [had] been committed."

Still, suspicions linger, and Bulger is widely referred to around town as the "corrupt midget," a phrase coined by an early political enemy and then turned into a Homeric epithet by the *Boston Herald*'s vituperative political columnist Howie Carr. In fairness to Bulger, the Bay State has never treated its legislative leaders very kindly. "You make a kind of bargain if you become a legislative leader in Massachusetts," says Congressman Barney Frank, who once served in the state's House of Representatives and who, though usually voluble, seems no more eager than anyone else to talk about the senate president. "You get a lot of government power, but you become the personal embodiment of the unpopularity of the legislature." No legislative leader in memory has succeeded in gaining statewide office, although several have tried. The state's anti-Bulger animus came to a head during the last election, when, in the voters' anger over the sudden implosion of the Massachusetts Miracle, Bulger was regarded as the ultimate insider haunting Massachusetts politics. One Republican ad compared him to Leonid Brezhnev. "HE USED TO RUN A ONE-PARTY DICTATORSHIP," read the caption under Brezhnev's picture. "HE STILL DOES" were the words under Bulger's. Yet for all the fury he provokes, Bulger can be surprisingly demure, almost dainty, in person. When we first spoke on the phone to set up an interview, he compared himself to Greta Garbo. "I think I get more attention for my reticence," he said. "As somebody once said about Greta, 'Ah, but how she waits to hear those cameras clicking.' " He closed by saying that he was sure that if I met him, I would be disappointed. "You're going to say there's no there, there," he said, quoting Gertrude Stein. As he must have known, that only piqued my interest.

Trace the divergent paths of the Bulger brothers back to their source, and you come to 41 Logan Way, a South Boston housing project originally known as Old Harbor Village. Built in 1938, it was the second housing project in the country, and at the time, it bore little of the stigma attached to public housing today. It now looks like a project, stark and barren, with graffiti staining its red-

Imprisoned mobster Jerry Angiulo once complained that Whitey Bulger never paid him tribute.

about it and get bluesy."

Whitey and Billy shared one bedroom with their younger brother, John, or Jackie; their three sisters shared another. Known to the family as Sonny, Whitey was always well-mannered around the house, and he was nice to the younger kids, like Joe Quirk, who were friends of his little brother Billy's. But as he entered his teens, he toughened himself up physically, and the courteous, dutiful Sonny side disappeared from general view. "Whitey was in perfect physical condition," Quirk recalls. "Not an ounce of fat on him. He had a body like steel." Whitey often asked the young Quirk to punch him in the stomach as hard as he could; when Quirk obliged—he says it was "like hitting a wall"—Whitey would only laugh and say "Oh, come on, you can hit me harder than that." Not content with proving himself to the younger kids, Whitey started to mix it up with the older, bigger, rougher teens from the neighborhood, who were never in short supply. "When he got into a fight, it was usually with a bigger person," Quirk says. "He was always looking for a challenge. He was macho, and he liked to show it."

I'd been warned that Billy hates to talk about Whitey.

painted brick and AstroTurf laid down in the cramped front yard where grass won't grow. But the place was borderline respectable when the Bulgers moved in from nearby Dorchester the year it opened, and doubtless it was the borderline quality that made it all the more attractive to the children. Whitey and Billy were 9 and 4, respectively, when the family moved in, the second and third of six Bulger children. "It was a wonderful place to grow up," recalls Joe Quirk, a neighbor in those years and a lifelong friend of Billy Bulger's. "A combination of Tom Sawyer and Huck Finn, with a little bit of *West Side Story* thrown in."

The family qualified for public housing because the children's father, James Joseph Bulger, had lost his left arm in a railroad-yard accident as a young man and had been able to work only part-time, at the library and at the navy yard, since. He was a short, stoic figure, who always walked ramrod-straight, the empty left sleeve of his suit jacket tucked into the side pocket. Politics were his chief interest, and he was a passionate supporter of the New Deal. Billy Bulger remembers his dad's mocking Herbert Hoover's ardor for private contributions to make up for the wages lost in the Depression. "Gee, private charity," his father would say in his rumbling Irish brogue, shaking his head in disgust. Aside from his political enthusiasms, the father emerges from Billy Bulger's recollections as a distant figure. Both powerful and powerless, he must have posed a complicated role model for his sons. His wife, Jane, was the cheerful, outgoing one, always busy with housework or the children. They are both dead now. "It's an odd feeling I have about my parents," Billy Bulger once told *The Globe*. "You think about it and get bluesy."

Billy's childhood was more happy-go-lucky. He spent hours with Joe Quirk, hunting for matchbook covers to add to his collection, and was thrilled to coax an autograph from Ted Williams. He played stickball, hitchhiked with a parish priest to Provincetown and fell in with a neighborhood group called the Pirates, who played street games around the projects. Billy became a leader of the Pirates, just as he would later be captain of the high-school baseball team. While Whitey had to win people's respect with his fists, authority flowed automatically from Billy, just by the way he carried himself. "I don't remember his being involved with anything where he wasn't the top dog," says Quirk. Billy's pursuits were always innocent pastimes, just kid stuff. But in South Boston, especially down around the projects, one never has to go very far to find trouble. That is the amazing thing about the place: You can find whatever you want there, sin or salvation.

One evening, Billy and Joe Quirk spotted a bunch of toughs from nearby Mercer Street taking on another gang in a park a few blocks from the projects. As the two kids looked on, horrified, the teenagers lashed one another with leather belts tipped with sharpened buckles. "It was like warfare," Quirk recalls. "Those guys were really going at it." The two boys watched as long as they dared, then raced back to the safety of Old Harbor.

Whitey Bulger also watched these fights. But he had a different reaction. He joined the Mercer Street gang.

The two brothers

moved in completely different worlds after that. Whitey started showing up at local police precincts on larceny charges, although none stuck. And he developed a showy side to his hell-raising. One time, he drove his car right down the tracks through the old Broadway elevated-train station with a blonde beside him, honking and waving to the startled crowd. At 20, he went *(continued on page 207)*

ISRAEL'S SPIN MASTER

Knesset member Dedi Zucker. "He doesn't want to risk your seeing how shallow he is."

Netanyahu says he'd rather face a rolling camera than a writer. "For delineation of character, television is better," he says. He cites a Pentagon report that identifies twenty facial expressions associated with lying. A television close-up, he explains, will expose them all. (The Pentagon denies knowledge of such a study.)

No doubt a television close-up would catch his face, at that moment, making one of the telltale expressions, for he is being disingenuous. He knows very well that television's delineating characteristic is its superficiality and that superficiality suits him: Netanyahu has made himself for prime time. "He used to work with videos," practicing his pitch before every interview, one old friend relates. "Of course, he doesn't have to do that anymore. He does so much TV, he can use Dutch TV for a rehearsal of something he wants to use on ABC."

Gad Ben Ari, a former aide to a Labor Party minister, recalls being astonished by the intensity of Netanyahu's preparation for even the most routine TV debate. "Even in the makeup room, he was sitting with a stack of notes on his lap, leafing through them again and again."

But even his friends worry whether all this will be enough to carry him beyond the role of Israel's Lancelot of the sound bite. In Israel, Netanyahu's stock soared after Madrid. "It was Bibi's Bar Mitzvah," says Harry Wall, head of the Anti-Defamation League office in Israel. Israelis watched the conference gavel to gavel, riveted by the spectacle of their delegation in a room filled with their country's most implacable foes. To them, Netanyahu was the boy with his finger in the dike, the only thing standing between them and a deluge of enemy falsehoods.

It will be a hard act to follow at home. Israeli audiences haven't yet seen as much of Netanyahu as Americans have. In Israel, a TV interview isn't nine seconds—it's half an hour or more, conducted by an interviewer who has served as an army reservist on the West Bank or fought the Syrians and who can't be fobbed off with a neat cliché. As a mere deputy minister, Netanyahu hasn't been in much demand at home for these long news shows; no one is quite sure yet how he'll do.

As usual, Netanyahu has no doubts. He is, after all, the one in the white hat. •

Geraldine Brooks writes frequently about the Middle East. This is her first article for GQ.

THE BULGER BROTHERS

(continued from page 200) off to the air force. No doubt his parents hoped the military would straighten him out. Instead, he was frequently AWOL, ending up in such diverse places as Oklahoma City or the Great Falls, Montana, jail as a suspect in a criminal case. Out of the service in 1952, he turned to crime with a vengeance, as if he was trying to make up for lost time. He went on a crime spree, robbing banks in Massachusetts, Rhode Island and Indiana, before he was grabbed in a Revere, Massachusetts, nightclub, in 1956, and sent away to federal prison for nine years.

Billy played it straight and hit the books. He stayed up so late, he was nicknamed Beam for the reading light that was always on. He didn't plan on being one of the losers who climbed the hill to South Boston High and thence went on to a lifetime of low expectations. He was determined to pass the special entrance exam to Boston College High, and he succeeded, even though going there meant an hour's trolley ride each way and work after school at a neighborhood meat market to make the $37.50 tuition each term. B.C. High led to B.C., then B.C. Law, making Billy Bulger a celebrated Triple Eagle.

Life for Billy quickened the year he graduated from law school, 1960. He married his first girlfriend, Mary Foley, whom he had met as a high-school junior on a cruise ship to Provincetown. And he decided on a political career, running for the Massachusetts house seat that had been vacated by Joseph Moakley, who also lived in Old Harbor Village, at 57 Logan Way. "But that was lower socioeconomic," Bulger teases now. "Ours was the high-rent district." It was his father who had set Billy on the political path, with the regular discussions of Mayor Curley and the New Deal, but it was also his father who tried to warn him off of it. "He thought it would be hard on me," Billy recalls. Then, typically, he opts for a more elevated way of putting it: "I liken it to Themistocles, the great Greek politician, who was taken by his father to the seaside to discourage him from becoming a politician. He showed him the old fishing galleys on the beach, lying there, rotting away. He said, 'That's what the crowd does with its public men when it no longer has use for them.' "

James Bulger may have had another concern when he heard about young Billy's ambitions, and that was that the good son might be tarnished by the exploits of the bad. At the time, Whitey was in the federal penitentiary. But the voters of South Boston proved to be understanding, and they sent Billy to the house. Ten years later, Joe Moakley called to say that he was giving up his seat in the Massachusetts senate to run for Congress, and Billy went on to win it. By the end of the decade, he'd risen to the third in command, then was

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the only one left standing when the senate leadership was erased in a series of scandals. He assumed the presidency in 1978.

By that time, Whitey had settled down to life as a career criminal. Prison had been his B.C. He proved a voracious reader, and he developed a fascination with the strategizing of World War Two, devouring accounts of battles from both sides. This may have sharpened his mind for his own criminal campaigns to come. He also learned about drugs firsthand, when he participated in a three-year CIA program to study the effects of LSD. Billy claims that the drugs still give his brother nightmares, but, according to investigators, that hasn't kept Whitey from profiting from the sale of controlled substances to others. His prison term had the added benefit of keeping him off the streets when they were especially dangerous for a hot-tempered Irish hood. Through the Sixties, Irish gangs from Somerville and Charlestown were fighting it out in a vicious turf war, and sixty aspiring wise guys were snuffed out, their bullet-riddled bodies turning up in the blood-drenched trunks of stolen cars, if they were ever found at all.

When Whitey emerged from prison, in 1965, he quickly fell in with South Boston's Killeen brothers, who needed someone to enforce their gambling-and-loan-sharking operation. But Whitey soon transferred his loyalties to Pat Nee, a leader of the Killeens' archrivals, the Mullins gang, who would later emerge as a major marijuana smuggler in league with the IRA-linked Joe Murray, whose exploits were chronicled in the book *Valhalla's Wake*. In 1972, when Donnie Killeen was machine-gunned to death in his car, the police figured that Whitey had done it. No charges were ever filed, but the crime made Whitey's reputation. He began hanging with the Winter Hill gang in Somerville. He started out small, collecting loan-shark debts and putting the squeeze on hoods trying to make off with goods stolen from the docks of Charlestown and South Boston. But he did well. When Howie Winter was sent off to jail in 1979, he left Whitey Bulger in command.

Although each is a terrible liability to the other, Billy and Whitey have displayed an enduring loyalty to each other. The precise nature of Whitey's emotional ties to his brother can't be known, of course, but he has done his best to keep his criminal activities from damaging Billy's career. This effort apparently led to an attempt to stifle a member of the press. On one slow news day back in 1978, a *Boston Herald* crime reporter named Paul Corsetti happened to ask an organized-crime detective with the Boston police if he thought there was any connection between the Bulger brothers, a topical question since Billy had just ascended to the senate presidency. The detective didn't say much, and Corsetti never followed up on the idea. But the next Saturday night, he was having a beer at the Dockside, in Quincy Marketplace, when a man with unforgettably terrifying steel-gray eyes came up to him and asked if he was Paul Corsetti. Corsetti said yes. "Well, my name is Whitey Bulger, motherfucker, and I kill people for a living," the man announced. He added that he knew where Corsetti and his daughter lived and what kind of car Corsetti drove. Then he left. Corsetti bought a .22 to protect himself, and arranged for police protection for the next few days, but he never again heard anything on the matter. The lesson was not lost on him, however. He never did write anything about the Bulger brothers.

For Billy's part, he provided that custodial job for Whitey, hired him to drive a car during one campaign and named him godfather of one of his children. In the past, he has downplayed the reports of Whitey's criminality but offered no real rebuttals. He once told *The Globe* that his brother had "run off with the circus," unable to bring himself to mention Whitey's true calling.

I was warned that Billy hates to talk to the press about his brother, and I put off our interview as long as I could, but eventually I found my way to his statehouse office. While I waited for nearly forty-five minutes as Bulger was serenaded by a school choral group, I browsed through an edition of Vasari's account of various Renaissance masters, which had been left out for visitors' edification.

Finally, my palms moist, I was ushered into Bulger's presence. Because of his office's majestic proportions, Bulger seemed even smaller than his five-feet-six. Still, as we sat together in a pair of leather club chairs, he could hardly have been more courteous or pleasant. "This man is warming to me," he loudly declared to his secretary at one point. At first, the conversation was less a formal interview than a little chat. He was surprised to hear that everyone was too scared of him to speak on the record. "Really?" he said, actually yanking back his head in a gesture of amazement. "Well, I'll be all the more insufferable now." He pooh-poohed the idea that he was all-powerful, declaring that the power accrued only to his office and that it depended on his pleasing the majority of senators, who had placed him there. He seemed happiest when he could lift the conversation to a higher literary plane. "I assume that life is a constant effort toward greater self-education," he observed at one point, and he freely quoted Seneca, Cicero, Homer, Samuel Johnson and Seamus Heaney. Finally, before I missed my

chance, I swung the conversation around to his upbringing, to his family, and to Whitey. I asked how his brother could have heard a different message at home than he had.

The playful, ironic bantering suddenly stopped. The words came slowly and painfully, as though each one had to be physically ripped from his body. "I have no explanation," he said. "Each person does what he desires to do."

Is it hard for him to be in his position, with Jim—as I knew Billy prefers to call Whitey—in his?

"When people are hostile, then everything is available as a weapon, and yet I don't think it counts."

Does he see Jim very much?

"As often as I can."

Who arranges the meetings?

"I seek him out, and I urge him to come by."

I tried to probe deeper: Does he think that Jim is really evil, as everyone says?

But Billy would go no farther. "Whatever I say, my critics will leap upon and distort, and so I prefer to leave the subject untended." With that, he would discuss his brother no more.

A little later, however, he gave a more revealing glimpse into Whitey. We had been going over a well-publicized incident in which he'd reduced the pay of a housing-court judge named E. George Daher for refusing to provide a job Billy had promised to the son of a former governor's councillor. Although the incident occurred ten years ago, Bulger's anger was still fierce as he recalled the part played in the affair by a reporter he refuses to name. "You have to bear in mind that the reporter who ran the thing and made it the big thing it was is a fella who at that time I would not speak to," he began, his language slipping from nearly Harvardian tones back into his native Southie diction. His voice dropped to a near whisper, and he bore in on me with his ice-blue eyes. Time slowed, the rest of the world fell away. "And one of the reasons I wouldn't speak to him was, he drank too much. One day, I came in and found him using the telephone in the lobby. I said 'I don't think you should use the telephone. I don't let the public do it. I don't think I should be allowing you to.' So he reached in his pocket, and he took out a dime. He was about to flip the dime to me, and I told him 'If you do it, you're going out of here and you're not coming back. Your newspaper will have to kill me before you come back.' "

By the time the senate president finished this story, I'd broken into a sweat. I'd heard Whitey Bulger speak.

The two brothers, so divergent in other respects, coalesce in this: Both have succeeded in leveraging a small base in South Boston into far broader realms. Both have uncanny survival instincts, knowing when to ride a trend and when to buck it. Both are loners. And, most important, both are absolute masters of power, exactly as ruthless as they have to be, no less and no more. "With both of them," says one of the few people in Boston who know both brothers, "if you step out of line, you get your head whacked." It's pretty well established how Whitey does his head-whacking. Interestingly, those who know Billy use the same language to describe his methodology. Senator David Locke, the state senate's minority leader and Bulger's sparring partner, says that Bulger succeeds by figuratively putting a gun to the back of your head. "It's an unseen power, but it's there," he says. Whitey may have offed any number of underworld rivals over the years. Billy is a far more selective assassin, yet his political hits have, if anything, reverberated far more than Whitey's. "I always liked that," Billy told me, smiling, "because it means you don't have to be a real villain." Only two stories ever come up. One is the Judge Daher incident; the other, curiously, involves Whitey's custodial job at the supreme judicial court: Billy froze the pay of John Powers, the former state-senate president, who later served as clerk of the court, after Powers had declared it unseemly to have a convicted felon on the payroll.

But there is a wider pattern of fierce determination that is more impressive than are the specific instances of dirty dealing. During the last campaign, Bulger faced a Republican candidate from the Back Bay named John de Jong, who had the unlikely profession of veterinarian and campaigned to "neuter Billy Bulger." One might think that Bulger wouldn't have taken him too seriously, but in the anti-incumbent political environment, Billy couldn't be too careful. De Jong claims that Bulger's staff threatened to withdraw funding for the Tufts Veterinary School, his alma mater, if De Jong pursued his candidacy, and arranged for Tufts president Jean Mayer, a Bulger loyalist, to tell De Jong so. During the campaign, De Jong received several threatening Whitey-esque phone calls in the middle of the night, cautioning him to "watch your back." Merchants who placed De Jong signs in their windows found themselves facing unexpected questions from the board of health. And on Election Day, De Jong's poll watcher at Saint Monica's Church in South Boston reported being told by Bulger henchmen to "sit outside for a while" as Billy Bulger went into the polling place for a few minutes, alone. It could not be determined what, if anything, he did in there. Bulger himself recalls doing no more than "putting my head in." When he emerged, he clapped his hands and shouted to about a dozen associates "Go get 'em now." The men charged into the nearby projects, where Bulger himself had grown up, and pulled out voters two, three and four at a time.

Bulger won easily. He laughs about the campaign now. "Just because everything is going to the dogs," he says, "that's no reason to send in a veterinarian."

Are Billy and Whitey linked? Every person I spoke to emphatically dismissed the possibility of any criminal involvement on Billy Bulger's part.

Are Billy's and Whitey's activities somehow linked? The question is almost too shocking to ask. And every person I spoke to immediately and emphatically dismissed the possibility of any criminal involvement on Billy Bulger's part. Still, one does wonder. Whitey Bulger has developed an uncanny ability to sense when the investigators are watching. Robert Long, the former state police detective, spent months com-

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THE BULGER BROTHERS

piling enough evidence to win a court order to place a listening device in the Lancaster Street garage, and then, practically as soon as the bug was in, the whole show mysteriously stopped. Long halted the investigation for a few months to let things cool down. By the time he resumed it, Bulger and his associates had shifted their operation to a bank of pay phones outside the Howard Johnson's on the Southeast Expressway in Dorchester. After state troopers had documented this behavior for another few months, they secured a court order to place a wiretap on the six phones. "It takes a lot to get a court order to tap one pay phone," Long says wearily, "let alone six of them." Finally, the taps were in place. "The day we got the court order, *the day we got the order*," Long says, "they stop showing up."

Someone told Whitey, but who? *The Boston Globe*'s Kevin Cullen has advanced the theory that Whitey Bulger has avoided prosecution by serving as an informer for the FBI and cultivating the friendship of John Connally, a now-retired FBI special agent on organized crime who had previously racked up Jerry Angiulo. Bill McMullin, a spokesman for the FBI's Boston office, refused to comment, as a matter of bureau policy, on the allegation but did point out that, under the law, "informers are subject to prosecution like anyone else." And if the charge is true, that doesn't explain why other law-enforcement operations should have been compromised or why other mobsters haven't taken exception to Whitey's FBI involvement. Some people have suggested that the state police inadvertently selected a monitoring specialist with ties to the Patriarca crime family in Providence, who let Whitey know. Or maybe—although there is no evidence of this—Billy Bulger, who knows everything, let his brother in on the secret.

Or maybe the world is not as separated as we'd like to think. Maybe good and evil don't necessarily live in different neighborhoods. Maybe they come from the same family, grow up together, stay in touch, like each other. And maybe they are so intermingled that one can never drive the other out.

Woven through the Bulger story are a number of fringe players who, likewise, have brothers who took a different path—the mobster whose brother is a policeman, the Whitey associate whose brother worked on Michael Dukakis's presidential campaign. Such ancient, unfathomable loyalties hold Boston together, even as other ancient, unfathomable hatreds pull it apart. Either way, the struggle occurs on a far more fundamental level than conventional morality can ever reach. As Whitey himself said, "We're all good guys here." The first thing people say about Boston is all you need to know: It's a very small town. We're all brothers here. •

John Sedgwick writes frequently for GQ. *He is a lifelong resident of Massachusetts.*

COUNTY CLARE

(continued from page 181)

The disaster was not just an act of cruel nature but a crime. George Bernard Shaw said, "When a country is full of food and exporting it, there can be no famine." Cattle, sheep and grain were raised and exported throughout the Great Famine. There were reports of boatloads of grain, brought in as relief from British Quakers, passing boats full of Irish grain on their way to English markets. An English officer, Captain Wynne, reported viewing a turnip field: "I confessed myself shocked by the extent and intensity of the suffering I witnessed, more especially among the women and little children...devouring the raw turnips, mothers half-naked, shivering in the snow and sleet, uttering exclamations of despair whilst their children were screaming with hunger."

I spent half an hour alone in the abandoned village, the buzzing of bees making the quiet more profound. There is no memorial for the dead of Clare, no statue, no sculpture, just places like Cathair Bheannach that are hard to find and, once discovered, pound you with an emotion that Feehan described as knowing the people, "even dying their deaths."

I walked back down the lane, and as I passed the farmhouse, the baby began crying, a long wail that made me shiver in the warm summer sun.

By chance, I found a "green road" that Christy had pointed out the day before. Green roads are rock-walled tracks that are used to move cattle. The road I walked ran high along a ridge over Galway Bay, and from the height I could see shoals and channels of maroon and green in the blue water. The mountains of Connemara were floating in a purple mist, thirty miles away.

I went into a field and had a picnic of cheese, apples and red wine. There was a scent of the sea mixed with mountain thyme, sage, the heady perfume of wildflowers. Silence, and cloud shadows moving slowly over the bare Burren hills. I stayed until suspicious cows entered the field, all staring at the stranger lying in the grass. It was time to go home. •

Ambrose Clancy is the author of The Night Line *and* Blind Pilot, *a novel about the Irish "Troubles."*