WILLIAM BURROUGHS
TWILIGHT'S LAST GLEAMINGS
a hitherto unpublished film scenario

This fascinating document flickers across the mind like an early Griffiths film. William Burroughs uses as his pattern the anarchic violence that has been reflected in recent highly successful American films. But behind his brittle words is heard the muted orchestra of Burroughs' deep forebodings on the future of man.

This film concerns a conspiracy to blow up a train carrying nerve gas from the west coast to the east coast where it is supposed to be dumped into the Atlantic. The conspiracy is not political. Only one FBI man is alert to the danger and he cannot convince his superiors that a conspiracy exists. He is playing a hunch and sometimes he doubts the validity of his intuition. Minutes before countdown he has the evidence he needs. He gets through to the President, Army, Navy, Marines converging on headquarters of the conspirators. FBI man rounds up local police and leads raiding party. Raiding party and conspirators wiped out. Marines, Army, Navy rush in through a pile of corpses and deactivate the robot-controlled missile that is designed to blow up the train. Conspiracy succeeds posthumously when a truck driver on LSD trip with a load of high octane gas crashes into the train.

Conspirators include a folksy meteorologist, an embittered homosexual, a Chinese camera man, a Lesbian, a Mexican pistolero, a Negro castrated in his cradle by rat bites. The time and place for countdown depends of course on prevailing
Chinese camera man takes over at the telstar. Train doors shut and locked. A gum-chewing MP reading SEXTOONS presses a button. The gates open and the train moves out.

Clem (standing in front of USA map): 'You know, I love this country. Only thing wrong with it is the folks living there.' (His face goes black with hate.) 'MOTHER LOVING STUPID-ASSED BIBLE BELT CUNTSUCKERS'. (He smiles and turns to Audrey, Miss Longridge and the spade whose name is Jones): 'Now you're city folk. You never drank cool spring water on a summer afternoon. You never sat down to fried squirrel and jack rabbit with black-eyed peas and wild raspberries. You never planted corn and cotton and tomatoes and watched them grow. You never sank your hands in the soil and let it run through your fingers... sandy loam... I've seen it four feet deep....' (He turns back to the map) 'Yes, sir, we're gonna lay down a mighty fine load of fertilizer.' (He sweeps his hand across the Middle West): 'The trees will grow again, the bison will come back, the deer and the wild turkey.'

Jones: 'I had a dream I said.'

Audrey: 'Other people are different from me and I don't like them.'

The camera man is taking shots through the telstar. Miss Longridge is looking at the nudes in Playboy.

Tio Mate the Mexican pistolero is cleaning his Smith & Wesson tip-up 44. It is a beautiful custom-made gun with hunting scenes engraved on the cylinder and barrel, given to him by the patron 30 years ago for 'taking care of my unfortunate brother the General.'

Jones is taking a fix.

Cut to FBI man panning up and down in his office. His name is Joe Rogers.

Rogers: 'I had a dream I tell you. I saw that train go up and that gas sweeping up the Eastern Seaboard.'

His second in command, Mr. Falk, is inclined to be cynical and describe himself as a white-collar bum who works for that crazy American government.

Falk: 'Are you going to tell the Chief about your dream, Joe?'

Rogers (picking up phone): 'No, but I'm going to ask him for more agents.'

Falk: 'Gotta stay ahead of the Commies or everybody's kids will be learning Chinese.'

Rogers: 'If my hunch is correct there may not be any kids left to learn anything.'

Cover story of the conspirators is that they are making a documentary film of America. Clem is the director, Lee the camera man, Audrey, the script writer Miss Longridge the business manager and Tio Mate the studio guard. The film of course is a documentary of America. Theme songs: 'The Star Spangled Banner,' 'America I Love You,' 'From Sea to Shining Sea,' 'Don't Fence Me In,' 'Home on the Range,' 'The Red River Valley.'

Rogers encounters the film company at the OK corral in Tombstone. He is intuitively suspicious. However, a check turns up no political connections and he drops the lead.

As the conspirators move from one set to the other following the train incidents occur.

In a deserted roadhouse Audrey rapes a young sailor at gunpoint while Lee impassively films the action.

Audrey: 'OK CUT...' (He turns to the sailor) 'You can put on your clothes now... And let's see how fast you can run.'

Sailor takes off like a rabbit and reaches the top of a hill fifty yards away. Tio Mate draws aim and fires. Tio Mate can blast a vulture out of the air with his .44.

Miss Longridge raps two female hitchhikers. And then, stark naked, she kills them with a baseball bat.

They stop at a filling station and honk. Nobody comes so Jones gets out to fill the tank himself. At this moment the owner of the filling station, a Nigger-killing lawman with six notches in his gun, comes out a side door.

Lawman: 'Get away from that pump, boy.'

Jones: 'Yahush boss,' (He drenches the lawman with gasoline and sets him on fire.)

Jones, who is hooked on junk, leaves a wake of dead druggists.

Audrey is restrained at gun point from mass rape of a boy scout troop.

Tio Mate shoots down an army helicopter. Clem sounds a word of warning to his impetuous companions.

Clem: 'Such a thing as too much fun. We're leaving a trail like a herd of elephants.'

They are stopped by three cops.

Cop: 'We gotta find out who you folks are.'

Clem drops his hands resignedly and nods to Tio Mate.

Tio Mate: 'I will show you who we are señores.' (He kills them with three shots.)

Clem (getting out of the car): 'Now how is

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Brandy continued from page 66
barrel age: VSOP. 10-15 years. The Extras
can be anything above that.
Unlike the wine situation, vineyards play
no role as such in the production of Cognacs.
Vineyard areas, however, are important and
are universally recognized as definite
categories of quality. Generally, as is the
case with Champagne and Sherry, the
chalkier the soil, the better the quality.
In descending order (and with percentages
showing roughly the Cognac wine pro-
duction in each), the regions are:
GRANDE CHAMPAGNE (10.8%)
PETITE CHAMPAGNE (10.3%)
BORDERIES (3.9%)
FINS BOIS (33.0%)
BONS BOIS (29.0%)
BOIS ORDINAIRES (13.0%)
To avoid confusion, you have to remember
that the word 'Champagne' refers here to
the characteristic rolling downland of this
region (which is a bit like the Champagne
area itself - or southern Sussex, for that
matter). Cognacs emanating from Grande
Champagne is the most expensive of the lot,
although the difference in quality between
the first and the last on the list above is
nothing like the difference you would
expect from great wine and vin ordinaire.
Grande Champagne possesses bouquet and
elegance, though it can be harsh when
young. It has less body than Cognac from
the borderies, but more than petite cham-
pagne. Petite champagne, in fact, possesses
much the same characteristics as its
grander brother, but to a lesser extent.
Neither is to be confused with fine cham-
pagne, which is a trade term referring to
a blend of the two and deriving exclusively
from those regions.
Actual future sales of Brandy seem secure
enough. About 80% of Cognac is exported,
with England by far the largest customer,
followed by the USA and, oddly, the
Chinese population of Malaysia and Singa-
apore. England in fact consumes a cool
million cases of the stuff annually, and
there is no reason to suppose that demand
will slacken.
Finally, a few hints for the newly converted.
There is, gentlemen, no excuse whatever
(except poverty or disease) for not pur-
chasing brandy - still less for not drinking
it. In the opinion of most competent
judges, brandy is the most manly, the most
virile, the most imaginative, the most
rewarding of all liquors. It is also, if you
want to be mercenary, a very fine
investment, given a scrap of cellar space.
Consider: prices of everything are always
rising, and brandy is no exception. Con-
sider, too, that a brandy bottle's value
increases with the age of its contents. You
gain both ways.
Generally speaking, it is better value to
buy VSOP rather than Three-Star, for the
costs of import duty, bottling, casing, and
so on, are the same for both. But the
best simple rule is to use the services and advice
of a reputable shipper. Surprisingly, wine
and spirit prices do not vary much from
the prestigious and old-established firms, on
the one hand, to your friendly neighbour-
hoodbooze merchant on the other. But
the former's taste, knowledge and sophisti-
cation are to be relied on.
In storing your brandy, there are just two
rules to remember: avoid a place that is
subject to extremes of temperature, and
store brandy upright. Wine is laid on its
side so that the cork stays moist and
healthy. But spirits need to be upright so
that the cork does not degenerate through
contact with alcohol.
As to the drinking of brandy, be respectful
but by no means obsequious. Brandy
should not be drunk in a liqueur glass.
It cannot be warmed in such a glass; nor
can its aroma be savoured. (There is, by
the way, no such thing as liqueur brandy -
though any good brandy can be drunk as
a liqueur.)
Neither should brandy be poured to the
sound of violins into one of those giant and
pretentious glass balloons that look like
a Russian space probe (the glass is much
too thick). Above all, just as you would
not attempt to warm up your old graney over
a naked flame, so you should not inflict
that kind of treatment on a brandy.
The result would be the same in both cases:
death from shock and culpable homicide.
Reserve that sort of treatment for amhrac-
icity.
Any glass will be serviceable for brandy if
it fulfils a few conditions. It should be
large enough so that there is space above
the liquid for the vapours to congregate.
It must be small enough so that the
thinness of the glass at the base allows the
brandy to be gently warmed by the hand
that cradles and swirls it. It must be
tulip-shaped, or at least taper upwards, so
that the bouquet does not escape. The ideal
glass fits into the palm of the hand comfor-
tably. The bouquet is gently released by
the warmth of the hand. First the nose
savour, then the mouth sips. One does
not, gentlemen, knock brandy back.
So, Gentlemen, your very good health!