

The Second Day

MORNING: 5:00 A.M.—10:00 A.M.

There are many early risers today. Thule, Domenico, the Camerlengo, Franzus, Angelico, Azande, are among the first to say their private Masses at 5:30 A.M.

By 6 o'clock, when the young Monsignore has been seated a bare five minutes at his desk, the Camerlengo arrives with Thule and Lohngren. They closet themselves in the inner office. The young Monsignore glances at his watch, then slips out and closes the outer door. He will have an early morning coffee with the priest-confessors.

Inside in the office, only one point is discussed: how to stop Angelico. In spite of Domenico's denial of any intention on his part to propose Angelico, or on Angelico's part to canvass for a nomination, the fear is that he will be nominated and will run as candidate. Too much has happened. All three Cardinals feel sure he will be put in nomination by Domenico and seconded by someone of Domenico's choosing. Before throwing their support in Thule's direction, the Camerlengo and Lohngren discuss the *Coalition Policy* with Thule. They have certain conditions: not so "open" a Church for non-Catholics as Thule proposes; a much slower and more cautious approach to the Marxists than Thule wishes. He agrees.

Then they discuss tactics. Thule's first idea is to create a long delay by organizing several speakers.

"It won't work, Eminence," the Camerlengo tells him. "Somewhere along the line, Domenico or one of his sympathizers may propose to elect their own candidate by acclamation. By then, he will have got all the Asians and Africans, most Europeans, perhaps even some of the Latin Americans. What then?"

"That's *it*, Brother!" Thule straightens up. "That's what we must do. We propose . . . I propose Yiu to be elected by acclamation. Buff seconds. My name is down already as first speaker. That's it, my Brother."

"Supposing they have the same idea?" the other men ask.

"No. It's not Domenico's way," Lohngren says soberly. "Besides, I think Domenico is too respectful of proper procedure. No. It is Angelico I fear. If you can get your proposal and seconding through, and Angelico doesn't follow you—by the way is he marked down to speak? No? Well, then, if you get past that point, you should have no difficulty."

After a few minutes' further conversation, they break up. The Camerlengo has paperwork to get through concerning the Conclave—he still is Camerlengo. Thule seeks out Buff in order to alert him as to the plan. Lohngren has to go and talk with the other Germans and some of the North Americans.

Angelico and Azande have an appointment with Domenico for 7:30 A.M. Domenico is late. The other two sit in his apartment waiting for him. He arrives at 7:50 A.M. "Either of Your Eminences going to breakfast?" he asks them, as he walks in. Both visitors shake their heads. "Well, then, let's get down to business. Here's the situation.

"There's going to be a rush acclamation, or an attempt at it." He looks at Azande. "By Thule and Buff." He stops, then adds: "Of Yiu, of course." Angelico draws a deep breath.

"Steady a moment," Domenico goes on. "I shall ask for special permission to speak. But—note it well—permission, not from the Presidents, but from the Conclave." He stops and looks at Angelico and Azande, appraising their reactions. "A rush acclamation job of our own."

"And then?" Angelico asks.

"Then," Domenico says slowly, "it is up to His Eminence here," turning his head around to look at Azande. Azande coughs and smiles a little sheepishly. The three are silent. Finally, Azande speaks.

"And what shall I recommend, Father?"

"Exactly what the situation demands, Eminence."

"But I have not prepared anything."

"Let me see: You have been an ordained priest, a

Bishop, and a Cardinal for over twenty-five years. Yes, I guess, twenty-five years or more have either prepared Your Eminence for this moment or they have not. We are going to find out within an hour or two. Now Eminence . . ." Domenico says this to Azande as he glances at his watch, "if you will excuse us two, we have some private matters to discuss."

Azande rises, smiles at both of them, and leaves.

Angelico looks at Domenico and waits. Domenico is also waiting. He only says: "We will have a visitor at 8:15. When he leaves, you go with him. Apart from the bathroom, stick to him at every moment. If you cannot find room together at Mass, then when the Mass is over at about 9:40, meet him outside the Chapel and walk with him past my room and toward yours—as if you wished to pick up something for the Session but did not want to lose his company. Understood?"

At a few moments after 8:15, there is a light knock at the door. Domenico opens it. The young Cardinal with the stutter is there. "Good morning, Eminence!" Domenico's voice is genial and friendly. Angelico stands up. "Angelico here is hungry, as I promised you! Now he will explain what I think exactly of the Progressivist theologians and about our prospects in Mainland China."

The Mass is a difficult experience for the young Cardinal. Again, as he gives a look around the Chapel, he senses the unity and the union of these men in spite of all their differences; or, rather their very differences seem to be the source of their unity. In front of him he recognizes Pellino with his continual shifting from knee to knee; Desai who is hunched over the pew, his head buried in his hands; the tremulous Sargent; the imperious figure of the arrogant Kirchner; Balboa, erect and slightly fierce; Dowd, the long Scotsman; Ni Kan, stiff and motionless. Each different, one from the other.

Looking over at the other side he runs his eye over a montage of faces: Domenico, Venturi, Lotuko, Lombardi, Vignente. Some invisible line of love, or at least of devotion to a cause, seems to run through them all, but to evade his own hand. All this is difficult enough for the young Cardinal. He feels alien.

His pain becomes acute when the Camerlengo raises

the Consecrated Host, saying the ritual words: "Through Him, with Him, and in Him, there is for You, All-powerful Father, all glory and honor for ever and ever." For that instant, most of the Cardinals raise their eyes and look at the Host in the Celebrant's hands. The young Cardinal feels excluded from some happiness that the others share, even if they are not conscious of that sharing. And he remembers what was said to him as a young priest in a remote country parish years before. It was a suicide whom he tried to dissuade: "Father, yesterday or last year—I don't know when—I fell from the velvet dark of happy stars down into these senseless yet sense-lit days and noisome hours. I will have an end to it all now. I cannot go on like this."

As he walks with Angelico along the corridor and the warning bell rings, he says for no apparent reason and not in particular to Angelico: "I have a few important questions to ask you. But for the last hour, the heavens were sort of wiped out. Like a rough hand had banged all the doors shut. But let me drop into my own rooms. I will rejoin you at the door."

"Walk with me as far as my apartment," Angelico says easily, "it will take a second or two. Then you can drop off and catch up with me later." The young Cardinal acquiesces.

As they pass Domenico's door, they both see it open. Domenico and Edouardo Ruzzo, the chief of security, are standing there. Ruzzo, Angelico thinks, is being very, very reverential and respectful. He does not look in the Cardinal's eyes. He has his eyes lowered and is looking intently at the Cardinal's pectoral cross.

Domenico is all urbanity. "Eminence," he calls softly to the young Cardinal, "a moment of your time. Please!"

"We'll catch up with each other later at the bus," Angelico says, seeing his cue. The door of Domenico's apartment closes behind Domenico and Ruzzo and the young Cardinal.

THE THIRD SESSION

When the Cardinal Electors are assembled in the Upper Room, a quarter of an hour later, Domenico enters followed by the young Cardinal and by the Camerlengo. Prob-