

**Make  
Room!  
Make  
Room!**

**Harry  
Harrison**



PENGUIN CLASSICS SCIENCE FICTION

## **Make Room! Make Room!**

Harry Harrison was born in Stamford, Connecticut, in 1925 and lived in New York City until 1943 when he was drafted into the United States Army. He was a computer technician and machine-gun instructor during the war, and returned to his art studies after leaving the army. A career as a commercial illustrator, art director and editor compelled him to live in New York. But as soon as his writing – fiction and non-fiction – began to sell, he travelled, eventually settling in England. He died in 2012.

His books include *Deathworld*, the *Stainless Steel Rat* series, *Bill, the Galactic Hero*, *Stars and Stripes Forever*, *West of Eden* and *Captive Universe*.

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*To Todd and Moira.*

*For your sakes, children, I hope this  
proves to be a work of fiction.*



## Prologue

In December 1959, the President of the United States, Dwight D. Eisenhower, said: 'This government . . . will not . . . as long as I am here, have a positive political doctrine in its program that has to do with this problem of birth control. That is not our business.' It has not been the business of any American government since that time.

In 1950 the United States – with just 9 per cent of the world's populations – was consuming 50 per cent of the world's raw materials. This percentage keeps getting bigger and within fifteen years, at the present rate of growth, the United States will be consuming over 83 per cent of the annual output of the earth's materials. By the end of the century, should our population continue to increase at the same rate, this country will need more than 100 per cent of the planet's resources to maintain our current living standards. This is a mathematical impossibility – aside from the fact that there will be about seven billion people on this earth at that time and – perhaps – they would like to have some of the raw materials too.

In which case, what will the world be like?



# Part One



**Monday, August 9, 1999**

New York City –

– stolen from the trusting Indians by the wily Dutch, taken from the law-abiding Dutch by the warlike British, then wrested in turn from the peaceful British by the revolutionary colonials. Its trees were burned decades ago, its hills leveled and the fresh ponds drained and filled, while the crystal springs have been imprisoned underground and spill their pure waters directly into the sewers. Reaching out urbanizing tentacles from its island home, the city has become a megalopolis with four of its five boroughs blanketing half of one island over a hundred miles long, engulfing another island, and sprawling up the Hudson River onto the mainland of North America. The fifth and original borough is Manhattan: a slab of primordial granite and metamorphic rock bounded on all sides by water, squatting like a steel and stone spider in the midst of its web of bridges, tunnels, tubes, cables and ferries. Unable to expand outward, Manhattan has writhed upward, feeding on its own flesh as it tears down the old buildings to replace them with the new, rising higher and still higher – yet never high enough, for there seems to be no limit to the people crowding here. They press in from the outside and raise their families, and their children and their children’s children raise

*Harry Harrison*

families, until this city is populated as no other city has ever been in the history of the world.

On this hot day in August in the year 1999 there are – give or take a few thousand – thirty-five million people in the City of New York.

# 1

The August sun struck in through the open window and burned on Andrew Rusch's bare legs until discomfort dragged him awake from the depths of heavy sleep. Only slowly did he become aware of the heat and the damp and gritty sheet beneath his body. He rubbed at his gummed-shut eyelids, then lay there, staring up at the cracked and stained plaster of the ceiling, only half awake and experiencing a feeling of dislocation, not knowing in those first waking moments just where he was, although he had lived in this room for over seven years. He yawned and the odd sensation slipped away while he groped for the watch that he always put on the chair next to the bed, then yawned again as he blinked at the hands mistily seen behind the scratched crystal. Seven . . . seven o'clock in the morning, and there was a little number 9 in the middle of the square window. Monday the ninth of August, 1999 – and hot as a furnace already, with the city still imbedded in the heat wave that had baked and suffocated New York for the past ten days. Andy scratched at a trickle of perspiration on his side, then moved his legs out of the patch of sunlight and bunched the pillow up under his neck. From the other side of the thin partition that divided the room in half there came a clanking whir that quickly rose to a high-pitched drone.

'Morning . . .' he shouted over the sound, then began

coughing. Still coughing he reluctantly stood and crossed the room to draw a glass of water from the wall tank; it came out in a thin, brownish trickle. He swallowed it, then rapped the dial on the tank with his knuckles and the needle bobbed up and down close to the *Empty* mark. It needed filling, he would have to see to that before he signed in at four o'clock at the precinct. The day had begun.

A full-length mirror with a crack running down it was fixed to the front of the hulking wardrobe and he poked his face close to it, rubbing at his bristly jaw. He would have to shave before he went in. No one should ever look at himself in the morning, naked and revealed, he decided with distaste, frowning at the dead white of his skin and the slight bow to his legs that was usually concealed by his pants. And how did he manage to have ribs that stuck out like those of a starved horse, as well as a growing potbelly – both at the same time? He kneaded the soft flesh and thought that it must be the starchy diet, that and sitting around on his chunk most of the time. But at least the fat wasn't showing on his face. His forehead was a little higher each year, but wasn't too obvious as long as his hair was cropped short. You have just turned thirty, he thought to himself, and the wrinkles are already starting around your eyes. And your nose is too big – wasn't it Uncle Brian who always said that was because there was Welsh blood in the family? And your canine teeth are a little too obvious so when you smile you look a bit like a hyena. You're a handsome devil, Andy Rusch, and when was the last time you had a date? He scowled at himself, then went to look for a handkerchief to blow his impressive Welsh nose.

There was just a single pair of clean undershorts in the drawer and he pulled them on; that was another thing he had to remember today, to get some washing done. The squealing whine was still coming from the other side of the partition as he pushed through the connecting door.

‘You’re going to give yourself a coronary, Sol,’ he told the gray-bearded man who was perched on the wheel-less bicycle, pedaling so industriously that perspiration ran down his chest and soaked into the bath towel that he wore tied around his waist.

‘Never a coronary,’ Solomon Kahn gasped out, pumping steadily. ‘I been doing this every day for so long that my ticker would miss it if I stopped. And no cholesterol in my arteries either since regular flushing with alcohol takes care of that. And no lung cancer since I couldn’t afford to smoke even if I wanted to, which I don’t. And at the age of seventy-five no prostatitis because . . .’

‘Sol, please – spare me the horrible details on an empty stomach. Do you have an ice cube to spare?’

‘Take two – it’s a hot day. And don’t leave the door open too long.’

Andy opened the small refrigerator that squatted against the wall and quickly took out the plastic container of margarine, then squeezed two ice cubes from the tray into a glass and slammed the door. He filled the glass with water from the wall tank and put it on the table next to the margarine. ‘Have you eaten yet?’ he asked.

‘I’ll join you, these things should be charged by now.’

Sol stopped pedaling and the whine died away to a moan, then vanished. He disconnected the wires from

the electrical generator that was geared to the rear axle of the bike, and carefully coiled them up next to the four black automobile storage batteries that were racked on top of the refrigerator. Then, after wiping his hands on his soiled towel sarong, he pulled out one of the bucket seats, salvaged from an ancient 1975 Ford, and sat down across the table from Andy.

‘I heard the six o’clock news,’ he said. ‘The Eldsters are organizing another protest march today on relief headquarters. *That’s* where you’ll see coronaries!’

‘I won’t, thank God, I’m not on until four and Union Square isn’t in our precinct.’ He opened the breadbox and took out one of the six-inch-square red crackers, then pushed the box over to Sol. He spread margarine thinly on it and took a bite, wrinkling his nose as he chewed. ‘I think this margarine has turned.’

‘How can you tell?’ Sol grunted, biting into one of the dry crackers. ‘Anything made from motor oil and whale blubber is turned to begin with.’

‘Now you begin to sound like a naturalist,’ Andy said, washing his cracker down with cold water. ‘There’s hardly any flavor at all to the fats made from petrochemicals and you know there aren’t any whales left so they can’t use blubber – it’s just good chlorella oil.’

‘Whales, plankton, herring oil, it’s all the same. Tastes fishy. I’ll take mine dry so I don’t grow no fins.’ There was a sudden staccato rapping on the door and he groaned. ‘Not yet eight o’clock and already they are after you.’

‘It could be anything,’ Andy said, starting for the door.

‘It could be but it’s not, that’s the callboy’s knock and you know it as well as I do and I bet you dollars to

doughnuts that's just who it is. See?' He nodded with gloomy satisfaction when Andy unlocked the door and they saw the skinny, bare-legged messenger standing in the dark hall.

'What do you want, Woody?' Andy asked.

'I don' wan' no-fin,' Woody lisped over his bare gums. Though he was in his early twenties he didn't have a tooth in his head. 'Lieutenant' says bring, I bring.' He handed Andy the message board with his name written on the outside.

Andy turned toward the light and opened it, reading the lieutenant's spiky scrawl on the slate, then took the chalk and scribbled his initials after it and returned it to the messenger. He closed the door behind him and went back to finish his breakfast, frowning in thought.

'Don't look at me that way,' Sol said, 'I didn't send the message. Am I wrong in guessing it's not the most pleasant of news?'

'It's the Eldsters, they're jamming the Square already and the precinct needs reinforcements.'

'But why you? This sounds like a job for the harness bulls.'

'Harness bulls! Where do you get that medieval slang? Of course they need patrolmen for the crowd, but there have to be detectives there to spot known agitators, pick-pockets, purse-grabbers and the rest. It'll be murder in that park today. I have to check in by nine, so I have enough time to bring up some water first.'

Andy dressed slowly in slacks and a loose sport shirt, then put a pan of water on the windowsill to warm in the sun. He took the two five-gallon plastic jerry cans,

and when he went out Sol looked up from the TV set, glancing over the top of his old-fashioned glasses.

‘When you bring back the water I’ll fix you a drink – or do you think it is too early?’

‘Not the way I feel today, it’s not.’

The hall was ink black once the door had closed behind him and he felt his way carefully along the wall to the stairs, cursing and almost falling when he stumbled over a heap of refuse someone had thrown there. Two flights down a window had been knocked through the wall and enough light came in to show him the way down the last two flights to the street. After the damp hallway the heat of Twenty-fifth Street hit him in a musty wave, a stifling miasma compounded of decay, dirt and unwashed humanity. He had to make his way through the women who already filled the steps of the building, walking carefully so that he didn’t step on the children who were playing below. The sidewalk was still in shadow but so jammed with people that he walked in the street, well away from the curb to avoid the rubbish and litter banked high there. Days of heat had softened the tar so that it gave underfoot, then clutched at the soles of his shoes. There was the usual line leading to the columnar red water point on the corner of Seventh Avenue, but it broke up with angry shouts and some waved fists just as he reached it. Still muttering, the crowd dispersed and Andy saw that the duty patrolman was locking the steel door.

‘What’s going on?’ Andy asked. ‘I thought this point was open until noon?’

The policeman turned, his hand automatically staying close to his gun until he recognized the detective from his

own precinct. He tilted back his uniform cap and wiped the sweat from his forehead with the back of his hand.

‘Just had the orders from the sergeant, all points closed for twenty-four hours. The reservoir level is low because of the drought, they gotta save water.’

‘That’s a hell of a note,’ Andy said, looking at the key still in the lock. ‘I’m going on duty now and this means I’m not going to be drinking for a couple of days . . .’

After a careful look around, the policeman unlocked the door and took one of the jerry cans from Andy. ‘One of these ought to hold you.’ He held it under the faucet while it filled, then lowered his voice. ‘Don’t let it out, but the word is that there was another dynamiting job on the aqueduct upstate.’

‘Those farmers again?’

‘It must be. I was on guard duty up there before I came to this precinct and it’s rough, they just as soon blow you up with the aqueduct at the same time. Claim the city’s stealing their water.’

‘They’ve got enough,’ Andy said, taking the full container. ‘More than they need. And there are thirty-five million people here in the city who get damn thirsty.’

‘Who’s arguing?’ the cop asked, slamming the door shut again and locking it tight.

Andy pushed his way back through the crowd around the steps and went through to the backyard first. All of the toilets were in use and he had to wait, and when he finally got into one of the cubicles he took the jerry cans with him; one of the kids playing in the pile of rubbish against the fence would be sure to steal them if he left them unguarded.

When he had climbed the dark flights once more and opened the door to the room he heard the clear sound of ice cubes rattling against glass.

'That's Beethoven's Fifth Symphony that you're playing,' he said, dropping the containers and falling into a chair.

'It's my favorite tune,' Sol said, taking two chilled glasses from the refrigerator and, with the solemnity of a religious ritual, dropped a tiny pearl onion into each. He passed one to Andy, who sipped carefully at the chilled liquid.

'It's when I taste one of these, Sol, that I almost believe you're not crazy after all. Why do they call them Gibsons?'

'A secret lost behind the mists of time. Why is a Stinger a Stinger or a Pink Lady a Pink Lady?'

'I don't know – why? I never tasted any of them.'

'I don't know either, but that's the name. Like those green things they serve in the knockjoints, Panamas. Doesn't mean anything, just a name.'

'Thanks,' Andy said, draining his glass. 'The day looks better already.'

He went into his room and took his gun and holster from the drawer and clipped it inside the waistband of his pants. His shield was on his key ring where he always kept it and he slipped his notepad in on top of it, then hesitated a moment. It was going to be a long and rough day and anything might happen. He dug his nippers out from under his shirts, then the soft plastic tube filled with shot. It might be needed in the crowd, safer than a gun with all those old people milling about. Not only that,

but with the new austerity regulations you had to have a damn good reason for using up any ammunition. He washed as well as he could with the pint of water that had been warming in the sun on the windowsill, then scrubbed his face with the small shard of gray and gritty soap until his whiskers softened a bit. His razor blade was beginning to show obvious nicks along both edges and, as he honed it against the inside of his drinking glass, he thought that it was time to think about getting a new one. Maybe in the fall.

Sol was watering his window box when Andy came out, carefully irrigating the rows of herbs and tiny onions. 'Don't take any wooden nickels,' he said without looking up from his work. Sol had a million of them, all old. What in the world was a wooden nickel?

The sun was higher now and the heat was mounting in the sealed tar and concrete valley of the street. The band of shade was smaller and the steps were so packed with humanity that he couldn't leave the doorway. He carefully pushed by a tiny, runny-nosed girl dressed only in ragged gray underwear and descended a step. The gaunt women moved aside reluctantly, ignoring him, but the men stared at him with a cold look of hatred stamped across their features that gave them a strangely alike appearance, as though they were all members of the same angry family. Andy threaded his way through the last of them and when he reached the sidewalk he had to step over the outstretched leg of an old man who sprawled there. He looked dead, not asleep, and he might be for all that anyone cared. His foot was bare and filthy and a string tied about his ankle led to a naked baby that was

sitting vacantly on the sidewalk chewing on a bent plastic dish. The baby was as dirty as the man and the string was tied about its chest under the pipestem arms because its stomach was swollen and heavy. Was the old man dead? Not that it mattered, the only work he had to do in the world was to act as an anchor for the baby and he could do that job as well alive or dead.

Christ but I'm morbid this morning, Andy thought, it must be the heat, I can't sleep well and there are the nightmares. It's this endless summer and all the troubles, one thing just seems to lead to another. First the heat, then the drought, the warehouse thefts and now the Eldsters. They were crazy to come out in this kind of weather. Or maybe they're being driven crazy by the weather. It was too hot to think and when he turned the corner the shimmering length of Seventh Avenue burned before him and he could feel the strength of the sun on his face and arms. His shirt was sticking to his back already and it wasn't even a quarter to nine.

It was better on Twenty-third Street in the long shadow of the cross-town expressway that filled the sky above, and he walked slowly in the dimness, keeping an eye on the heavy pedicab and tugtruck traffic. Around each supporting pillar of the roadway was a little knot of people, clustered against it like barnacles around a pile, with their legs almost among the wheels of the traffic. Overhead there sounded a waning rumble as a heavy truck passed on the expressway and he could see another truck ahead parked in front of the precinct house. Uniformed patrolmen were slowly climbing into the back and Detective Lieutenant Grassioli was standing next to the cab with

a noteboard, talking to the sergeant. He looked up and scowled at Andy and a nervous tic shook his left eyelid like an angry wink.

‘It’s about time you showed up, Rusch,’ he said, making a check mark on the noteboard.

‘It was my day off, sir, I came as soon as the callboy showed up.’ You had to put up a defense with Grassy or he walked all over you: he had ulcers, diabetes and a bad liver.

‘A cop is on duty twenty-four hours a day so get your chunk into the truck. And I want you and Kulozik to bring in some dips. I got complaints from Centre Street coming out of my ears.’

‘Yes, sir,’ Andy said to the lieutenant’s back as he turned toward the station house. Andy climbed the three steps welded to the tailgate and sat down on the board bench next to Steve Kulozik, who had closed his eyes and started to doze as soon as the lieutenant had left. He was a solid man whose flesh quivered somewhere between fat and muscle, and he was wearing wrinkled cotton slacks and a short-sleeved shirt just like Andy’s, with the shirt also hanging over the belt to conceal the gun and holster. He opened one eye half-way and grunted when Andy dropped down beside him, then let it droop shut again.

The starter whined irritably, over and over, until finally the low-quality fuel caught and the diesel engine slowly thudded to life, shuddered and steadied as the truck pulled away from the curb and moved east. The uniformed policemen all sat sideways on the benches so they could catch some of the breeze from the truck’s motion and at the same time watch the densely populated streets:

the police weren't popular this summer. If anything was thrown at them they wanted to see it coming. Sudden vibration racked the truck and the driver shifted to a lower gear and leaned on his horn, forcing a path through the swarming people and hordes of creeping man-powered vehicles. When they came to Broadway progress slowed to a crawl as people spilled over into the roadway next to Madison Square with its flea market and tent city. It was no better after they had turned downtown since the Eldsters were already out in force and heading south, and were haltingly slow in getting out of the truck's way. The seated policemen looked out at them indifferently as they rolled by, a slowly surging mass: gray heads, bald heads, most of them with canes, while one old man with a great white beard swung along on crutches. There were a large number of wheelchairs. When they emerged into Union Square the sun, no longer blocked by the buildings, burned down unrelentingly upon them.

'It's murder,' Steve Kulozik said, yawning as he swung down from the truck. 'Getting all these old gaffers out in the heat will probably kill off half of them. It must be a hundred degrees in the sun – it was ninety-three at eight o'clock.'

'That's what the medics are for,' Andy said, nodding toward the small group of men in white who were unrolling stretchers next to a Department of Hospitals trailer. The detectives strolled toward the rear of the crowd that already had filled the park, facing toward the speaker's platform in the center. There was an amplified scratching sound and a quickly cut-off whine as the public address system was tested.

‘A record-breaker,’ Steve said, his eyes searching the crowd steadily while they talked. ‘I hear the reservoirs are so low that some of the outlet pipes are uncovered. That and the upstate rubes dynamiting the aqueduct again . . .’

The squeal from the loudspeakers dissolved into the echoing thunder of an amplified voice.

‘. . . Comrades, Fellows and Dames, members all of the Eldsters of America, I ask your attention. I had ordered some clouds for this morning but it sure looks like the order never got through . . .’

An appreciative murmur rolled over the park, there were a few handclaps.

‘Who’s that talking?’ Steve asked.

‘Reeves, the one they call Kid Reeves because he’s only sixty-five years old. He’s business manager of the Eldsters now and he’ll be their president next year if he keeps going like this . . .’ His words were drowned out as Reeves’s voice shattered the hot air again.

‘But we have clouds enough in our lives so perhaps we can live without these clouds in the sky.’ This time there was an angry edge to the crowd’s grumbling answer. ‘The authorities have seen to it that we cannot work, no matter how fit or able we are, and they have fixed the tiny, insulting, miserable handout that we are supposed to live on and at the same time they see to it that money buys less and less every year, every month, almost every day . . .’

‘There goes the first one,’ Andy said, pointing to a man at the back of the crowd who fell to his knees, clutching his chest. He started forward but Steve Kulozik held him back.

‘Leave it for them,’ he said, pointing to the two medics

who were already pushing forward. 'Heart failure or heat stroke and it's not going to be the last. Come on, let's circulate the crowd.'

'... once again we are called upon to unite ... forces that would keep us poverty ridden, starving, forgotten ... the rising costs have wiped out ...'

There seemed to be no connection between the small figure on the distant platform and the voice booming around them. The two detectives separated and Andy slowly worked his way through the crowd.

'... we will not accept second best, or third or fourth best as it has become, nor will we accept a dirty corner of the hearth to drowse and starve in. Ours is a vital segment – no, I'll say *the* vital segment of the population – a reservoir of age and experience, of knowledge, of judgement. Let City Hall and Albany and Washington act – or beware, because when the votes are counted they will discover ...'

The words broke in crashing waves about Andy's head and he paid them no attention as he pushed between the painfully attentive Eldsters, his eyes alert and constantly moving, threading a path through the sea of toothless gums, gray-whiskered cheeks and watery eyes. There were no dips here, the lieutenant had been wrong about that, the pickpockets knew better than to try and work a crowd like this. Dead broke, these people, all of them. Or if they had a little change it was locked in one of those old clasp purses and sewn to their underwear or something.

There was a movement in the crowd and two young boys pushed through, laughing to each other, locking

their bare scratched legs about each other's in a tumbling game, seeing who would fall.

'That's enough,' Andy said, standing in front of them. 'Slow down and out of the park, boys, there's nothing for you here.'

'Who says! We can do what we wanna . . .'

'The law says,' Andy snapped at them and slid the blackjack out of his pocket and lifted it warningly. 'Move!'

They turned without a word and made their way out of the crowd and he followed just far enough to make sure that they were gone. Kids, he thought as he slid the tube of shot away, maybe just ten or eleven years old, but you had to watch them closely and you couldn't let them give you any crap and you had to be careful because if you turned your back and there were enough of them they would pull you down and cut you up with pieces of broken glass like they did to poor damned Taylor.

Something seemed to possess the old people, they were beginning to move back and forth and, when the amplified voice was silent for an instant, distant shouting could be heard from beyond the speakers' platform. It sounded like trouble and Andy forced his way toward it. Reeves's voice suddenly broke off and the shouts were louder and there was the sharp sound of falling broken glass. A new voice boomed from the loudspeakers.

'This is the police. I am asking you all to disperse, this meeting is over, and you will go north out of the Square -'

An enraged howl drowned the speaker and the Eldsters surged forward, carried on waves of emotion. Their screaming died and words could be made out again, the amplified voice of Reeves, the original speaker.

‘... Folks ... easy now ... I just want you to hold on ... can’t blame you for getting disturbed but it’s not the way you think at all. The captain here has explained the situation to me and I can see, from where I’m standing, that this has nothing to do with our meeting. There’s some kind of trouble over there on Fourteenth Street – NO! – don’t move that way, you’ll only get hurt, the police are there and they won’t let you pass and there, I see them coming now, uptown there, the choppers, and the police have mentioned flying wire ...’

A moan followed the last words and the crowd shuddered, the restless movement reversed and they slowly began drifting uptown, out of Union Square, away from Fourteenth Street. The old people in this crowd knew all about flying wire.

Andy was past the speakers’ platform and the crowd was thinner, he could now see the milling mob that jammed Fourteenth Street and he began to move quickly toward it. There were policemen along the outer edge of it, clearing a space near the park, and the nearest one raised his night stick and shouted:

‘Stay back there, buddy, or you’re going to be in trouble.’

He nodded when Andy showed him his badge, then turned away.

‘What’s up?’ Andy asked.

‘Got a real riot brewing here and it’s gonna get worse before it’s better – get back there, you!’ He rapped his stick on the curb and a bald man on aluminum crutches stopped and wavered a moment, then turned back into the park. ‘Klein’s had one of those lightning-flash sales,

you know, they suddenly put up signs in the windows and they got something that sells out quick, they done it before with no trouble. Only this time they had a shipment of soylent steaks –’ He raised his voice to shout over the roar of the two approaching green and white copters. ‘Some chunkhead bought hers and went around the corner and ran into one of those roving TV reporters and blabbed the thing. People are pouring in from all over hell and gone and I don’t think half the streets are blocked yet. Here’s the wire now to seal off this side.’

Andy pinned his badge to his shirt pocket and joined the patrolmen in pushing the crowd back as far as possible. The mob didn’t protest; they looked up and shuddered away from the flapping roar of the copters, jamming together like cattle. The copters came low and the bales of wire fell from their bottoms. Rusty iron bales of barbed wire that thudded and clanked down hard enough to burst their sealed wrapping.

This was not ordinary barbed wire. It had a tempered-steel core of memory wire, metal that no matter how it was twisted or coiled would return to its original shape when the restraints were removed. Where ordinary wire would have lain in a heaped tangle this fought to regain its remembered form, moving haltingly like a blind beast as the strains and stresses were relieved, uncoiling and stretching along the street. Policemen wearing heavy gloves grabbed the ends and guided it in the right direction to form a barrier down the middle of the road. Two expanding coils met and fought a mindless battle, locking together and climbing into the air only to fall and struggle again and squirm on in a writhing union. When the

last strand stopped scratching across the pavement the street was blocked by a yard-high and a yard-wide wall of spiked wire.

But the trouble wasn't over; people were still pushing in from the south along the streets that had not yet been sealed off by the wire. For the moment it was a screaming, pushing impasse because, though more wire would stop the influx, in order to drop the wire the crowd had to be pushed back and a clear space made. The police were shoved back and forth in the face of the surging mob and above their heads the copters buzzed about like angry bees.

A sudden exploding crash was followed by shrill screams. The pressure of the jammed bodies had burst one of the plate-glass show windows of Klein's and soft flesh was being jammed onto the knives of glass; there was blood and moans of pain. Andy fought his way against the tide toward the window; a woman with staring eyes and blood running from an open gash on her forehead bumped into him, then was carried away. Closer in, Andy could barely move and above the shouting of the voices he could hear the shrill of a police whistle. There were people climbing through the broken window, even walking on the bleeding bodies of the injured, grabbing at the boxes piled there. It was the back of the food department. Andy shouted as he came closer, he could barely hear his own voice in the uproar, and clutched at a man with his arms full of packages who forced his way out of the window. He couldn't reach him – but others could, and the man writhed and fell under the grabbing hands, his packages eddying away from him.

'*Stop!*' Andy shouted. '*Stop!*' as helplessly as though he were locked in a nightmare. A thin Chinese boy in shorts and much-mended shirt crawled out of the window almost at his fingertips, holding a white box of soylent steaks against his chest, and Andy could only stretch his hands out helplessly. The boy looked at him, saw nothing, looked away and bending double to hide his burden began to wriggle along the edge of the crowd against the wall, his thin body forcing a way. Then only his legs were visible, muscles knotted as if he were fighting a rising tide, feet straining half out of the auto-tire-soled sandals. He was gone and Andy forgot him as he reached the broken window and pulled himself up beside the patrolman in the torn shirt who had preceded him there. The patrolman swung his night stick at the clutching arms and cleared a space. Andy joined him and skillfully sapped a looter who tried to break out between them, then pushed the unconscious body and spilled bundles back into the store. Sirens wailed and a splashing of white spray rose above the mob as the riot trucks began rumbling their way inward with water nozzles streaming.