

DANGEROUS CORNER

by J.B. Priestley

I. ENVIRONMENTAL FACTS

A. Geographical Location

1. "We'll send you a copy. If you're here when it comes out, I'll give you a ring about it."
....."Oh, of course you're in the city office now." pg 3
 - a. A character works out of an office located in the city.
 - b. The second quote follows one which infers the place they are at is not the city, but the country, since she will mail a copy from the city office.
2. "Yes I am. Though I still come up here as often as I can." pg 4
 - a. The character confirms the fact she works in the city.
 - b. The present action does not take place in the city, but rather in the country.
3. "I was showing them my gun and took a crack at a flower pot." pg 9
 - a. This is Robert and Betty's house. He got his gun out and shot his flower pot.
4. "It happened a year ago - Last October in fact - at his own cottage about twenty miles from here." pg 11
 - a. Cottage confirms that it is the country.
 - b. The incident happened 20 miles from Robert's house "here".

B. Date

(month/year)

1. "It happened a year ago - last October in fact - at his own cottage about twenty miles from here." pg 11
 - a. A year ago from the present time - now.
 - b. Last year this time was October, so now it is October.
2. "I wonder if there's any dance music on the radio tonight?"pg13
 - a. Radio is a primary source for information and entertainment
 - b. Present action takes place before TVs and during the time of radio broadcasts. (before the 1950's)
3. "Who wants a drink? Drinks, Robert. And cigarettes. A cigarette, Miss Mockridge." pg 17
 - a. Present action takes place after prohibition, when it was socially o.k. to drink in public.
 - b. Action takes place when it was socially o.k. for women to smoke in public.

4. "The point is then, that that first Saturday in October was the last time Olwen was at Martin's cottage - Don't you remember, you and I ran over the next Sunday afternoon, to see Martin about those little etching" pg 23
 - a. Both quotes together determine the date in October.
 - b. If the present action is happening 1 yr. from the shooting, and the incident occurred the second Sunday in October, then the present action is also taking place in mid October.

(season)

1. "Next spring, I suppose." pg 3
 - a. Spring will come again next year, so it has already occurred.
 - b. Present action does not take place in the Spring.
2. "I suppose it's a white owl." pg 8
 - a. White owls are common in Fall/Winter, not Summer/Spring.
 - b. Present action must take place in the late Fall or early Winter, since the characters watch this owl now.
3. "What about that white bird that comes into your garden nearly every night" pg 8
 - a. Garden indicates season. Since gardens can't grow in certain seasons, like dead winter, it is obviously not a harsh winter right now.

(time of day)

1. "What about that white bird that comes into your garden nearly every night? Do you suppose we might see it now?" pg.8
 - a. Every night explains it is night out.
 - b. It is night now, indicated by the "NOW"
2. "I've never caught sight of it much after ten." pg 10
 - a. Indicates it is after 10:00.
 - b. 10:00 pm because it is happening "NOW" at "NIGHT".
3. "They've probably all gone to bed." pg 53
 - a. Even now, near the end of Act I, we are still reminded that it is evening.
 - b. It is later now.

C. Economic Environment

1. "When will you publish it?" pg 3
 - a. Publish refers to a novelist and indicates she has a job.
2. "And as another woman who also gets her living by it - though in a humbler capacity - I also protest" pg 6
 - a. This character is also a novelist.
 - b. This character does not make as much. (humbler capacity=lower income)
3. "I was showing them my gun and took a crack at a flower pot." pg 9
 - a. Economic level is high because he owns a gun.

- b. Economic level is high because he can afford to break his own material possessions.
- 4. "I must have seen a box like this somewhere else and then pushed it on to poor Martin because he was always so fond of things like this."
 - pg 18
 - a. Martin's economic level is high since he likes the cigarette box....."things like this"things which are extraordinary.
- 5. "That was the time we all sat in the garden for hours and Martin told us all about those ridiculous people he'd stayed with in Cornwall - the handwoven people." pg 21
 - a. Martin is well off since he can afford to travel.

D. Political Environment

- 1. "Then you'd have your three directors, and also three pairs of adoring husbands and wives." pg 5
 - a. Refers to work politics.
 - b. Being a director is a leadership position in which one dictates to others.
- 2. "I don't mind Gordon drinking Robert's old brandy - and I don't mind him gossiping. But I do object to him coming in - as he will, you'll see - looking very important and pretending he knows all the secrets of the publishing business." pg 6
 - a. She is giving her permission for him to drink brandy and to gossip. (family politics)
 - b. She is not giving her permission for him to act as if he knows everything. (family politics)
 - c. By her giving her "permission" she is dictating what her husband Gordon she do and not do. (family politics)
- 3. "Yes, like the muck they drag out of everybody in the law courts." pg 16
 - a. Law courts indicates there is some kind of judicial system.
- 4. "I vote we believe her and have done with it." pg 28
 - a. Indicates there is some kind of a democratic system.

E. Social Environment

- 1. "It's so arranged now that the married ones - my brother Gordon and Betty and Robert and I are here - and the single ones, Olwen and Stanton, are in the city office."
 - pg 4
 - a. Married people are indicated here.
 - b. Single people are indicated here.
- 2. "As a woman who gets her living through it, I protest" pg 6
 - a. She refers to herself as a woman, not a girl
 - b. It means a lot to her that she be recognized as a woman in that society.

3. "I suppose you all miss your brother-in-law."....."You mean Robert's brother, Martin?"
pg 10 (2 quotes)
 - a. Martin is Robert's brother.
 - b. Martin is Freda's brother-in-law.

4. "I remember I thought him very amusing and charming. He was very handsome, wasn't he?" pg 11
 - a. She is commenting on the looks of Martin.
 - b. She gives a very warm and gentle explanation of Martin, which shows she likes him.

5. "You see, Miss peel, Mr. Stanton is still the cynical bachelor." pg 13
 - a. Mr. Stanton is single.
 - b. Mr. Stanton is important since he is referred to as Mister.

F. Religious Environment

1. "I suppose that's God's truth." pg 16
 - a. God is mentioned to mean a supreme Being.
 - b. It is now known that these characters know who God is, yet it is unknown how they feel about the Being.

2. "Oh- for God's sake -" pg 31
 - a. God's name is taken in vain.
 - b. In context, there is no worship here.
 - c. First sign of no faith.

3. "In other words - your god." pg 35
 - a. Refers to Martin as being your god.....or your idol.
 - b. She worships Martin.

II. PREVIOUS ACTION

The reader first discovers what the relationship of the characters are to one another and their backgrounds. Robert and Freda are married as well as Gordon and Betty, all of which are involved in the publishing business. Olwen is their secretary, Maud is a novelist, Stanton, who is single, is a publisher and Martin is dead. Some work out at their city office, while others stay in the country. While in the midst of finding the cigarette box, we discover that there are a lot of secrets yet untold. As these secrets begin to unfold, Betty feels uncomfortable and forces Gordon to take her home. Freda explains how last year, in mid October, she went over to Martin's house to give him the cigarette box. It was then she had an affair with Martin. Olwen then accuses Robert of stealing the money, of which he denies. Olwen admits she also went to see Martin, but does not give any details about her visit. Olwen explains that Martin told her Robert had taken the money, which is what Stanton told him. Yet, Stanton also told Robert that Martin took the money, so all these years Robert has blamed Martin. By the end of Act I Robert is very curious about what "actually" happened the night Martin was shot, and is determined to know the truth.

III. POLAR ATTITUDE: Robert Chatfield

A. Act I

1. "Well, he was quite right to disturb it." pg 14
 - a. Robert will stop at nothing to know everything.
 - b. Robert will support anyone who helps him in finding out the truth.
2. "Serious or not, I'm all for it coming out." pg 15
 - a. No matter if the information is important or trivial, Robert wants to know everything.
 - b. He is in favor of knowing it all.

B. Act III

1. "But I can't do it. I've lived among illusions." pg 121
 - a. Robert can not bare to listen to the truth any more.
 - b. He realizes he has been living in a world of make-believe.
2. "Don't you see, we're not living in the same world now." pg 122
 - a. Robert understands now that the truth has change him and the others.
 - b. His "special world" at the beginning of the play of innocence, has now changed to a "world" of anxiety and dishonesty.
3. "Tomorrow. Tomorrow. I tell you, I'm through, I'm through. There can't be a tomorrow." pg 123
 - a. He does not want to hear any more.
 - b. He can not go on living his life any more.