



Fig. 1—the photo at the top right is from a Polonaise at an cadet-ball in Tønsberg, at the Club in 1953. The two characters joined by the red dot will marry each other in the coming year. At this point she is 21 and he is 22 years. They married about 1 year later December 28th 1954. His military career at the Naval Academy, would extend till 1961, when he was selected by the Foreign Ministry to serve as a career diplomat in the Norwegian missions abroad. He did not leave his native Sandefjord for her, he left with her for a life abroad.

A young man wrote in his letters to a young lady explaining that he was of an impulsive character, but would be a good boy for her sake. He explained his early resolution—a Navy cadet—to beguile a woman in each port, by this *impulsiveness*. He explained his temperamental moods in this way, but also that he surrounded himself with a *hardened* shell. He also explained his “impulsivity” with deficiencies in his upbringing: his father had an alcohol-problem, was absent due to his work as a whaler, caused trouble when at home; he had been in a [correctional institution](#) while in his youth.

The young man wanted to get away from all this. He wanted to take the opportunity that his father—coming originally from an old and wealthy family—had missed. In some ways, his weakness was his strength. By laying himself bare to the woman he was in love with, he tangled the tango of a relationship in which they *could be themselves*, and where there was no need to hide weaknesses. She chose to confide in him and they developed a relationship in this way. Since she came from a distinctively good background he did *not* want to appear as a social climber, but a selfmade man.

His impulsiveness owed to a social handicap that made him see himself as incomplete, and not a full human: he was plagued with a sense of deficient constitution, and his physique. Rather than a social climber he was one to seek a radical *shift*, that would change him into the man that he aspired to be. She was a key for him to become that man. What made him stick out, by Norwegian standards, was a particular kind of *unhandiness*. In Norway, handiness is part of being a man. It is a sign that you have had a father to teach you.

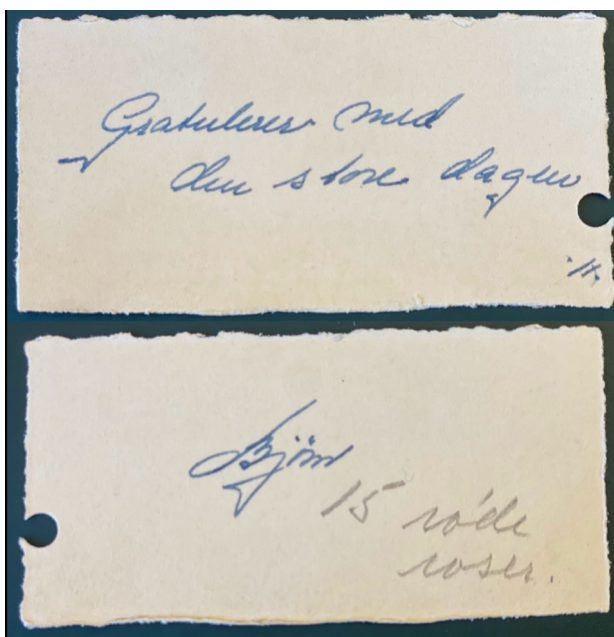


Fig. 2— A card accompanying a bouquet of 15 red roses at her 21st birthday. Handwriting (ink): the young man. Handwriting (pencil) the young woman.

Handiness is handed down. He did not have that. Though dexterous in some domains—like driving and writing—he was notoriously clumsy in others: particularly the ones he could have learned from his father in his shed: the workshop in back of his garden. It was the place where the drinking went on, after he and his father had a row about it. He lost his father, including his skills, to the *shed*. The young man found that he instead could excel musically and intellectually. And would outshine most people at the scale of the small town where he grew up. His abilities at learning and expressing himself—his handwriting, music, driving—promised him to life and success elsewhere.

It was very clear that the work of his hands *untied* him from life in the small town. Everyone could see that he was *not* fit for it. And so he could leave. He did not leave it for the young woman—at the time when the education of the Naval Academy was all he could afford—but instead left with her for a life abroad, when his life as a career diplomat started in 1961. In their early relationship it was her honesty he prized. The freshness and directness of her correspondence with him. Though she came from a privileged background, or because of it, she was a distinctly *practical* woman.

He attempted to establish a relationship with her on an intellectual level, but her talent and interest were elsewhere. In effect, over the years, she became his hands. So, there areas of life with which he struggled would also remain untouched by him. Which is how, in this way, what he called his shell would survive. The cause of it would also be the blame for it, in a complicated equation in which he would offer his body in evidence of something that could not be overcome, yet was deeply caused by others in his intimate circle and passed on. All in this entourage were affected.

The [homunculus](#) in Goethe's Faust (Part 2) states (from the phial to Wagner): "Now, father! That was no joke. How are you? Come: press me tenderly to your heart, too! But not too hard, the glass may be too thin. It's in the very nature of the thing: for the natural the world has barely space: what's artificial commands a narrow place (verse 6880)". In the life and history of our young man, his shattering point was ever *nigh*, and the role of his wife to be would paradoxically express itself by the pledge to overcome the shell, *and* by the duty to protect it. It was never explained.

But always assumed. With a number implicit assignments for people in his entourage. At some point, it became a problem for him in his professional career. Others could experience him as an authoritarian person. Which might be largely inaccurate since his demeanour—if the explanation he is giving in his early love letters to her, was true—would be caused by an impulse to protect himself, to make the mark, and succeeding on par with others, in a competition between better men. But it did turn against him. In the aftermath he discovered management in collaborative work.



Fig. 3—1852 engraving for Goethe's Faust Part 2 (featuring Wagner and the homunculus): "Through art they are born, and therefore art is embodied and inborn in them, and they need learn it from no one." In Newman, William "Alchemy, domination and gender" in Koertge, Noretta (ed.). *A house built on sand*. Oxford University Press.

From that point on, this became all-important to him. Which is also why he dropped the contract of mutual dependency that previously had defined and bound him to his wife. He changed his style of leadership into team-work under his leadership. He had *more* hands to help him, and in his sense of logistic leadership he also became more of a practical man. Ways of working could bring intelligence to processes, teams, organisations and even to politics. These possibilities gave some results, but did not lead as far as he had hoped.

As late-converts to Roman Catholicism, he and his wife returned to Tønsberg according to her wish. Their declared intention was to be closer to her family. Through his initiative of conversion, however, their principal focus was on church life. It sealed them off from the family that they had come back to join. They came back to the place where their liaison had started. But with a baggage from a life abroad centred on Paris, where they spent the longest time in their life together: starting with a joint career in a wife-and-husband team; ending it as a couple joined by the work of time, a past memory, since at one point he chose his career—or his phial—over her.