

INVESTIGATION ON THREE AUTORS WEARING A MASK

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The use of pseudonyms is quite a usual phenomenon in literature.

So much so that there exists a dictionary listing about ten thousand French pseudonyms and we know that many are missing.

The majority of the aliases belong to the press or the literary world and, to a lesser degree, show business.

This oddity seems to be due to the legislator of the second French Republic (1848-1852), who forced all newspapers to use pseudonyms. By virtue of a law, all press articles had to be signed but the author could hide his real identity with a fictitious one also used privately.

During the Second World War and German occupation, caution was appropriate and the use of a "nom de guerre" became a necessity. However, after the war, other reasons predominated such as political and social positions. There also exists an aesthetic effect or a sound more suitable to look literary (sometimes, the change of one letter is sufficient). But the use could also be to look more modest or prudish, for confidentiality or because of a family etc... The best thing to do is consult "*La Pensée du Pseudonyme*" (The Thought of the Pseudonym) published by PUF (Presses Universitaires de France).

A collection called "*Pseudo*" (J.J. Pauvert) gives the work of notorious authors concealed under an unknown name. The prologue gives a piece of explanation:

"All men are secretive and each writer keeps in his drawer a text judged un-publishable under his name for one reason or another. Should we really wait the next fifty years as it is the custom today, before printing books which are probably more pertinent to our generation than the future ones? Maybe, it could suffice that a renowned publisher create a collection which would ensure the author of strictest anonymity".

Hence, the secret, imperative, has to be kept even against inquisitive readers who try to discover it at their own risks.

In literature, dissimulation can be taken to the extremes in using a front-man. Evidently, this straw-man will always refuse to admit that he did not write the book he signed. It will then be extremely difficult to unmask the real author who does not want to betray himself.

I will give you three examples to illustrate the difficulties to discover the genuine writer.

Let us start our investigation with a major author who discouraged over curious readers and turned researchers away: I refer to **James Hadley Chase**, pseudonym of René Brabazon Raymond (British, 1906-1985).

The novels signed Chase left their marks on two generations of readers. Continually re-published by the prestigious editor Gallimard, the “J.H. Chase” books first ensured the success of “Poche Noire” publications (Black Paperback) and “Carré Noir” (Black Square) before being a new collection totally dedicated to Chase. The “Cercle Européen Du Livre” (The European Book Society) published a book entirely devoted to Chase in the series “Chefs-d' Oeuvre de la Littérature d'Action” (Literature of Action Masterpieces). In it, we find three titles: “*You Have Yourself a Deal*”, 1966, (translated into French as: *La Blonde de Pékin*), “*Cade*”, 1966, (*Chambre Noire*) and “*Well, My Pretty*”, 1967, (Eh bien, ma Jolie!).

These three books were originally published by Plon Editor in 1966 and 1967 and are the main infidelity to Gallimard and its prestigious collections “Série Noire” (Black Series), “Poche Noire” and “Carré Noir”.

The preface written by Thierry Maulnier (French, 1909-1988), member of the “Académie Française”, raises a certain number of questions which could be embarrassing as far as the Chase's official biography is concerned.

The preface entitled: “*Qui Etes-Vous, James Hadley Chase ?*” (Who are you James Hadley Chase?), continues as follows: “numerous articles have been published on Chase. Some look contradictory to the others. The writer himself is very difficult to make out as a man”. He then gives a strange Chase quotation taken from his novel “*Eve*”, 1947: “most men generally have a double life: on one side, he has a normal public face while, on the other, he is generally secretive. Naturally, a man can only be judged after his public life but if he is foolish enough to disclose his secret life, the public opinion goes against him and blacklists him. It is however the same man. The only difference is that he has been discovered.”

Then, studying Chase's texts, Maulnier adds: “It seems easy to detect in almost each page, the winks of imperceptible humor and a certain way of not being too serious which allows his heroes, even in the most terrible situations, to resemble James Bond or a Hitchcock character. Chase is a born-writer, one of those who have been summarily and abusively called composers of police stories. We simply have the impression that very often, he is simply a novelist.”

To conclude, he gives a summary of the three novels and ends with the evocation of “*Cade*” where, more seriously, we are told a pathetic decline which recalls a similarity to Graham Greene (British, 1904 – 1991).

The preface, illustrated with photographs of Chase in front of his typewriter, is followed by a short introduction by the writer, but Maulnier is no fool and knows the role played by Chase.

He expresses it intentionally for attentive readers, without exceeding the rules of polite society towards the author and the editor, powerful Gallimard, guardian of the secret.

While Robert Deleuze (French, born 1950) was studying the work of Chase, I was interested by Frédéric Dard (French, 1921-2000) but I could not imagine that our research would meet during the hunt of secrets so well kept.

Robert Deleuze published a book called “*A La Recherche De James Hadley Chase*” (In search of J.H. Chase) gaining a glimpse of this quite important author with an unknown personality. As T. Maulnier suggests it, he thinks that Graham Green is hidden behind Chase.

Frédéric Dard is another case of police literature.

This very popular man during his last years, used all possible editorial options to conceal an important part of his output all through his quite extraordinary and diverse career. He used about twenty known pseudonyms and probably more than a straw man (I already wrote about Frédéric Valmain in Bulletin N° 1).

We are going to explain how our research on these two authors has overlapped.

Finding signs of a possible Dard participation to Frédéric Valmain's work, I found it very intriguing to notice the photograph of Chase followed by a preface on the back cover of some Dard/San-Antonio and F. Valmain's books. This

has been repeated on several occasions. To be clear in my mind about it, I immersed myself in Robert Deleuze's book again and found out the following quotation which tallied with my interests.

“At the time when I used to visit the back of bookstores to find second hand Romans Noirs which could not be found on the classical market, debating vigorously with the landlords of these somewhat magical places, one manager of these sorts of hotchpotch, maintained stubbornly that Frédéric Valmain was one of the multiple pseudonyms used by Frédéric Dard. In the 70's, I had read the quasi-complete Dard's opus and I could not detect any relationship between the two authors. To tell the truth, I had only read two or three Valmain but it was not necessary to be an expert on the subject to notice the dissimilarities.

I said so to the manager who, dissatisfied with my scepticism, sustained that differences existed between the novels signed Dard, Kaputt or San Antonio which, however, had been written by the same person. This argument did not convince me. I did not insist but kept the subject in mind. Finally, a few years later, I read two articles. The first one was about the theatrical adaptation of police novels naming Chase and his “*No Orchid For Miss Blandish*” (adapted by F. Dard) and “*Trusted Like the Fox*” (translated into French as Traquenard) but this time, adapted by a ...

Frédéric Valmain. The second article was full of praise about the just published novel “*La Mygale*” (The Tarantula) of the latter. Quite satisfied with myself, I went to visit the manager of the bookstore to show him the two articles. After having read the first one, he frowned. With the second one, his face lit up with a triumphant smile and he showed me the sentence which had contributed to his cheerful humour with his index. The words were approximately this: Frédéric Valmain who also publishes police stories using a pseudonym with the editor Fleuve Noir, etc... Of course, the critic did not specify the pseudonym but Dard was also edited by Fleuve Noir. Later, it just happened that I could lay my hands on the pseudonym, James Carter. Suddenly, I also discovered Valmain's real name: Paul Baulat which had no relation with Dard” End of quotation.

I immediately called Deleuze to discuss Dard's dedications which had aroused my attention and obtain some additional advice on the Valmain/Dard mystery. I met him some time later and after having compared our research, Robert agreed with my position (and his bookstore manager's). On my side, I fuelled his arguments in emphasizing the role played by Dard towards Chase.

The photograph of Chase and Dard on the back cover of Dard's novel, Chase's dedication to Dard on the same cover, the prefaces... are too much to not be the will to express a message. And this concerns Dard and Valmain (who is supposed to be Dard's straw-man).

As far as I know, they are the only ones to support with photographs and dedications the fact that René Brabazon Raymond is the author known as James Hadley Chase.

During one of his rare public appearances in France, organized by their respective editors, a photograph had been taken where we can see Chase shaking hands with Dard. This snapshot has been used many times.

We should not forget that Graham Greene, probable originator of the meeting, had been a secret agent. This could explain how he knew all of the manipulation tricks that he enjoyed using privately.

The gathering of an author and his theatrical adapter is obvious. Everything is clear, there is nothing to add.

The film of this conference was broadcast by French television a few days after Dard's death. Needless to say that the manoeuvre had worked. The convincing images had been propagated and “one” can say “I saw it on a TV show” which can be qualified a simple and naïve coincidence. No demonstration, no explanation needed, the images played their role.

For those who have not understood, I will quote Yvan Audouard (French, 1914-2004) in “*La Connerie n'Est Plus ce qu'Elle Etait*”(Stupidity is no longer what it used to be) ”The image is always suspicious, essentially when it is evident. At the same time, although it pretends to show the reality, it feeds our imaginary. It is so convincing that it can say what we want it to say. Its possibilities to tell lies are without limit. The Television's essential fraud is to let us believe that an unverifiable image is a confirmed fact.

The third writer does not belong to the police genre but simply to literature. He is the specimen of a famous straw-man: Emile Ajar, **Romain Gary's** mask. (His real name is Roman Kacew, French, 1914-1980).

The "*Romain Gary*" by Mrs Dominique Bona (French, born 1953) who gave me the amiable authorization to quote her book, will allow us to look into the backstage of the show and take a look at his magician in action.

"Gary is already a pseudonym which, legally, became his real and official name.

In 1956, he published "*L'Homme à la Colombe*" (The Man with the Dove) signed **Fosco Sinibaldi**. At this time, diplomat to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Paris, he did not use his name so as not to upset anybody. But before the war and this time without any excuse, he was already thinking about a double career. In 1974, without any other reason than changing his identity, he published "*Les Têtes De Stéphanie*" (Stéphanie's Heads) signed with a Turkish-Persian name **Shatan Bogat**, mysterious author, which translated from English by Françoise Lovat as fictitious as the signatory. The editor soon uncovered the literary hoax to be able to sign the book Gary and then increase stagnant sales.

Romain Gary was looking amongst his circle not only for an imaginary name but also somebody who could embody the signature he wanted to create. He offered his childhood friend Sacha Kardo-Sessoef to collaborate on thrillers that Gary would write and would be signed by Kardo. He also proposed to a Bulgarian friend living in London to act as an understudy. In both cases, the offer was turned down. In 1973, after "*Europa*" and "*Les Enchanteurs*" (The Enchanters), he wrote "*Gros-Calîn*" (Big Hug). But Gary was a trouble-maker. First, by his integrity: Libération Cross, Legion of Honor, Gaullist, Prix Goncourt winner, then by the large circulation of his books for the last thirty years. We do not expect anything new from somebody who is a mandarin in literary circles even if he is dressed like a hooligan or a tramp.

Gary was now looking for a pseudonym to represent what he felt he was, an anarchist known only by his attentive readers. The nice and miserable however humorous and modest character, that he had just written the story about, did not satisfy him entirely. He needed to embrace his real life, to fictionalize not only his work but also the author to become the imaginary and main hero of the tale.

Sad because critics avoided his books which were only subject to a blasé and weary glance, he decided to sell his soul to the devil and mask his pen. He called himself Emile Ajar, just to see...

For extra safety, and this time to avoid the wrong manoeuvre used with "*Les Têtes de Stéphanie*", he decided to act alone, without the editor's complicity.

Once "*Gros-Calîn*" was achieved, Gary imagined a quite sophisticated scenario. He asked one of his friends, Pierre Michaut, who had recently moved to Brazil, to mail the manuscript from Rio De Janeiro to the Editions Gallimard in Paris along with a letter to present Ajar, dictated evidently by Gary.

Claude Gallimard decided that Ajar's book would not be published by the collection "Blanche" but, because he did not want to take the risk of missing a talented author, he sent the manuscript to one of his branches "Mercure de France" managed by his wife, Simone, who would certainly know how to get on with the novelist. Indeed, the letter made it clear that it had been written by quite a fussy person.

When "*Gros-Calîn*" was published, in 1978, critics received it favourably.

In all editorial offices, everybody was trying to guess whom was behind Emile Ajar. A mystery developed, a few names were proposed. The weekly magazine "Nouvel Observateur" named Louis Aragon, (French, 1897-1982) then Raymond Queneau (French, 1903-1976)... For it could only be the work of a great writer. Gary was not recognized.

The dream of the total novel, characters and author largely described in Gary's essay "*Pour Sganarelle*" was going to take shape...First ghostly, Emile Ajar would have to be embodied in order to foil suspicion of those who smelt a rat. However, according to Gary, an artist must create fictions livelier than reality. Now, he must exhibit a puppet acting in a

fantastic comedy. Emile Ajar was represented by a member of Gary's family, his nephew Paul Pavlowitch who started to act in 1975, his identity being kept secret.

Gary wanted to sign a second novel Emile Ajar "*La Tendresse Des Pierres*" (Stones' s tenderness). Mercure de France did not hesitate and were ready to publish it with enthusiasm, conscious that they detained a superb, quite original novel.

However, Michel Cournot (1922-2007), literary director, wanted to obtain some additional details from the author. Pierre Michaut was supposed to send some notes from Brazil.

Gary unveiled his straw-man. Pierre Michaut disappeared to be replaced by a real Ajar brilliantly played by Paul Pavlowitch. Paul wore thin clothes, looking like a crook to despise the bourgeois with a both vulgar and poetic style. This role fitted him perfectly to the point that one day, he would be entirely confused.

Michel Cournot obtained a rendezvous in Geneva with Ajar who was supposed to go there straight from Rio de Janeiro.

Simone Gallimard, delighted to meet her mysterious author at last, was there too. However, Ajar did not appear, he stood them up.

A fortnight later, a new meeting was organized in the Geneva neighbourhood. Cournot went there alone. The room was empty except for a revolver on the table: Ajar was really there.

I did not doubt one second that it was him, Cournot said later. This man could only be Ajar. If I dare say so, he looked the part. He was exactly as I had imagined him when first reading "*Gros Câlin*", then "*La Tendresse des Pierres*". He was all together a bandit, mad, bizarre and frightening... No, I had no doubt: he had the physical look, the voice and Ajar's style.

However, "*La Tendresse des Pierres*" was already a title given to a fictitious novel that Jess Donahue, the young heroine of "*Ski Bum*" (translated into French as *Adieu, Gary Cooper - Good Bye Gary Cooper*) signed Romain Gary, was writing up when she had a quiet moment. The book was already advertised and several thousand copies already printed with this title. Afraid that some perspicacious readers could discover some clues, Romain Gary changed the title and "*The Tendresse...*" became "*La Vie Devant Soi*" (translated first as *Momo* then as *The Life in Front of us*. The film will be titled *Mrs Rosa*).

Amid the Parisian world of publishing, "*La Vie...*" caused quite a stir and there was a rumour that it could win a literary prize. Michel Tournier, member of the Académie Goncourt went to see Simone Gallimard to confide that he and his fellow members would very much like to crown Emile Ajar as long as they were certain that he did exist, that he was not an impostor. Mrs Gallimard answered that she personally had never met Ajar but confirmed that Ajar was really an author in the flesh considering that Mr Cournot had a private meeting with him in Geneva. This conversation was reported to Gary who was not able to prevent his puppet competing for the prize.

Following the talks Mrs Gallimard had with Michel Tournier, Romain Gary decided to organize some sort of a summit meeting for her so that she could put the Goncourt jury's mind at rest and vouch herself for the author. While Gary lived just a step away from Simone Gallimard, he sent her to Copenhagen! Apparently, this town had nothing to do either with Gary's biography or the one invented for Ajar. He clouded the issues but he did not forget to create a legend in defining an iconography. Like Melville (American, 1819-1891) left stranded in New York or Lowry (British, 1909-1957) in Mexico, the nomadic Ajar, citizen of the world, could only inhabit an unusual place such as exotic Rio, cosmopolitan Geneva and now, at the end of our continent, Denmark, country of fairy tales and homeland of Andersen (1805-1875) and Karen Blixen (1885-1962). He sent Paul Pavlowitch and his wife Annie to Copenhagen to find a house for Ajar who rented a wooden house in the middle of a forest, close to the Baltic sea.

"Bonjour Emile Ajar !" called Simone Gallimard when she arrived at the doorstep". Paul wrote in "*L'Homme Que l'On Croyait*" (the man we believed in): "never, had I heard a so refined voice say hello to a nonexistent man".

She spent two days and a night with Ajar/Pavlowitch. They had some conversations in the old living-room, near the

Austrian piano and in the veranda, in the fair seaward wind during a dinner of smoked fish, raspberries and tea. Ajar was dressed with a white corduroy jacket which added an exotic touch to the actor. Simone Gallimard came with some copies of the novel that Paul Pavlowitch obviously signed Ajar.

As soon as she was back in Paris, she lent her support to the Ajar affair. To give more credence to the reality of Ajar, Michel Cournot sent the journalist Yvonne Baby from the daily "Le Monde", to Copenhagen to interview Pavlowitch who more or less repeated the same story he had told Mrs Gallimard. Mrs Baby published a long article in "Le Monde" confirming all the lies or, if we prefer, all of Ajar's comedy. As a matter of fact, Pavlowitch was forced to lie all along this adventure but he did it dangerously if not brilliantly, with all his heart.

To Baby, he spoke about Vilna, Nice, his mother, comments that Gary who could not have foreseen, sharply criticized her nephew to have said them. Pavlowitch played with fire, lying or not with some truth in what he said, improvising his text by surprise, his creator being away, left in Paris.

Organized by Gary, on a theatre stage, Pavlowitch was interpreter of an original partition. The same way he chose the house in Denmark, he arranged his speech in all independence. But instead of staying within the limits of Gary's fiction, he gave names which are some reference points and guiding devices. Bright and inspired comedian, he looked sincere in his interpretation of the character, by far, different to the one Gary had imagined as a foreign author of such a novel, but as someone belonging to the same family with a common past. And Gary had to adapt himself to this modified Ajar who remained, however, his responsibility.

Neither Simone Gallimard nor Yvonne Baby could detect the fallacious part of his performance. Both had dinner with him in a dacha and saw him as a strange but attractive man, at the same time vulgar and cultured. Ajar was no longer a mythological author because he had a face, a look, a house and, although disjointed, the beginning of biography. The puppet was moving, making an exhibition and soon would escape from his master trying to outstrip him.

Monday the 17th of November, Armand Lanoux (1913-1983) announced that "*La Vie Devant Soi*" had won the Prix Goncourt. With this prize, the hoax was made official. As no writer can receive the Prix Goncourt twice, Romain Gary advised by Gisèle Halimi (lawyer, born 1927), asked Paul to write a letter refusing the prize on the basis that it had increased his difficulties to only communicate through his book. But, Hervé Bazin (1911-1996), Académie Goncourt's president, answered solemnly that the Académie elects a book not an author. Hence, the Prix Goncourt cannot be accepted nor rejected just like birth or death. Emile Ajar is and remains crowned.

The prize could have permitted Gary to disclose his authorship of the book. But he would let the game go probably in order not to face a scandal or more surely by diabolical curiosity to see how far it could go.

The daily paper "Dépêche du Midi" ended the secrecy about Ajar in publishing his real identity and his family ties revealing that Paul Pavlowitch was Gary's nephew. Hence, Gary was forced to break his silence and get out of his own trick. The second act was going to be played but Gary did not have the upper hand anymore and the event went beyond him. His apartment Rue du Bac in Paris was besieged by journalists but he refused to open his door. Then, tired, he told them that Pavlowitch would not come, that he was someone in a constant state of panic who could not be pushed to the limit.

The same evening, Jacqueline Piatier, journalist for the daily paper "Le Monde" rang Gary's door. She had read all his books during the last thirty years and told him that he was Ajar. Gary played the innocent and proved to Mrs Piatier that Ajar was Pavlowitch. If there was a similitude in their writings, it could only be because they belonged to the same artistic family: the uncle had an influence on his nephew. Piatier courageously insisted because she felt that there was something going on. She accepted to depart only when Gary had signed a text where he denied being Ajar but that he was convinced that Ajar was somebody else. The wording used is not a real lie for he will not put his honour at stake or promise anything. This declaration was published the next day.

Two days later, he told Claude Gallimard that he was not Ajar. The literary hoax took root in a game of lies and pretences. A few days later, the daily paper "L' Aurore" published a photograph of Pavlowitch knocking about a journalist and trying to snatch the camera out of his hands. Gary commented: "I am afraid for him because he is in an atrocious psychological state, nervously exhausted, ready to explode". Henceforth, for the press and editors, the nephew with his touch of genius, powerful and anarchic, was more brilliant than his uncle who saw his own novels sent to the

respectable but academic domain of neoclassical tradition.

Ajar personifies rebellious modern art, yelling, rioting. On the contrary, Gary writes in a conventional style out of fashion. “*La Vie...*” remains at the top of the book sales charts during many weeks while Gary's other book published the same year “*Au Delà de Cette Limite, Votre Ticket n'Est Plus Valable*” (translated as: Your Ticket Is No Longer Valid), did not exceed the seventh rank. As a matter of fact, “*Le Ticket...*” which was read with the same disdain, the same pitying smile granted to the waning Don Juan, was a success but “*La Vie...*” was a triumph, the chef-d'oeuvre of an effervescent writer, master of his talents or, as Gary said, master of his will for power.

The following year, Gary published “*Clair De Femme*” (Woman's Light). Malicious gossips found obvious analogies with his nephew's in this book, and said that he had tried to plagiarize or imitate him. The conclusion was that he was in decline while Ajar was the rising star.

Gary went to Geneva where, in a fortnight, he wrote a 237 page manuscript titled “*Pseudo*” (Fake), the third novel signed Ajar. To write it, he put on Paul Pavlowitch's shoes, his much talked-about nephew that everybody now considered as the real author of “*Gros Câlin*” and “*La Vie...*”. While he asked Paul to strut about on the public scene, Gary shut himself up with the will to live again but vicariously and created a story commensurate with the ambition to puzzle the last pursuers. Their identities mingled, passing from one to the other, the first one, Paul, embodied in Emile Ajar as created by Romain while the second, Gary, the real mentor, played to believe that his character, derived from his pen and his imagination, lived his own life outside a book. In “*Pseudo*”, as if he were Paul, he told why, he, Paul, had created Emile Ajar. In this new book, he faked, he even reinvented Pavlowitch as a both real and fictitious romantic figure.

He wrote “*Pseudo*” in a feverish mood because he was afraid to be discovered, to be threatened by justice and lawyers who withdrew one after the other from Gary's case. He was also afraid to be forced to answer to a commission of notable citizens, to the Goncourt comity, to his editor Gallimard and to the fooled journalists. He had in mind a long list of damages that he would have to face including the tax office considering all the money he had to declare through another person who was not even his pseudonym.

Four years later after “*Pseudo*” and Gary's death, the hoax was uncovered by Ajar himself, alias Pavlowitch.

Romain Gary had expressed the posthumous will to claim the paternity of this part of his corpus. His nephew, under duress, confessed himself in the book “*L'Homme Que l'on Croyait*”. Here is his prefatory declaration: At the end of 1972, Romain Gary told me that it was his intention to write something different using another name because as he said:

“I do not have the necessary freedom anymore”. The chosen pseudonym was Emile Ajar. He asked me to sign the publishing contract of “*La Vie...*” using this name. After the attribution of the Goncourt prize, the novelist wrote two other books “*Pseudo*” and “*L'Angoisse du Roi Salomon*” (translated as King Salomon) signed Ajar.

In 1980, Romain Gary committed suicide.

Until his death, nobody knew that he was the real author hidden behind the pseudonym as he had decided not to reveal it during his lifetime.

The key element is the sentence “I do not have the necessary freedom...” and we can take a look at what Dard (1921-2000). wrote in “*Je Le Jure*”, 1975, (I Swear It):

“...It is why I would like to be ensured to be able to write during the next five years. But I want to use this moment to pull out all the stops, to create an oeuvre requiring some strength. Not a book. Not my book: some books, other books. There is no time anymore to ruin a tried and tested recipe like the “San-Antonio” series but I am decided to go further even if I have to deceive part of my readers. I can take the risk. Stop writing San-Antonio? No, I do not think so. In any case, it is not a decision that I can make deliberately. It could happen that one morning, when I wake up, I could say to myself: this time, that's what I decided to do, that in this manner and nothing else. Over with San-Antonio! That's possible, that's very possible. In fact, it could be something I dream of confusedly. To feel like not writing San-Antonio novels anymore because I would like to create something entirely different and this desire would be so strong, so

pressing that I would be forced to give up this gold mine for the unknown. Oh, yes, it would be great!”

This seeking of freedom leads an author to use a straw-man. It is the most successful and efficient form of dual personality, but very tricky to manage, for complete secrecy is required essentially from the editor who has to protect his author.

The use of a straw-man is the best way to resist the perspicacity of readers and critics with, like in any secret enterprise, the risk of being revealed. Hazards which leave the author uncovered as Chase wrote it in “*Eva*”.

It is also the most sensitive situation to unveil because the straw-man deserves consideration being a man...sensitive to a fame he does not deserve.

He has accepted to play a role in complete confidence of the secret which will have to be kept until the death of one of the two protagonists to avoid a direct confrontation between the author and his double.

Graham Greene and Frédéric Dard concealed the truth even after they had disappeared. Romain Gary was the only one to let his secret known after his death in order to claim the authorship of part of his oeuvre.

This explains why many literary mysteries remain and will stay unsolved until the end of time.