

*Alan Heuser*

## Only to Connect

“Hello. Is that Aurangabad?”

Silence.

“Are you there? Hello?”

“This Bombay. We trying to get through.”

First class hotel room in Bombay,  
Air conditioner rattling heavy wet heat,  
Wife bedded down with fever and dysentery,  
Cockroaches in the bathroom, a company,  
And I struggle to communicate by phone.  
Meanwhile servants pad in and out with  
Pudding and porridge, bland diet.

Phone rings. “Hello.”

“This hotel. Trying your call.”

Minutes tick insects into

Hours of a bilious monsoon.

Waiting on the Deccan are

Ellora and Ajanta Caves

Near goal of call. And we cannot go.

Ringaring. “Hellohello.

This Bombay. Lost contact.

No intermediate station.

Call back. One hour.”

Our room connects to screened bathroom.

Each click of toilet light brings

Cockroaches in. Assaults are futile.

Cockroaches piston out of toilet roll to floor.

Soundly hit, they scurry off

Somewhere into reserve.

Our first damp days in India.

Six hours for one call.

Then, “Hello.” “Hello. This Bombay.

Nono, impossible to make through.

Thank you. There is no connexion.”

I hang up the phone, walk to bathroom,

Discover there are no screens but open slats

That let cockroaches in.

A day lost: reservations not cancelled,

Cockroaches and dysentery in charge.

Back to bed I sink into damp sheets

And taste failure as

A way of life.

# It's a Gift



## **Up to 25% reduction on Christmas gift subscriptions**

Yes, a year's subscription to ENCOUNTER is the perfect answer to the Christmas gift problem. Not only do you give your friends twelve months of solid intellectual pleasure, but you save yourself a host of chores—crowded shopping, parcel-packing and posting. Once you have sent us your order, we look after everything, including a gift announcement card and the cost of postage to wherever your friends may be . . .

What is more, our special rates for these Christmas gifts save you up to 25% of the usual price! All we ask is that you should not include any friends who, as far as you know, are already buying ENCOUNTER regularly. And please note that these reduced rates are not intended for the renewal of previous gifts or for your own subscription. You will find an order form overleaf. It will help us greatly to have your instructions well before Christmas.

**This offer closes on 6th January 1973**

# CHRISTMAS GIFT ORDER FORM

## REDUCED RATES FOR NEW SUBSCRIPTIONS

Gift subscriptions will start with the January 1973 issue, posted shortly before Christmas. Time permitting, a specially designed card announcing your gift will reach the recipient by Christmas day. This special offer, which is not intended for your own subscription or the renewal of previous gifts, closes on January 6th, 1973.

### YOUR NAME

My name and address are as follows:

Name (CAPITALS)

Address (CAPITALS)

### YOUR GIFTS

Please enter Christmas gift subscriptions for the following:  
BLOCK LETTERS THROUGHOUT PLEASE

Name ..... Name .....  
Address ..... Address .....

Sign Gift Card from..... Sign Gift Card from.....

Name ..... Name .....  
Address ..... Address .....

Sign Gift Card from..... Sign Gift Card from.....

Extra gifts can be ordered on a separate sheet of paper

### PAYMENT

Enclose payment with this form

The cost of each subscription is £3.0.0 or \$10.50 by surface mail. A subscription air-speeded to the U.S.A. or Canada costs \$12.00 (please mark order "AIR" if this is required). Dollar cheques, sterling cheques and postal orders, can be accepted; if you can only pay separately by money order or bank transfer, please give details of the arrangements you have made. A receipt will not be sent unless requested.

**Encounter · 59 St. Martin's Lane · London WC2 · England**  
NOV.

To avoid damaging your magazine cut out along this line

