

# Agent Blue Invitation

Dear Agent Blue,

Sorry to disturb you in the sanctity of your retreat, but it's that time of year again: when the necessity of solving one of our toughest cases impels us to call upon you, in spite of our previous arrangement. As usual, you have the right to refuse the mission, to our disappointment, of course. Were you to refuse this mission within the allotted delay (21 days), you will automatically be removed from further communication.



The case is apparently simple. On May 1st 2002, two eminent scientists were reported missing, not having returned from a luncheon bike ride along the Western Coast of France. The maid, who contacted the local police at 11:35 pm, reported their absence that evening. In her

words: "Miss Turing should have been home long ago, by 5:00 I expected, certainly not after 8:00 having asked me to cook dinner and set the table for three".

Miss. **Claudia Turing** is a mathematician, granddaughter of Alan Turing (1912-1952)- a brilliant British mathematician, most famous for his 'Turing machine' (arguably the first computer) and his code breaking activities during World War Two. Claudia is the only child of Max Clarke, son of Joan Clarke and Alan Turing, product of the mathematician's only (and short lived) heterosexual relationship. Though Max never used his father's name, he passed it on to his daughter, who is widely known as Turing's granddaughter. We have reason to believe that this affiliation is linked to her disappearance. Born in 1969, Claudia is 32 years old. Raised in France, she studied in the United States and returned to her home country after completing her PhD. Though she works in Paris, she spends most of her free time in her uncle's home in Brittany, where she disappeared on May 1st.

May 1st is a holiday in France and it is not unusual that Claudia should have been entertaining guests in her country abode. Her only guest that weekend was **Marcus Perlman**, a young physicist at the Livermore Laboratories in Northern California. Though there is little record of any correspondence or sustained friendship between them, it is not implausible for them to have met during their doctoral studies, as both were research students at Columbia, New York from 1993 to 1997. The maid confirms never having seen Marcus before, and all of Claudia's friends were surprised to hear that she was spending the weekend with a young man whom she had never mentioned. Their



association is perhaps less astonishing when one learns that Marcus is the grandson of John Von Neumann (1905-1957), an eminent Hungarian-American mathematician, one time advisor to Alan Turing. Though their collaboration was interrupted by WW2 and both men's sudden deaths, there have been many rumors on the products of this collaboration, some even suggesting that they had jointly devised an unbreakable code. However, aside from these rumors, there is no corroborating evidence for such a discovery. When pressed, both Turing and Von Neumann denied it. Von Neumann had a single child, a daughter Marina (born 1935), who married a New York banker, Harold Perlman. They had 5 children; Marcus is the youngest (born 1967). He never knew his grandfather,

though he apparently takes great pride at this kinship, which he claims inspired him to become an academic scientist.

Claudia and Marcus arrived in her uncle's home (in a small coastal village in the French region of Brittany- see pictures) on Friday evening- they disappeared on Wednesday morning. According to the maid, they entertained no other guests, and she was surprised to hear of a third person for dinner that evening. While she was waiting for Miss Turing and Mr. Perlman to return, the maid saw no one; which of course casts doubts on the identity and purpose of the 'mystery' third guest.



We have reason to believe that this 'third guest' is the clue to the disappearance, which we also believe to be linked to the victims' grandfather's collaborations and discoveries in crypto-analysis. Should you accept this task, Agent Blue, you will need to **travel** to Western France and unveil the identity of this mystery guest, and the purpose of his quest. Despairing at finding their niece (whom they adopted when her parents died in an airplane crash 20 years ago), the Marquis and Marquise de Rouvray are organizing from Friday August 30th to Tuesday September 3rd a weekend long ceremony in memory of her life and work, a fundraiser to match their donation to her Parisian Academic Center. Claudia was an accomplished athlete, and they have seen fit to organize a triathlon of sorts along the Brittany coast. Should you accept this mission, you will be sent to the event as one of the competing athletes- this gives you three months to train for the .5km swim, 5 km run and ping-pong (boys) and bacci ball (girls) tournaments. We suspect that the 'mystery guest' will participate in this weekend event; in order to retrieve whatever

information he was attempting to collect, on the evening of the victims' disappearance.

Let us reiterate our expectations and hope that you should chose to take on this mission. Refusal will trigger much disappointment.

**Miss C. and Mr. J.**