

## MAUDE MOLD

#2

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### ELECTIVE AFFINITIES

tags: 1961, mars2, maude\_mold, spiro\_mold

9 August.

"Fuck, Mom!"

Spiro Mold, age seven.

"Jesus Christ!" he added. His scream vibrated in the strings of the family's upright piano, untouched by slender hands these past few weeks.

"There is no Jesus Christ," scolded Maude Mold. "Figure it out."

Spiro was seated at the kitchen table, upon which had been mounted various bits of sinister looking hardware which probably weighed more than he did. A CRT, a beige rectangular box, and a heavy, mechanical keyboard, all in metal casing. The woman had called it a computer. Spiro was incredulous. The power requirements alone would have dwarfed that of his RF gear. Its shielding seemed dubious. What was he supposed to do with this thing?

"You're gonna need to know all about this kind of stuff if you want to get a job someday," Maude continued.

Ah.

"But I don't *want* to get a job someday," Spiro stated the obvious. "*You're* always gone. You're never happy. You have no idea who I am."

She allowed as much.

"Furthermore, you don't make enough money to make all of this worthwhile. You haven't joined the search for a new asset class, nor have you innovated a new commodity at virtually zero cost. You're surviving, not living. No matter what the stats say. Lacking any sense of ambition, your actions are a net drag on the economy. I don't suppose this device has fixed any of that."

Again, she couldn't argue.

"But you're going to keep doing this anyway," he said. "Going to work. Coming home. Going to work. Coming home. Hypocritically micromanaging my future at the expense of straightening out your own life."

"Yes," she said.

Spiro turned on the machine.