

THE STAR AND I
CHAPTER 14: Where to now?

Winning the Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe was not just the proudest moment of my life, it was a moment of catharsis. Clement and Urban Sea might never have really gone away, in my mind anyway.



Clement and Urban Sea might never have really gone away in my mind

However, it was the dramatic transformation in M. Lesbordes that had such a profound effect on me, as though some awful, brooding overhang had been blown away. I had often thought about Clement since I learned about his tragic death and in important moments, I would seek his advice, hoping he would visit me in my dreams to answer my numerous queries.

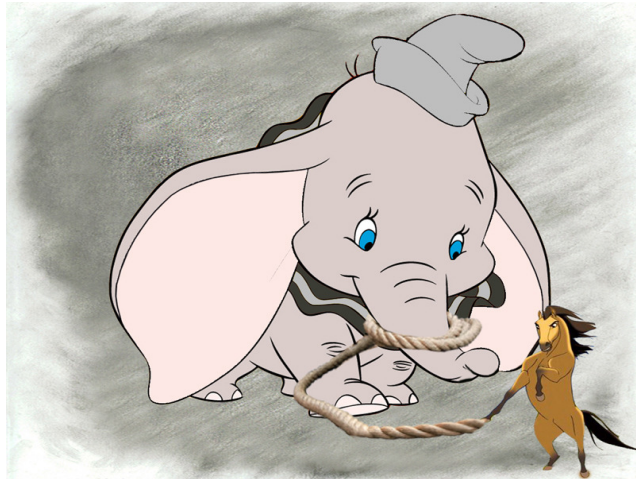


I hoped Clement would visit me in my dreams

But this was never to be mentioned to his grieving father. Now, it seemed that the Star's emulation of his mother's Arc success had finally released M. Lesbordes from his own private desolation. Finally, the elephants had been driven from the room.



Mr. Lesbordes, the grieving father



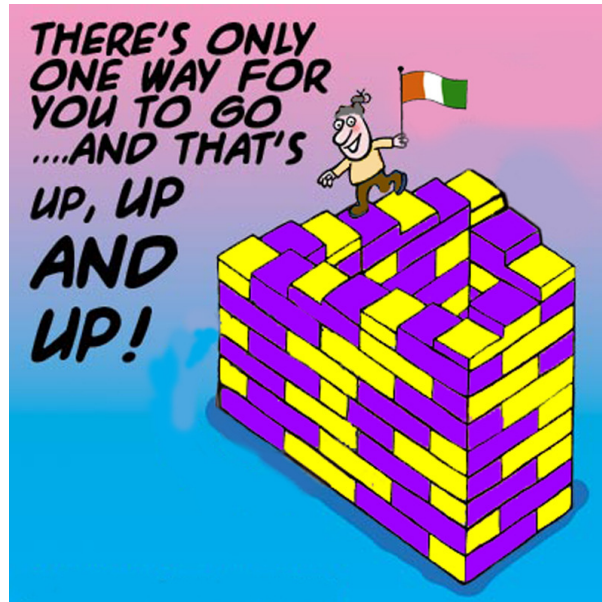
The elephant had been driven from the room

As ever, the media whipped up a frenzy. Should the Star venture to California to show American race fans what all of Europe now acknowledged? Among those to put pen to paper – and they were not a few – opinion seemed to be evenly, sharply divided. Some wanted to sock it to the Yanks. Others insisted that Sea The Stars had no further peaks to climb. He had faced his Everest and planted his flag on the summit with the same degree of insouciance as he showed cantering across the Curragh.



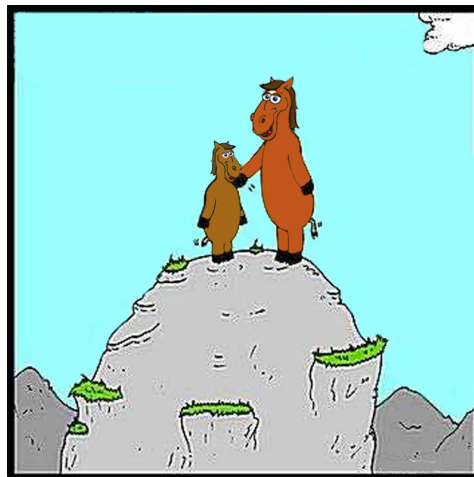
He had faced his Everest and planted his flag on the summit

We would – as we always had – leave that decision to Mr Oxx. Secretly, I hoped that he would resolve the issue as he had after the Derby. We learned to entrust him with Sea The Stars' fate knowing that he would know how to grasp each opportunity and turn that into a success story.



For Sea The Stars' career, there was only one way to go and it was upwards

Michael Kinane had been very quick to observe after the Arc that the Star had 'gone in his coat', implying, I thought, that enough was enough. There was nothing more the horse or his connections needed to prove.



Urban Sea told Sea The Stars that there was nothing more he needed to prove

When Mr Oxx announced his decision on Tuesday, 13 October, it made news headlines in Irish bulletins. Sea The Stars had run his last race. It is a measure of the respect in which Mr Oxx is held within the racing world and beyond that, his announcement instantly quashed any further debate.



Mr. Oxx's announcement quashed any further debate

Today in Asia for the Chinese horse fans, John Oxx = BOLE 伯樂 (the constellation that watches over Pegasus in the heaven of Chinese mythology). BOLE became the nomination of the Masters who had discovered talent in all fields such as art, sport, science etc...King Chu at the end of Han Dynasty proclaimed that Emperors and Kings should first discover their BOLE (who was harder to find and not always around) and only then, their Thousand miles horse. This is the tribute that my mother wishes to pay from the bottom of her heart to Mr. John Oxx for being our BOLE and for making all our dreams come true.



Thank you, Mr. Oxx, from the bottom of my heart



Thank you for discovering my talent

However, in many respects, the guessing game began afresh. Sea The Stars would be retired to stud, to commence his new career as a stallion but where would he stand and for whom? This was in many ways an infinitely more amusing game, involving probabilities, improbabilities, possibilities and wild speculation.



Sea The Stars will commence his new career as a stallion



Wild speculation of what is possible and impossible

Perhaps, Sheikh Mohammed would buy him. Perhaps he had already done so. Maybe an American consortium would gain the day. Japanese interest was rumoured. The Tsui family planned to set up their own stud farm around their Star, though whether in Ireland, England, France or America they were not saying. It was all the greatest of fun, a form of comic relief after the weather-dictated tensions of the Star's racing campaign.



Perhaps he had already been sold

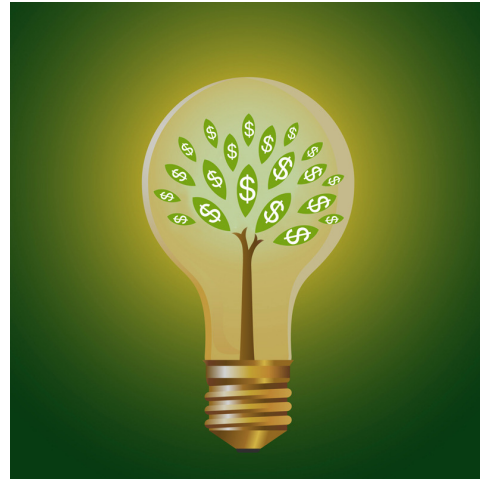


Maybe the Tsui family dreams of Japanese gardens

The only slightly sour note in all this hoopla was the continual emphasis on money. From our childhood, mother had taught Christine and I that money is an energy, circulating and moving things along. Money should not be considered as a possession to freeze in a safe. One should learn how to use this energy positively.



Money is an energy, circulating and moving things along



One should learn how to use this energy positively

Mother's love for history, devotion towards educating the next generation and belief in the power of re-production is what makes her personality unique. She is a pacifist and a sentimentalist with a low profile. From the time Urban Sea had produced a fine, big, strong and healthy colt foal to Cape Cross, my mother's intuitive choice of mate for her, Sea The Stars was never for sale.



History



Education



Re-production power

Perhaps it had been my mother's devotion to '*Le Petit Prince*', a story by Antoine de Saint-Exupery, that had induced her to follow what she saw with her heart, not just with her eyes.



'Le Petit Prince', my mother's inspiration



Christopher and Sea The Stars' connection is invisible to the eyes



Urban Sea's grave : Christopher's connection to Urban Sea can only be felt with the heart.

To us, Sea The Stars is a living, breathing memorial to his magnificent mother. What son could have done more to pay tribute to his mother's memory? To have sold some or all of Sea The Stars was never really in question. He has always been 'family', as was his marvellous mother, come what may.



Winning the Arc was the best way to pay tribute to his mother

When all arrangements had been completed, it was announced that Sea The Stars would be making another short journey, as he had from the Irish National Stud to Currabeg in 2007. Two years later, he would travel to nearby Gilltown Stud, there to join HH the Aga Khan's distinguished stallion band. If I might paraphrase the closing line from 'The Brook Kerith' by George Moore, himself a racing man: "The rest of his story remains to be told".



He left his Curragh stable, saying goodbye to John Hynes, John Oxx and Kevin Oxx



He joined HH the Aga Khan's world renowned Gilltown Stud with his owner Christopher Tsui

My mother would often say 'Happiness is not something one can possess or own, it is a quality of thought'. Now I know what she meant by that and no amount of challenge is going to stir me away from what I truly believe in.



Thoughts become things, choose the good ones



True appreciation of a bowl of rice can bring happiness