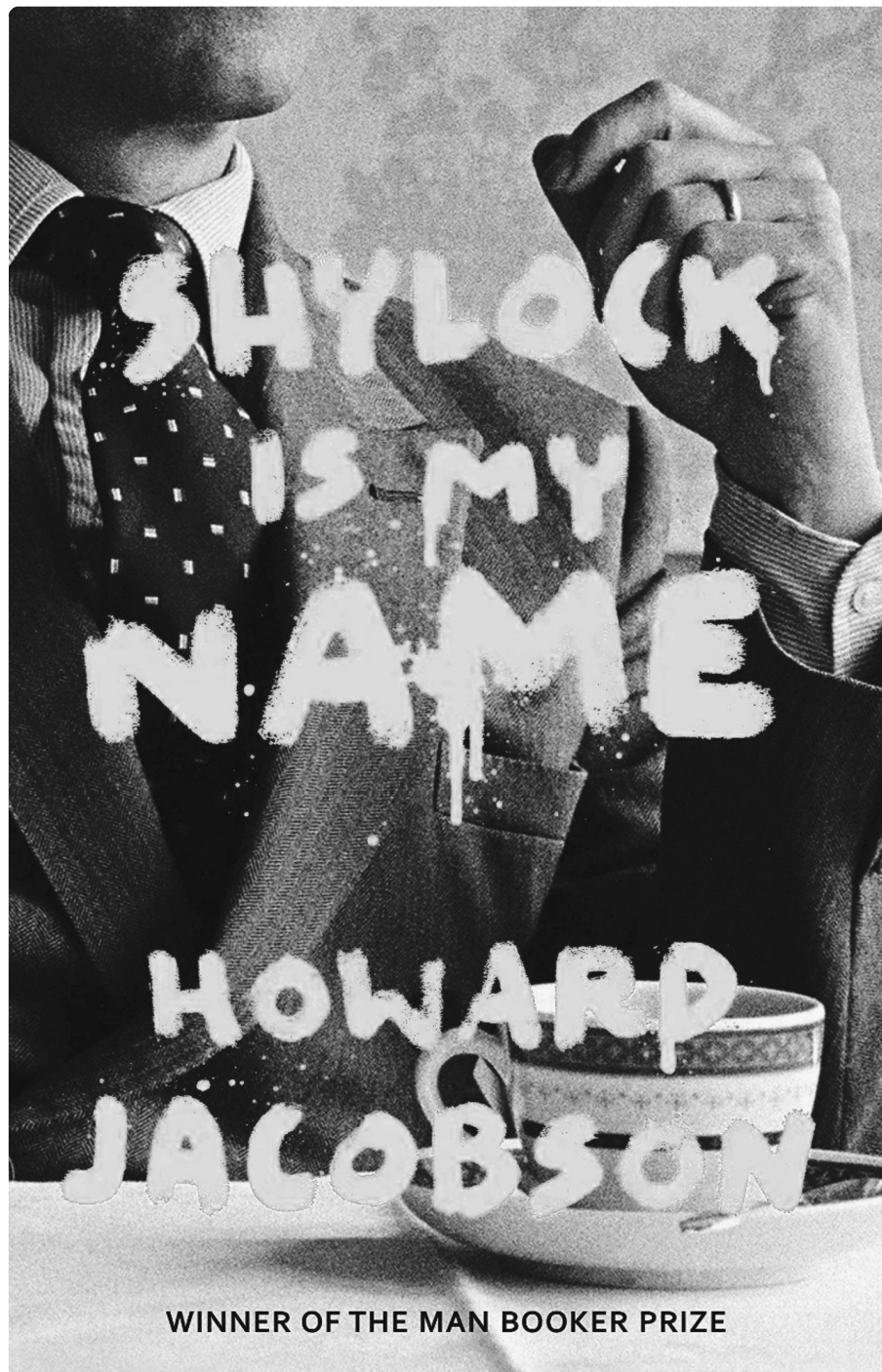


Het volgende fragment is het begin van hoofdstuk 2 van de roman *Shylock is my name*, geschreven door Howard Jacobsen.



(1) There lived once in a big old house equidistant from Mottram St Andrew, Alderley Edge and Wilmslow — at the very heart of what is still known to estate agents as the Golden Triangle — a dope-smoking media don who disapproved of dope and media, heir to a pharmaceutical fortune who favoured the redistribution of all wealth but his own, a utopist who mistrusted the principle of social amelioration, a lover of Gregorian chant who fantasised about being a rock legend, a whimsical conservationist who bought his sons fast cars with which they tore up the very country roads he wanted conserving. If he sounds like many people it's because many people were wrapped up in him. But he was just one man, a single fretting bundle of idealistic envy. 'Sometimes,' he told his students at the business school in Stockport of which he was the dean, 'even the fortunate and gifted can feel their lives are mortgaged to a perplexing sadness.'

(2) 'You don't say,' his students said behind his back.

(3) For Peter Shalcross MBE, one day had become the same as every other. A live morning radio interview on any subject, an afternoon lecture to his students on Mercantilism and Alienation — on alternate weeks he changed the title to Money and Estrangement — and then the drive home in the early evening to the heart of the Golden Triangle where a neat Scotch and a scarlet smoking jacket awaited him, where he could fulminate in comfort against the faux manses and manor houses of which the Strulovitches and their kind had taken possession. Every evening at the same time he fulminated, saying the same things and feeling the same burning sensation in his chest. But habit took nothing from the fervour of his animus. Only someone who enjoyed the benefits of great wealth himself could have been made so angry by the great wealth of others — the difference being that he hadn't had to earn his, the fact of which also made him obscurely angry.

'Can you smell anything?' he would ask visitors, throwing open the doors to his grounds, and when they had exhausted the possibilities — someone burning off leaves in the next country, horse manure, faulty plumbing, dust from the Sahara — he would rub the tips of his fingers together and say, 'No none of those, what I smell is more like lucre ... The filthy sort.'

Though he was concerned about the effect that the propinquity of lucre might have on the air quality, the hedgerows and his only daughter, Anna Livia Plurabelle Cleopatra A Thing Of Beauty Is A Joy Forever Christine — Christine being the name of the flighty society model he had ill-advisedly married and whose influence on him extended all the way down to his candy-striped socks and fashionably pointed, high crepe-soled shoes — Shalcross was known to boast to his academic colleagues about the millionaire pop stars and footballers who were his neighbours. This was not to be confused with 25. A man can boast and still deplore.