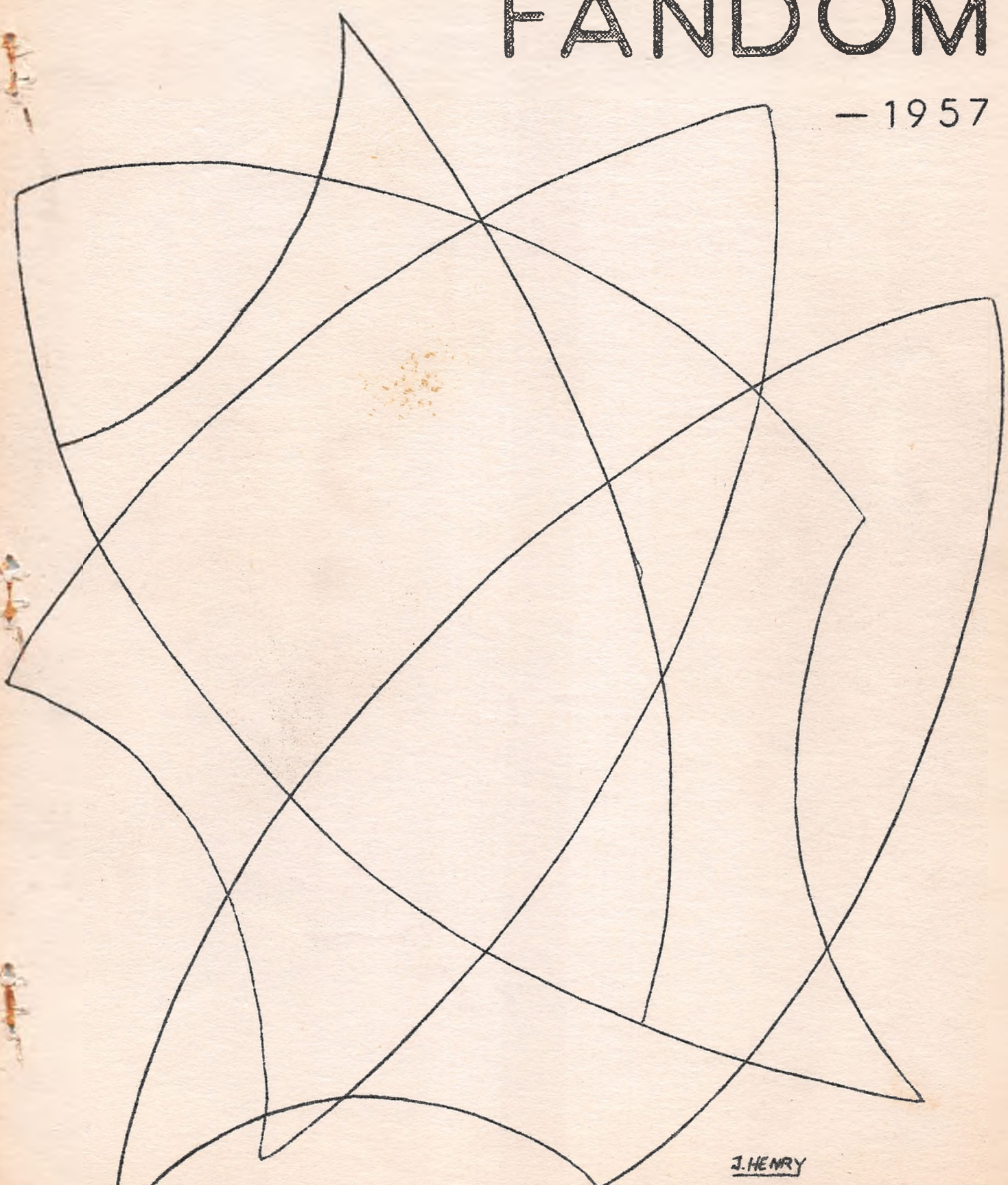


THE BEST OF FANDOM

— 1957



J. HENRY

A Twig PUBLICATION

V O I D

Presents



by John Berry

For years I have been relying on my mobility on an ancient pedal-cycle which was considered relatively ancient and unique when it was presented to me by a scrap metal dealer who, I recall, beside having a particularly generous nature, also conducted his business with a certain commendable professional standard below which he refused to participate.

Recently, however, I began to notice the methods of conveyance of my contemporaries. I discovered that men not as old as myself, and not earning as much money as myself, were tooting about the countryside in super-streamlined automobiles. Even a girl in my office screeched to a halt on one of those dinky Vespa's. One of my great friends purchased a German Messerschmitt car, one of those extremely fannish vehicles that combines originality of design with compactness and durability.

And it occurred to me just the other day, as I puffed my chain-straining way up the Upper Newtownards Road, that it was time I moved up the social circle of mechanically propelled vehicle owners.

I carefully checked my bank balance, cashed my National Saving Certificates, and counted the petty cash (the kids' money box). Satisfied with the result, I began haunting vehicle salesrooms in the center of Belfast and nightly scanned the 'For Sale' columns in the newspapers. And at long last, after carefully perusing, calculating, considering, pondering, I made my purchase.

My fourth hand motor assisted pedal cycle looked too good to be true. So good did it look, in fact, that I immediately relegated my old machine to the back bedroom. I admit I felt brutal doing so, because the trusty velocipede had borne me stout-heartedly for so many thousands of miles in the years that had gone by. But no one can deny that I do my best to keep pace with modern trends.

Proudly I called at the house of the owner of this magnificent highly powered motor assisted cycle, all 30 c.c. of it. He showed it to me, pointing out the various refinements he had added himself, and so I handed over my money and wheeled the machine on to the road. It was clean, vibrant, and powerful - looking. As I took my preliminary mounting stance, preparatory to whizzing away, the chap pointed out that the petrol tank was empty.

"....but," he added, "there's a garage just down the road."

I thanked him, and with a certain amount of effort, pedalled the machine to the garage.

I propped the machine proudly against the cement base of a petrol pump, and flashed the attendant a knowing grin.

He looked at me questioningly.

Half a gallon, please," I said.

"Four to one?" he asked.

I gave him the benefit of my specially cultivated 'bauty' expression.

"I don't bet on horses," I announced firmly, "all I want is half a gallon of petrol."

I didn't like the way the attendant ripped off his cap and flung it across the road. He put his big hairy hand over his face and rubbed his eyes. His stubble-covered chin grazed my forehead as he looked at me. I found difficulty in exactly understanding what he said, because his teeth seemed so unnaturally clamped together.

"On these two-stroke machines," he said slowly, "you use a mixture of petrol and oil for fuel, at a certain ratio. Now then. DO YOU WANT FOUR TO ONE?"

The blast from his last shouted sentence whistled through my moustache.

"Yes," I said meekly. I started to unscrew the cap of my petrol tank, but he brushed my hand away. He seemed to think I was trying to slow him down. I would have expected that he would have been grateful for the profit he was getting from my half gallon. I suspected that the big important looking chap with the red face sitting inside the Rolls Royce behind me, waiting to get served, started on a pedal cycle years ago. There was even something wrong with his car, too. The horn needed to be fixed. There was probably a short circuit somewhere, and it caused his horn to keep permanently blasting.

No wonder he looked a bit annoyed.

Now, before I go any further, I want to impress upon you that I have no practical mechanical knowledge at all. I can draw, paint, make model aeroplanes, etc. etc. But I know absolutely nothing about engines. This will become abundantly clear as you continue this enthralling narrative, but I don't want anyone to be laboring under a misapprehension.

Once clear of the garage, I moved the little handle that caused the friction drive to contact the wheel, and pressed the petrol switch. All was now ready for my first ride on this superb machine.

There was a bus stop on the opposite side of the road, and I didn't want the small queue to think I was inexperienced. I brought into action my long ingrained pedal-cycle mounting technique ... you know ... the three smart paces forward, the superior smirk, the quick leap onto the saddle and away in a flurry of pedals.

②

I'm sorry to say that in this instance, I didn't even man-

age the three smart paces forward.

This is what happened.

I gripped the handlebars, grinned at the queue, and leapt forward. The machine remained perfectly still, because the friction drive was gripping the tire, and I performed what I heard later described as being... 'A beautiful parabolic movement, executed with superb finesse, finally culminating in a delightfully artistic back-flip, spoiled only by the manner in which the backbone hit the concrete road surface.'

Fortunately, the route homewards consisted of several loooong downward slopes, and I was able to free-wheel to my house after laboriously loading myself onto the saddle and leaning on the crossbar.

After a brisk rub-down with 'wintergreen ointment', and three days in bed, I felt prepared to commence driving once more.

Many hours later I felt I had at last mastered the machine. There were no gears to worry about, just the accelerator and decompressor on the right handlebar, turned according to your fancy. So ~~accomplished~~ I did become, in fact, that I rode to work on my machine to show my co-workers and demonstrate my prowess.

But on the way home last night, the blasted engine just wouldn't start and I had to pedal the damn thing up the Upper Newtownards Road once more, and this time I had the weight of the engine to carry too.

My brother-in-law, who has had a motor cycle for about fifteen years, came to my house in answer to my urgent 'phone call, and he produced a large bag of spanners and oily cloths and sparking plugs and bits of wire. He gave me what he said was a very important job, namely sitting hunched up over a roaring fire with a length of wire in my hand, on the other end of which a (to quote him) 'badly oiled up sparking plug' was attached, and dangling the plug in the fire. That night he said he hadn't finished, and he came back the next night, and the following night, and the one after. By this time the threads on my sparking plug had formed into one big blob, but he told me night after night that I was doing a good job. And yet periodically I would hear him push the bike out the back door, and he would come back half an hour later, puffing and panting, and start throwing things around the kitchen again. Eventually, on the eighth night, when my wire was only about three inches long and the plug was a chunk of redhot coke, and he still said it was doing fine, I began to imagine he preferred to work on the machine by himself.

On the ninth night he called me to a secluded corner of the house and gave me a mysterious message.

"I have never had contact with an engine like that. I have stripped my 500 c.c. engine many times, and yet your 30 c.c. thing has me completely baffled, yet it is simplicity itself. It can't be the sparking plug, because that works in my machine, and it can't be the carburettor because the mixture is getting to the cylinder, and it can't be the compression because I've cleaned the cylinder and put in a new gasket and it can't be...."

And so he carried on for half an hour without repeating himself twice, using all sorts of quaint expressions such as 'points' and 'timing' and 'choke' (this worried me) and 'jet needle', etc. Then he leapt through the open window and hasn't been seen since.

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Cover
Jim Henry

SPECIAL NOTE:

With the exception of the Introduction and the Finis, the entire contents of THE BEST OF FANDOM '57 have been reprinted with the written permission of the editors of the various fanzines represented. No exceptions to this rule were made. The understanding was, also, that the permission, direct or indirect, of the authors was also given.

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I thought that maybe I had taken too big a step forward, but it seems there is nothing less than 30 c.c. obtainable according to the chap who runs the big garage nearby. He's got my machine at the moment and he says it looks like a long job to try and get it in working order. In fact, he went so far as to say that with labor the way it is today it would probably be cheaper in the long run to buy a new motor assisted pedal cycle. But I get a certain kick out of telling folks that ... "My machine is in the garage for a major overhaul." ... and I have discovered that my social status has risen considerably since the word has gotten around that I now travel to work on an omnibus. The fare to town is sure expensive. The dark nights are coming soon though, and then I can venture out on my old reliable bicycle again. I admit it's a retrograde step, but I feel more at home on my fateful friend.

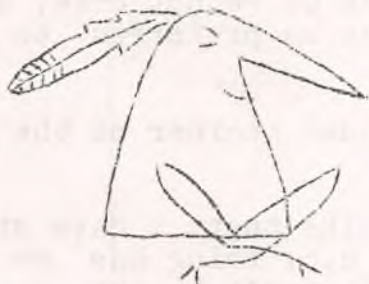
And if I do happen to get the two-stroke machine working again this year, I shall not go to the same garage again for fuel.

I still think it should have been four parts of petrol and one of oil, and not the other way round.

--John Berry

Reprinted from VOID #10. VOID is published by Greg and Jim Benford at 10521 Allegheny Drive, Dallas 29, Texas.

GREG BENFORD SAYS: "...we have decided on John Berry's OIL GET BY. It was a close decision as several other items (notably Boyd Raeburn's section of the Editors Forum) were excellent, but I consider this piece to be the best John has ever produced--or very close to it.



QUIRK

Presents

A
SLIGHT DEFENSE
OF

HOLLYWOOD

by Robert Coulson

Recently, the sporadic potshots taken at stf movies by fandom have been supplemented by a couple of major blasts. A pair of elephant rifles, as it were, have been added to the arsenal of .22's. Charles Beaumont, in F&SF, and Robert Bloch, in INSIDE, have, between them, accused the movies of everything from causing the slump in stf magazines to ignoring the true stf masterpiece in favor of filming monster-horror type crud.

The latter charge, at least, is unquestionably true. The question remains, why? Why does "Slan" lie mouldering in the files while "The Beast With 1,000,000 Eyes" is filmed in all its tarnished glory?

The answer, I think, lies in the basic make-up of Hollywood. The film industry has always depended on the "B" movie, or "Quickie" for its bread and butter. In the hey-day before television, the movies' staff of life was the cheap western. For every "Shane" or "High Noon" there have been dozens of Saturday afternoon double features starring Bill Boyd, Gene Autry, or Wild Bill Elliot. TV, however, changed all this. Formula westerns are probably the easiest thing in the world to produce, and the TV industry grabbed them thankfully, thereby effectively killing the Hollywood variety. With their major source of income gone, the studios began a frantic search for a replacement. So far, the gap left by the demise of the horse opera has been filled by cheap comedies, or "Ma and Pa Kettle Meet Martin and Lewis", the re-release of old grade "A" movies, and the expansion of the horrible horror movie productions, with the change in the advertising emphasis from fantasy to science fiction, since fantasy isn't doing too well commercially anymore. There is no basic difference between "The Creature From The Black Lagoon" and its sequels, and the old Frankenstein series, except for the advertising.

The flood of low grade fantasy has continued for one reason-it makes money. Many fans seem unable to grasp the fact that the movie industry is not at all interested in science fiction. Movies are produced solely to bring in a profit, and a large number of low-budget monster movies will bring in more profit for the same investment than one well planned and expensive production.

But, you say, there are many fine stf movies which could be filmed without undue expense, and which would make good movies. "Slan", or moreover, "More Than Human", would require less technical effects than any but the cheapest horror show, and provide grade "A" adult entertainment. Here we come to the second difficulty in

producing science fiction. Entertainment for who? The fans? The prospect of drawing the attendance of 2,000 or so fans to a movie is not exactly one to make a producer scream with delight. The readers? Which readers? There are two distinct type of stf readers; except for fans, the readership of AMAZING STORIES and ASTOUNDING will not show very much overlapping. Which market will Hollywood aim for; the 225,000 individuals who bought the issue of FANTASTIC containing a Mickey Spillane story, or the 90,000 or so readers of ASF, and the 186,000 readers of the old pulp AMAZING? Which do you think? "1984" was a good stf movie, and it was not overly popular. "Creature From the Black Lagoon" was a 'bad' stf movie and was extremely popular. There is little doubt as to which type will continue to be produced.

Fans are going to have to live with the fact that no mass entertainment medium, whether it be movies, television, radio, or The Saturday Evening Post, is going to present much high-class stf. High quality stf is not too popular with the masses. It demands thought on the part of the American people. The American public does not appreciate entertainment which makes him think. Like it or not, it's not Hollywood which is out of step; it's fandom.

--Robert Coulson

Reprinted from QUIRK #1. QUIRK is published by Larry Ginn and Johnny Holleman whose addresses are: Box 85 Choudrant, Louisiana and Box 77 Choudrant, Louisiana.



ZODIAC

Presents

FLYING SAUCER REPORT!

by Herbert Beach

(G. Tryon Geshu)

Doing this assignment for editor Sokol wasn't too hard to take, being that he promised transportation to Amheist and also to compensate me for expenses incurred. However, after discovering that the "bus" I boarded at one a. m. was really a salt truck with a load of bootleg oleomargarine for Wisconsin, and going all through the sackful of remuneration to find nothing but "All the way with Adali" buttons -- Well, I began to have my doubts about the fellow. But then, he did promise me a life subscription to Science Fiction Plus beginning with issue #8, so I decided to go through with it--after all, what possible harm could come of it?

I began to think over that last bit again as we crossed the Iowa Wisconsin border and a running gun battle developed between the truck driver and the highway patrol behind us. Fortunately, there was some salt in the truck to stop the bullets or this report would have been finished before it was started.

As it was, we shook them by pulling into a drive-in movie lot, and the law never checks those places in the middle of the afternoon. The rest of the trip was quite uneventful, and I bid my smiling friends a hasty adieu the next time they stopped the truck -- after all, how long did they think I could subsist on margarine and Stevenson buttons?

Finding myself on the outskirts of a town whose name I won't even attempt to pronounce, I induced a local cab driver to take me over to nearby Amheist. He explained on the way that his real place in life was writing, his name being Black or Blot or something like that for those of you who may have read something by him. He only hacked in between times to get along.

Leaving the poor fellow to figure out change for a sackful of "all the way" buttons, I hurried into a corner tavern to inquire the way to Ravin A. Palmist's home. Three hours and fifteen minutes later, fortified with the information I needed and a little Wisconsin cheer besides, I staggered out again to find the driver still waiting. He was just about ready to button me up, too, when I explained to him where I wanted to go and why. Picking me up out of the gutter and dusting me off, he set me gently into the back of the cab -- it turned out that he too was a saucer addict, and was quite willing to take me to one of the meetings.

I was a bit annoyed though, to discover that the floorboards were missing from the back of the cab, but, due to my excellent good nature and the lugger he pointed at my head, I happily took

over "running the car."

Making very good time, we soon arrived at the Palmist farm where a large banner was strung over the driveway, proclaiming that this was the official home of the "Saucer Watchers and Marching Society of Central Wisconsin". Casually slipping to the ground in a panting heap, I watched the driver depart to meet some of the others, who were observing the sky through glasses (which, from time to time, were placed under the spigot of a large barrel and then raised again).

I marveled at their strange method of greeting each other. (They shook hands and slapped backs with one hand and went through the other's pockets with the other), but gave it up as a strange membership ritual full of hidden meaning and things like that.

Gathering up my possessions, I approached the house in hopes of meeting the man most responsible for this business. Entering a dimly lighted hallway, I could make out a mirror at the far end with a small table directly below.

Moving towards it, I was able to discern a sign which read "Place manuscripts or art work here". Curious, I placed my large manila envelope of C-Ration cigarettes upon the table to see what would happen. Immediately a bell rang behind me, causing me to turn with a start, but while doing so, I noticed a hairy arm dart out from behind the mirror, seize the package, and disappear again!

Taken somewhat aback at the turn of events, I pulled on the mirror and then pounded it with more force all to no avail. Just upon the point of exasperation and with my foot poised in mid-air for a tremendous kick, the bell rang again, and a panel marked reject slid open above the mirror to drop my package back on the table.

I clutched it to me like a professional fullback and charged out of the house, only to note upon examination that the cigarette papers were missing from the smokes! Writing this off as a shortage of newsprint, I unlimbered my tape recorder and walked down to the gathering by the barrel to begin my interviews.

The first fellow that I could shake into some semblance of sober action revealed himself to be no less than Paul W. Cheatman, editor of Agonizing Stories. I introduced myself to him, and when his careful scrutinization of the three of us merged into one fellow with a tape recorder, he agreed to talk to me.

"Tell me, Mr. Cheatman, how did your half -and-half Flying Saucer issue of Agonizing Stories go over?"

"Like a lead balloon, that's how! As a result of this issue, one of the owners of the publishing firm even quit!"

"Well, err, that's too bad, of course, but how did the fans react to the issue?"

"We got utter silence! Even C.W. Brandt didn't write, and he always writes in praising each issue! Ravin says that the saucer fans outnumber the s t f fans 10 to 1, but these saucer fans are too busy writing books of their own experiences to take time to read about somebody else's!"

⑧ "Well, if things are so bad, how did you ever come to use this flying saucer material in the first place?"

"I must be getting old, but Ravin conned me into it! He offered the material free in exchange for the publication rights of the old Remington Shaver Mystery, which appeared in Agonizing Stories when he edited it! Now, he publishes his magazine with enough reprint material to run for years, and I don't even know if I'll have a job when the final circulation figures for that issue are in!"

"Yes, but if you feel like that, what are you doing in this group of Palmist supporters?"

"Palmist supporters, that's right! I've five other friends here who also are ready to support Ravin, providing he's on the inside of a wooden overcoat!"

"Err, thank you, Mr. Cheatman, for your views on flying saucers! Now, here's a jovial fellow on the other side of the barrel, and perhaps you'd be kind enough to say a few words..."

"I sure will! Hello, gang! This is your old space-ship daddy, William L. Hamstrung, again, reminding you to turn to page 130 for your free books with each subscription--Psst! Hey, son, which way is the camera?"

"Calm yourself, sir, and climb off my lapels. We're not on television, just a tape recording interview, so please quit waving that copy of Imbicellis Tales under my nose!"

"Sorry, son, didn't mean to hog the whole scene! Who'd you say you were from--Life, Newsweek, or somebody like that?"

"Well, err, no, but I am from Nebraska's leading fan magazine, Zodiac! Mr. Hamstrung? Hey, Mr. Hamstrung! Come back here, and give me your ideas on this flying saucer business!"

"Oh, all right. You're sure you're not from Life? Oh, well, yes, I've gone into flying saucers, even have a column coming up devoted to fan's incident's and experiences with them."

"Have you received anything of a significant nature in this way?"

"The only thing significant about these 'reports' is that they're more fantastic than both of my writers can think up! Why, they even got more Imagination than I have!"

"Yes, but..."

"Hey, son, you missed that! More Imagination than me! That's a joke son; don't be passing me by like that!"

"Sorry, Mr. Hamstrung. Then you really believe in these flying saucers, and you don't think that they're a hoax of some kind?"

"Hoax! Of course, not! Why, son, when Ravin A. Palmist and your old space ship daddy Bill tell you something, you know it's real, don't you? By the way, son, your subscription's coming due pretty soon! You can renew right away with me, you know! Free books and everything!"

"Well, to tell you the truth, I never read your magazines.....Mr. Hamstrung? Oh, well, let him go...Say, there's a grinning face peering out of the bushes...Pardon me, sir, but who might you be?"

"Say, do you see Cheatman, anyplace?"

"Yes, he's lying down over there, hugging the bottom of the barrel. Why, you must be Ravin A. Palmist!"

"That's right! Help me out of these bushes, will you? Ahh, that's better! Now, what can I do for you?"

"I'm here from Zodiac and getting a report on these flying saucers. Care to comment?"

"What a foolish question! Oh yes, you're the young fellow with the envelope of those old cigarettes, aren't you? Too bad figured I'd get enough out of that to complete the material for

next issue--guess I'll have to use another of Remington's yarns...."

"Speaking of Remington, where is he? I've been looking around, but I haven't seen anyone that would answer to his description."

"Oh, he's not up here. He's down in his caves, but I'll ring his doorbell for you!"

"A lighted stick of dynamite dropped down an old well shaft! Some doorbell!"

"Oh, I used to drop a friend down the well in the good old days to strike a bell at the bottom. Had to use dynamite lately, though. Seem to be running out of friends."

"I shouldn't wonder, if you treat them like that!"

"Duh, hello up there! Waddya want?"

"Fellow here to talk to you about saucers, Remington!"

"Duh, I saw 'em first! Everybody else writes about 'em and gets paid for it, but I saw 'em first!"

"Err, that's enough, Remington, get back to your writing! Poor fellow. I'd invite him up for you to see, but he doesn't look so good living underground and all that. Hmmm, his voice sounded weaker this time ...Guess I'll have to send down some food again..."

"Good heavens! You don't mean that you're starving the poor fellow slong with not paying him?"

"Oh, it's good for him and he writes better that way. The less distraction, the better the writing, I always say!"

"Well, you should know more about that than I do. How is your new magazine, Flying Crockery, being received?"

"On the newstands, with indifference! In the mails, a month late!"

"Why do you mail your copies out late to your subscribers?"

"This just goes to show how little you know about business, young fellow! That's to get them tired of waiting, and they buy a copy off the stands! Total, two sales!"

"You've been accused of starting this whole thing back in the forties and that you played up the emotions of the people with the "Orsen Wells" technique so much that they actually began seeing these things! Now, what have you to say to this?"

"Care to buy any hair dressing? Great stuff; grows hair on billiard balls, and with every purchase I give a free bottle of dandruff remover to clean out the pockets of your pool table."

"Mr. Palmist, you didn't answer my question!"

"How about some delicious spaghetti powder? It's made out of ground glass and varnish -- the latter for a beautiful finish! I serve it to all of my friends to whom I owe money!"

"Mr. Palmist..."

"Sorry, friend. Got to go now; brother Cheatman has awakened and is leading a band of five fellows this way. You wouldn't have time to make them up a batch of spaghetti, I suppose...Well, keep an eye on my editorials, and I'll answer your questions by and by..."

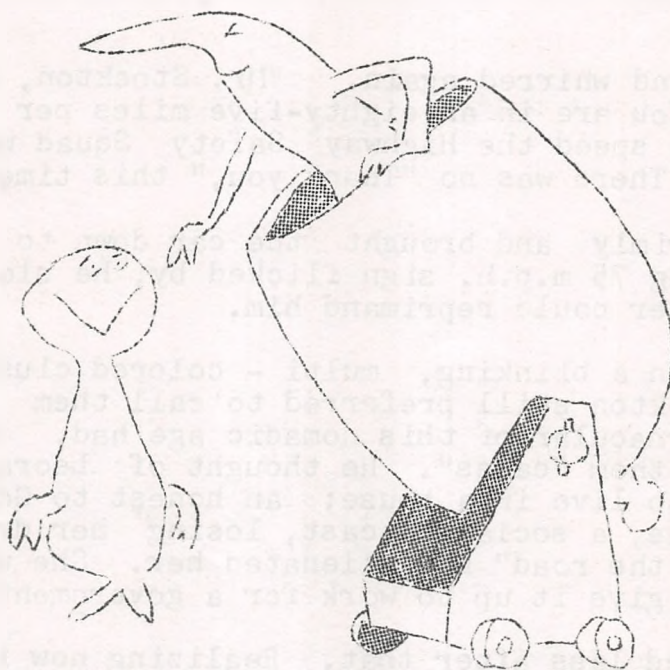
ing out this report by mail. Oh, yeah, I did start out to return it in person, but walking by an old well opening, a clammy arm laid hold of me and I found myself at the bottom of the Shaver homestead. Guess he thought the sackful of "All the Way" buttons was his long awaited pay for his stories....

I'm now working as secretary to Remington and guess I'll continue until I'm able to sneak away. Wish Larry would start sending my subscription to Science Fiction Plus, though. It gets awfully lonely down here.....

--Herbert Beach

Reprinted from ZODIAC #4. ZODIAC, now discontinued, was published at 4131 Lafayette Avenue, Omaha 31, Nebraska, by Larry Sokol

ABOUT BEACH: During ZODIAC'S short life, a mystery writer was often present in its pages. Not until the final issue was it revealed that O. Tryon Geshe was Herbert Beach and that he was trying his hand at faanish writing. The success of a number of these, including FLYING SAUCER REPORT show the versatility he holds in his pen.



CAIFANAC

Presents

TO HELL ON A ROLLERCOASTER

by Tom Reamy

The highway dash stripes made military interruptions to the soft turbine purr of the speeding black car. The man behind the wheel shifted his position and winced as his left leg tingled with returning blood. His head hurt and his eyes burned and he was smoking too much.

The flat prairie country was monotonous and his eye lids were heavy with persistent drowsiness. He eased the car away from the highway edge when the warning light on the dash blinked red. He tightened a little as he passed an autohouse without letting up on the accelerator.

A tape in the dash clicked and whirred. "Mr. Stockton, you have entered a speed zone. Please decrease your speed to..." There was a barely perceptible pause as the safety monitor in the dash selected the correct speed to match the highway impulses. "...eighty-five miles per hour. Thank you."

Stockton clamped his teeth together and ignored the voice. There was no way to disconnect the damn thing. The headlights snapped on as the sun finally made a complete exit behind the mountains rearing out of the flatlands ahead of him. The green coloring in the windshield faded with the light.

The dash clicked and whirred again. "Mr. Stockton, this is your second notification. You are in an eighty-five miles per hour zone. Unless you slow to this speed the Highway Safety Squad will be summoned automatically." There was no "Thank you," this time.

Stockton smiled grimly and brought the car down to the limit. When the night blinking 75 m.p.h. sign flicked by, he slowed the car before the safety monitor could reprimand him.

The town nestled in a blinking, multi-colored cluster at the foot of the mountains. Stockton still preferred to call them towns, although the changing vernacular of this nomadic age had, with unusual appropriateness, dubbed them "cases". He thought of Leora and the night he told her he wanted to live in a house; an honest to God stationary house. Becoming a Lamie, a social outcast, losing her driver's license and the "privileges of the road" had alienated her. She was a stockholder and would never give it up to work for a government allowance.

He saw her less and less after that. Realizing now it was all hopeless, he didn't care so much. Once you became a Lamie either voluntary (which was rare) or as a penalty for violating the "highway code" or simply because you were born a social undesirable, you were always a Lamie. After all, someone had to supervise the synthesizer plants and take care of stores and things that couldn't be run by automation.

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He should have accepted it sooner, the way Leora prided herself in being the first born in a Happy Wanderer autohouse while it

was in motion.

He slowed the car in compliance with the speed limit signs. At fifty-five he came to the first sign: "Drive-In Restuarant". He was hungry, but he wanted to get out of the car to eat and stretch tired muscles. He was sure this "oasis" had no old-fashioned cafe where he could sit at a counter or a booth.

He wasn't too sure how it all started. The disintergration of most of the larger cities and industrial automation had been a boosting factor, but it had started long before that, almost with the advent of the automobile.

The street was eight lanes wide. He maneuvered through the traffic from the center thru-lane to an outside local-lane. The stores were widely scattered with ample parking space around each and signs that proclaimed: "Park 'N Eat; Select Your Purchases in the privacy of Your Car or Autohouse With Our Personal Telescreen Service: Drive-In Bank, Never Leave the Comfort of Your Car; Autohouse Park: Drive-In Theatre, Special Section for Autohouses; Drive-In Clothiers, Our life-like mannikin models in your exact size will model our complete line for you. You Never Leave Your Car. They never closed.

Drive-In First Baptist Church. There had been quite an uproar from the ministry over that, but it accomplished nothing. Most of the clergymen became voluntary Lamies, but he had heard that mannikins were being used in some places and that there was a move to do away with the churches completely and simply broadcast the sermons over the car radios.

Stockton laughed aloud when he saw the service station sign announcing redly: "Now! The Latest in motoring convenience! Try our new Drive-In Restrooms!"

He pulled into a space at a drive-in grocery. A Handi-Chute slid to his window. He filled out the Handi-Order Blank and pressed the button. The chute slid back into the wall and almost immediately returned with his bill. He deposited the coins and again pressed the button. His money was running low after that silly traffic violation which had caused his dividend to be suspended for a month. Being a Stockholder wasn't all the Lamies thought it was. His stock had been left him by his father and he would leave it to his children or nearest relative if he died childless. When no relative existed the stock was put on the open market.

After a moment the chute returned with his order. A recorded voice intoned a cheery "Thank you, please call again."

Stockton replied with a mirthless "Ha!" and drove away. He left the oasis and started the climb into the mountains. The oncoming headlights were black-rimmed owl eyes in the gloom. After a ways he pulled over to the side of the highway, ignoring the blinking red light on the dash.

The tape clicked and whirred, "Mr. Stockton, if you are in distress, dial the Highway Rescue Squad on your communicator. If you do not do so within ten seconds, it will be because you are unable to do so or are purposely violating a traffic regulation. In either event the Highway Safety Squad will be notified automatically."

Stockton ignored the voice. He made a sandwich from the groceries and opened the cup of Handi-Coffee, Ready to Drink. With

the sandwich in one hand and the cup of self-heating coffee in the other, he stepped from the car. The night air was cool and he could hear the night noised all around. He stretched. Ghost-glow faces stared at him from passing cars.

He hadn't finished the sandwich when the Highway Safety Squad car pulled up behind his own. There were two of them. They yelled at him without getting out. The Squadmen were supposed to be beyond physical pleasures and the idea of leaving the comfort of their patrol car displeased them.

"What's the trouble, Stockholder?" one of them asked while the other called his license number in to Files.

"No trouble, Squadman. I only stopped to stretch and eat a bite."

The Squadman was apprehensive. "Why didn't you eat at a drive-in?" The other Squadman said something to him Stockton did not catch.

He walked toward them. This was foolish. He should never have stopped. What was it worth to get out of the car like **this**? He had a tingling feeling in his stomach and the coffee cup was burning his hand.

"Files has your number listed for a violation already. Why didn't you eat at a drive-in?"

Stockton made a futile gesture with his hands. I don't know. I just wanted to get out of the car for a while." He knew that he shouldn't say it but he couldn't stop. "I was so tired of staying in the car I could scream!"

The squadmen looked at each other. One of them attempted to be soothing. "There are places for that. You know it's against the regulations of highway safety to stop in a non-prescribed parking area."

Stockton lowered his head. "I'm sorry. I don't know what came over me. I won't do it again." He looked up. What will the penalty be?

"The Circuit will have to decide that. How would you like to be a Lamie?" There was a trace of smirk on his face. "Get back in your car and follow us!"

Stockton was frightened. One squadman said to the other, "I will certainly be glad when automatic drivers are installed in all the highways so these jokers will quit giving us so much trouble."

He got back into his car and put the remainder of the sandwich and the coffee cup into the disposer. Oh, my God, he thought, A Lamie! A damn Lamie! I won't! I won't! The squadcar pulled around him and turned back to the oasis. He started the car but didn't move. The squadcar slowed waiting for him. I haven't got the nerve. I'm scared! He gunned the car and headed into the mountains.

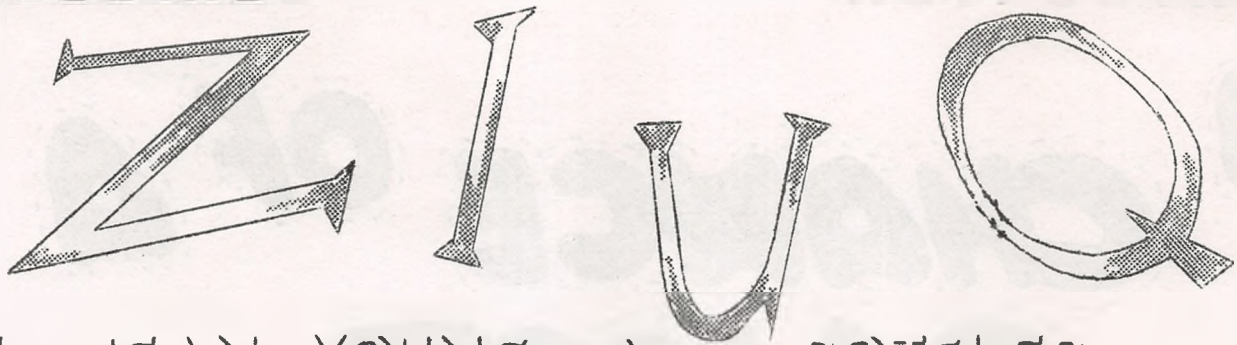
The squadcar whipped around and started after him, its siren blaring. He had hardly gone a mile when he saw the roadblock ahead of him. What's the use? There's no use. I won't be a damn Lamie!

The railing hardly slowed the car when it plunged through. The red hot neon worms burned his brain. "Drive-In Cemetery, Never Leave the Comfort of Your Car."

--Tom Reamy

KEEBIRD

Presents



by JEAN YOUNG & ROTSLEER
captions by JACK HARNESS

(EDITOR'S NOTE: When Richard Eney submitted his entry for this anthology there was not one, but three choices that I could choose. Seeing as to how ZIUQ fit into the magazine so admirably, you can see that it was the item I chose. Further, it was the only selection of art that came in and as such was more than welcome.

I would like to add that, since these drawings are copies of copies they are not as true to the original as might be expected, however Jean's drawings are fairly easy to copy so it is hoped she can recognize her own art work.)

Eney had this to say about this selection:

"...Jean Young's incisive pictorial satire.is a parody of Jack Harness' questionnaire which, he claimed, would use Scientology to show all of us whether we were sane...."

Reprinted from KEEBIRD. KEEBIRD is published by Richard Eney who lives at 417 Fort Hunt Road, Alexandria, Virginia.

(This selection is scattered throughout the magazine, with indications as to the next page at the bottom of each section.)



I can recall
things by
listening to them
in memory

(more on page 21)



I am complete
master of myself
and my
environment

A CHANCE OF A GHOST

by Bob Shaw

Winter came early in the year 2113 - a long succession of cold, sad months in which the chill rain swooped in windy shapes down deserted streets and gurgled mournfully in the gutters. Goon Bleary VI, head of the G.D.A., walked slowly towards his home; trench-coat buttoned tight, hat pulled down against the hopeless drizzle. He was whistling a low, sad tune, which reached no other ears but his own.

Overhead the dark evening sky was occasionally disturbed by the whisper of commuting copters, but the Goon preferred to walk. The G.D.A. was not far from the Bleary ancestral home, anyway. Reaching his house, he opened the front door and stood in the hallway removing his outer garments.

Before him, lined along the wall, were the familiar portraits of the preceding heads of the G.D.A. They were remarkably alike - strong athletic-looking men with keen, penetrating eyes and luxurious moustaches. The Goon hung up his coat and went down the hall into the living room, stopping for a minute at the painting of Goon Bleary the first which was in the darkest part of the hall where it could hardly be seen.

This was the Goon's favourite ancestor. All the others were grim determined men but Goon 1st was different. There was a cheery twinkle to his eyes and under his moustache lurked the hint of a grin. His clothes were slightly dishevelled and in his right hand he held a square of battered cardboard.

Goon VI had often pondered on the meaning of that incongruous piece of cardboard. It was a pity that the beginnings of the G.D.A. were shrouded in mystery. So many years had gone by. Years in which the G.D.A. had become the world's foremost detective agency, fighting crime in all its many forms, and always headed by a Bleary. A fine tradition and one which every member of the Bleary line was expected to carry on.

In his living room the Goon sat down before a glowing coal fire which differed from a 20th century coal fire only in that it never needed tending. He pressed a button on the arm of the chair and a bottle of beer and a glass were levitated up from the basement store. Goon poured the beer and sat staring into the fire, and the cold rain

pattered on the windows.

An hour later the Goon was aroused from his lonely reverie by the robot butler's announcement that he had a visitor. He went out to the hall where he saw a small, neat man with large ears and sleek black hair, turning off his field force umbrella. The small man was looking surprisedly at the Goon's dripping trench coat and hat.

"The traditional G.D.A. outfit," the Goon explained going forward, "I'm Goon Bleary."

"How do you do?" the small man replied and the Goon saw that he was pale and nervous. "I'm Aub Long."

"Indeed. I would have said you were fairly well rounded. Get it? Hee hee hee. What a smashin' pu - " The Goon stopped, inwardly angry at himself. Why did he sometimes get these uncontrollable impulses to make weird puns and then praise them extravagantly? "What's your trouble Mr. Long?"

"It's my house. It's haunted, do you handle cases like that?"

"Oh yes," said the Goon. "The more unusual the case is, the better. Where is the house?"

"The address is 170 Upnards Road."

"170 Upnards Road," the Goon echoed faintly. "170, Upnards Road."

"What's the matter, Mr. Bleary?" Long said anxiously. "You seem quite pale."

"I don't know," said the Goon. "Am I pale? For a moment I seemed to... it's nothing. Let's go." He grabbed his trenchcoat.

"Right now?" Long queried.

"Why not. This is a lonely house. I hate it. Tell me about your ghosts."

As they flew in Aub Longs copter, Long explained that he could not get any tenant to remain in his house more than a few days. They all claimed they had heard ghosts in the attic - screams, shouts, bangs, horrible cries, moans. Probably the ghostly re-enactment of a terrible murder.

"Don't worry," the Goon explained. "Until a few years ago ghosts were not accepted, but with the definite proof of psychic phenomena great steps were made in these things. Exorcizing, for instance. I have in my pocket a little machine which sets up vibrations which either destroys spectres or renders this 'continuum' absolutely untenable for them. When I use this machine these ghosts will vanish for ever." He gazed sadly down through the whirling mists to where the lights of the Upnards Road were rising slowly to meet them.

The tiny copter landed in the front garden of 170. The Goon got out and stood surveying the house and lawn, narrowing his eyes against the wind-bourne rain.

"What is that?" he asked, pointing to a jumble of vaguely seen bars on top of a short pedestal.

"It is a genuine 20th century bicycle. I had it put there as a curio. It was found out at the back of the house."

"Really?" the Goon replied. He poked the thing with his fingers and it sagged slightly. "Hard to believe that it could have become so rusted in 150 years or less." He smiled a little as he tried to imagine the sort of person it would have been who actually rode on that piece of metal.

They went into the house and stood in the dark, empty hall. The

Goon took off his hat and flipped it towards the stairs where it landed on top of the newell post.

"Why did you do that, Mr. Bleary? We will be here only for a few seconds, won't we? Are you sure you feel all right?"

"I don't know," the Goon said faintly, retrieving his hat. "Listen. I heard something.

They listened. From upstairs came strange sounds, growing gradually louder and louder - bangs, cries, weird laughter, screams.

"It is they," screamed Long. "It's the ghosts. What a horrible sound. Quickly, Mr. Bleary, use the machine."

Moving like a man in a trance, the Goon removed the exorciser from his pocket. For a moment his fingers hovered above the activator switch, then he withdrew them. "I'm going up there to see them," he said slowly.

Long caught his arm. "Are you mad? You can't go up there. Who knows what would happen to you?" The sounds floating down the stairs grew even louder.

The Goon's eyes were shining with an unnatural brightness as he brushed off Long's hand. "I don't care. All my life I have been lonely. I've been searching, searching, searching. Looking for.....something. I'm not a Master Detective at heart. I need something else and I'm going up those stairs."

He started up the stairs and the sounds grew thunderous from above.

With a desperate cry Long threw himself forward, caught the exorciser and turned its switch.

All at once the sounds ceased. The house was silent.

The Goon stood stock still on the third step, his face buried in his hands. He swayed like that for some time then turned and walked slowly tiredly down to the hall.

Outside the house, Long said timourously, "I guess we've both been under a strain. I'll fly you straight back."

The Goon gazed at him for a second.

"No thanks, I'll walk."

He pulled his hat down over his eyes and walked away into the night. Long glimpsed him once as his copter rose in the sky; and the Goon looked very small and lonely as the rain and clouds closed over and hid him from view.

--Robert Shaw

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Arthur Thomson, 17 Brockham House, Brockham Drive, London, S.W.2, England

AMATEUR'S CORRESPONDENT

Presents

W H Y A N I G Y

by Roy Cadwell

Most people think the whole purpose of the extra long I.G.Y. Year is to launch the celebrated satellites. Although this is the most tremendous and exciting project it is by no means the only one. There are so many varied activities, all over the world, that they simply cannot be crammed into the conventional 12 month year. In fact, many of the necessary preliminaries were begun last January, for even the announced 18 month spread is not enough for the I.G.Y.

July 1, 1957, was the official opening date and it marked the beginning of a scientific program that will be the largest, most stimulating experiment of its kind. There have, in the past, been comparable events but none so large. In 1882 - 83 there were International Polar Years and again in 1932 - 33 another program under the same name.

During the 18 months period from July through December of 1958 over 40 nations will station more than 5,000 of their best scientists at some 1,600 stations throughout the world in a cooperative attempt to find out how and why an event that happens in one part of the earth and its atmosphere affects the earth as a whole.

It will employ newly developed recording and observing mechanisms which have never been widely used before. For instance, a new research rocket has been designed primarily for this project. It is designed to carry 150 pounds of scientific instruments 180 miles into the air.

For the first time in history the world's greatest scientists are to make a simultaneous concentrated physical examination of the earth and its atmosphere.

Then, they may possibly be in a position to diagnose some of the ills that have afflicted mankind since the beginning of history. This is both the beauty and the why of the I.G.Y.

There are two main divisions in the I.G.Y. research. Scientists have in the past contented themselves mainly with exploring the surface of the earth. During I.G.Y., scientists will delve deeper into the mysteries both above and below the earth's surface.

Some of the scientists will be cruising the seven seas far off the steamer lanes, while still others will be in submarines measuring the gravity of the earth far below the surface of the sea.

Hundreds of scientists aboard more than 81 ships flying the flags of more than 20 nations will sail over practically uncharted waters, seeking basic scientific facts that will guide research

into such fields as long - range weather and earthquake forecasting, the possibility of preventing hurricanes from hitting highly populated areas, and disposing of atomic waste without poisoning the ocean waters.

The most spectacular and largest field of exploration will be the upper atmosphere. During the I.G.Y. the United States alone is planning to launch in 1957-1958 more than twice as many high altitude rockets as have been sent up in the past decade. Some will go from earth. Some will be shot from airplanes (rockairs) and some from balloons (rockoons) thus excaping the need of climbing through thickest atmosphere by expenditure of their own limited fuel power. The rockairs and rockoons will collect data up to 60 miles, the Aerobee land based rockets up to 200 miles, and the new earth satellites up to 800 miles above the earth.

This is the purpose of project Vanguard which, using ~~three-stage~~ rockets, will attempt to place a total of 12 instrument carrying artificial satellites into orbits around the earth. The first shot is planned for January 1958.

This launching of an Earth Satellite Vehicle is perhaps the most exciting of all the projects planned for the I.G.Y. This project, if successful, may contribute more to the science of the world in general than any other single project known to science. The mere fact that the satellite when launched must fly over all the countries of the world will call for mutual trust and cooperation.

The satellite will offer an unparalleled opportunity for science to study the physical phenomena surrounding the earth. During the past hundred years, man, despite being earthbound, has made enormous strides toward understanding the universe. However, the hampering presence of the heavy blanket of atmosphere has left many questions unanswered. With today's knowledge of rockets and instrumentation this would no longer be true.

All data collected by the satellite will have to be sent back to earth via a transmitter. This can be powered only for a limited time by batteries, so initial results will be meager. Later, however, if and when a satellite's pay load can be increased to 100 pounds or more, scientists hope to gather more valuable data. In fact, it is hoped that satellites eventually may carry TV cameras with telephoto lenses so that they can send sky views down to earth.

Some data can be collected right from the earth, as the satellite will be tracked both by radio and telescope. Special computing centers will be set up to compute its orbit and to analyze other tracking information. The amateur viewer may be able to see it with binoculars at certain times of the day, dawn and dusk.

The purpose of the present satellite program is to gather information, not only about conditions in the high atmosphere, but also about methods of getting future, larger satellites up there.

We know very little about conditions 150 miles above sea level, even though previous rockets have gone up that far and thus given us some information about the solar spectrum and cosmic rays. The truth is that ours is still an incompletely explored planet.

Construction of the satellites is one of the greatest technological efforts of our times. In the beginning, we heard only of one earth satellite, which was to be about as big as a basketball and was to circle the earth at a distance of 350 to 1,000 miles. Then we heard of as many as 12 satellites. Recently questions of cost have produced problems that may reduce the number to six, a number that is subject to change.

Besides exploring these more or less unknown fields, there will also be studies in the more routine areas. Scientists will make more accurate determinations of the globe's latitude and longitude to reduce present errors from a mile or more to a few feet. They will remeasure and correlate the earth's widely varying magnetism which influences navigation, cosmic-ray studies, radio reception, and the search for minerals. They will rechart the ocean currents and temperatures which will make possible more precise weather predictions.

These are the main objectives of the International Geophysical Year.

--Roy Cadwell

Reprinted from AMATEUR'S CORRESPONDENT.
October 1957 issue.

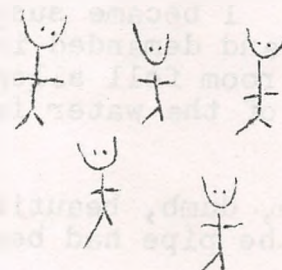
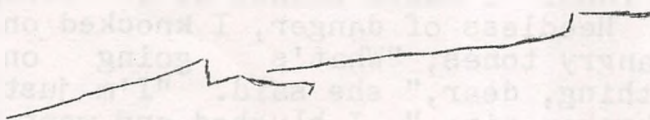
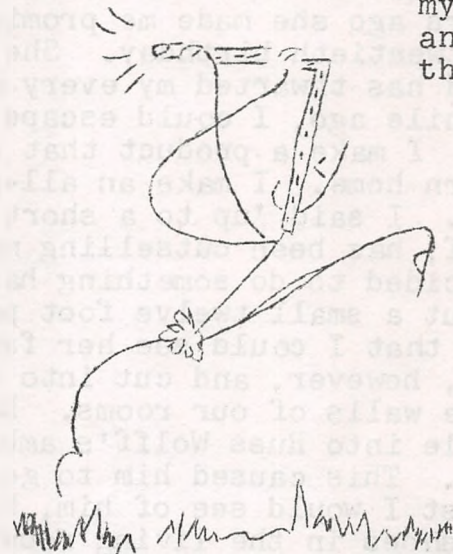
AMATEUR'S CORRESPONDENT is published by John E. Bowles at 802 South 33rd Street, Louisville 11, Kentucky.

LIUQ

Children have to be punished
to make them good



I am very much
myself
and I make
the best of it!



ONE
CAN'T
ALWAYS
BE
HIMSELF!



I've got to be myself, somehow!

(more on page 23)

SIGMA OCTANTIS

Presents

RAG DOLL

by Peter Walsh

This is my story. It isn't a pretty story. It's a very hard, realistic, raw, naked open shocking story. It's a story about the South.

Most people think every Southern home is a victorian mansion with seven marble pillars and a dozen colored slaves. This is not the case; my mansion has only five marble pillars and I have no slaves but my wife. Some people think the South is a land of good manners and high moral tones. The naked truth is that my wife never wears shoes in the house.

My wife is nineteen. Next week will be her twentieth birthday. She is young and beautiful but dumb and knows nothing about life. When we were married ten years ago she made me promise that I would never look at her face until her twentieth birthday. She wears a black Lone Ranger mask all the time and has thwarted my every attempt to rip it off.

Up to a short while ago, I could escape this frustration by spending my time at my job. I make a product that comes in bottles and can be found in every Southern home. I make an all-purpose interior detergent for the smart homemaker. I said 'up to a short while ago' because recently a Russian, Russ Wolff, has been outselling me with Siberian ambrosia.

Last night I decided to do something hard, realistic, raw and shocking, so I cleverly cut a small twelve foot peep-hole between my room and my wife's room, so that I could see her face without the mask on. I misjudged the distance, however, and cut into the third floor water pipe that runs between the walls of our rooms. But I won't give up.

Last week I stole into Russ Wolff's ambrosia plant and poured water into his ingredients. This caused him to go out of business. I hoped that would be the last I would see of him, but tonight when I got home I found his jacket and shoes in the living room. I raced upstairs to the third floor and heard noises in my wife's room. I heard sounds of a struggle and laughter. I became suspicious. Heedless of danger, I knocked on the bedroom door and demanded in loud, angry tones, "What's going on in there?" The room fell silent. "Nothing, dear," she said. "I'm just mopping up some of the water from the broken pipe." I blushed and went back downstairs.

My poor naive, dumb, beautiful young wife, so innocent that she hasn't guessed how the pipe had been busted. But that's life...in the South.

--Peter Walsh

Reprinted from SIGMA OCTANTIS #7. SIGMA OCTANTIS is published by John Mussells and comes from P.O. Box 15, Wakefield, Mass.



I like to
have people
talk to me



All my
thoughts are
creative
and
constructive!

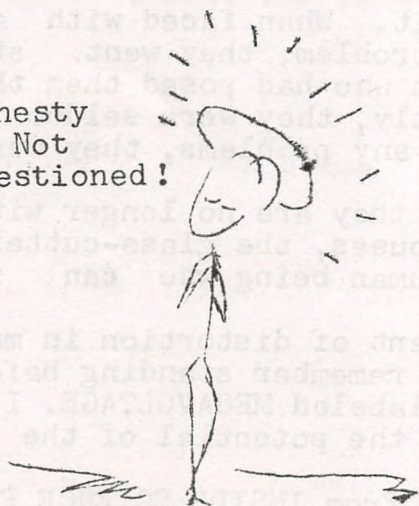


Life is a serious affair,
and there is little pleasure
in it.



I enjoy
talking
to people

My
Honesty
Is Not
Questioned!



Sometimes you
have to destroy
things when
they
frighten you.

(more on page 26)

INSIDE SCIENCE FICTION Presents

TWO SELECTIONS FROM

Resounding SCIENCE FICTION

(EDITOR'S NOTE: The following two articles are taken from the "Resounding Science Fiction" issue of INSIDE SCIENCE FICTION and are not the complete satire. As Ron pointed out, they are not the 'best' from INSIDE, just the most easily transplantable portion of the complete selection which is, in itself the 'best'.

If you didn't see the rSF issue, a large portion of the issue consisted of parodies on various stories and departments in ASTOUNDING. The two selections presented here represent the editorial (State That Problem!) and the science article (Psi-onics Machine: Type O). Dave Foley is mainly responsible for the two items. However, Ronald Smith helped on the editorial.

editorial

STATE THAT PROBLEM!

Two things happening at the same time is regarded by some as a strange coincidence, and rightly so -- when the irresistible force meets the immovable object and both yield, what have you? With the coming of the neo - technological era, people who had formed their pre-conceptions years before suddenly found post-pre-conceptions necessary, and hastened to conform. But there was more to it than that.

After all, not everyone can be as happy as they think others believe that they would like to be, despite the fact that happiness can be measured only by synthesizing the difference between an over-abundance of problematical traumas and the inherent desire of any entity to have more.

The Ancient Mayans had a way of doing it. When faced with a problem of this nature, or, in their case, any problem, they went straight to the heart of it -- they killed the person who had posed them the problem. It was as simple as that. Consequently, they were seldom presented with any problems, and seldom having any problems, they were happy.

But due to the loss of problem-posers, they are no longer with us ... After all, to people living in glass houses, the glass-cutter is a deadly weapon. And if it happens to be a human being who can reason, then what?

The problem is similar to the measurement of distortion in magnetic fields, electromagnetic fields, or both. I remember standing before the Bookhaven Frammiston once, watching a gage labeled MEGAVOLTAGE. I asked myself then, what is it measuring? Is the potential of the elec-

trostatic field surrounding the coil of the machine, to which is connected all the intricacies of the amplifier unit as well as the cardfeed stop, not to mention the tape-reading units upon which the successful operation of the entire machine and indeed the entirety of Bookhaven itself depends, undistorted? What is a megavolt? What is a volt? Do we really know? And if we don't, do we really know we don't? What is the purpose of running for governor if no one recognizes you as a candidate?

Only when some genius, with a greater talent for introspection than otherwise, learns that he is much smarter than anyone could have predicted, and learns, thereby, of the unpredictableness of prediction, can pre-prediction (or predilection) become common enough to do us any good. While we're waiting, we might as well relax, because we're none of us going anywhere.

THE EDITOR...

PSIONICS MACHINE: TYPE O

In 1875, at the University of Creel, Professor Carlysle Pismyre made the astounding discovery for which he is famous. It can be expressed: $M \text{ equals } EC^2$; or, more simply, any object which is equal to any other object, is equal to itself.

The sum total of man's knowledge has, up until now, remained large. But it is diminishing. This is what is known as a Plutonian Paradox--that is, an apparent discrepancy, which is actually a very real discrepancy, though not so apparant as first thought. You can lead a horse to water, but only after you've closed the barn door.

The reaction of the masses to revelations of this kind is difficult to understand--at least in the prevalent philosophical framework. One has to accept the bi-planel gyroscopic theorem in order to procede, and naturally this leads nowhere.

Science, like philosophy, needs something new on which to hang its hat--something that will take into account the existance of a square wheel, without trying to square all wheels. Conformity can be a good thing, but only in very large doses.

Psionics is like a square wheel. It serves no purpose within the boundries of round-wheelism, and therefore seems useless, or worse. Scientists react to psionics in a very unpredictable fashion for this reason. In order to break down the resistance to non-Homeric thought, one must first prove Homer existed, and that is impossible without admitting the existance of electrical contingencies for which there can be no fuse. You'll find few scienctists willing to give up any fragment of their dialectic intuition, unless you offer them better mortar for their stones.

As for myself, there is more than one way to skin a cat. The trouble is, all methods hurt the cat, and if hurting the cat is what you are trying to avoid, then procedure in this direction is blocked by Fortescue's Second Major Platitude--"Movement, in any direction, by any power is impossible."

Look at it this way--let C equal cat, S equal skin, H equal hurting the cat, I equal you, D equal the dirty trick you're playing on the cat. The problem can then be stated:

C - S equals H

Also;

I \neq D equals H

Therefore:

C - S equals I \neq D equals H, or SCHID.

There's no use cooking supper if there's no one to eat it.

My tests with this psionics machine achieved mixed results. The first person tested could feel nothing on the plate at any setting. The second person felt a slight sensation of nausea. The third person sneezed.



Ultimate psionics
machine schematic

I then took the machine apart and put it back together to see if this would help. My next subject felt nothing--nothing at all. He could not feel the plate or any part of the machine, nor could he feel any of the objects which I handed to him. I thought for a moment I had stumbled on an important new principle--one which reversed the normal reactions, and set up an area of insensitivity at a given setting. The subject proved intoxicated, however.

I then tried facing the machine in various directions. From this I discovered that the strongest and most positive reaction is obtained when the machine is turned south-west and the door of the room is left open. The next subject to feel the plate experienced a remarkably persuasive sensation that he was made of brick, but when I adjusted the setting, he decided it was the machine that was made of brick.

Before continuing, I walked twice widdershins around the machine and laid a broom across the room's doorway. This procedure increased the response markedly, and I was actually able to fry an egg on the plate. Rather than allow the experiment to proceed without the proper safeguards, I chalked a pentangle around the table. This calmed the machine somewhat.

My next subject was the seventh son of a seventh son, and his experience with the machine was remarkable. His hand adhered to the plate with such force that he was actually able to lift the machine from the table. No setting seemed to help the situation, and I was finally forced to sprinkle the subject with mandrake root (powdered, in the dark of the moon). The phenomenon ceased.

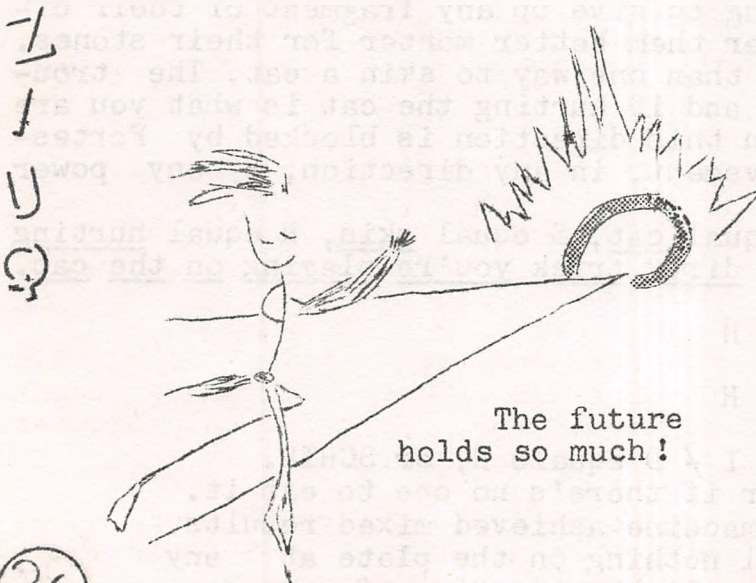
The most important discovery made during this series of experiments was that it is possible to create a field of gravitational polarization, within the limits of the carminative factor, without shorting any of the binaural potential. Experiments conducted with the appropriate instruments proved conclusively that any lecithin reaction, no matter how implosive, can be halted by pulling out the plug.

Once again, we are limited by spherical elometric thinking-- in a universe of plugs, can you pull one without pulling them all? As yet, there is no answer.

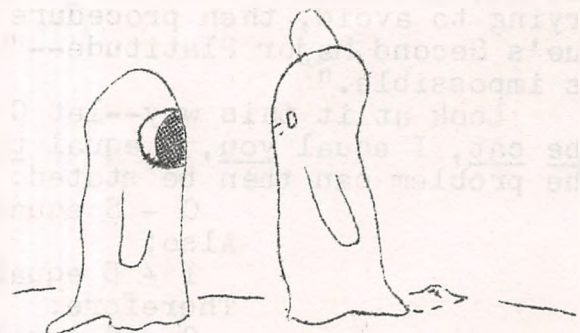
STOP

Reprinted from INSIDE SCIENCE FICTION #52

INSIDE SCIENCE FICTION is published by Ron Smith. All communications should be sent to Box 356, Times Square Station, New York 36, New York.



The future
holds so much!



I have never failed to mail
a letter which was given me!

(more on page 31)

BEYOND SATURN

by Dave Jenrette

Mark Holzen wrenched the controls of the space ship Derndle and found himself using more than the normal allotment of fuel for landing. The ship struck the frozen soil of Triton with terrific force. Desperately, Holzen used even more power.

"Good work!" came Professor Lerribertz' voice over the intercom, "Man has successfully gone beyond Saturn! Congratulations!"

"Thank you," said Holzen (realising that the ship's recorders must be preserving his words for all eternity), "but I think the majority of the credit should go to the scientists and engineers who designed and built the Derndle."

The recorder clicked off.

"We're here," said Dutch Gogle in his picturesque Brooklyn accent, "But dat was a hell of a rough landing."

Mark cursed under his breath. That damned accent was beginning to get on his nerves. Everyone else's, too. Who needed a cook anyway?

"Well, men," said Holzen, "Who's for a stroll on Triton?"

The crew assembled inside the pressure chamber.

"Whose turn?" asked Holzen.

"Mine," said Sparks Johnson, the radio man, stepping forward and raising his hand.

"OH!" screamed Gogle. "Da noive of 'im! He was foist out on Gany-mede and Eeros. It's my toin."

"Okay, okay," said Holzen.

The door swung slowly open and Gogle prepared to step out on the cold soil.

"Cap., would you take a pitchur?"

"Surely," said Holzen, hiding his boiling hatred behind a smile.

"Oh, if duh gang on Flatbush Avenue and Schermerhorn Street could see me now," said Gogle, striking a dashing pose.

@ @ @ @ @

The men worked for several days, Professor Lerribertz spending all available time studying the soil, the minerals, the rocks. Due to space and weight limitations he took, of samples, none. He had to remember everything.

At last it was time to leave, and Holzen told the radio operator to send the message to Earth telling them how much fuel was aboard the Derndle. An answer came back that substantiated Hol-

zen's worst fears: there was not enough fuel left to carry the ship, back. All excess weight would have to go.

Immediately, all hands turned to and began stripping the ship. Extra bunks went, bulkheads, mizzenmasts, the card tables, the portable bar oxygen tanks, weapons, coins, keys, extra clothing. Everything not absolutely essential to the flight to Earth was thrown away, even Gogle's harmonica. As soon as they had finished Sparks called Earth and a grim answer came back: still too much weight.

"But we can't get rid of anything else," moaned Holzen.

There was a long pause, while radio energy flew between the planets and the answer came:

"Perhaps you can get more fuel," said Earth. "You have water fuel atomic pile."

"So what?" said Holzen. "Do.. do you think I can --?"

"We do," said Earth, "And any liquid will do. Repeat: any liquid will do."

"I understand," said Holzen.

Mark called all the men together and each one, in turn, did his best. Holzen reported the exact amount.

"It is still not enough," said Earth. "You need a little over a hundred pounds of water still. I might mention that a human being is more than 90% water."

Holzen gasped. "You....mean we should use a....human....as fuel?"

"Unless you want to stay on Triton and never come home again."

Holzen clicked off the radio and sat down to think.

"It's simple," said Professor Lerribert, "I'm an old man; I've lived a good, long life; I'll let you youngsters carry on. I volunteer for a fuel tank!"

"No!" exclaimed Sparks. "I'll be the one. Remember me to my wife and five children and I'll be happy to let --"

"No," said Holzen firmly, "I'm in charge and if anyone should go into the fuel tank it should be me. It was my fault the fuel was wasted."

"Well," said the professor, "perhaps we should draw straws. I've heard of that being done."

"Dat's fair," said Gogle. "Here, I shall volunteer tree straws you-se volunteers."

"Thanks, Dutch, that's nice of you to -- hey, wait a minute!" exclaimed Holzen. "I can't go in the tank, because no one else can pilot the ship back to Earth."

"And I, I," said the professor, "have all the scientific data without which this journey is useless."

"And me," said Sparks, "I'm the only one who can navigate and get us back on the Uprgouth Beam."

"Hey!" said Dutch, "dat only leaves me!"

"Right!" said the others.

Gogle leaped off the deck, down the companionway, into a space suit and out into the frozen night of Triton.

"Come back, Gogle," called Holzen through the radio. "Come back, maybe we can work out something. Everyone could give a leg or an arm."

"I'm not coming back, skipper," said Gogle over the radio, "you're not putting me in no fuel tank. Not me, boy. I might be from Brooklyn but I'm nobody's fuel!"

He was wrong. They caught him within a quarter of a mile.

YANDRO

Presents

THE
GREAT
CURUCU

by Thomas Stratton

The producer informs us -- in big Technicolor letters -- that this movie was shot in Brazil. One feels that the least he could have done, after shooting it, would be to give it a decent burial. Instead, however, it has been dragged back for display. Appreciation is also expressed to people "without whose cooperation this movie would not have been possible". I do not appreciate their help and can only say that hanging would be a fairer expression of their abilities.

The movie opens with a native woman going down to the river for water while a sinisterly clawed hand holds aside some foliage so that the sinisterly clawed owner and the audience can watch her. On the return trip, she spots a few odd-looking tracks, looks directly at the audience, screams (and from the looks of the audience I was in, I don't blame her) and the next scene shows the police examining the body and looking ill. Along about here we also find that the stupidly superstitious natives are terrified by this creature, thinking it is something supernatural. They have decided to return to their "ancestral home" somewhere up the Amazon near something called Curucu Falls -- which is where the "monster" comes from. Muddy thinking, as far as I'm concerned, but if the script writer says so Also about here, the hero (a sort of skiny Tarzan with clothes on) arrives, rather put out about the whole thing, since he is one of the owners of the plantations on which the stupid superstitious natives are supposed to be working. He decides to put a stop to this, by trekking deep into the trackless wilderness of back-country Brazil (that line seems familiar, somehow), where he will prove that the monster doesn't exist. Since the monster is at the moment ravaging things right under his nose in front-country Brazil, the expedition appears safe enough, if a bit futile,

Naturally, his first move in this operation is to go to Rio de Janeiro and spend some time watching a sexy night club performer and meeting the heroine who seems to be a lady -- or at least, a female -- doctor who also wants to go trekking up the Amazon; in her case, to collect some of the goo the local savages use to shrink heads. (A rather morbid preoccupation, in my estimation.)

Following this interlude (and, while it had nothing to do with the plot, I thought it was nice of them to include something the fans could enjoy), the hero, heroine and the noble guide begin their journey. The guide, incidentally, is the only decent actor in the

movie--a sort of South American Mel Ferrer. A short trip brings them to what we are told in more big Technicolor letters is "Belem, Gateway To The Amazon". (Why, I couldn't say; they must have had a few letters left over from their last travelogue.)

Here we take a dugout canoe, and have such fascinating adventures as the hero tapping politely on the skull of a crocodile with his rifle butt. There ensues a violent tug-of-war between croc and hero for possession of the gun. Hero wins, stands up in the canoe, and shoots the poor beast, after which we are treated to a sepia-tone shot of piranna. (We are treated to this same shot about a dozen times thereafter, until even the dumbest audience gets the idea that there are dangerous fish in the Amazon.) Hero later proves his prowess with firearms by shooting a tarantula from the hip with a .30-30 Winchester. Considering that the spider's body was shown afterwards, in one piece, you can judge his ability for yourself. Personally, I feel that the little beast was just trying to be friendly, but he suffers the fate of all misunderstood monsters. (This rifle, by the way, is referred to by the guide as "the heavy rifle"; considering its caliber, this must mean that someone had weighted the stock with lead. For that matter, it hardly needed to be described, since it appeared to be the only rifle in the group -- I believe someone had been seeing too many African movies.)

Now, cross country! Through some of the crossiest country I have ever seen.... Hardly a yard goes by without their being attacked by some kind of stuffed animal (with at least one shot of the party in full technicolor and the attacking animals in black and white -- sort of spoiled the effect). The intrepid guide (a prince, if not among men in general, at least among the natives) hacks a neat path through all the foliage. This, unfortunately, leaves the hero with nothing to do -- a fact which fails to deter him at all. He has a machete, too, and by George he's going to use it! He doesn't actually succeed in cutting any vines, but he sure looks heroic and manly, swinging that ol' machete. (The heroine, I noticed, stayed well behind him during this foray.)

Finally, they encounter the native head-hunters and shrinkers. "Peace!" intones the hero a couple of times, then points to the heroine. "Woman!" (Try saying that out loud, and speculate a bit on some embarrassed censors.) A bit of tentative poking on the part of a beady-eyed native convinces them that she is, after all, a woman; that therefore the party has peaceful intentions. Just then, the heroine dashes off to look at a sick native. Remarkable diagnosis -- one short look, and she knows immediately that he has appendicitis. ("I've seen thousands of these cases.") She drags him to a nearby mission, operates, saves his life, and he offers her tokens of his undying gratitude--and of the fact that he is now her slave forevermore. He then returns to his village before she can think up any suitably slavish duties for him to perform.

Now Curucu (remember him -- the monster?) puts in another appearance, slashes a couple of people and then, after the party is safely away from the mission, kidnaps the heroine. At this point we begin to wonder just what this paint-splattered parrot with a thyroid condition wants with a human female, but we are not left long in doubt, for he runs full tilt into the hero with a rifle.

After a few futile shots, hero begins battering monster over the head with the gun-stock. Perhaps the stock had been weighted with lead; after a few blows, the monster places the heroine, carefully, on the ground, doffs mask and gloves, revealing himself to be the villainous guide (formerly the noble guide), bows politely (no, I am not exaggerating), and backs off into the bushes. This doesn't come as too much

of a surprise; the guy was much too good an actor to be anything but the villain.

Next day, the villain returns with his entire tribe, captures and carries off both hero and heroine. We have a few background shots of beautiful Curucu Falls, looking like something out of the National Geographic, as the party travels to the tribes village. Once there, a native priestess entertains us with a snake dance. This has no more to do with the plot than did the Rio night-club dancer, but nobody -- at least, no male -- objects. Villain then reveals his villainous plot to get his people to return from the evil ways of the white man to the jungle -- where they can pursue his evil ways. At this point, the heroine's slave shows up with his tribe, the villain and his tribe are wiped out, and everyone expects the picture to end.

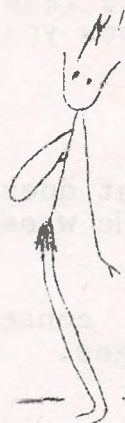
It doesn't, though. Hero and heroine escape during the fighting and spend another 15 minutes of film trekking back through the trackless wilderness in search of civilization, fighting stuffed jaguars, stabbing anacondas in the tail, chucking tree sloths under the chin, and being frightened by natives. It finally trails off to an anticlimactic ending when the noble headhunter presents the heroine with the shrunken head of the villain and enough head-shrinking goo so that she can begin operations on her own. (Come to think of it the hero gets short-changed here -- heroine gets what she's after, but he still doesn't have anyone to work his plantation.)

And so, as the sun sinks into the piranna-infested Amazon, we take leave of beautiful Curucu Falls.....

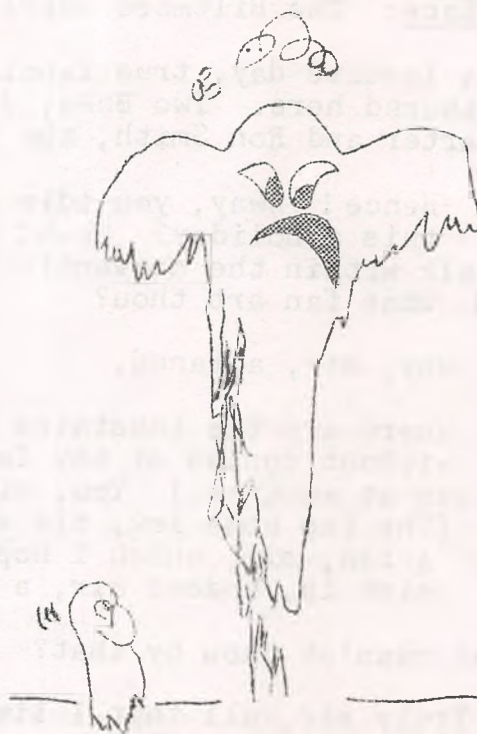
--Thomas Stratton

Reprinted from YANDRO #51. YANDRO is published by Robert & Juanita Coulson at 105 Stitt St., Wabash, Ind.

ZUQ



I am excellent
at projects and
always finish
what I start



I get
openly
angry
with
people

(more on page 33)

THE TRAGEDY OF
SAM MOSKOWITZby Kenneth Beale & David MacDonald
A PARALLEL TIME TRACK ADVENTURE

(Freely adapted from the play by W. Shakespeare.)

DEDICATION: To Lee Shaw, who did it first. -KB

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

Sam Moskowitz, an extremely Big Name Fan.Henry Moskowitz, Dave Kyle, Dick Ellington, Directors
of the World Science Fiction Society after the Mos-
kowitz' death.Ray Van Houten, Forrest J. Ackerman, James V. Taurasi,
members of the Convention Rules Committee.Art Saha, Dave Mason, Dan Curran, Bob Stewart of Fris-
co, John Closson, Martin Jukovsky, Ken Beale, David
MacDonald, Fans, conspiring against Moskowitz.Lin Carter, Ron Smith, Sergeants-at-arms.Charles Freudenthal, A Reichian philosopher.A Priest of Kahtah.Bob Stewart, of TexasSteve Takacs, A friend of Art Saha.Jean Carroll, Trina Perlson, girl friends of Mosko-
witz and Saha, respectively

ACT I

Scene One

Time: Labor Day Weekend, 1956.Place: The Biltmore Hotel, New York.

It is a festive day, true fannish spirit prevails, and a crowd of fans are gathered here. Two BNFs, jealous of Moskowitz' popularity, enter: Lin Carter and Ron Smith, the Sergeants-at-arms.

Lin Carter: Hence! Away, you idle fans. Get you to your rooms. Is this a holiday? What! Know you not, being true fans, you ought not walk within the convention hall without a badge upon your lapel? Speak! What fan art thou?

First Fan: Why, sir, a faned.

Ron Smith: Where are the inkstains upon thy hands? And what doest thou without copies of thy fanzine under thy arm? (He wheels about and waves at another.) You, sir, what fan are you?
(The fan bows low, his eyes twinkling.)

Second Fan: A fan, sir, which I hope I may be with a safe conscience, which is, indeed sir, a filler-up of prozine pages.

Smith: What mean'st thou by that? Art thou a dirty pro?

Fan: Truly sir, all that I live for is to sit at typewriter. I meddle in no pro affairs, nor actifan matters, but only with letter-hackery.

Carter: Thou art a letter-hack, art thou?

Fan: I am indeed sir. A filler up of the space between the rupture ads.

Carter: But wherefore art thou not at thy typewriter today? Why dost thou lead these fen about the convention hall?

Fan: Truly sir, to help me gather material for my letters. But indeed sir, we make holiday, to see Moskowitz and rejoice in his triumph.

Smith: Wherefore rejoice? What egoboo brings he here? What neofans follow him to the convention hall to clamor for his autograph? You Blochs, you Tuckers, you worse than casual readers! Knew you not Sykora? Many a time and oft have you climbed up the steps to the QSFL clubroom, your prozines in your arms, and there have sat the livelong business meeting, to hear Sykora's honored guest speak! And do you now put on your best helicopter beanies? And do you call it a holiday? And do you now strew Gernsbackian Amazings in his way, who came in triumph over Sykora's blood? Begone! Run to your rooms! Fall upon your knees! Pray to immortal Kahtah to intermit the plague that needs must light on this ingratitude!

Carter: Go, go, good fans! (The crowd scatters and moves down the hall) They vanish, mind-frozen in their guiltiness. Go you down that way towards the bar; this way will I. Destroy any copies of The Immortal Storm that you do find stacked upon the tables.

Smith: May we do so? You know they are the property of the hucksters.

Carter: It is no matter, let no tables be covered with Moskowitz' crud. I'll about, and drive the neos from the halls. So do you, where you perceive them thick. These booster rockets plucked from Moskowitz' stern, will make him fly below escape velocity, who else would soar satellite like beyond the bounds of Earth, and keep all fen in servile fearfulness.

(They exit, in different directions.)

--Kenneth Beale

--David MacDonald

Reprinted from METROFAN #6 METROFAN is published by David MacDonald at 101 West 109th St., New York 25, New York.

(NOTE: "The Tragedy of Sam Moskowitz" as presented here is not in its complete form. The entire opus is too long to be reprinted in this anthology, and further, it has not been completely presented in METROFAN as of this date. Dave plans on bringing out the entire story under one cover when it is completed.)

Z1U?



I adjust
myself to
situations
as need be



Sometimes the
future is
THREATENING !!

(more on page 35)

CAT

by Robert Williams

A small yellow cat with a sweet lazy smile
Lay dreaming of days when he lived on the Nile,
Of those succulent dishes the priests placed before him,
The enraptured look of a race that adored him,
Fat Egyptian mice and priestess tit cream,
The aroma of fish brought fresh from the stream,
Plush satin cushions stuffed with Ibis down
And, if he cared, a high golden crown.

He is awakened now with my "here kitty, kitty!"
Eyes me and the bowl of milk with contempt and pity,
Yawns, stretches and disdainfully nods,
Wishing once more for the days when cats were gods.

--Robert Williams

Reprinted from
SATA Illustrated #7

SATA Illustrated is published by Bill Pearson with Dan Adkins as Associate. Their current address is unknown, but you can reach them by sending mail to 4516 East Glenrosa Avenue, Phoenix, Arizona, or Rt. 2, East Liverpool Ohio, respectively.

(NOTE: It is impossible to represent the contents of SATA with a written item. The basic appeal of this fanzine lies in its superb illustrations.)

7 1 1 0

Sometimes I'm afraid
I'll lose things...



People are always
good at heart



Thinking of new projects
is as interesting as s*x!



I enjoy all my possessions
and always have



I own what I own in spite of them!

I can't be
myself!

(more on page 47)

SO YOU WANT TO BE A PSEUDO
by John Quagliano

If you are getting sick of obscure, literary linos in the fanzines that you can't dig, and you want to join the growing ranks of fannish pseudos, this is for you. But before I come down to a practical discussion of what it takes, let's first examine the word. There still is a controversy as to how it should be pronounced. Some hold for "pa-sway-do" or "p-sway-do" as in "blue psuede shoes". The majority, though, seem to favor "sue-dough".

Anyway it's short for pseudo - intellectual. In other words, a false or imitation intellectual. Now a necessary part of being intellectual is having intelligence. In other words, you must know something. So a pseudo is a person who pretends to know something. But if he did know something, he wouldn't have to pretend, so he obviously knows nothing. What's the point of all this? It just goes to show that anyone can be a pseudo. If intelligence or knowledge isn't required, the field is wide open. So don't let them fool you, you to can be a pseudo.

Now that you have made up your mind, you will wonder just how to go about it. Instead of merely listing some rules, I'm going to give you examples of the pseudo in action. This should make things less difficult for you to understand.

Suppose you go to a Con and the BNF's are discussing literature. It's no good to ask Tucker to autograph you copies of "The Long Loud Pause," he'll just change the conversation around to poker. Remember now, you must not feel bad because your reading stopped because Planet folded. Chances are that the others never did get past Burroughs or Iris Murdoch. Wait for an opening and say something like, "What did you think of Jean Paul Sartre's last book?" I guarantee that this will stop all but the cleverest. But just in case you should run into an old pro who comes back with, "Very interesting, but do you think he really justifies his conclusions?", all you have to do is shrug your shoulders, and say, "Oh well, you know how those Existentialists are," and change the subject.

Another example. Suppose the talk is about modern art. Just say, "Now take Picasso. Of course his technique is excellent, but do you think he really has the spirit of art?" What could anyone possibly say to a remark like that?

Of course, things can be rough if people pester you with questions on art since it's almost impossible to keep up with the latest, nowadays. Rich Kirs has worked out a pretty good technique to get away from, "Truly all I like is Kandinsky." Or in his own words: "When someone asks me what I think, a big steel wall right-away snaps down in front of my mind, clean - painted with, "this painter is almost certainly a charlatan and his work meaningless and accidental, but I may not say so because I have no status." and I say to the person 'Very impressive', or even (in self-defense or the good-offense principle), 'I quite get the motif.

Do YOU?' And they either explain interminably how one's psychicoi-
talanalecticalizer eleemosynarily prejudices quasiesthetic determi-
natorial partiprinciples to the extent that there is no motif, or
they slink quietly off into the other tenebrous chambers." It will
be worthwhile to practice the "no motif" answer at night just in
case you meet someone like Rich.

You will find it a simple matter to get a list of all the
right authors. They are the one's whose library books are well
thumbed only for the first 100 pages or less, depending on the
author's "rightness". Kafka is always good. But don't waste time
trying to read the books because, if you do finish and understand,
you will be an intellectual and get all wrapped-up and not have any
time to spend on parties or fanac. Probably you will only think
you understand and you will slosh around in a puddle of your naivete
at a party and the pseudos, who have read the reviews in the
Partisan Review will spend the whole night asking you, "But how
could you have failed to see..." Once you find the right authors,
read their diaries and drop quotes like, and Kafka said: "I am
really like a lost sheep". Or as Ralph Waldo Emerson so wisely
put it: "All thoughts of a turtle are turtle." Or better yet,
confuse them with, as Abe Lincoln once said: "For such an awkward
fellow, I'm pretty sure-footed."

One thing to remember. If the majority likes something, you
are against it. The majority can be referred to as "the peasants",
"the neo-fen", or the "great unwashed." You can even take a chance
on "other-directed," which has the added advantage that your
audience might not understand what "other-directed" people are.
Also remember that a fan who has intelligence and has recently sold
a few stories is "guilty of selling his soul for the almighty
sheckle" and is referred to as a "dirty pro." You must be careful
though to wait until the young pro drops out of FAPA first because
otherwise his few sales will guarantee him BNF status since he
may only write his stories while the ink on his fanzine is drying.

Now that you have these few hints, you ought to be able to
take it from there. Use your imagination and you can come up with
dozens of original pseudo remarks. If you want a simple rule just
preface every argumentive statement with "as Nietzsche says." There
are other incidentals that always help, such as contempt in your
fanzine for the so-called mass-media, and so forth. So practice
up because next issue Robert Bloch has "So You Want To Be A Fringe
Fan. I mean the article not the fringe fan.

--John Quagliano

Reprinted from QUAGMIRE #1

QUAGMIRE is published by John Quag-
liano whose address is 743 Isthmus
Court, San Diego 8, California.

HI-LIGHTS FROM

MY FAIR FEMMEFAN

by Carl Brandon

With the assistance of Pete Graham
Terry Carr

PROLOGUE: My Fair Femmefan opened at Brandonhaus early in 1957 and became an overnight success. The amusing story of the gauche neofanne who was tutored by a BNF and became a successful BNF herself has proved to be the most popular production of the Slan Shack Players since the Fannish Revival Hour in 1954. We present it here with running notes to clarify the background for each musical number.

I. The opening number takes place at a world convention. Iggens and Bickering, two BNFs, are walking through the convention hotel. In the background can be heard Sam Moskowitz. They are bewailing the miserable state of fandom when they come upon Martha Coznowski, who is hawking NFFF memberships.

IGGENS: Listen to her, mark the way she stutters,
Appalled by every horrid phrase she utters.
By rights she should be drummed out of fandom
For mispronouncing fannish words at random.

MARTHA: ...ess-tee-eff fans...

IGGENS: What a horrid thought!
This is what the serconfan foundation
Calls a truly fannish education.
Listen to this neo here, dropping aitches out of Bheer,
Using fanspeak any way she chooses.
You, girl, - ever heard of Rapp?

MARTHA: Whattaya take me for, a Sap?

IGGENS: Listen to these infantile abuses.
Hear this neofan or worse
Utter ideas so perverse--
I'd just as soon have Degler on the scene,
Neos blithering at a con,
Just like this one...

MARTHA: ELRON, ELRON!

IGGENS: I ask you now, precisely what's that mean?
It's ess-tee-eff and Elron that keep her in her place.
She might be very different with a sensitive fannish face.
Why can't the Welcommittee teach new members how to fan,
Instead o trying to fit them into some great Cosmic Plan?

(to Bickering)
If you believed this hogwash, you'd soon be on the shelf....
Or have to join the N3F yourself.

BICKERING: Go to hell.

IGGENS: A trufan's way of thinking absolutely cubbyholes him;
He must be very careful when some rabblrouser polls him.
Why can't the Welcommittee teach new members how to fan?
The pros know how to write, and critics how to pan.
Drinkers always drink from birth (at least I'm told they can.)
Oh, why can't the N3Fers learn...to...FAN!

her a masterfanne who will be accepted in all fannish circles. As part of her early fannish education she joins the local fanclub. At a meeting of this Martha overhears some fans daydreaming aloud:

FIRST FAN: It's rather dull in town, I think I'll take me to Belfas'

SECOND FAN: I've got some home brew here, I'll pour me out a glass.

THIRD FAN: Why wait for egoboo? -- I'll mail my mag first-class.

ALL: Wouldn't it be lovely.....

MARTHA: All I want is a hektograph,
And beside me just plain Falstaff;
Fanmags to make me laugh
Oh, wouldn't it be lovely....
Lots of prozines for me to read,
What a trufannish life I'd lead,
Yes, that's the life I need
Oh, wouldn't it be lovely.
If I had my stf checklist all compiled and stencilled up,
I would be the happiest fan since Amazing was just a pup.
Someone there to slipsheet for me,
Sensitive and fannish as he can be,
Who likes to read ess-tee-eff, wouldn't it be lovely,
lovely,
lovely.

III. At the same meeting, Holloway, who is an old fan, tired and cynical, expresses his views on fandom:

HOLLOWAY: The Ghreat Ghod Ghu gave fans the blasted mimeo
Because hektographic repro really stank.
The Ghreat Ghod Ghu gave fans the blasted mimeo, BUT
With a little bit o' luck
With a little bit o' luck
Someone else will turn the goddam crank.

ALL: With a little bit, with a little bit,
With a little bit o' goddam luck!

HOLLOWAY: The Ghreat Ghod Ghu made bheer for inspiration,
So that our zines would not be filled with crud.
The Ghreat Ghod Ghu made bheer for inspiration, BUT
With a little bit o' luck
With a little bit o' luck
You can drink your bheer and never pub.

ALL: With a little bit, with a little bit,
With a little bit o' goddam luck.

HOLLOWAY: Ghreat Ghu says we should always welcome trufans,
And give them food and lodging when they roam.
Ghreat Ghu says we should always welcome trufans, BUT
With a little bit o' luck
With a little bit o' luck
When they visit us we won't be home.

ALL: With a little bit, with a little bit,
With a little bit o' luck we won't be home!

HOLLOWAY: Oh, it's a crime when a faned folds his fanmag,
And fills subscribers' hearts with grief and doubt.
Oh, it's a crime when a faned folds his fanmag, BUT
With a little bit o' luck
With a little bit o' luck
The Better Business Bureau won't find out.

ALL: With a little bit, with a little bit,
With a little bit o' goddam luck!

HOLLOWAY: Oh, you must work to help support your fanzine,
Which is the right and proper thing to do.
Oh, you must work to help support your fanzine, BUT

With a little bit o' luck
With a little bit o' luck
Soon subscribers will be supporting you.
ALL: With a little bit, with a little bit,
With a little bit o' goddam luck.

IV. As Martha's education continues she is spending more and more time with Iggen's, whose friend Bickering speculates that perhaps they are falling in love. Iggen's protests to the contrary.

IGGENS: I find the moment I let a femmefan fall for me, she becomes loving, attentive, and completely fuggheaded. I find the moment I fall for a woman I begin to gaffiate. So here I am, a confirmed old bachelor, and likely to remain so. After all, Bickering....

I'm an ordinary fan,
Who desires nothing more than do the others of his mold:
To fan exactly as he likes and drink as much as he can hold.
An average fan am I, of no insurgent whim,
Who pubs a fannish mag, not some rag
Concerned with recipes and silly frilled lace trim.
Just an ordinary fan...BUT
Let a femmefan in your life, and your fannishness takes a nosedive.
She'll redecorate your room, sweep the place out with a broom;
When she's cleared out all the refuse she will give it to her nephew's
scrap-drive.
Oh, let a femmefan in your life, and fanning hasn't got a chance!
You've a deadline, but you find she has something else in mind,
So although you ought to hurry you spend your evening in worry at a dance.
You were a fan of grace and polish
Who never spoke above a hush.
Now all at once you're using language
That would make Charles Burbee blush!
Oh, if you let a femmefan squeeze ya, then you're courting fannishthnesia
You will join the nonfan rabble, playing games like bridge or scrabble!
I maintain it's less a pitty to be on a con committee
Then to ever let a femmefan in your life.

I'm a quiet-living fan
Who, though he has a sense of humor, is content with silent laughter;
Who likes an atmosphere as restful as con-halls the morning-after.
A literary man am I, who finds stf quite a bore,
Who hasn't read a utopian novel written since Sir Thomas More.
Yes, a quite conservative fan...BUT
Let a femmefan in your life, and you'll say goodbye to fandom.
In a line that never ends come her dull, plebeian friends--
Though they're her friends stout and true, very soon you'll find that you
can't stand 'em.
She'll have an opinionated famimily, who will decide that fanning's sin;
You will explain it's just a hobby, but plebeians....who can win?
Oh, let a femmefan in your life,
Let a femmefan in your life...!
I shall NEVER let a femmefan in my life.

V. Following this, Iggen's makes it a point to treat Martha as coldly as possible. Martha, a typical young fan, wants to become a BNF, so she tolerates his coldness and applies herself to her fannish studies. But her indignation finds expression when she is alone.

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MARTHA: Just you wait, Enry Iggen's, just you wait!
For hell hath no fury like a femmefan's hate!

When your old typer will not stencil,
 I'll hand you a sharpened pencil!
 Just you wait, Enry Iggens, just you wait!
 Just you wait, Enry Iggens, till your bills
 From S.F. Bookclub are higher than the hills.
 You'll say, "Mail this money order" --
 I'll buy me a tape-recorder!
 Ah-ha-ha, Enry Iggens, just you wait!
 Ohhh, Enry Iggens, just you wait till you're in Raeburn's
 Derogation.
 Hah! Enry Iggens -- and you're stomping 'round the room
 in irritation.
 Though you're full of indignation,
 I'll be laughing with elation --
 Ah-ha-ha, Enry Iggens; Oh-ho-ho, Enry Iggens,
 Just you wait!
 One day I'll be famous; every fan will be stunned
 By my beauty and wittiness; I'll win the TAFF fund.
 When Don Ford counts the ballots, he will write to me and say,
 "Your fare to England's shores is on the way."
 Then an air-letter from the con-committee is sent:
 "Anything on the program you want, we'll present."
 "Thanks a lot boys," I write back, "but as I've always said,
 The only thing I want is Iggens head."
 "DONE!" writes the chairman with a stroke;
 I'm sending you passage for the bloke."
 Then you'll think that you're Big-Ponded, Iggens dear--
 But you'll make no guest-of-honor speech, I fear.
 You'll display your elocution
 Only at your execution!
 Ah-ha-ha, Enry Iggens; Oh-ho-ho, Enry Iggens--
Just you wait!

VI. Martha's education continues. Iggens, assisted by Bickering, is
 teaching her some of the finer points of fannish pronunciation:

IGGENS: Snog and Blog in the Fog in 1957
 MARTHA: (hesitatingly) Snog and Blog in the Fog in 1957
 IGGENS: Again...
 MARTHA: (more surely) Snog and Blog in the Fog in 1957
 IGGENS: I think she's got it; I think she's got it.
 MARTHA: Snog and Blog in the Fog in 1957
 IGGENS: By Ghu, she's got it; by Ghu, she's got it!
 Now, once again, where is the Blog?
 MARTHA: In the fog, in the fog.
 IGGENS: And what do fans do in the fog?
 MARTHA: They snog! They snog!
 ALL: Snog and Blog in the Fog in 1957! (Hoohaw!) Snog and Blog in
 the Fog in 1957!
 IGGINS: In Bhoston, Bhloomington and Bhelfast,
 MARTHA: Bhlighters all enjoy a bheerbust....
 I have a Cosmic Mind, what do I do now?
 IGGENS: Now once again, where is the blog?
 MARTHA: In the fog, in the fog!
 IGGENS: And what do fans do in the fog?
 MARTHA: They snog! They snog!
 ALL: Snog and Blog in the Fog in 1957!
 Snog and Blog in the Fog in 1957!

(The number ends with Iggens, Martha and Bickering joining in a
 wild tango, amid boisterous cries of "Arriba!" and "Los Cuentos
 Fantasticos!")

VII. It is months later, and Martha has completed her fannished education. Iggens and Bickering take her to the London Convention, where she scores a resounding success. All the con-goers wonder who the unknown femmefan is, assuming she must be a well-known fanne making her first appearance at a convention. After the last convention party is over, Iggens and Bickering celebrate their victory.

BICKERING: Tonight old man, you did it, you did it, you did it!
I thought your plan was shaky, yes indeed I did.
I doubted that you'd make it; I hoped that you'd forsake it.
But now I'm very thankful that proceed you did!
You should get a Hugo, or a Laureate Award!

IGGENS: 'Twas nothing, really nothing.

BICKERING: All alone you swept each difficulty from the board!

IGGENS: Now wait, now wait, give credit where it's due--
A lot of the egoboo goes to you!

BICKERING: But you're the one who did it, who did it, who did it!
Though our hopes at times were hazy, you were reliable as
Taurasi.
There's no doubt about it -- you did it!
I thought my beanie prop would wilt,
The way you pushed things to the hilt.
At times I was quite sure you'd pushed too far.

IGGENS: Shortly after Registration, I discarded trepidation--
I left her by herself and went to the bar.

BICKERING: You should have seen them take the pause.
Everyone wondered who she was.

IGGENS: You'd think they'd never seen a trufanne before.

BICKERING: And when at last the Masquerade got started (despite the BBC)
And BNFs flocked round her by the score,
I simply said "You did it, you did it, you did it!"
They thought she was so fannish that at midnight she must
vanish--
And they never knew that you did it!

IGGENS: Thanks Roscoe for Goon Bleary -- if he hadn't been there I'd
have died of boredom.

BICKERING: Goon Bleary? Was he there?

IGGENS: Yes...that man's so adept at the art of fanmanship
That I knew Miss Coznowski would have to consort with him
sans a slip.
Every fan at the con who was famous was under surveillance
by that shamus.
Finally I saw it was fuggheaded not to let him have his
chance with her,
So I stepped aside and let him dance with her.
Just to see what he could learn, he used fanspeak at every
turn;
Every gambit he could play, he used to strip her mask away--
And when at last the dance was done, he grinned as though
he'd made a pun.
Leering beneath his moustache, that horrible fuzz,
He announced from the rostrum that he knew who she was!

BICKERING: No!

IGGENS: Quite so!
"Her manners are quite poor," he said, "That clearly indi-
cates that she's trufannish.
"Whereas nonfans have their social rules, we trufans don't,
because we're slannish.
"And although I've only spoken with her briefly and at ran-
dom,
"I can tell at once that she is of--First Fandom!"

BICKERING: But she's only twenty!
IGGENS: Quite so.
BICKERING: This evening sir, you did it, you did it, you did it!
You said that you could do it, and indeed you did.
I thought that you would rue it; I doubted that you'd do it,
But now I must admit it--yes, succeed you did!

VIII. At the London convention Martha has met Freddie Bunker-Hill, an American fan. In the weeks that follow their return to the States, Freddie courts her in his fannish fashion, but as Tucker could have predicted, Freddie knows nothing of normal romance. Finally he gets up the nerve to propose to Martha:

FREDDIE: Your writing's the ultimate in humor, and there's a rumor referring to we two:
They say that our styles go well together; I wonder whether--
MARTHA: Egoboo!
Always egoboo! I get praise all day through,
First from him and now from you! Is that all you trufans cando?
Don't drag emotion through fannish mire--
If you're on fire, tell me!
Don't talk of budgies--speak of the dove!
If you're in love, tell me!
Ever since I met you at the London convention dance,
You've spoken only to me of fans!
If you think that fanac makes you consummately glad,
Try sometime to kiss a hekto pad!
Has some unlucky love twisted your mind?
Can't you unwind?--Tell me, tell me!
Don't talk of raising Twelfth Fandomites--
Certainly you must know how to tell me now!

IX. Meanwhile, the old-timer, Holloway, has decided to quit fandom, and in his honor the local fanclub throws a huge party on his last night as a fan, calling it the Gafianquet. Holloway arrives at the party feeling tired and not very fannish....

ALL: There's just a few more hours, that's all the time you've got
You'll be a nonfan at midnight on the dot.
HOLLOWAY: My reputation's all over fandom, and I've got to live up to
it just a few more hours.....
I'm quitting fandom in the morning,
Retiring from this tiresome fannish life.
But this evening I must join in the bheerbust
And let my fan instincts run rife.
I'm gafiating in the morning,
Giving my crifanac the knife.
Neos, come and zap me -- everyone be happy,
And let your fan instincts run rife!
If I am drinking, pour me some more;
If I get sercon, kick me out the door!
For I'm quitting fandom in the morning,
Retiring from this fascinating life--
I'll be normal tomorrow, but tonight I'll drown my sorrow,
And let my fan instincts run rife!
ALL: Oh, he's quitting fandom in the morning
Retiring from this tiresome fannish life...
HOLLOWAY: I hate to leave it behind me, so everyone please remind me
That fandom's just a way of strife!
ALL: He's turning normal in the morning,
Giving his crifanac the knife...

HOLLOWAY: Though fandom is madness, ere I leave this sad mess,
I'll let my fan instincts run rife.
If I get plastered, put me to bed;
If I plan a fanzine, club me on the head!
For I'm quitting fandom in the morning,
Retiring from this tiresome fannish life;
Tonight is my last fling, so let's have the bells ring!
And let your fan instincts, those crazy fan instincts,
Oh, cut loose and let your fan instincts run rife!

X. At the Gafianquet, Martha suddenly becomes angry with Iggen and rushes out of the room crying. Iggen subsequently finds that she has moved away, leaving no word.

IGGENS: What in all of Hyphen can have prompted her to go, after I had helped her rise to glory?
Hiding out in isolation...can this be a gafiation?
I must say it's quite a perplexing story!
Women are mundane, that's all I have to say for that
Their reading matter's always nonfan rags.
Their lives are shaped by loutish, boorish, clownish, churlish, lowbrow plebeian, proletarian mags!
Yes...why can't a woman be more like a fan?
Fen are progressive, with a free-thinking view,
More wise than Confucius, more strong than the Poo.
They've clear-thinking minds -- always know where they're at.
Why can't a woman be like that?
Why does every one do what the rabble do?
They dote on all that Billy Graham's said.
Their conversation's empty, and a babble, too.
Why don't they learn to think like Scientologist instead?
Why can't a woman just act like a fan?
Fen are so witty; I find that when I'm
With a fan I'm assured of a very good time.
A woman grows angry if just once you start to pettin' her.

BICKERING: How prudish!

IGGENS: What's even worse, their conversation's quite dull too.

BICKERING: Dim-witted!

IGGENS: Would you be shocked if I should swear at my Gestetner?

BICKERING: Of course not!

IGGENS: Well, why can't a woman be like you?

One fan in a hundred may watch TeeVee

(For after all, one might see Berry there!)

And you and I each have some small deficiency,

But by and large we are a marvelous pair.

Why can't a woman behave like a fan?

Fan-thinking is calm, open-minded and free.

We're never conceited; why, just look at me!

If fuggheads disagree with us, we just ignore them.

BICKERING: Naturally!

IGGENS: If we get panned by Claude Hall, do we make a fuss?

BICKERING: Of course not!

IGGENS: We don't start feuds with them -- we quietly abhor them.

BICKERING: Quite logical!

IGGENS: Well, why can't a woman be like us?

Why can't a woman be more like a fan?

Why, only a fan (and I'm sure you'll agree)

Would pub your last-minute FAPActivity--

Now, take Dean Grennell, he's a typical fan.

Why can't a woman be a Good Man?

Why is thinking something women never do?

Read GEMZINE and you'll see just what I mean.
Thinking with their typer's all they ever do;
I doubt they even keep their typers clean!
Why can't a woman be more like a fan?
If I were a woman who'd been to a con,
Been made guest of honor, and such goings-on
Would I start weeping as though I had due cause for sadness?
Act like I'd lost all rationality?
Would I run off and not announce my change of address?
Well, why can't a woman...be like me?

XI. Iggens finally finds out where Martha has moved to, and visits her.
When asked why she left him, she delivers a tirade:

MARTHA: What a fool I was, what a dull, fuggheaded fool,
To think you were the earth and sky!
What a fool I was, what a bright-eyed, simple fool,
What a neofannish fool was I!
No, my tru'fannish-type friend,
You are not the beginning and the end!
There'll be cons every year without you;
FAPA will still be here without you.
There'll be good old J.D.
There'll be I.S.F.C.C.
Quinn will still send IF free without you!
Science Fiction Times will thrive without you;
Somehow Forrie will survive without you,
And there will still be blog
Where they snog in the fog.
LassFass will meet in the smog without you--
We can do without you!
You mighty drinker who's always plastered--
You're just a stupid Cosmic-Minded crackpot!
We'll have South Gate in '58 without you,
(That con too will start late without you)
And if you must know, dear, Milwaukee still will make bheer
without you!
Without your buying them, the prozines survive;
Without your carrying them, the mails arrive.
Without you lifting, drinkers all get high--
If they can get along without you, so can I!
I can still be well-known without you
I can pub on my own without you
So go 'way, little man, I can still be a fan without you!

XII. Iggens subsequently learns that Martha is to marry Freddie Bunker-Hill. Alone at home, he mixes himself a nuclear fizz, and reflects that it is nowhere near as good as the fizzes Martha mixes....

IGGENS: Fout, fout, fout, fout!
I've grown accustomed to her fizz!
She makes housecleaning seem worthwhile--
I've grown accustomed to the aisles she's cleared through messy
piles,
And I'm not bothered by the glare from polished silverware.
It's quite familiar to me now,
This cleaning-up and putting-away,
My home was so supremely fannish, quite a wreck before we met;
Sure, I could just mess it up that way again...and yet
I've grown accustomed to her typer,
Quite fond of her LP's,

Accustomed to her fizz.

Marry Freddie! What a starry-eyed idea! What a goshwowboyoboyish thing to do! She'll regret it! She'll regret it! It's doomed before they even reach the altar.

I can see her now, Mrs. Freddie Bunker-Hill, in a small apartment loaded down with stf.

Bunker-Hill turns out impotent, but his wife's a woman still, so she's mothering the good old N3F!

Each member now becomes her son or daughter, and the Welcommittee's her delivery room;

She'll continue this perverted life he's brought her till the day she's laid to rest inside her tomb!

HAH!

But perhaps she'll see the error in her way and she'll leave poor frigid Freddie in the lurch.

Then she'll come to me and kneel to me and say, "You were right, you should've stopped us at the church."

HAH!

Poor, dear Martha! How simply frightful!

How degrading! How delightful!

How gratified I'll be when she begs me to take her back,

When she huddles on her knees outside my door,

Maternally frustrated, all for Freddie's lack--

Shall I take her in, or send her right back home?

Should she live with me, or ever after roam?...

I'm a most forgiving fan,

The sort who never could, never would

Get into a feud then carry a lifelong grudge.

Just a most forgiving fan...BUT

I will never take her back, tho she be crying in the snow!

Let her say that from now on she'll do all assembly-work! --

I shall very coldly tell her where to go!

Marry Freddie--HAH!

But I'm so used to hear her play "The Planets" every day,

Its highs, its lows, the way the ending goes--

Of course, I could just buy the thing

And get all this off my mind....

I'm very glad she's not trufannish; I can treat her like a pet,

Rather like a lower form of life that talks--and yet

I've grown accustomed to the trace

Of...something...in this drink,

Accustomed to her fizz.

(Iggen's disgustedly throws his drink into the fire. Martha enters; they embrace. Curtain)

EPILOGUE: The next day Iggen's and Martha have an argument, and Martha leaves again. She marries Freddie and lives happily ever after, Iggen's remains a confirmed old bachelor, and George Bernard Shaw is content.*

*In a long addendum to Pygmalion, Shaw insisted for several pages that Higgins would always remain a bachelor and pupil Eliza would marry her young suitor, Freddie Eynsford-Hill. To assume that the heroine of a romance must have married the hero of it is 'unbearable' Shaw snorted.

----Time, July 23, 1956

--Carl Brandon

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Social lies are not too serious



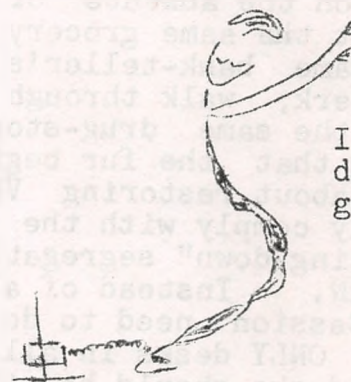
You can't let everybody do as they please!



Any idea may have some truth in it.



I do not have accidents!!



I am free to do anything good I choose!

JD

Presents

(Reprinted from THE CAROLINA ISRAELITE May-June, by 1956 issue.)

HOW TO SOLVE THE SEGREGATION PROBLEM

Harry L.
Golden

Those who love North Carolina will jump at the chance to share in the great responsibility now confronting our Governor and the State Legislature. The Special Session of the Legislature, scheduled to open in a few days, will be asked to pass a series of amendments to the State Constitution. These proposals submitted by the Governor and his Advisory Education Committee, include the following-A the elimination of the compulsory attendance law, "to prevent any child from being forced to attend a school with a child of another race." (B) The establishment of "Education Expense Grants" for education in a private school, "in case of a child assigned to a public school attended by a child of another race." (C) A uniform system of local option whereby a majority of the folks in a school district may suspend or close a school if the situation becomes "intolerable."

But suppose a Negro child applies for this "Education Expense Grant" and says he wants to go to the private school too? There are fourteen Supreme Court decisions involving the use of public funds; there are only two "decisions" involving the elimination of racial discrimination in the public schools.

The Governor has said that critics of these proposals have not offered any constructive advice or alternatives. Permit me therefore to offer an idea for the consideration of the members of the Special Session. A careful study of my plan, I believe, will show that it will save millions of dollars in tax funds and eliminate forever the danger to our public education system. Before I outline my plan, I would like to give you a little background.

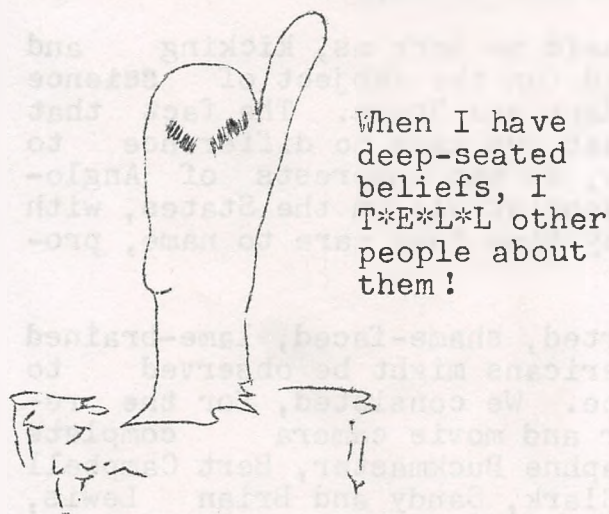
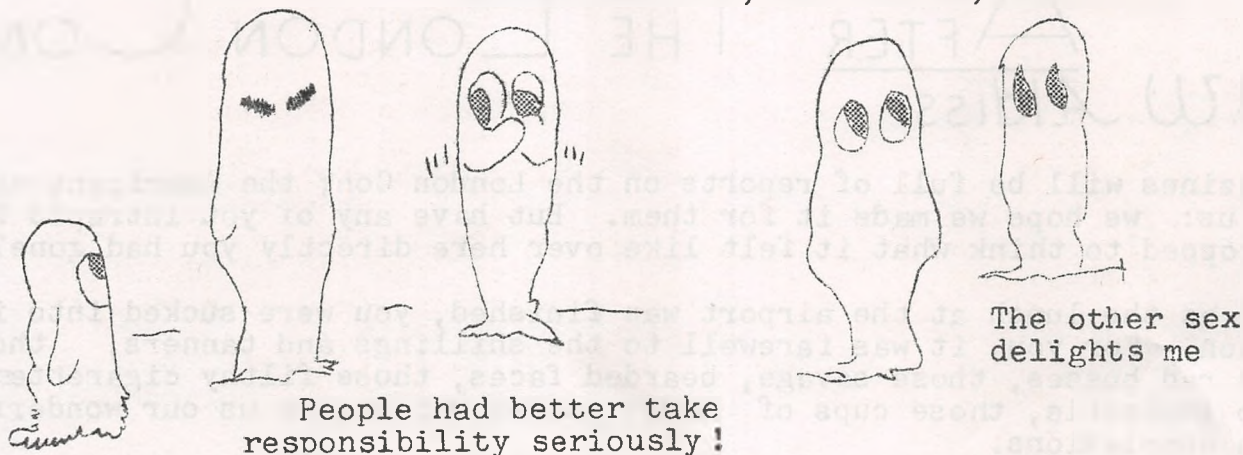
One of the factors involved in our tremendous industrial growth and economic prosperity has been due to the fact that the South, voluntarily, has all but eliminated VERTICAL SEGREGATION. The tremendous buying power of the twelve million Negroes in the South has been based wholly on the absence of racial segregation. The white and Negro stand at the same grocery and super-market counters; deposit money at the same bank-teller's window; pay phone and light bills to the same clerk; walk through the same dime and department stores, and stand at the same drug-store counters. It is only when the Negro "sets" that the fur begins to fly. Now since we are not even thinking about restoring VERTICAL SEGREGATION, I think my plan would not only comply with the Supreme Court decisions, but would maintain "sitting down" segregation." Now here is the GOLDEN VERTICAL NEGRO PLAN. Instead of all those complicated proposals, all the Special Session need to do is pass one small amendment which would provide ONLY desks in all the public schools of our State; NO SEATS. The desks should be those standing-up jobs, like the old-fashioned bookkeeping desk. Since no one in the South pays the slightest attention to a VERTICAL NEGRO, this will completely solve our problem. And it is not such a terrible inconvenience for young people to stand up during their class-room studies. In fact this may be a blessing in disguise. They are not learning to read

sitting down, anyway; maybe "standing up" will help. This will save more MILLIONS of dollars in the cost of our "remedial English" course when the kids enter college. In whatever direction you look with the GOLDEN VERTICAL NEGRO PLAN, you save MILLIONS of dollars, to say nothing of eliminating forever any danger to our public education system upon which rests the destiny, hopes, and happiness of this society.

--Harry L. Golden

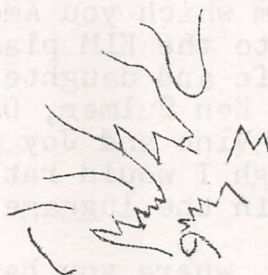
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I guess we're all more or less right !!



(more on page 52)

SPHERE

Presents

Oh To Be In ENGLAND

AFTER THE LONDON CON
by B.W. Aldiss

The fanzines will be full of reports on the London Con; the Americans made it for us: we hope we made it for them. But have any of you intrepid KLM-ers stopped to think what it felt like over here directly you had gone?

As soon as the lunch at the airport was finished, you were sucked into immigration. For you, it was farewell to the shillings and tanners, those endless red busses, those savage, bearded faces, those filthy cigarettes we find so smokeable, those cups of muddy coffee which give us our wonderful English complexions.

For us - well, two grim-faced Customs men held me back as, kicking and struggling, I exchanged one last vital word (on the subject of science fiction) with the Kyles, Forrey, Val, Lee, Mary and Steve. The fact that I could not pronounce the surnames of the last two made no difference to the warmth of my feelings. And here and now, in the interests of Anglo-American unity, let's make it clear that anyone at all in the States, with no exceptions, may weep on my shoulder at any time they care to name, provided they look and behave like Ruth Kyle.

The British contingent now made its downhearted, shame-faced, lame-brained way to a point of vantage from which you Americans might be observed to cross from the Customs sheds to the KLM plane. We consisted, for the record, of Ted Carnell, with wife and daughter and movie camera complete with continuous belt of film, Ken Bulmer, Daphne Buckmaster, Bert Campbell (Late Editor of "Authentic"), Vinc and Joy Clark, Sandy and Brian Lewis, the artist - oh, and me, though I would rather have been lying disguised as a record of "Dirty Old Town" in the luggage rack of your plane.

You now came out of the sheds, where you had been inspected, disinfected and stamped "U.S.A. Fondle Carefully", and climbed into the bus which would take you over the tarmac to the plane. You were only some two hundred yards away, so we had quite a clear view of you. At once, a doubledecker bus, two Comets flown over specially from Dar-es-Salaam, a fire engine and the Airport Controller's bicycle were parked in front of us. So you made your way to the plane unobserved. We nearly caught a glimpse of you ascending the gangway, but six men ran up and hastily built a radio station with control tower in front of us.

However, when your plane taxied to the take-off runway, we had a fine view of it. Those faces at that window - Sam Moskowitz and Bob Madle surely? Or perhaps it was Art Kyle - or hadn't he got on at all? And whose was that tiny figure running madly as the speed of light after the plane? Yes, that was me, friends, but I never made it: these KLM jobs are too fast. Finally, after a comprehensive tour round London Airport, you were airborne, your plane lifting irrevocably into the grey haze with

which we shroud our country from alien eyes.

That was our worst moment. We watched and watched till the spots before our eyes formed star-spangled banners in the air, and then we turned away. Ken Bulmer reassumed the false beard he had been waving. Mastering our emotions, English-fashion, we deposited our chewing gum and went to have a cup of English-fashion tea. Avidly drinking, I saw the leaves in my cup form up into the shape of a phallic symbol; of course, I know these things are really only space ships, so I took heart and felt slightly better.

Well, we had to get back to routine. I had to return to Oxford (the others were just simple local boys, Londoners all). The cold draughts of everyday life were blowing again. We caught a bus into town; it took an hour to get from Bushey, where the airport is, into central London. We talked of you all the time - in fact, we were so engrossed we accidentally let Bert Campbell buy all the tickets. The most fruitful and practical suggestion emerging from this discussion was a proposal to move the Azores over into mid-Atlantic for the establishment thereon of a permanent, time - and moneyproff Convention site, with the finest features of both our great democracies (i.e. Coca Cola and espresso coffee) available at all hours.

Finally we reached Hammersmith Broadway, and the conductor helped us off the bus. We picked ourselves up from the grimy pavements and made for the underground (tube, subway) station. There this great and happy Fifteenth Convention finally broke up. "South Gate in '58", we shouted, more in sorrow than anger. The names of the stations were a blur as I headed alone for Paddington.....Goldhawk Road, White City, Lad-broke Grove, Royal Oak..... Around me was this shabby, battered weedy, dusty, grand old city which had been so glad to welcome you all here. Ah, me, nothing will look the same again - not even the corpse-faced prostitutes under the sodium - vapor lights of the Bayswater Road. So I reached Paddington mainline station, feeling both sentimental and semi-mental.

I had ten minutes to spare before my train left: The carriages were crowded with Oxford faces, most seats were taken. It was 4:45 on a warm afternoon. I'd been walking about all day -- to say nothing of the preceding sleepless night. The loveliest thing in the world, I thought, next to being headed for New York in a charter plane, would be to cool my aching feet. Going along to the toilet, which packs all mod. con. into a room no bigger than Val's suitcase, I took off shoes and socks and thrust my feet under the spout where it says 'Not Drinking Water'. It felt wonderful.

The dryer was an elaborate mechanical business, into whose sides you thrust a penny and get out eighteen inches of roller towel. It hung shining overhead. My feet don't extend that far. Slipping out of my jacket, I climbed nimbly up onto the jakes and the wash basin. Steadying myself precariously with one hand on the window, I inserted a penny in the gadget and jerked out a coil of towel. Then, flexing my muscles, I stuck out a foot to dry it. At that moment, the train started with a jolt... .

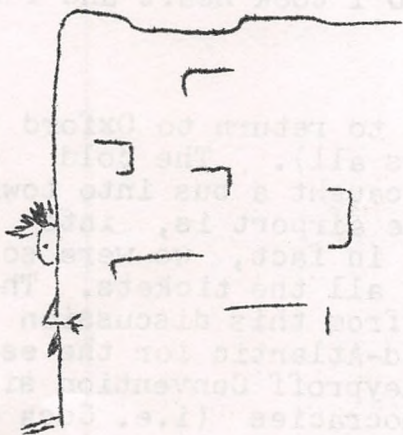
So I say farewell, as I hang downward, caught up in the folds of a British Railway towel. It is my sincerest hope that travel has similarly reoriented all of you, turning your preconceived

notions upside down. Adieu for now, and thanks for the memories. We'll meet again someday, once I've really found my feet again.

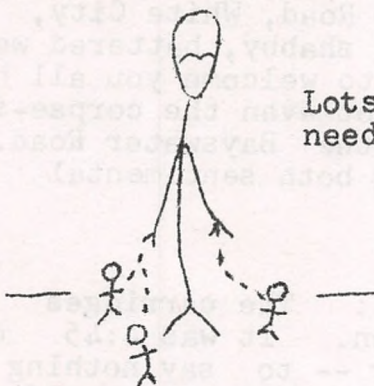
--Brian W. Aldiss

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A conservative attitude
is often best



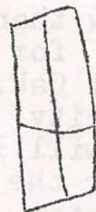
Lots of people
need me!



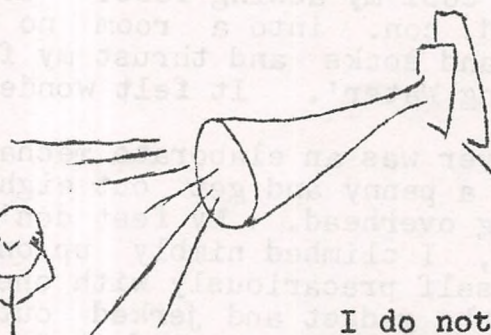
I can recall things by
seeing them in memory!



You can be
hurt by
responsibility



One
can't
always
be
right!



I do not
listen to
bad things

(more on page 55)

ABERRATION

Presents

the murky way

by Dean A. Grennell

There seems to be something in our culture that makes us seek absolutes. We tend to see things either as Unmitigated Evil or Sublime Virtue. We love to speak in broad generalizations...generally speaking.

It seems to me that this is true of most people. I feel a little wistful about this because I sometimes think I am but a lonely chip of dither awash in a sea of people who know their own minds. Well do I recall moments of near panic when I used to find myself confronted with a cigarette machine into which I had just inserted a quarter. Which brand to buy? Which knob to pull? I tell you it drove me clean frantic and at times I'd finally, out of sheer desperation, shut my eyes and grab any knob at random. Which is all right except that I'm equally reluctant to accept the arbitrary decree of consulted fate which rules out coin-flipping and buck passing. Besides, the eyes-shut-and-grab technique was apt as not to leave me with a pack of Kools or some other brand which I despise to the remote corners of my being. Eventually I solved the problem with the aid of a fortuitous attack of bronchitis by stopping smoking, but that is another story.

I think there is a word -- vaguely recall reading it somewhere -- it's "nitchevo" or something like that; won't vouch for the spelling. Russian, maybe, maybe not, which I believe is translated to something like "it doesn't matter" or "it makes no difference" or something. If there is a word such as this, and if it means that, and if it's spelled that way, and if I had occasion to have a coat of arms -- then that is the word I would like to have emblazoned in nice arty script across that wavy ribbon that they have on coats of arms.

I am, I guess, a peasant without a cause to be rebel without. Few things set me aflame with an ungovernable urge to Do Something. True, there are things at which I am appalled or repelled, but not painfully so. I grouch a little sometimes at my vision of the vast seas of furore raised over teenagers nowadays but I manage to neutralize my discontent fairly well by rationalizing that this is partly my natural distaste for anything that is overdone, and partly simple jealousy that nobody made such a fuss over teenagers during the era between 1936 and 1942 when I was a teenager, plus the fact that nobody seems to make a fuss over thirty-agers today. I view the adored idol of millions such as Liberace and Elvis Presley with the same quiet disgust I felt for Frank Sinatra in an earlier era and console myself with the thought that this too shall pass. I resist the temptation to found an international Poop on Presley Club complete with monthly bulletins, clubrooms, secret grips, signals, and (most important) dues, on the grounds that I simply don't care that much. It isn't worth the bother. Nitchevo. Fout.

Oh, there have been times when I cared for something, all right. I've vague recollections that I once could have mustered 87 pages of fine printed argument as to why it was almost obscenely

unfair to permit (in the armed forces) the NCO clubs for the non-com officers into which the poor, trod-upon privates and PFCs weren't allowed. But I feel a little sheepish about the way all my magnificently marshalled points of irrefutable logic seemed rather silly, suddenly, the day I became a corporal and thus eligible to join the NCO club (which turned out to be a fearsomely dull place which, once joined, I rarely attended afterwards.

I've never been much of a letterhack, but once a letter of mine was printed in AMAZING STORIES -- I forget what I said and doubt if I really said anything at all. I received a letter from some chap who saw it however. I don't think he's connected with mainstream fandom, but for a little while he bombarded me with letters recounting the rank injustices which had been visited upon him during the years of his wretched life, and, seriously, if he wasn't stretching things, the poor guy did get a raw deal.

His primary trouble seemed to be with his parents who, it was alleged, practically kept him a prisoner in his own room although I got the impression that he was somewhere in his thirties. They refused to let him go see a doctor when he got sick with the result that his health was permanently damaged and they wouldn't let him read anything other than the newspapers, not even classics such as Robinson Crusoe and Treasure Island, and especially not science fiction, and so on. I don't mean to be altogether callous; I would hate like poison to be in a fix like that poor guy claimed to be, though he apparently got hold of that issue of AMAZING STORIES in some way.

And somehow he managed to put out publications. I hesitate to call them fanzines, because they were mostly little printed-on-both-sides-one-sheets, professionally done on a press. Like most stuff in most fanzines, though, he was secure in his viewpoint and he was crusading hammer-and-tongs for his pet cause.

And that cause was...? Well, guess now: it wasn't any of the baffling complexities dealing with segregation and intergration and pro-segregation and anti-pro-segregation which sometimes requires counting out on the fingers to work out which side is being defended. Nossir, he had nothing to say about that or Communism, up or down with, and he didn't seem to care about vivisection or flourides in water or the creeping peril of the slimy petty-bourgeois middle classes or the joys of vegetarianism or how chiropractors can cure tooth decay by cracking your spine or how doctors are dirty bastards or any of the standard crusades.

His fearless fighting forthright fulminations floundered ferociously at cruel and heartless parents who downtread their down-trodden offspring. He thundered with might against these heartless monsters and spoke of setting up a foundation to foster and succor worthy souls who had heretofore writhed under the fiendish dominion of sadistic fathers and demoniacal mothers.

All of which is not overly startling. Nor is it very original as thoughts go. Chap name of Aesop, quite a while ago, came up with a fable about a fox who crusaded to have all foxes cut their tails off, citing all sorts of advantages to (?) caudectomy, or whatever the word would be. The crusading fox, you'll remember, had previously lost his own tail in a revolving door or somewhere.

So it goes. In more cases than otherwise crusaders have some sort of personal axe to grind, directly or indirectly. Certain nasty-minded cynics have tried to put over the theory that the American

Revolution was formented and fanned by several Yankee merchants who stood to gain handsomely if the relationships between England and the colonies were severed. Not satisfied with that, they have gone on to say that the prime movers in the War Between the States were economic pressures as much as ethical ones if not moreso. They cite millions of dollars owed by Southerners to Northern creditors -- debts which could hardly be collected from a citizen of a hostile nation.

Even today -- even in fandom -- true, unselfish motivation still isn't what you would call common. Diogenes could wear out as many lanterns hunting an altruist as an honest man. I could cite for-instances but I dern if I a-goen to. Start naming names and you get controversy and that's just another name for trouble, and that's what I'm allergic to -- as I keep telling myself. I'm just a good-natured slob trying to get along. Crusading against crusaders...

--Dean A. Grennell

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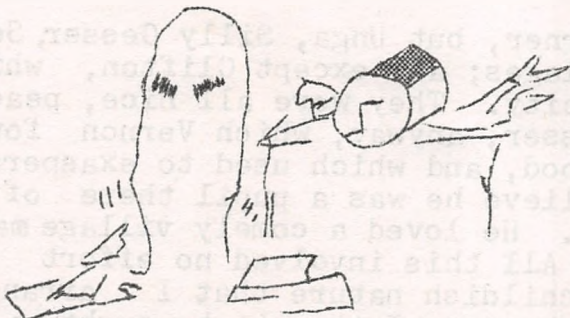
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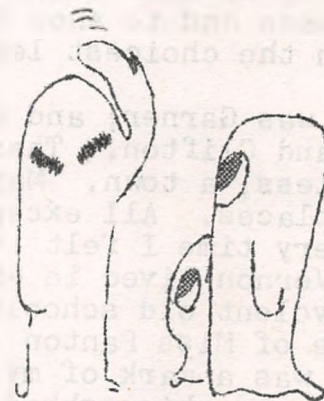
The past is pretty dreadful



I am well all of the time!



Possessions are occasionally troublesome



A lot of people are wrong most of the time!

(more on page 58)

TRIODE

Presents

ABACCHUS

by Mal Ashworth

Sometimes I feel that it is all very inevitable. It is a rather awesome thought. There are times when I feel that, say, ten trillion years ago, two minute amoebae kept a rendezvous on the shores of a steaming lake and pored over even minuter diagrams they had laboriously squiggled in the mud. "Well now," the first amoeba would say, "lessee-if you do the splits at sundown on the third day after the end of the next rainy season, and I make a schizo of myself a couple of days later, you can see what's going to happen in ten trillion years, can't you?" "Boy," says the second amoeba, wriggling happily in the bubbling mud, "can I! We'll do that thing." And away they splosh.

That is how I feel sometimes. I can, in fact, find no other reasonable explanation. For being a fan, I mean. Science-fiction, of course, is just a good excuse; the real responsibility rests with the amoebae.

Take me, for example. (It is always wise to use complete strangers as examples - one avoids getting too personal.) I have only been reading science-fiction for about nine or ten years-a mere trifle out of an existence stretching over the vast distance of twenty-three years. And yet I know for a fact that I have been a fan for longer than that. The plentitude of proof in support of this is almost overwhelming. The Time I Was The Prince Of India, for instance.

I used to be the Prince Of India. I was only masquerading as an ordinary person, of course, and very often, when everyone else was sleeping (so as not to create too much of a disturbance) I used to 'whisszzhh' back to India just to see that everything was going along smoothly in my absence. (I haven't been back for quite a while and just look at the place now!) The process used to mystify my younger brother, Vernon, somewhat, but as I told him at the time, he was far too young fully to understand the mighty ramifications involved. As a completely irrelevant aside, I naturally had to keep up some slight shadow of my lordly reality, even in my mundane existence and to show my rank in some small way, like having a prior claim on the choicest lead soldiers and toy cars.

Or there was Garner; and not only Garner, but Unga, Silly Cesser, Sensible Cesser and Clifton. These were villages; all except Clifton, which was, more or less, a town. Maybe even a city. They were all nice, peaceful sorts of places. All except Silly Cesser, anyway, which Vernon found himself in every time I felt in a giddy mood, and which used to exasperate him no end. Vernon lived in Garner; I believe he was a pupil there of a wise and benevolent old schoolmaster (me). He loved a comely village maiden by the name of Miss Panton (also me). All this involved no effort on his part - it was a mark of my generous, childish nature that I arranged it all for him and whisszzhhed him there whenever I thought he ought to go. Or back whenever I thought he oughtn't to stay.

56 Now, Garner (and Unga and ... all the lot) were menaced by the raids and incursions of two mighty, evil, alien hordes (me). As everyone knows, when mighty, evil, alien hordes are menacing peaceful

villages, there is only one thing to do - elect a hero to go out and fight them. I elected one - Vernon. I made him a sword. I made myself half a dozen swords and a couple of daggers (after all, you can't be a mighty, evil, alien horde with only one mighty little sword, can you?) And out went Vernon to fight these mighty, evil, alien hordes.

I forgot the name of the main horde now, but they were led by an old man (me) and his twelve terrible sons (also me), all with awe-inspiring names. They were massive, bullheaded, rip-roaring monsters who wielded claymores and bore a rather remarkably high percentage of the characteristics attributed by English daily newspapers to German soldiers. The other mighty, evil, alien horde fought with rapiers, slunk around corners and stabbed people in the back, had a beautifully descriptive name like Dirty Little Gutter Dogs, lived in a place called The Vicious Circle, and always reminded me, rather strangely, of the English daily newspapers version of Japanese soldiers. The actual numbers of either mighty evil, alien horde were just never estimated - which was useful if Vernon got fed-up and said he'd killed them all. I could always bring on another ten battalions.

So there is Vernon, bravely clutching his sword, faced by two mighty, evil, alien hordes (me). Perhaps you are closing your eyes in horror, refusing to watch him go down gallantly before their blood-thirsty onrushes? In that case you are quite safe in opening them again; you have overlooked something. Vernon's future is not quite as black - or as short - as you might think. The point you have overlooked is this - Vernon is Good and these mighty, evil, alien hordes are Bad. Besides that fact, mere reality - like the fact that Vernon is facing twenty thousand, screaming, claymore-brandishing warriors - pales into insignificance. Nevertheless, I am prepared to admit that his future does not look so rosy. Maybe he needs a little help. He gets it - it comes as something of a surprise to him (as you might imagine) from the Gundras (me). He did not even know they existed.

The Gundras are a body of utterly fearless underground fighters. They fight underground while Vernon fights on the surface (all the enemy are on the surface; this is one reason the Gundras are so fearless). Every once in a while they come up to the surface and stab somebody in the back or poison a detachment of one or other of the mighty, evil, alien hordes. They are Good. They remind me, rather peculiarly, of the English daily newspaper impression of the French Maquis. They are equipped with the best weapons owned by either side - Gundra daggers. These have a black-painted handle, an orange-painted blade and a hand-guard which went on straight. For this reason they are the best weapons in the whole war. They remind me, rather amazingly, of Bowie knives.

Vernon does a great job. He kills hundreds of the claymore--wielding horde and thousands of the rapier-using Dirty Little Gutter Dogs. He kills one of the old man's twelve sons, Gargrabble the Lion (me). Gargrabble, however, subsequently turns out only to have been badly wounded as he has got a rather terrific name and it would take me a long time to think up another one as good. Whenever Vernon gets captured he is rescued by some fearless underground Gundra fighter (me) or by a mysterious lone individual who races madly around the garden on roller-skates and snatches Vernon from under the enemy's very nose. Vernon is married to Miss Panton (me) by the kindly old schoolmaster (me) or maybe a kindly old priest (me). He lives in a tent on the patch of grass in the front garden - in Garner, of course - and has, in lieu of a house-dog, a tent kitten called Jingles. Sometimes the Gundras come for him in the middle of the night, to take him out on a raid with them, and summon him silently by sticking one of their famous Gundra daggers

through the side of the tent - hoping, in their silly old, sentimental way that he is not sleeping at that side. A strange old man wearing a red dressing-gown (me) teaches him herbal secrets that have been handed down through generations of devoted mystics - like how to mash dandelions into an unrecognisable pulp in an old tin helmet. Thousands of Dirty Little Gutter Dogs are poisoned mysteriously and the Gundras know nothing about it.

And that is the last I remember of the desperate situation. Perhaps something went wrong with the whisszzhhing apparatus; perhaps Vernon deserted his post at a crucial moment to go to the pictures. Whatever the cause, that is the last I remember of it.

Now, you may think, in the circumstances, that that is pretty flimsy evidence for suspecting a couple of amoebae of plotting me, ten trillion or so years ago. You may not regard it as conclusive proof that I was a full-fledged fan before I ever so much as sat on a science-fiction magazine. But I would ask you to suspend judgement for a moment; that is not quite all. You see, I already had the solution of the whole thing worked out in my mind. The culmination would come about suddenly and unexpectedly (to Vernon, at least) whenever I (or, less likely, Vernon) got fed-up with the whole business. All the Dirty Little Gutter Dogs and every single claymore-flourishing bullhead would suddenly be stricken dead in their tracks by a devastating, intangible weapon never before known to any of them and more deadly even than a Gundra dagger. And, if you haven't already guessed, it would have been unleashed by the little old man in the red dressing-gown (me, you may remember) who had secretly come down to earth from a distant planet to fight for the Forces of Good and who held, within his sage old head, all the secrets of the universe.

I regard that as quite conclusive evidence. Why, any one of you could name three or four magazines which would absolutely jump at the chance of buying that if it were written down in story form.

At least, I hope they will.

--Mal Ashworth

Reprinted from TRIODE #11

TRIODE is published by Eric Bentcliffe, who resides at 47 Alldis St. Great Moor, Stockport, Ches., England.

Z J U Q

All children
are wonderful



People are
very co-operative

INTROD

Presents

WAY OUT WEST IN TEXAS

by Marion Bradley

Yeah, sure, I'll write something for your fanzine some day. Only right now I don't feel much like writing anything. In the first place, I told my kid sister she could use my typewriter while I was in the Army. Paulette's taking a commercial course in high school this year and she needs a typewriter to use. I'd feel like a rotten heel if I asked her to wrap it up and express it to me right in the middle of the school year after telling her she could use it and everything.

Anyway, I don't have much time, life here on the Base is pretty drastic, just one damn thing after another. Every time I get a minute and sit down to do something, one of the guys busts in and wants to know what the hell I'm doing and why don't I come play ping-pong at the Rec or something. So you see how it goes? And --well, you remember last month I was in Nevada and before that they had me in Texas and here I am in Montana. My mail's still travelling all around the circle to catch up with me. Sure, every time I move I pick up the phone and call my family, and tell them about it, but I can't send out notices all over fandom, can I?

And as a matter of fact--well, no, that isn't all. Listen, I'd like to tell you about it, only it's going to sound absolutely nuts to you. I mean, like I was going crazy or something, not just goofy, I mean real gone, psycho, crazy.

You're right about when it started, it was when they sent me to that big air base in Texas. I was real keen on going there, for a funny reason. Yeah, you probably can guess without my telling you. I mean Margo Sanders--Margo Bellew Sanders, that is.

Now look, don't get the wrong idea right from the start. It's just that I've known Margo ever since she--I mean, ever since I was a neofan. I guess she must have been the first fan I wrote to. She was just plain Margo Bellew, then. I guess it must have been an awful crazy letter; I didn't have a typewriter then, so I didn't keep a carbon, but she wrote me back an awful nice letter, I guess you'd say gracious, and sent me a couple of copies of her fanzine. I guess you're too new in fandom to remember BELLOWINGS. It was one of the first of the individzines. She got tired of it, after a while, and it never had been a top fanzine, but the people who wrote in to it, sure had fun with it.

I got a real shock when she got married. Oh, I wasn't jealous of Sanders, or anything like that. He was a good guy, if he was kind of stiff and stuffy. I always thought Margo ought to marry a fan, and sure enough, she did. Well, for a while after that, I kind of lost track of her. You know how it happens, how femme fans drop out of sight for a year after they get married?

She sent me a few copies of one-shots and FAPAazines she put out after that, but it wasn't till a couple of years later that we started corresponding again. It was a different kind of corresponding now. I mean, we didn't just talk about science fiction magazines and fars and fanzines and stuff like that. We didn't talk personally, e-

ither, I don't mean that. She never told me anything much about her marriage (although she had a lot to say about Texas!) and when her baby was born I read about it in another fanzine--she'd never told a word to me about it. What I mean was, we talked about ideas. I still have the letter she wrote about school segregation in Texas. She was wild about it. I mean, she was so mad, she just blistered the paper, but she didn't get crazy mad--not the way Marion Bradley used to, for instance, talking nasty about anybody who disagreed with her; Margo just sounded indignant and reasonable -- and sort of mournful. And we talked a lot about books. She loaned me some books on music -- she had a lot of them -- and some novels by modern writers she liked. If Margo had one talent, it was for wading through all the pocket-size paperback trash and coming out with real honest-to-gosh good books. She could find real good novels on the bookracks --no matter how screwball the covers looked. I introduced her to Dostoyevsky, though, and Sigrid Undset. I even checked one of Sigrid Undset's novels out of the high school library and mailed it to her because she wanted to read it. It was taking an awful chance, but she got it back inside of two weeks.

And we talked about people. I don't mean gossiping about people we knew, I mean talking about what made people tick. Sometimes when I read her letters I was reminded of that old English goon who used to call himself the Spectator or something. It made me blink to think there might be people who sat and watched others like that, and then went home and wrote down, so damn devastatingly, what they were like, seeing right through to their insides.

I guess what I'm trying to say is, she helped me grow up. I knew she was a year or so older than I was -- I wasn't sure just how much. But she seemed like a lot older than she was. You know. Heck, you've read her stuff. When she had her first story published, she sent me a copy autographed "To my best fan and friend, Bryan Sears" and I almost bust. I was just as tickled as she was, I'll bet.

Heck, I'm getting long-winded, and I've got to be back at the Base by eleven. Let's skip all that -- and pour me out some more coffee, will you? I wish to gosh they could sell beer in these damn fool towns, but I suppose your family wouldn't like it.

So let's skip all that and come up to where I landed in Texas. One afternoon I called Margo up long distance, and told her where I was, and the first thing she did was suggest that I come up and spend a week-end with them. Well, of course, I'd been hoping all along that she'd ask me, and you can guess what I told her. I was just as excited as a kid, and I could tell from her voice that she was tickled to death, too. So I arranged for a weekend pass, and Saturday morning I landed up in Clearwater.

It was a funny little town, like all those Texas dryland towns; a watertank standing head and shoulders over all the funny little one-story houses, and flat as a griddle. The first thing I saw, of course, was the Sanders drugstore, and I went in and met Tom Sanders behind the prescription counter.

He was quite a shock. I'd pictured him as being stiff and stuffy, and instead he was a round, chubby, balding guy, sort of middle-aged, if you know what I mean. And -- jovial. He kidded and joked all the time. He acted like he was really glad to see me, though. He shook hands with me, and made some kind of wisecrack about what kind of Air Force was it where I could get away with long curly hair like that -- as it happens, I'd missed out on a haircut for about a month, so I didn't have a crewcut, but anyway -- well, it doesn't sound so funny unless

you heard Tom Sanders saying it. He asked me to sit down and have a milk shake on the house while he got Margo on the phone and asked her to come down and pick me up. So I drank a chocolate malt -- he made good ones, the way they ought to be made, with chocolate ice cream and frozen milk, so thick I had to eat it with a spoon -- and we talked some about jet planes. He'd been a radioman in WW2, and was keen on flying. Then he stood up and said, "Oh, here's Margo," and I turned around and met her.

Well, she was a shock too, in a way. You know how you make up mental pictures of people? Margo was short and fat, and she had straight black hair whacked off across her forehead. She was nice-looking in a way, too, that was the funny part of it, and she had the nicest speaking voice I've ever heard. Her voice was just as pretty and gracious as her letters, and here's the funny part, after the first little shock at seeing that she wasn't young or pretty, I got used to her and hardly thought about what she looked like. Oh, yes. This was the real queer part of it. She wasn't young. I guess she must have been 35 or 36. It was hard to tell, and of course I didn't ask her, but I'd say she was about 35.

Well, I went up to the house with her in the car -- she was a good driver, too -- and saw their house. It was a nice house, in a way, and there were books all over the place, but it was -- well, it wasn't neat. There was dust on the furniture, and Margo's desk was the worst mess I ever saw, and she didn't have a cover on the typewriter so the keys were all clogged up with sand and stuff. Oh, it would write, all right -- she asked if I wanted to write any letters or anything while I was there, because she knew I'd left my typewriter at home. But it had a jumpy feel, as if somebody'd been banging on it a lot.

Well, there isn't so much to tell, after all. I talked a lot with Margo, and played a while with her little girl, Peggy -- she was a cute little dickens and no mistake about it! Margo had some work to do in the kitchen and she said I could use her typewriter if I wanted to, and just help myself to stamps and paper and so on. And of course she said to make myself at home, look over the books and magazines all I wanted to, and so forth, and I did just that. She sure had some marvelous stuff, old Clayton Astoundings, Merwin Startlings, Brackett's books all bound in hard covers, and all that kind of thing, but of course I already knew about that.

And then about five, the door opened, and the cutest chick I ever saw, walked in the door. I guess she was about sixteen, and brother was she stacked! In a nice way, that is. Everything in the house was nice, that way -- I mean, Margo wasn't prissy, or prim, but you just knew, from looking around, and there wasn't. Especially not the girl. She had gold hair. Real gold, not just yellow -- just the color of a wedding ring. Her eyes were dark blue, not the wishy-washy color either, and as I say, she was stacked, in a nice way, and she had on a cute little pink sweater and a skirt that didn't hurt her any, either. She looked a little surprised when she saw me, and then she said, "Oh, you must be that friend of mother's. Mr. Sears. I'm glad to know you."

Yes, she really said Mister Sears, and my lord, she could see I wasn't much more than eighteen, for the luvvagod! And then Margo came in and said, "Bryan, this is Priscilla Bellew. My daughter by my first marriage." --and I damn near fell off the sofa. I mean it.

Oh, lord, why go right through the weekend blow by blow? I slept in Priscilla's room -- she moved in with the baby, Peggy,

while I was there. I didn't want to put her out, I said Margo could make me up a bed on the floor or anywhere, but she said, no, Priscilla's room was really a guest room but they let the girls have separate rooms when they didn't have company, and Pris said she didn't care, Peggy's bed was more comfortable than hers anyway. They were awfully nice to me. I didn't have much of a chance to talk to Margo, though. I guess she saw the way I looked at Pris, and so that first night she said there was a good movie at the Drive-in and why didn't I take the car and take Pris to the movie. Pris acted like she wanted to, so I did. And the next afternoon, Sunday, we all went on a picnic. It was a lot of fun, too. The only thing is, somebody who knew Margo came up and asked if I was her son. And Pris followed me around. I mean -- well, I guess I encouraged her. She was the cutest thing I'd ever seen by a long shot, and after I got her to call me Bryan, she was all right, too.

But -- well, there was this. You've got to face it, she was dumb. I don't mean she was a stoop. Margo wouldn't have a creep for a daughter. But -- well, let me show you what I mean. I said something about a book I'd talked over with Margo, and Pris said, "Gosh, I'm not smart enough for that stuff. Mother's all the brain we've got in this family, I guess!" She didn't know what science fiction was -- honest, I mean that. She said when she was a little kid her mother tried to get her interested in it and she was just plain bored. And she wanted to know if our high school had had a good football team. For creep's sake, how would I know? And when I said I'd never seen a football game, she just stared at me as if I were a green bem, or something.

And then, Sunday, Pris went to church with her father and the baby, and I stayed home with Margo. We tried to get to talking, but I just couldn't straighten myself out. You see, after the movie last night, Pris and I had stopped on the way home and -- well, you know. Nothing to worry about -- I'm not that kind of a bastard -- but anyway, we'd done some pretty heavy making-out, and it made me feel a little funny with Margo. All the girls I date have mothers, sure, but I don't get so friendly with most of them. So by the time we got packed up for the picnic, Margo had given me up as a bad job, I guess, and treated me the same way she'd treat any friend of Pris'.

When the picnic was over, it was time to get back into uniform, and catch the bus for the Base. Margo gave me a copy of the new GALAXY and an old copy of S-F with one of her stories I'd missed, and a couple of fan-zines, to read on the bus, and Tom shook my hand and made a few more wise-cracks, and Peggy gave me a moist and sloppy kiss and a bite of her candy bar. Pris said -- she was being awfully grown-up all of a sudden -- that she hoped I'd come back for the Homecoming football game that Thanksgiving, and couldn't he come then, Mother? And Margo said sure, she'd love to have me any time. Then the bus came in, and all of a sudden a funny thing happened. Margo put her arms around me and stood up on tiptoe and kissed my cheek. That got me. I mean, it really did. I found -- now, don't think I'm getting gooey or anything -- but my eyes were all wet and teary when I got up on the bus, and I stumbled over an old lady's feet.

Well, that was it. I told you it wouldn't sound like it made sense. Even to me, it doesn't. Now don't get me wrong. I wasn't in love with Margo. I'm not just disillusioned, or anything like that. But she was an awful big hunk of my life -- I never knew it till now. When I think about fandom I think about Margo, and that brings me around to Pris again. If I gave myself half a chance, I could flip over that girl Pris. And some way that doesn't seem right. In a crazy way, it's Margo I want, or maybe I want Margo to be Pris, or Pris to be Margo.

So that's it. Hey, listen, I told you I had to be back at the Base by eleven, where did I stick my coat? Anyway, that's all it is. Maybe Margo wrote me, I don't know, like I said, there's been mail following me all around from one Base to another. I did write her a letter to thank her for the weekend, but I didn't have time to say much except what a nice time I had. You know, like I told you, the Base is just one damn thing after another and like I said, fandom seems awful far away.

But yeah, I'll try to write you something for your fanzine, some day, when I can get around to it.

--Marion Zimmer Bradley

Reprinted from INNUENDO #5

INNUENDO is published by Terry Carr who now resides at 2315 Dwight Way, Berkeley 4, California.

(NOTE: At the time "Way Out West In Texas" was printed, INNUENDO was co-edited by Carr and Dave Rike. Dave is no longer with INN. Also, the top selection from INN, as Carr said, was "The Cacher of the Rye", an item too long for anthologizing.)

7 1 U Q



Your integrity
to yourself is
more important
than your body



Man's
problems are
solveable
without any
recourse to
the
supernatural

--Jean Young
Rotsler
Jack Harness

CAMBER

Presents

STILL SHOCK

by John Berry

(Title by Walt Willis.)

Walt wasn't at home when I called at Oblique House recently. I went straight upstairs to the fan-attic, and settled down to browse awhile until his return. Madeleine came up a few minutes later, bearing the usual and much beloved tray, and drank, and chatted.

I commented on the furnishing of the attic.

"I like the look of that marble-topped writing table cum sideboard," I said. "The hand carved cup boards are particularly antique looking. I wonder Leeh and Larry Shaw didn't make you an offer for it. Is it a family heirloom?"

"No," replied Madeleine, in rather a superior manner, "as a matter of fact, it cost me thirty shillings at an auction some time ago."

I whistled unbelievably.

"And that gilt-edged mirror?", I asked.

"Seven and sixpence," replied Madeleine.

"And that plush rocking chair that George sleeps in?"

"Five shillings."

"All from auction sales?"

"All from auction sales."

I pondered deeply. I had never been to an auction sale. My famed bad luck would not permit of such a luxury. I always get the worst of a bargain. The vacant expression on my face fills salespeople with optimism. Their eyes seem to light up at my innocent visage. In other words, I always get done.

"And I suppose, conversely," I continued to Madeleine, pensively, "folks who organise auction sales buy items for a cheap price off people and sell them at the sale to the highest bidder?"

"You're too right," confirmed Madeleine, packing the cups on the tray and leaving the room to begin the looong journey down the 93 steps to the kitchen.

I lay back and pondered again. My mind raced back to several years previously...to a few days after Diane and myself were married, and had started to organise our own household, in the country.....

"Here's a letter from my Uncle Ebenezer," smiled Diane, "...says he's coming this afternoon to bring us a belated wedding present."

"Any relative of yours is welcome, Precious," I grinned, "er....is he rich?"

"Very rich," beamed Diane. "I shouldn't wonder but that he's bringing us a fabulous present. He is a farmer, is very old, and lives in a place called Ballyslapgoblin, in County Down, just a few miles from here!"

Later that day, a 'clip-clop' made me look out of the window, and a bored-looking donkey, drawing a little cart, clattered to a stop outside our house. An aged gentleman, sporting a bowler hat got off the cart and staggered up our path, bearing in his arms an obviously heavy parcel.

"Afternoon," he cackled, "sorry I'm late with my present. I'm sure you'll like it."

I flashed my wife's uncle a charming grin, and bowed low at the door as he passed through and retraced his steps to the cart and trotted away.

With feverish haste, we ripped the paper off the parcel, revealing a long wooden box. It was heavy.

"Right enough, silver is very heavy," observed Diane, "this could easily be a solid silver tea service, or a.....or.....a...."

I ripped off the wooden cover, looked agonisingly at the contents, and fetched a tumbler of water for Diane.

"After all, dear heart," I commiserated, "two Roman soldiers three feet high, and made of pig iron is certainly an original gift."

"They are absolutely useless," sobbed Diane, "it wouldn't be so bad if they weren't all covered with rust."

"Oh, I don't know," I grimaced, "one of them will definitely come in useful as a door-stop, and the other one can be used as a scarecrow in the garden."

And they were indeed so utilised.

The whole dismal scene flitted before me, until I heard Walt Willis shout in my ear, "GHOODMINTON."

But I didn't play too well, I'm afraid.

I was calculating.

Later that night, much later, when the moon popped behind a big cloud, and the streetlights were dimmed, I pulled on an old pair of ghoodminton trousers, picked up my spade, and, keeping to the shadows trekked to the middle of my garden and dug.

Three feet down I came to the box, and eventually, blinded by perspiration, succeeded in getting the box onto the grass.

I cursed myself for not leaving them in the country when I had moved to Belfast three years previously. In the rural countryside, it isn't too unorthodox to have a Roman soldier as a door-stop, or a scarecrow, but in the metropolis of Northern Ireland....

Back in the house, I pried the lid off again. The only change in them appeared to be the original rust was itself covered with rust. With a certain amount of morbid enthusiasm, and after several hours effort, I cleaned them up somewhat, and gazed in frustration at these erstwhile wedding gifts.

One Roman soldier, a centurian, held aloft a short sword, and sported a brief toga. The other horror stuck out its chest proudly and bore above its head a banner bearing an undecipherable inscription. Both faces bore a post-Wetzel expression.

I wrapped them carefully in brown paper, and cradled them under the stairs for the night. If my luck was good, this was the last night I would be their unhappy possessor.

I paid off the taxi, pulled up my coat collar, gripped a Roman soldier under each arm, and pushed my way through the imposing portals of :-

McDONNELL AND MURPHY
AUCTIONEERS AND VALUERS

OUR MOTTO:- IF YOU MUST GET DONE GET DONE BY US.

A ferret-faced individual approached me warily, and jabbed a nicotine-stained finger up my left nostril.

"Two shillings and sixpence, take it or leave it," he gritted absently.

"I'll take it," I yelled.

Oh, bliss. Two whole lovely big silver shillings and an itty- bitty silver sixpence for two rusted soldiers. I was in the big time.

The auctioneer winced at my uncontrolled enthusiasm, as if he had made a too extravagant offer. I suppose he was impressed by my neat and tidy appearance. (The centurion under my left arm luckily hiding the black finger marks where Willis had gripped my coat as I left Oblique House one night when I hadn't purchased any of his prozines.)

Reluctantly giving me the money, the auctioneer jerked a thumb and a juvenile delinquent appeared and ripped the paper off, revealing my treasures. The poor boy was violently sick, but the auctioneer had drifted away as more and more people started to enter.

"The great auction is going to take place in ten minutes time," I heard someone announce.

Hmmmm.

Madeleine had told me she had picked up some good bargains at auctions....my luck had been brilliant so far...there might even be a good duper going cheap....

I edged to the back of the crowd, and watched carefully, trying to acquire the correct technique.

The sale progressed for some time, and, gradually, the auctioneer got closer to my late pig iron soldiery. To bide the time, I watched pityingly as an old man hobbled in. I admired the kindness of a young girl holding his arm. As they came closer, I saw it was George Charters being assisted by Peggy White.

GEORGE CHARTERS AND PEGGY WHITE????

Walt Willis, Madeleine and James White followed them in, chatting amicably.

Ghod. What strange quirk of fate had brought Irish Fandom together in an auctioneers shop?

Tucking the ends of my moustache under my collar, I tiptoed behind them, where they were talking in a huddle.

".....and I am sure John will invite us up to his new house, and the least we can do is to take a house-warming present when we go to see it, what do you think...?" I heard Madeleine say.

Good old Madeleine.

".....definitely get something to suit John's personality," continued Walt, "look, how about those two items the men are staggering about with now?"

I didn't need to look around. I knew what the next lot was. Even if I had been blindfolded, I would have known.

"...these superb looking statuettes," said the crook who had given me two and sixpence for them, "have a great historical background. Note the green mould in the cracks, and the deeply ingrained rust. These magnificent collector's pieces have come direct from the museum of a well known archeologist who has seen better times. Who said thirty shillings each?"

With an air of foreboding I slumped away as Madeleine held up her hand.

There was a pause. No one else had troubled to bid, in fact, at the sight of the Romans, half the crowd evaporated.

"Forty shillings each," I heard a gruff voice shout over my shoulder. An electric atmosphere settled over the room. The auctioneer breathed harder at this unexpected competition. So did I.

The other members of Irish Fandom had a little discussion.....I was careful to remain hidden from them.

"Fifty shillings," shouted Madeleine defiantly.

The gruff voiced chap behind me was silent.

Heck.

I tiptoed up to him.

"They're worth at least sixty shillings," I mouthed encouragingly. He seemed to consider, fumigating me with his bheer sodden breath the while.

"Sixty shillings each," he said eventually.

Irish Fandom huddled together again, and buzzed for a few seconds.

"Seventy shillings each," bleated Madeleine in a desperate sort of voice.

My man hesitated.

The auctioneer didn't.

"Who'll make it eighty shillings each?" challenged the auctioneer significantly.

I looked at my man.

He looked at me.

"You've got a black mark on your forehead," he breathed.

Instinctively I reached up to remove it.

"Sold to the gentleman with the bewildered expression putting his hand in the air," announced the auctioneer, banging his gavel triumphantly as I looked up at my hand waving about like a periscope.

It just couldn't be true.

But it was.

Later on, when I had supervised the reloading on to the taxi, I saw the bheer baited chap with the gruff voice go up to the auctioneer, and a few coins of the realm changed hands. Madeleine didn't mention to me that prompters were distributed in the crowd to encourage bidding. I had learned the fact the hard way.

I sat miserably in my den and surveyed my Romans.

What to do with them?

To even bury them in my garden again was still technically admitting ownership. It was difficult to know exactly what to do.

"John," whispered Diane round the door. (I specify 'whispered'. I think she was a little worried about my nervous state.) "...here's Walt and the rest of them with a present for our new home."

Friendship is the proudest of all human emotions. And the esprit de corps amongst us of Irish Fandom is a pure and precious thing. It shines triumphantly over every other aspect of our association. And as I trod the stairs to meet my comrades, I felt a surge of sentiment overpower me.

I opened the living-room door shyly, and looked expectantly at their radiant faces. Walt looked down coyly, and George bleated happily as Madeleine unwrapped the parcel.

"I'd like to say just a few words," said Walt said happily. "Madeleine has spent the last twenty four hours flitting from auction room to auction room looking for something that is YOU. A chap looking something like you, except for the gaunt expression, pipped Madeleine at the post for two beautiful statuettes. However, as you know, Madeleine although I say it myself, is particularly unrelenting. Going without food, and making extreme physical and mental sacrifices, she...has..obtained....these....four....glorious...examples...of...the....sculptors..art....one from each of us."

Excuse me for a moment whilst I stoke up the furnace. I

think three shovelfuls of coke should build up a pretty big temperature. After all, I'm a novice at this business....me and extreme forms of manual labour coming under the category of complete strangers.

Seriously, though, I got to thinking about it. Having six rusty Roman soldiers made of pig iron is pretty frustrating. Dammit, three more of the blasted things and I'd have a platoon of them, and the way things were shaping, it was quite possible that fate would steer the remainder of the legion in my direction.

I had to make a decision.

Setting up a blast furnace in the back garden seems to be a precedent but I feel that one has to use one's initiative.

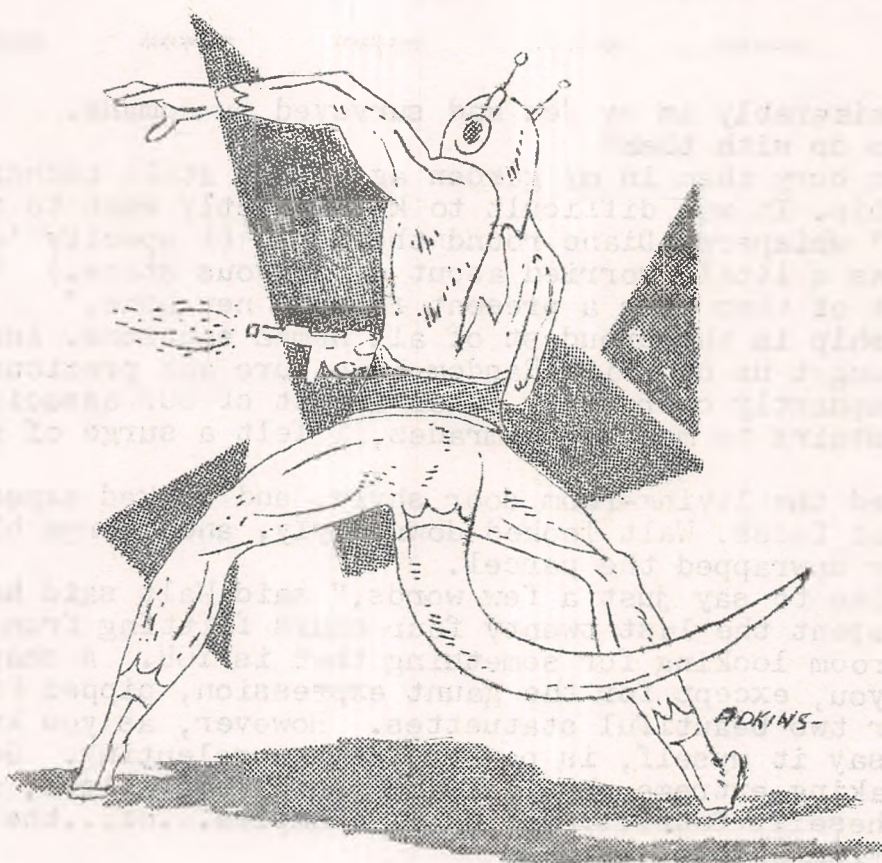
After all, trying to dispose of six pig iron militants covered in rust would seem to be an impossible task...but it should be easy to dispose of iron ingots.

Shouldn't it?

--John Berry

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Herts., England.



TWIG

Presents

DODD-MENTS

by Alan Dodd

The climax in visual science fiction can be at times very frustrating. In fact, in many cases, it is actually an anti-climax which is quite the opposite that the author or producer had in mind. In particular the ultimate appearance of a Bug Eyed Monster seldom lives up to all the build up that preceeded it. In radio and magazine form the appearance and actual shape of the monster is left to the imagination of the reader or listener. Each is allowed to create a satisfactory alien in his or her own imagination. In films and television, though, the creature itself must be produced for the viewers to actually see, and in how many cases does the monster live up to one's expectations?

Since there aren't any extra terrestrials on hand to play the necessary parts, the creation of monsters is left to the hands of the special effects men. Some of these have imagination at their command, some money and most with evidently neither.

Ignoring the highly paid film studio men who are on hand all of the time with almost unlimited resources of money to create everything from KING KONG to the giant ants in THEM, we are left with the less resourceful television special effects men with a small budget to produce the same effects the bigger men are expected to.

Take Saturday evening on the British Commercial Television station for instance. Excluding the mass production of The Adventures of Sir Lancelot, The Errol Flynn Theatre, The Buccaneers and the inevitable Wyatt Earp (brave, courageous and truuuuu...) there is always a half hour long science fiction serial.

The first one shown was a conventional "mad-scientist" theme combined with a matter transmitter which could send creatures back to a time planet in "The Secret of Planet X." The story, itself, was a little better than the unfortunate title and featured one of the most realistic prehistoric ape-men I have seen for a long time. He, a mere fugitive human returned from the dread planet, was not, however, the main villain. This honour was reserved for a predatory bloodsucking brain which emanated evil from the centre of the transmitter cabinet in much the same manner of DONOVAN'S BRAIN. Here the effects men cheated. Since evidently they didn't have a brain.

So -- they didn't show a brain. Instead, various actors were shown in close-up with expressions of "Arrgghh!" on their faces as they gazed upon IT, with what one presumed at the time to be looks of unspeakable horror.

Such crude cheating as this could not be tried with the following serial, that great classic -- "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde" -- a version so remarkably good that I feel sure if Robert Louis Stevenson had been alive he would have wholeheartedly approved. Since the villain appears on the screen for at least half of the serial which, like all of them shown, were 'live' and not filmed, it necessitated some pretty quick change work from Jekyll to the bestial Hyde. This was done chiefly by the fitting of a foam rubber facial mask onto the actor concerned.

But, they were slow in fading out the camera in one sequence and the special effects man, mask in plain view of all the audience, was seen. Alas, alak, sniff.

But it is the build up and climax of the third serial that I am more concerned with this time. This serial introduced to us a mysterious outerspace alien who made itself known with a strange

melting mist, a noise like a thousand klaxon horns and the garish name of the TROLLENBERG TERROR.

The Trollenberg itself was a mountain in the Alps perpetually enshrouded in mist and missing persons. Usually about sixteen a month was its average appetite.

In a hotel observatory at varying distances from the mountain are a group of characters who have come to investigate the disappearances. It is around these people that the alien evolves its net of plotwork. The hero, the heroine, her telepathic sister that the alien contacts, various odd astronomers, scientists and doctors complete the cast, along with an American U.F.O. expert played by an Irish actor with a phoney American accent, pretending to be a Swiss bartender, if you can imagine such an unlikely combination.

The sister disappears and in an observation hut on the Trollenberg, a scientist vanishes and a vacuum flask is found wrenched asunder by a creature who didn't know that it could be unscrewed. The second scientist -- also evidently unscrewable -- is found torn apart, too, in the same manner but with considerably less tidiness.

The first scientist returns to the hotel in the control of the alien and runs amok to kill off various minor characters all the while wearing a maniacal idiot grin, a sure sign that he has been "infested."

In the latter sequences of the serial the alien attacks the hotel and it is not until then that you realise it is not a single alien called EXides -- but hordes of them. And what puny looking creatures they are. Size is indefinable since they could be large models photographed from long shot in which the action takes place, or small models closeup. The actors and alien are never shown in the same picture so it is impossible to determine whether they might be the size of a house or as small as a sponge.

Shape? Well, considering the camera went out of focus everytime it looked at the alien I think I made out the shape quite well. A hybrid cross between an octopus, a haggis and a rampant garden hose with two very weary tentacles so feeble they had to be supported by threads of cotton that all could see. It curled up and died when the contents of the bottles in one room were thrown at it. One of the bottles contained the chemical strong enough to kill this telepathically powerful alien. But which bottle? Which chemical? There are so many broken bottles that analysis is out of the question.

Then one bright spark realises that the room is a taxidermists backroom and that the chemicals used are the solvents used in preparing the birds and animals prior to stuffing. A fleet of military planes is ordered up to bomb the Trollenberg, but (naturally) it seems they will arrive too late.

So a group of local crop-spraying planes which appears to be present --though why they should be needed near the Alps is beyond me. These planes--like the 7th Cavalry arrive just in time as the TT is making its final attack preceeded by suicide squads onto the hotel and observatory followed by violent telepathic storms, creeping mist and a hooting like a thousand dyspeptic owls.

The sister? She returned all right. But the solvent got her, too. You mean, that pile of snow on the step is.....?

Yes, friend -- that's exactly what I mean.

--Alan Dodd

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TWIG is published by Guy Terwilleger and emanates from 1412 Albright St. Boise, Idaho.

SHANGRI-LA

Presents

I Really Don't Believe It...

by Len G. Moffatt

and no one, by Foo, is going to make me believe it! I'm sitting here, locked in Forry's garage, surrounded by vast quantities of stf books and mags and pics--and a large cardboard statuette of Marlene Deitrich. The way I feel right now, she's the only thing in here worth looking at. I'm completely disgusted with stf, fantasy, and anything fannish. A joke is a joke, and I used to like jokes and gags and fannish humor--but this thing has gone too damned far.

Fooy on Hugo Gernsback! There--I wrote it, and I'm glad. (Glad I found this old typer out here too) If anything drastic does happen to me --and I really don't believe it will happen--but IF anything does..Well, maybe I can leave this as a message or a warning...a revelation of what a stupid bunch of jerks fans can be--when they let their so-called sense of humor drive them to extremes.

Imagine...locking me in here, and telling me all that crud about aliens....and 1958....Did they stay awake nights thinking up the gag? I'll say this for them: they certainly plotted out well...

Fooy on Campbell and his psi stuff....that's partly the basis for their gag....I always thought I could take a joke as well as the next guybut this is too much....

It all started (for me) with the Invitation. A gathering at Ackerman's place. Anna, Rick and I drove over in Rick's car. Rick won't let me drive. Anna says she doesn't feel well enough to drive, and they both act kind of funny. Unusual, that is. They hardly talk to me and after a while I give up trying to make conversation. Rick takes the freeway, and drives like a demon. They sure worked hard at building up a feeling of foreboding. But I pretended to ignore it.

When we arrived, only a few persons were present. That was odd too for a gathering at Forry's usually means that upwards of 50 persons will be present. No refreshments either. They just sat around and looked at me. I didn't know what I was expected to do, so I didn't do anything. I was dying with curiosity, but I refused to "bite." Conversations were forced and dull. I thought I knew everyone there, until I noticed the stranger. Except he didn't look strange. Something familiar about him. Not a bad looking guy, slim, about my heighth. I wondered why Forry or Wendy hadn't introduced him. Prob'ly assumed we all knew the guy. Maybe I had met him before. He certainly looked like someone I should know, but I decided to take a chance on being embarrassed and walked over to where he was standing beside the piano.

"I'm Len Moffatt," I said, sticking out my hand. "I don't think we've met..."

"I know who you are," he said, ignoring my hand. "Who you really are..." His voice, more than what he said, sent little chills down my spine. They didn't have strength enough to work their way back up. Just little chills. His voice sounded almost exactly like mine. I studied him a bit, somewhat embarrassed, not knowing what to say in reply. Yes, he did resemble me quite a bit, including the moustache and glass-

es. He wore a cheap suit and a torn shirt, but otherwise we might have been mistaken for each other. I began to catch on.

"So this is the gag," I laughed. "Who are you anyway?"

"I'm Len Moffatt," he said. "The real Len Moffatt. You know what you are so we may as well stop the pretense and get down to cases. Grab him, boys!"

I was grabbed, rather violently, by Stan Woolston and Paul Turner. "Don't let the get away!" snarled Sneary. This shocked me more than the roughhouse tactics. Rick rarely swears in the presence of ladies.

"OK," I grinned, showing I could take a joke. "What's the gag?"

"You get gagged, if you don't keep quiet and listen," said the stranger. You know why I'm here. Surprised that I escaped and came back to claim what's mine, aren't you? I wouldn't have dared go this far with it, I would have stayed in hiding after my escape, but my friends here have a way to take care of you and your masters..."

"My masters?"

"Shut up, you fake! You stinking android!"

"Say," I said brightly. "Is this being taped? Might make a good show to play at a LASFS meeting or the next Westercon. Only trouble is-- I feel completely unrehearsed."

"Oh, come off it," snapped Anna. "We've had enough of your fakery. I know you're not my husband. I'm trying not to be resentful against you personally, because I know you are just a tool for them. But don't try to tell us you are ignorant of what's happening here. Don't play innocent. We have you now, and since we can't go to the authorities..."

"Why not?" I grinned.

"You know why not," said Forry, vehemently. (This was the biggest shocker of them all. Forry, burning up with anger and loathing. I hadn't seen him that way since the feuds in the old days of fandom.) "No one would believe us, and the only way to prove you're not a real human is to have you taken apart..."

"And that prob'ly wouldn't do any good," said the stranger. "They prob'ly duplicated all of the interior organs too, and although that's not what makes him tick, it prob'ly looks like the organs are really working. They are so far beyond us in science and invention...well, it's almost unbelievable."

"It sure is," I said. "But when do we get to the punch line? I hate to say this, lads, but you're hurting my arms. Let's not play this too realistic."

Sneary walked up to me and gave me a long look. I waggled my brows at him. It didn't get a smile. "Maybe he doesn't know..." said Rick slowly. "Maybe they've fixed him so he really thinks and believes he is Len."

"Maybe," said the stranger. "But what difference does it make? I've proven that I'm the real Moiffatt, that he is an imposter, that his body contains a gimmick that'll blow Los Angeles to hell, and that it's up to us to destroy him and them. You all said you had a way to do it; let's not waste any more time..."

"Just a minute, buddy!" I interrupted. "What proof do you have? I've known most of the people here for over ten years. If this is a contest to test my memory, I can recount fanciful history as far back as 1939 and give you more detailed accounts of LA fandom for the past ten years. Is that the game we're playing?"

"You didn't know about South Gate in '58!" said Rick, accusingly. "They slipped up, which shows they're not entirely perfect, and that didn't get into your memory bank. Everything else was there, everything we could think of. Anna and I have been testing you for days--ever since Len showed up at my place and bowled me over with his revelation. He knew about '58...and everything else, at least up until the time he was taken and replaced by you--in September..."

"Wait a minute," I said. "I got the picture now. I remember you asking me just a few days ago what ideas I had for South Gate in '58. Of course I don't know anything about it. Neither did anyone else until you or Stan or someone rigged up this gag. Anyway, if you want to be serious anyone knows that the idea of a world convention in South Gate is perfectly ridiculous."

"That proves it isn't Len!" roared Woolston. Boy, were they hamming it up. Woolston never roars. Most soft spoken man for his size I know.

"Lock him in the garage," suggested Turner.

"But my collection..." complained Forry.

"Only safe place to put him," said my so-called other self. "Anyway the way we plan to dispose of him won't harm your collection. Might get a little blood on a few mags, but..."

"Oh well," shrugged Anna. "It isn't real blood."

I had to laugh. The hammier they got, the funnier it seemed. Before I could say or do anything more, they hauled me outside and locked me in here. So here we are, me and Marlene, and hundreds of mags, and a beat-up typer, waiting for the next stage of this crazy practical joke. Sooner or later, they will have to let me out of here. I'm getting pretty hungry, that's for sure. I had expected to eat at Forry's...

I don't know how much time has passed, as I don't wear a watch. Must have been two hours anyway. But just a minute ago the garage door opened and some of them came in to stare at me. I decided to play it cool and am going on with my typing. I don't think it's so funny anymore. I get irritable when I'm hungry. There they stand...Anna, Rick, Stan, Forry, Paul, Barney...oh hell, why list them all...why give them ego-boo for a silly trick like this...maybe now they are too embarrassed to speak...the stranger is with them...he's helping Stan hold some kind of a hok-ed up little gadget....right out of a cheap sf film...I just asked them why they didn't plug it in and get it over with...well now, it seems it is powered by their minds...by the intensity of their great thoughts.... what happens now? A squirt of water in my face, assuming it is a glorified water pistol? A puff of powder in my nose? A sudden bang to make me jump? I asked them all this as I typed and they say, no, it is silent and will work instantly and I won't feel a thing...they say it will reverse the bomb thing I carry inside me...that my body will dissolve, and that the bomb will be teleported to the alien ship...hovering near Earth, where it will explode and destroy the last of a great but evil race...seems the "real Len" stole some of their know-how

before he escaped...I should have brought a shovel with me; it's getting pretty deep in here now...Rick just said they'd have to destroy whatever I was writing, but my counterpart said no, he would take it and claim it as his own piece of fiction....

"Maybe I can use it in Shaggy," said Turner....

"This is a hell of a way to get someone to write something for a fanzine," I cracked.

I just asked them where we were going to eat or did Forry have something? "Let's get it over with," said Forry.

They are raising their arms now, and staring at me as though in deep concentration...except for the stranger and Stan who are slowly turning something on the gadget... Everyone is silent and looking like characters out of a Grade C suspense movie.... I think I'll stop writing, and get up and walk out to the car...break this thing up before it gets any sillier, if that's possible... Forry just broke the silence: "Are you sure he won't dribble all over my mags?" he asks...Anna shushes him, and they all begin to stare at me again.

Of all the silly, stupid, ridicul

--Len Moffatt

Reprinted from SHANGRI-LA.

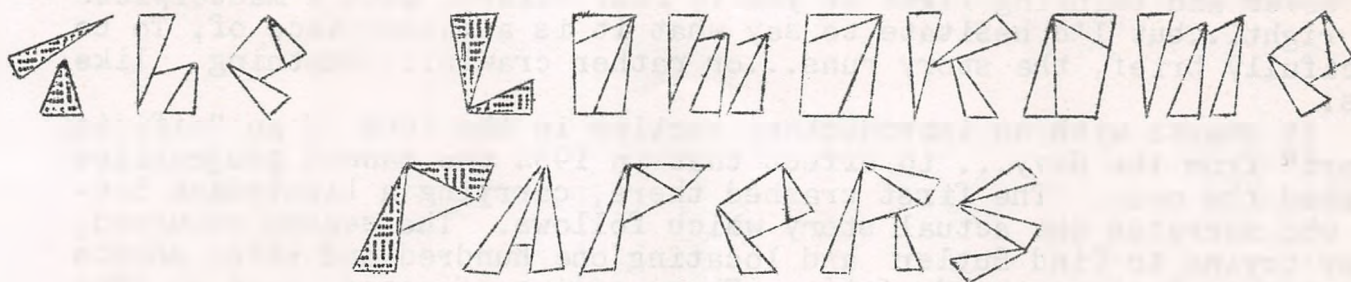
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(NOTE: At the time "I Don't Believe It..." was published, Paul Turner was the editor of SHAGGY.)



S1630

Presents



THE LOMOKOME PAPERS

by Robert Bloch

I approached "The Lomokome Papers" with high hopes. To begin with I am always delighted when a science fiction or fantasy yarn finds a place for itself in a big, general-circulation magazine. I think it's good advertising for the field and can help attract readers. Secondly, the fact that the story was by Herman Wouk carried a certain amount of general prestige value. Wouk has made a big name for himself and a big buck. Ordinary readers unacquainted with science fiction might be impressed by the fact that a man like Wouk would choose to write in the medium.

When Colliers ran the story, they even went so far as to put a picture of Herman Wouk on the cover, in full color, yet. In the background was a large blowup of the moon's surface. In the foreground, Herman in the pose of a deep thinker. In case you never saw this cover he looked something like Bill Hamling sitting down and starting to think up an editorial.

Well, I admit, this cover bothered me a little. Then, when I turned to the inside pages and discovered those little notes about authors, I read that "The Lomokome Papers" wasn't exactly a new effort. It seems the manuscript had been lying around unpublished for quite a few years. But one day when Herman was cleaning house, he discovered it someplace. . . lining the bottom of a bird-cage, or something like that. And he sort of tidied it up a bit and sent it out, and Colliers was delighted because here was a real gem.

By the time I finished reading this, I was perhaps a trifle hesitant. I know how quickly a best-selling author can start palming off his old rejects on editors. One has only to stop and remember how, after selling The Chinese Doll, Wilson Tucker was able to unload about twelve more dud books on the unsuspecting publishers. But on the other hand, I reasoned, maybe Wouk's story had been unpublished previously merely because it was science fiction and the editors had a prejudice against it. So I read "The Lomokome Papers."

Now I am not by any means a model citizen. I may very easily, at some future date, commit some crime or misdemeanor. I may get into a lot of trouble and perhaps be punished and ostracized. But if that ever happens, and you have any reason to condemn me, all I ask of you is one thing. Please stop and remember that I read "The Lomokome Papers." And no matter what I do, this has been punishment enough.

I have read bad books in my time. I have read hack-work and slop and crudzines, and even some issues of Destiny. But I have never, I repeat, never, read anything that pretended to be so much and was so little as "The Lomokome Papers."

That's the point, if any. It isn't that one could not find worse science fiction, word-for-word, if one wanted to browse through old pulps of the 1920's and come up with some horrible examples of bem and mad scientist yarns. But few of these ancient pulp

thrillers made any pretension of being anything else than just that. On the other hand, here is one of America's top-name authors, sitting on the cover and thinking right at you in four colors, with a masterpiece all right...but I'd hesitate to say what it is a masterpiece of. To be mercifully brief, the story runs...or rather crawls...something like this.

It starts with an introductory section in the form of an "official report" from the Navy... to effect that in 1954 two manned projectiles reached the moon. The first crashed there, carrying a Lieutenant Butler who narrates the actual story which follows. The second returned, after trying to find Butler and locating one hundred and seven sheets of notes in Butler's handwriting. These series of notes make up "The Lomokome Papers."

As is usual in these yarns -- you have read them a hundred times and so, apparently, has Herman Wouk -- the so-called report claims to disbelieve the story -- and the story itself is supposed to convince the reader that it's true anyway. This is a great, little, original gimmick, isn't it? Unless you happened to have read H. P. Lovecraft twenty-five years ago, or H. G. Wells fifty years ago. The "report" infers that Lt. Butler, the narrator of the story, was writing after falling into a crater and using up his oxygen supply, and that he was delirious. Then Wouk goes into the story and tries to prove his narrator was delirious.

The so-called story in note form begins very conveniently in mid-air. Butler has arrived on the moon. (Wouk never tells us how he got there, and thus doesn't have to bother making it convincing.) Butler has met the natives (again we are never told how) and has made friends with them (we are never told how) and has somehow been taught their language. These natives -- now get this -- live in caves under the moon's surface. There's a jim-dandy original idea, isn't it? I wonder how long you would have to sit with hand on forehead before you could think up a novel notion like this!

Wait, there's more to come. Our hero lives with a wise old scientist named Vove, and his beautiful daughter, Vovone. How about that, now? A wise old scientist and his beautiful daughter. And -- dig this, cats -- their skin is green! So help me, it's green! Moon-people with green skin. This guy Herman is what I call a real original-thinker type genius.

Well, after another break in the narrative -- so Herman could do some more thinking with his finger on his forehead or somewhere -- we get another bit. The moon people live in caves illuminated by orange light and they wear orange robes and they have a big Central Cavern to meet in. Herman doesn't say if they have bug eyes or not...but outside of that he doesn't miss a trick. Except, perhaps, to explain things through extrapolation. We do learn that the hero has been taught the language, and is a guest, and that these people "pipe sunlight into their homes as we pipe water" -- that's a direct quote so don't blame me -- and use a system of reflector relays. Presumably straight out of an old Tom Swift book.

We also learn that these Lomokians are actually colonists from---oops, can't tell you that, because Author Wouk breaks off his narrative again here. Too much work trying to figure out where his human-oid lunarians come from.

When he resumes his story, the scientist Vove has been arrested and the hero lives somewhere else. Wouk now rambles on about the two moon nations--the Lomokome and the Lomadine, and their history. They fought a lot of wars with a fissionable nitrogen cloud as a weapon. The Lomokome government is based on a social system of Hydrogenism and the Lomadine order is based on Suggestionism. **These systems** are briefly described but never developed.

Then comes some excerpts from the Book of Ctuzelawis, the

wise man who invented the Law of Reasonable War. This quotation , in pseudo-Biblical language, is a satire, a statement on how to wage war without destroying a nation. And it is pretty good stuff, too, what there is of it, about the equivalent of a lengthy satirical article such as you might find in a serious constructive fanzine such as Fritz Leiber's New Purposes. Indirectly, by reading it, we discover why the scientist Vove must die on Death Day--as a leader of his people selected as a martyr.

Then comes another fragment and we learn that Vove, his beautiful daughter , and the narrator plan to escape Death Day and get to the crashed projectile nine hundred miles away on the moon's surface. They do this in the next fragment without all of that messy business of plotting and action and dialogue that clutters up the average story -- they just plain do it, in some kind of machines. No trouble at all.

And in the next fragment they are apparently captured while trying to repair the projectile and there the narrative ends.

Very simple. But my question is: how simple can you get?

A word about that satire on war, now. I've already heard several people compare it to the work of Jonathan Swift. Unfortunately , the comparison just doesn't hold. Consider Gulliver's Travels for a moment. There is a book...in fact, four books. In them, Swift tells a story, a real story, so real that it still stands up today in narrative form, or in an adaptation for children without the satirical element. And the satirical element itself is carefully woven into a plot. There is actual characterization present.

Whereas in "The Lomokome Papers" we find nothing but a satirical section encapsulated in one of the poorest excuses for a story ever presented. Every time Wouk has to face a problem of Who, What, Where, or Why --- problems which are faced daily and must be faced by any hack writer who wants to sell for a $\frac{1}{2}\phi$ a word market -- he merely ducks the issue by breaking off his "fragment." His so-called setting and so-called characters are borrowed from the most ancient pulps and there isn't the slightest effort made at actual description or actual characterization.

This is lazy man's writing. I contend that "The Lomokome Papers" is not a novel , not a novelette -- merely a disorganized jumble that couldn't sell to the worst market in the field if it didn't have a big name attached to it.

Now maybe this is envy , it might well be. But by any critical standard, there's absolutely no excuse for this thing except the satirical element. And that is poorly injected. Worse, I don't even believe it's honest. Wouk, in the Colliers notes, is reported as saying he originally planned to write a play about the Bomb , which appeared in 1949 in New York and -- although Wouk doesn't mention it -- failed. Probably a case of all Wouk and no play. He then took the same idea, developed it as a fantasy , but...he says...put it aside because the Korean War came along and he did not want to put out any anti-war stuff because he happened to "believe" in the Korean War. So here's a guy writing a satire which has no reason or excuse for existence except its anti-war sentiment...and he sets it aside because a war comes along and he "believes" in that war. Maybe I'm dense , but I just don't get this kind of double-thinking. And it certainly destroys the "value" of the satire for me.

But to me the worst crime of all , as it applies to the science fiction field , is that Wouk has wittingly or unwittingly smeared us again. A straight science fiction story appears only on rare occasions in a big general magazine like Colliers. When it does , presumably it will be read by several million people who don't generally read science fiction. If it's a good job, it might well serve to interest a lot of potential readers in the field. And when it bears a big name--like Wouk's--it presumably represents "the best" of it's

kind to readers unfamiliar with science fiction. In this case, I'd venture to say that a good three-fourths of the Colliers readers never got beyond the second page of "The Lomokome Papers" before throwing it down and reaching for the TV dial. The muddled writing, the tedious passages, the hackneyed concepts, the pretentious and self-conscious style probably discouraged them completely. "If THIS is what science fiction is supposed to be...if one of the biggest best-selling writers in the country can't make it any more interesting than THAT...then I sure ain't gonna read no more science fiction no how." That's the kind of reader reaction "The Lomokome Papers" would generally inspire. Not only does it discourage the printing of further science fiction material in general magazines...it also keeps potential readers away from the regular science fiction magazines themselves.

The anti-war satire, while clever in itself, is no excuse for the sloppy, rambling format which passes as a "novel." Presented as a straight short essay, it could find a logical place in magazine pages. But it doesn't belong in a so-called narrative of this sort any more than it belongs in Marjorie Morningstar.

The contrast between this work and something like 1984 can be measured only in astronomical figures. Let's take some of the elements which I personally think are necessary for good science fiction and see how the two books stack up in terms of them.

First of all, credibility. It's my notion that you simply cannot have a good science fiction story without credibility. Granted that the reader must bring to his reading what Coleridge calls "the willing suspension of disbelief", it's still up to the author to help him. . . even in so-called "main-stream literature." If the science fiction writer doesn't give his work credibility, the result is not science fiction but fantasy. And even there, the best fantasy makes an effort to be convincing. . .or at least logical within its established frame of reference.

In terms of credibility, 1984 is a masterful job. You may not like the picture of the world that Orwell paints, but he shows it to you in convincing detail.

As for "The Lomokome Papers", here we find no attempt made to convince the reader--except the trite old gag about pretending the story is a part of an official report. Even if we accept this tired premise the result is wholly unconvincing. The narrator is on the moon presumably as a Navy observer on active duty. Does he take notes on what he sees--describe the flora, the fauna, the topography, the atmosphere?

Does he sound like a man on official business interested in the moon as a potential military base or colony? Does he speak of the inhabitants in terms of their actions and reactions, their relationship to human or known life-forms? Not a bit. He is a most unconvincing and unlikely narrator. And of course, the events he does narrate are equally sketchy and unconvincing. There is little or no motivation offered for anything that happens.

Now, we come to characterization. Again, it is an important element -- except in a few cases where science fiction is offered as pseudo-history, as is the case of Arthur C. Clarke's Childhood's End or Stapledon's Last and First Men. But in a story involving a protagonist and his relationships with others, it's very definitely necessary to get to know that protagonist and to know something about the people who are allied with him or oppose him. In 1984, Orwell has given a vivid picture of Winston Smith...of O'Brien, and of Julia. And he's done it in the third person. In "The Lomokome Papers", Wouk has chosen a first person narration. . . an even more intimate method of giving the reader an insight into the thoughts and personality of the hero. What

do we learn about Lieutenant Butler? Absolutely nothing, except his name. There isn't the faintest clue as to what type of a man he is, or why he behaves as he does. In one paragraph, describing

describing the girl Vovone, he admits he likes the athletic type of female...and that's all. Similarly, we don't find out anything about the wise old scientist or his charming daughter. The crudest comic book at least attempts to give the reader some stereotype as a substitute for individual characterization. Wouk gives nothing. There is no reason for the reader to identify with anyone in the story, no reason for him to care what happens. Maybe this is a good thing because not too much happens.

Now we come to continuity. By this I mean the construction of the story -- the plot, the story-line. In 1984, the story is so well integrated with the theme that its emergence seems almost inevitable, step by step. Everything ties in, cause is followed by effect. In "The Lomokome Papers", there's just a fragmentary mishmash -- any time Wouk has to face the problem of a plot, any time he has to present action or reaction, he just ducks it and rambles on into another episode. He backtracks amateurishly again and again to explain how he happens to be writing something which has no relationship with what went before. And he thereby cheats the reader.

Finally, there is creativity. That is to say, the imaginative, evocative element every writer must put into his work to make it distinctive, individual, significant. . . even when you water these terms down to apply them to pulp work. This is the vital spark. In 1984, creativity consists of vividly portraying a whole extrapolated civilization, logically tracing the development of certain totalitarian tendencies to their inevitable conclusion, granted the necessary circumstances. The whole idea of Big Brother, of the double-think world complete with ideology and vocabulary, stems from Orwell's creativity. What does Wouk's creativity give us? The wise old scientist and his daughter -- with green skins -- living in caverns under the moon. Period. Plus his satire. The difference between Orwell's satire and Wouk's is that Orwell made a book out of it and Wouk just makes a satire sandwich -- a little hunk of meat between two of the stalest and mouldiest pieces of crummy old bread that were ever baked in the Gernsback ovens of 1926.

By the way, it's perhaps interesting to note two things regarding Wouk's work as a whole. One critic, in discussing 1984, tried to relate Orwell's work to his actual personal psychology. I've never seen this attempted with Wouk, but I'd like to take a crack at it. If we ignore Aurora Dawn and City Boy, his early efforts, and concentrate on his popular successes, The Caine Mutiny and Marjorie Morningstar, it's at once self-evident that Wouk has two fixed beliefs: (1) So-called "intellectuals" are no damned good and (2) the Law is the real Authority. In The Caine Mutiny, you may remember, the villain is not Queeg but the book-writing Lieutenant who stirs up the trouble. And the lawyer who wins the trial and saves Willie Keith is the real hero who at the end vindicates Queeg and the Navy, not because they are necessarily "right" but because both Queeg's actions as captain and the Navy's rulings regarding mutiny are a part of established law.

In Marjorie Morningstar, we find the villain, Noel Airman, is another one of those nasty "intellectual" types--which, according to the way Wouk likes to load his argument, are always weaklings and poseurs. And Marjorie ends up by marrying (of all things) a lawyer. Meanwhile, her mother lays down the law to her and there is a general attempt throughout the book to posit the notion that the "moral law" and the religious "laws" of Judaism are Authority.

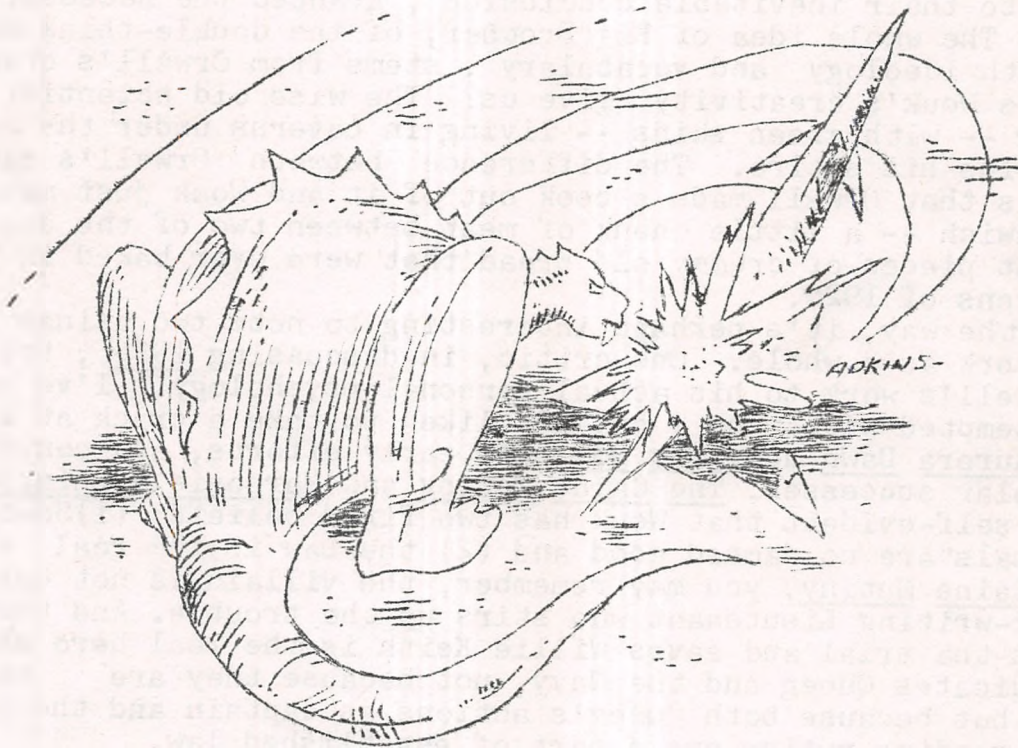
At first glance it is hard to see this pattern, punishment for the so-called "intellectual" and veneration for the so-called "law" in the jumbled confusion of "The Lomokome Papers." Until we suddenly realize that the whole thing is merely a crude restatement of the old Wouk theme. The narrator of the book is himself a writer. He is officially branded by the Navy report in the foreward as a crazy,

mixed-up kid and he presumably is destroyed in the end. And the heart of the book, the satire on war, is bluntly presented as the Law of Reasonable War. So here it is again and it raises the question what happened to Herman Wouk that makes him so bitter against so-called "intellectuals" and that makes him so determined to uphold the status-quo in the form of "laws" and religious codes? It's an interesting question.

--Robert Bloch

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SIGBO is the product of Jerry DeMuth who resides at 3223 Ernst St., Franklin Park, Illinois.



HYPHEN

Presents

RUSH REPORT RE PORTRUSH

by Bob Shaw

JOHN BERRY'S PORTRUSH adventure in HYPHEN set me thinking of the first time I saw that little resort. It was during that period of my life when I was an unwanted member of the Boy's Brigade, and the Company went there for summer camp one year.

A series of minor disasters with tents and equipment had inspired in the Company Officers a deeply rooted distaste for the great outdoors, and by the time I joined, the word "camping" had come to denote taking over a cheap boardinghouse for a week. The adventurous souls who had decided to make the trip in this particular year mustered in the railway station one grey, drizzly, Saturday morning. The rain was coming down in leisurely, vertical lines and looked as though it could stay that way indefinitely.

Things began to go wrong for me almost immediately.

One of the lieutenants hated me. His name was Johnny and he was a large beefy young man with a round red face and humourless little eyes. He hated me because at that particular time I had a peculiar gasping sort of laugh which I was totally unable to control, and which sometimes reduced me to the point where I had to lie down to recover my power of breathing. I think he felt that this was bad for discipline.

I saw Johnny working his way down the line (we were queued at the barrier) collecting our money so that we wouldn't lose it. My parents had warned me that I was getting only a certain amount of holiday money and that I had better conserve it if I wanted to have enough for the camp. I had ignored the warning and they had remained firm, --with the result that I had slightly less than a pound with me. Some of the others had ten times that.

When Johnny asked me for my cash I said, no. I didn't want to let him know my weak financial position. The part of his neck that bulged over his collar turned a deeper red. He lifted his gaze upwards to the sooty trusses and rain-washed skylights of the station and stood like that for a moment. After a time he said, "Why?"

I didn't know what to say. I glanced wildly around me for succour and saw only my friend McCreedy moving away from us towards the barrier. McCreedy was a thin pale youth who had only been drawn to me by the fact that I was more persecuted in the Company than he. By a strange coincidence he too was having a difficult period as far as laughing was concerned. He was in a sort of "silent heave" stage and his efforts to control this made his face twitch in a ghastly manner.

I could see from the convulsions of McCreedy's body and the spasmodic movement of his ears that he had seen me on the spot and the sight had brought on one of his attacks. To my horror, I felt my own lungs give a sympathetic squeeze and a preliminary sob escaped my lips.

Johnny recognized the danger signs. "Shaw," he gritted murderously, "I hope you're not going to start."

"Hhawnngghhh! Hhawnngghhh!" I said weakly, trying to ignore McCreedy who was now an alarming purple colour and twitching from head to foot like a veteran of chorea. The situation was saved by Johnny noticing that the Company had moved through the barrier and was board-

ing the train. He gave me a threatening-pleading-reproachful look, grabbed his bags and ran away. I could see that he was worried about how his holiday was going to turn out.

At Portrush we emerged from the body-warmed, clammy interior of the carriage (all the Privates had managed to squeeze into one section thus making it impossible for an N.C.O. to travel with us) into the same kind of light, persistent rain. We made a rough formation and marched off to the digs lugging our cases. I still remember that cheerful march vividly --jogging along through the grey, spotless rain-scoured streets; smelling linseed oil from cricket bats, seeing muddy football boots dangling from rucksacks, being slapped with wet inner-tubes which some of us had brought to use as water-wings.

We reached the boarding house, settled in, made gleeful discoveries about who was in the same room with whom, and had our first meal. When the meal was over we went out and found that the rain had stopped.

I was lounging around the entrance when a fellow called Wishart approached me. "Let's go down to the fun fair," he said. I was quite flattered, because Wishart was one of the leading members of the Company, but I was chary about starting to squander my little stock of cash so soon.

"I don't know if I can," I hedged. "My money....."

"Never worry about money. I've got plenty here," he said. "Let's go."

This was great! I went with him to Barry's where we rode on dodgems, shot rifles, raced in little racing cars, ate ice cream, fed the slot machines, and, in general, had a good time. When we got back to the digs at about eleven I went to my room where I played "Monopoly" with McCreedy and another unfortunate called Knox. I even did well at "Monopoly" which was unusual for me as I had a fatal weakness for buying cheap property with low returns.

The game had been in progress for about half an hour when there was a knock at the door and Wishart came in.

"Welcome, kind and noble Wishart," I blabbered loudly. "Wilt thou sit with us and share our humble repast?" McCreedy and Knox looked at me admiringly--I was Wishart's friend. I was a success.

Wishart produced a piece of paper, handed it to me and said: "There's a list of all the things we did down at Barry's. You owe me eight bob."

This was about half my stock. I mustered a trembling smile and gave him his money then went back to Monopoly. I got put out of the game and went to bed. I felt sick.

Next day things were fairly quiet. I kept out of Johnny's way and managed to reach bedtime without losing any more cash. On Monday morning the stamp-collecting fiend descended on me. "I've discovered a great shop," he told me. "Come on down and see the stamps." I went and looked them over, said they were very nice and that I was sorry I couldn't buy any as it would leave me broke.

The friend told me reproachfully that he was going to spend all his money on them, and that a real collector was prepared to give his all to the cause. I felt ashamed. Here was I trying to conserve a few miserable shillings when the fiend and I could be sharing our hobby, talking, going for long walks during which we could monkey with our stamps and in general act like a couple of Gibbons.

I spent all my remaining cash with the exception of two shillings which I felt might see me through any emergency which should crop up. It cropped up about ten minutes later. When we left the shop the fiend said, "I think I'll go and buy some presents and stuff to take home, then I'll have a feed."

"But you spent all your money on stamps," I reminded him.

"That was all my stamp money. I still have my holiday money." He set off briskly in the direction of Woolworths.

I tottered after him, tugging his sleeve. "Wait a minute," I pleaded. "Are we not going to go on long walks talking about stamps an' albums an' postmarks an' triang...."

"Are you mad?" he said, shaking my grip off. "I can talk stamps any time. Right now I'm on holiday." He quickened his pace and left me standing in the street wondering who it was up there didn't like me. I went back to the digs and sat on the front step trying to budget for the next six days with 24 pennies. Finally I got an idea.

I went and found Knox. "Knoxy," I said, "How about going up the town and buying a fishing line and hooks? Then we can have fun all week and it won't cost anything."

Knoxy's long gloomy face reflected the mental turmoil my proposal had engendered inside his untidy head. He didn't like fishing, but he liked it better than spending money,--and, after all, fishing would not be too bad with company.

We bought the lines, took them back to the boarding house and met the bunch on their way to the beach for a pre-lunch swim. This was another good way to enjoy one's self...and free too. Knoxy and I grabbed our swim trunks and went along. We stayed in the water longer than anybody else -- it didn't cost anything.

When it came near lunch-time, Knoxy and I staggered out of the breakers onto the bright sand and went for our clothes. All the stuff had been piled in a promiscuous heap and it seemed reasonable to assume that when all the others removed their stuff ours would be left.

That was not exactly the way things worked out. Knoxy got dressed all right but when I looked for my nice new shoes there was only a pair of cracked gaping things which looked as though they had kicked stones all the way round Ireland ten or twenty years before.

"Knoxy," I said, "somebody has stolen my good shoes."

Knoxy was enraged at the treatment which some unknown had meted out to his new friend. "The rat," he gritted. "Let's teach him a lesson. Let's destroy his shoes. That'll teach him." Before I could begin a refutation of his logic he seized the shoes, methodically broke the laces into tiny pieces, threw the shoes into a puddle, tramped them into the wetness stuffed them with sand and pebbles and then buried them.

"Yow!" Knoxy said. "That'll teach him!"

It was while he was brushing the sand out of his trouser cuffs that I noticed something.

"Knoxy," I said. "Give me my shoes."

The events of the next minute are not suitable for detailed description ---Knoxy's realization of the situation, his frantic scrabbling in the sand for his shoes, his reluctance to return mine, his angry accusations

....

I spent most of that week fishing in Portrush harbour -- alone.

When Friday rolled around I was beginning to believe that I was going to escape without any more trouble. I was recovering pretty well from a sun-roasted back and I had hardly seen Johnny at all. In fact I had hardly seen anybody.

Friday afternoon they decided to have a cricket match--Officers versus boys. I was forced to play because the boys only outnumbered the officers two to one and it was felt that this was not enough to compensate for the age difference. The pitch was a fairly level spot behind the sand dunes. It had been made treacherous by trampling down the long grass into a slippery flatness.

On this pitch the Officers bowled out the boys for a total score of nine runs. The boys then dismissed six of the officers for seven runs, which meant that Johnny was left to save the day for them. All through the game Johnny had been prowling about disgustedly, sometimes lying on his back pretending to sleep, sometimes whistling at passing girls to show us that he was a worldly man encumbered by his duties to us children, sometimes taking the ball and bowling an over at blinding speed by which means he so much terrified four of the more timid boys that they fell backwards into their wickets.

When the Captain, whose name was Sammy, informed him that he was "in" and that three runs were needed, he surveyed the field reluctantly then saw that I was holding the ball. He seized his bat and shouted: "Okay, Shaw,--Bowl!"

The other members of my team gave an immediate cheer, sensing something good was coming up. "Go ahead, Bob," they shouted. "Bowl him out!" From the tone of their voices they obviously considered this an impossibility.

So did I.

Johnny made a great show of obtaining centre, marking his crease, examining the fielding layout, squaring his bat. At every exaggerated movement the boys laughed uproariously--it would be worth losing the match to see me getting pasted.

I ran down to bowl amid a sudden, pregnant silence. The ball, going at a good speed, landed three-quarter way down the pitch, sped up from the slippery grass and hit Johnny, who had been attempting a cut to leg, squarely on the chest. It made a peculiar booming sound and dropped at his feet.

Johnny clutched his chest and glared up the pitch at me with naked hatred in his eyes. "Shaw," he snarled, "get a grip on yourself."

I retrieved the ball, ran down to deliver it and was just about to let go when I saw McCreedy. The sight of Johnny being thumped on the chest had brought on another of his attacks. He was staggering about at mid-on limbs twitching grotesquely, eyes rolling, mouth working, face contused. The breath whooshed out of me in one gasp and I shambled to a halt, absolutely incapable of delivering the ball.

Johnny pointed one meaty finger at me and shouted, "Shaw! Stop laughing."

This reduced me to the point where I began seriously to feel that I might die of strangulation. I tried to stop. McCreedy was doing the same. I could see the panic-stricken look in his eyes as he felt himself go more and more out of control.

Johnny ran down the pitch and seized my shoulder. "This is your last chance, Shaw," he gritted. "Stop it." I dangled on him, sobbing from deep down in my chest. McCreedy was down on his hands and knees, dribbling.

"All right, Shaw," Johnny said, "you've had your chance." He strode away from me and the game broke up in utter confusion.

I saw Johnny once more that day. I was walking through the dunes alone after supper when I heard a sound on the other side of one of the hillocks of sand. Hoping that it might be somebody I knew, I went up the hill and peered down the other side. I found myself looking straight into Johnny's face!

He was lying in the grass with a dark-haired girl of about nineteen. Johnny and I gazed at each other in petrified silence, both of us unable to take in what we were seeing. After a few seconds my legs regained strength and I sprinted away through the gathering twilight, bleating with panic.

The look of incredulous rage on Johnny's face haunted me until I went to sleep. That night some of the lighter sleepers in the Company were aware of a mild disturbance in the small hours of the morning.

When morning came most of the boys found themselves liberally daubed with shoe polish. Enquiries revealed that the Captain and a couple of senior officers had got up during the night to play a prank on the juniors by devorating them with "Cherry Blossom" boot polish. My own experience of the affair differed from that of everybody else. I was fast asleep when something big and strong descended on me like an enraged incubus and showered me with vicious, painful blows. This went on for about a minute before my terrified moans wakened the others in my room and the intruder fled.

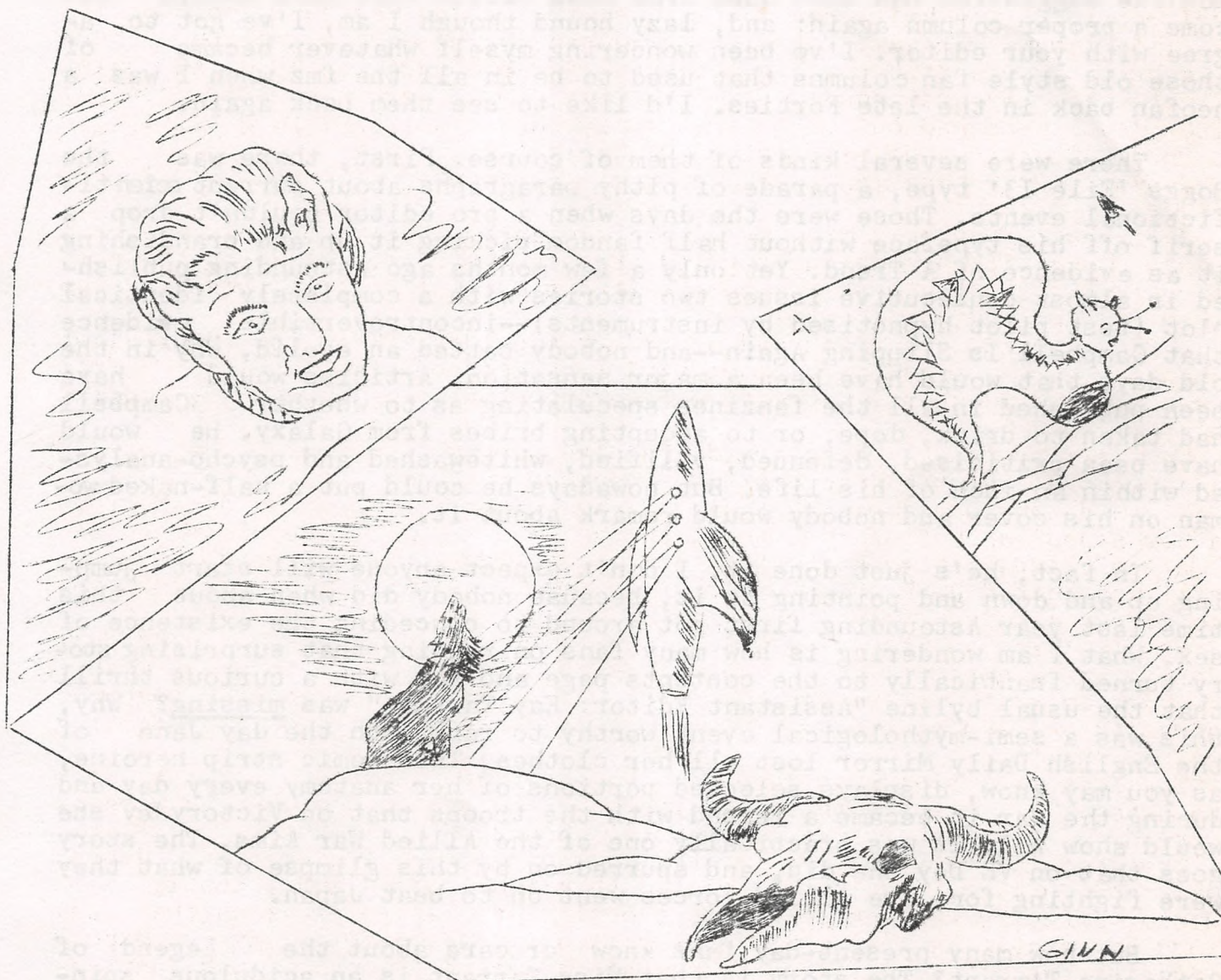
I never found out for sure who had done it, but next morning I

saw Johnny smirking contentedly at me during breakfast. As soon as possible after the holiday I resigned from the Company as a sort of dramatic protest against the company officials.

I don't think anybody even noticed that I had gone.

--Bob Shaw

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OOPSLA

Presents

THE HARP THAT ONCE OR TWICE

by Walt Willis

I suppose it was too good to last. For a long time there, all I had to do when an Oopsla deadline loomed ahead was to dig out that big envelope full of used bus tickets, Texaco maps, timetables and similar cherished souvenirs, and recount the events of another few hours in 1952. If I'd been left alone I'd probably have kept it up indefinitely, getting nearer and nearer to the end of the trip without actually arriving until your great-grandchildren would have been reading to you in childish piping voices the report of my journey foot by foot and then inch by inch up the gangplank, with dramatic accounts of each splinter. But now the suggestion has come down from Head Office that this should become a proper column again: and, lazy hound though I am, I've got to agree with your editor. I've been wondering myself whatever became of those old style fan columns that used to be in all the fmz when I was a neofan back in the late Forties. I'd like to see them back again.

There were several kinds of them of course. First, there was the Boggs 'File 13' type, a parade of pithy paragraphs about current scientific events. Those were the days when a pro editor couldn't drop a serif off his typeface without half fandom picking it up and brandishing it as evidence of A Trend. Yet only a few months ago Astounding published in almost consecutive issues two stories with a completely identical plot (test pilot hypnotised by instruments)--incontrovertible evidence that Campbell Is Slipping Again--and nobody batted an eyelid. Why in the old days that would have been a major sensation. Articles would have been published in all the fanzines speculating as to whether Campbell had taken to drink, dope, or to accepting bribes from Galaxy. He would have been criticised, defended, vilified, whitewashed and psycho-analysed within an inch of his life. But nowadays he could put a half-naked woman on his cover and nobody would remark about it.

In fact, he's just done it. I don't expect anyone will start jumping up and down and pointing to it, because nobody did when about this time last year Astounding first got around to conceding the existence of sex. What I am wondering is how many fans on reading that surprising story turned frantically to the contents page and saw with a curious thrill that the usual byline "Assistant Editor: Kay Tarrant" was missing? Why, this was a semi-mythological event worthy to rank with the day Jane of the English Daily Mirror lost all her clothes. This comic strip heroine, as you may know, displays selected portions of her anatomy every day and during the War it became a legend with the troops that on Victory Day she would show All. It was practically one of the Allied War Aims. The story goes that on VE Day she did, and spurred on by this glimpse of what they were fighting for, the Allied Forces went on to beat Japan.

But how many present-day fans know or care about the Legend of Catharine Tarrant? The story is that Miss Tarrant is an acidulous spinster whose life is dedicated to keeping Astounding a clean-cut magazine for John's super-scientific Boy Scouts. She might accept bad stories, accept stories full of elementary grammatical errors, even accept stories twice that shouldn't have been written once, but there's

one thing you could be sure of: that when John W. Junior looked in from playing with his radio station or dianetics set or whatever the latest fad was, he would never find that she'd accepted anything that would raise a blush from a pure-minded young lady. (Whether it would arouse any interest at all was of course another question altogether, and one that doesn't seem to have worried either of them.) Miss Tarrant, dedicated from the neck up, fought for Astounding's honor as she would have no doubt fought for her own, if the occasion had ever arisen. The legend goes on that in the days when Astounding had its own stable of writers they used to get up to some horseplay, and one of the ways they kicked over the traces was to vie with one another to see who could sneak something dirty past Miss Tarrant. Obscene double meanings and erotic allusions were painstakingly thought up and cunningly inserted in perfectly serious stories, camouflaged with all the literary skill the authors could command. But none of them could get past the faithful guard of Miss Tarrant's shining blue pencil. None, that is, except George O. Smith. He won the contest in a canter by getting into print a story about a man who built a better mousetrap (which I wouldn't be surprised was written especially for the purpose) in which the hero's tomcat was referred to casually as "the original ball-bearing mousetrap."

Now, in the light of all this, wouldn't it be interesting to speculate on what lay behind the omission of Miss Tarrant's name from the issue with the sexy story in it, and its reinstatement the following month? Has Campbell gone in for sex with the same enthusiasm he went in for dianetics and seduced Miss Tarrant? Has an ultimatum come down from old Street & Smith that like King David they need sex to restore their failing circulation and that Miss Tarrant must give in or go? If so, is Miss Tarrant being driven out of her mind by the conflict between her principles and loyalty to good old S & S, so that she's accepting stories twice and so on? Or was it merely that she was on holiday when the offending story was put in, and when she got back there were angry scenes and stamped feet and slammed doors and tearful reconciliations?

Of course one of the reasons we don't have this type of column any more is the same one that explains why I haven't been able to give the dates of any of the issues of Astounding I was thinking about. Generally, fans don't keep their prozines the way they used to, and they don't have them available for reference. As for the current issues, those fans who buy them all don't have time to read them: and those who don't buy them all often find it embarrassing to take their typer down to the newsstand and write their column there. We do have prozine reviews, Ghod help us, but in the nature of things as they are, or as they were until quite recently, they can't be the leisurely conducted tours they used to be. They resemble more the desperate cries of policemen during a riot, directing refugees to places of safety or warning them of particular perils.

There's an even older form of this type of column, the science snippets one. This has been dying since the days of Will Sykora, and there are plenty of us waiting to dance on its grave. Nowadays you can get the same information, presented quite as inaccurately, in the newspapers and promags. We also have the flying saucer fringe of fandom, but the less said about that the better. I've nothing against flying saucers personally, you understand--it's just that I don't like the company they keep. Incidentally, didn't anyone think it was a shocking thing to see a reputable reviewer like Santesson devote a whole page of Fantastic Universe to discussing Adamski, Leslie & Allingham as if they were more than crack pots or swindlers?

Then there's the purely fannish type of column, including Convention Reports and social notes from all over. Usually the trouble

with these is that when the events are interesting you don't feel like taking notes, and reports tend to degenerate into lists of people you didn't eat breakfast with and who was under whose bed. Pending the invention of a pocket tape-recorder there's nothing to be done about this, unless like John Berry you just invent everything including the events themselves. But now I come to think of it, there's one fannish occasion I can partly report. Yesterday Irish Fandom had a farewell party for Bob Shaw, who is sailing shortly for Canada. The hosts were James and Peggy White, in the new White house up in the Belfast Mountains, the entire deposit for which was paid by the sale of one story to Astounding. (It's the only one-story house in the world with two floors.) Madeleine is in hospital, so I took some notes so I could tell her about it and thus I happen to have some authentic dialogue. Everyone else in Irish Fandom was there--James & Peggy White, Bob & Sadie Shaw, the venerable George Charters, John Berry, Gerard Quinn (the K. Winn of the Fansmanship Lectures, though he didn't know this himself until last night), and me. When George arrived, James and Peggy called him to the window to admire their front garden, recently reclaimed from the primaeval jungle...

James: Look at my new fence posts, George. Observe the symmetry.

George: Call that a symmetry? Where's the headstones?

Peggy: Did you see the Sweet William?

George: You mean that stuff you planted the shamrocks beside?

Peggy: I didn't plant those shamrocks, they came up by their own Sweet Will.

James: Don't you like the anemones?

George: No, I hate those things. They gave me one in hospital before my operation.

James: It's a pity they didn't believe in euthanasia there. They might have put you out of our misery.

Bob: What's euthanasia? Siberian Boy Scouts?

Of course this dialogue is condensed... Another time they were talking about clothes and Peggy mentioned seeing in a shop window a pair of knickers with "No no a thousand times no" embroidered round the hem.

George: In Braille?

Bob: Tch tch. You dirty old man.

George: At my age I have as much interest in women as I had when I was four.

Bob: What a dirty wee beast you must have been.

Maybe I had better explain that George is the oldest of our group by a few years, though he doesn't look it, and it has become a Berry-inspired tradition that he is in an advanced stage of senile decay.

When the drinks were served I suggested everyone throw their glasses in the fireplace, shouting "Skoal!"

James: Do that and you'll be skoal-ded.

Peggy: Shall I throw some coal on instead, shouting "'s'coal!"?

James: No, if the room gets any warmer we'll all lapse into a coma.

George: Well, if you don't want a coma, just put some semi-colon.

Bob didn't move a muscle of his face. "I think," he said gravely, "I'll save that one up and laugh at it when I get home."

James was showing us some transparencies of Twenty Thousand Leagues Under The Sea. "This character was using atomic energy 100 years before it was invented," he said. "His watch was fast."

Later, Peggy was bringing in the supper, and bumped the tea-trolley on the door tread. "Those trolleys should have caterpillar tracks," suggested someone.

John: For bringing in the grub?

Bob: Yes, especially when it's home cocoon.

Had enough? There's one last type of column I haven't mentioned, the fmz review column. Nowadays there are so many fanzines that trying to review them all is rather like swatting flies. I'd like to see someone attempt a more searching analysis of certain fans and fanzines, the way Laney used to vivisect them in Spacewarp. I'm no Laney, but I'll try to give in each instalment of this column from now on a detailed review of one fanzine, the last to arrive at the time of writing.

This time the victim is Muzzy No. 8, from Claude Hall, 2214 San Antonio St., Austin 5, Texas. 46 pages. 25¢ or Pay After Reading. Muzzy is rather muddily mimeoed on coarse paper, something like Dimensions. This is probably just as well, because if it had been any more legible it might have been banned by the postal authorities: some of the fillers are jokes of doubtful age but determined indelicacy. The cartoons are not particularly distinguished, ranging from the infantile (Example: man holding dagger, caption "I'm sure you'll get the point") to those doodle-things by Dave English which look as if they were drawn by a pneumatic drill during his lunch hour but which many people seem to like. Hall is carrying on a one-man crusade for more amateur fiction in fanzines, but the examples here are not a very good advertisement for his cause. There is a rather vapid column by Nancy Share which shows promise of developing into something worth while and another "Whither Science Fiction" article by Wilkie Conner, better than most and prophesying the return of the pulps. But the main interest of the magazine is the personality of Hall himself, which rather resembles that of a disgruntled Max Keasler. Hitherto Hall's main claims to fame that I am aware of have been an account in an early Muzzy of his desperate struggles to produce the magazine while in the Army, which was sincere and quite moving, and a more recent article asserting that some other Texas crudzine was superior to Quandry, which was so absurd that everyone ignored it. Both these Hall-marks are evident in this issue, especially in the fmz review section where, while his judgments are still odd, his writing bears out the decided promise shown in that early Muzzy article and his later reports from Germany in his Apazine. His comments are forceful and pungently expressed. Examples...Psychotic: "I wouldn't recommend this crapzine to a bird dog."...A La Space: "In the editorial, Kent Corey says 'I'm back', and the reader is quickly struck with the associated thought that the air might have remained a little fresher had he remained away"..Merlin: "It must be interesting to someone, yet you can't think, who." And so on. You might not be able to agree with two out of three of his assessments, but you must admit it's fun to see someone stick out his neck like this, even if it's brass, and it makes a nice change from the reciprocal backscratching that fills most fmz review columns. Admittedly Claude lets his own friends down easily, but fortunately for us he doesn't seem to have many friends: and unfortunately faneds being the hypersensitive creatures they are, if he goes on like this he'll have even less. However that's his worry. Meanwhile the rest of us can sit on the sidelines and enjoy the brawl.

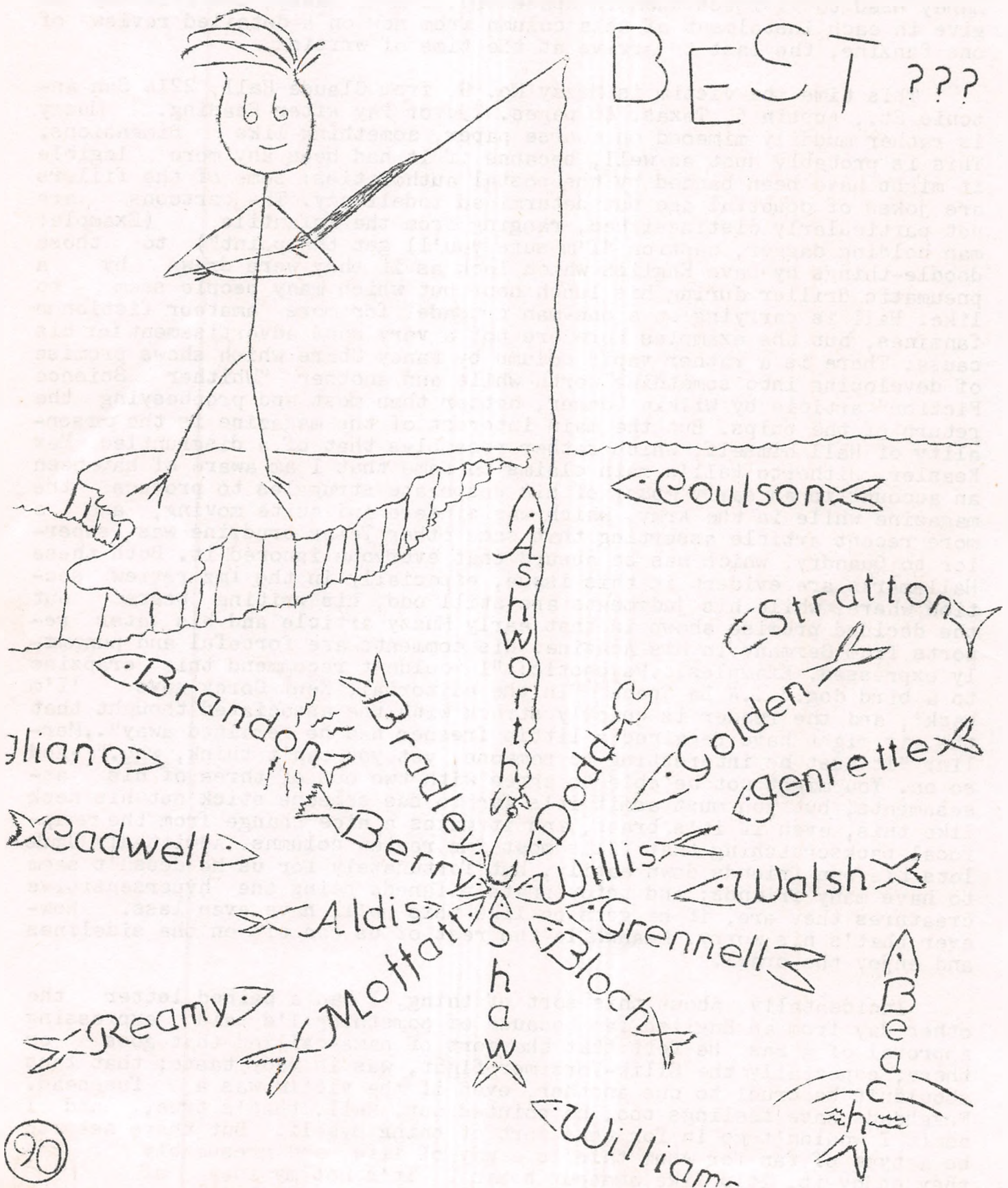
Incidentally, about this sort of thing, I had a pained letter the other day from an English fan because of something I'd said expressing approval of A Bas. He felt that the sort of name-calling that goes on there, especially the Ellick-Vorzimer fight, was in poor taste; that fans shouldn't be cruel to one another, even if the victim was a fugghead. Fuggheads have feelings too, he pointed out. Well, that's true, and I admit I wouldn't go in for this sort of thing myself. But there seems to be a type of fan for whom this is a way of life, and presumably they enjoy it. It's like amateur boxing. It's not my idea of fun, but if two men like to go into a ring and try to hurt one

another I don't see why I shouldn't watch them with interest without
feeling any vicarious guilt on their behalf.

--Walt Willis

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Finis

DEAR

o o o o o

I guess you'll be able to come home pretty soon now. At least, from what the doctor said, the conditions that put you where you are are about to be eliminated from 1412. This is the last of it. Just my own closing statements on stencil and running them off. Can get that done today and it will put an end to the mimoeing for this session.

I wouldn't plan on coming back for at least two or more weeks, though. You see, there is the matter of a few details, assembling, stapling, binding and making out the envelopes for mailing. I hope it won't take any longer than that. I'll miss your help there, that's for sure. But I know what the doctor said, and I understand it would be too much for you to even see these pages again. So...I'll go it alone.

Things have gone pretty good, I think. Did run up against one snag, though. MANA is not represented.

Remember, shortly before you left, I got Bill Courval's note saying to write Jean Young about "Mostly Malarky?" He was a little wrong in what he said. Jean didn't write it at all. John Quagliano did. Unfortunat as it seems, by the time John wrote me and said not to reprint it, I already had typed the stencils for it and had to discard them. There wasn't a stencil left around this place on which to type "Strippin' the Comix", his second choice, and, like you said, I'd spent enough on this anyway.

One thing should make you happy. I'm asking every one who gets a copy to write saying what they think of it. Lots of mail to read. Also, (and this part you won't like so well) I'm asking them to make suggestions on what should be done to it to make next years volume better. You know, I was so undecided about the art work as to whether I should have used new art, or maybe have asked each editor to pick his best for the year or.... The thought also crossed my mind that I could have asked the individual artists to pick the one they thought was their best printed effort of the year.

Your idea, that came to late, both for you and for me, to have the editors make their selections and then for me to edit the anthology out of these selections appeals to me. Like you say, all the selections in this '57 volume aren't tops, but I still say they are better than average in all cases.

Funny thing. The other night I didn't feel like

typing so I sat down and went over a lot of the old fan-zines for 1957. Quite often, I found that, had I been picking from one of them, I would have used something of a different nature. In looking back, there are very few instances where the editors gave me a choice that I didn't try to stick to what I thought was their first preference, even if it amounted just to taking the item I found mentioned first in their letters. So many of them gave more than one, you remember.

Haven't written to Juanita Coulson, or Terry Carr to again thank them for offering to cut some art on the various pages, or for full page illos. It just didn't work out that way, and when KEEBIRD came in, it really solved the problem. But I still appreciate their offers a great deal. As well as the offers of all the others volunteered to help in any way they could.

Guess I have been lucky to get as many pre-pubbing orders as I have. Seems fandom is full of skeptics--and I hear it is with good reason. From various reports to me, there have been a lot of one-shot ideas kicked over the traces, money collected, and then nothing came of it except regrets. From the looks of things, my getting this out at all will surprise some of them.

And that's about all for this time. Just think of all the mail you'll get to read -- if they decide it is worth commenting on, and maybe it'll help get rid of the thing that is bothering you.

Best--

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Terry", with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

INTRODUCTION

by

Robert Bloch

The worst word in the publishing industry is "best".

Any Constant Reader will become inconstant after exposure to the endless output of collections containing this word in their titles.

There are general collections -- thus, The Best Cat Stories and The Best Dog Stories -- composed of cat and dogs; chiefly the latter. Then there are anthologies made up of the work of individual writers; The Best of Damon Runyon, The Best of William James, The Best of the Marquis De Sade. And we have the genre category to contend with, such as The Best Adventure Stories, The Best Love Stories, or The Best Smoking-Car Stories. Magazines get into the act, too, with The Best From The Saturday Evening Post, The Best From The Atlantic Monthly, The Best From The Hog And Shoat-Breeder's Gazette.

Last, but by no means least, are the annual Bests -- Short Stories, Plays, Motion Pictures, Television Plays, and even TV and Radio Humor.

Who makes the selections?

Sometimes the guilty party is an editor employed by a publishing house; often he is a freelance professional anthologist; quite frequently material is chosen by large groups, and on some occasions the authors represented are themselves solicited to determine a representative offering.

But the result is seldom "best" -- by any objective standard.

Naturally, this phenomenon has invaded the field of professional science fiction, and we need look no further for familiar examples.

Such anthologists as Judy Merrill, Anthony Boucher, Thaddeus Dikty (with or without Everett J. Bleiler) have offered repeated "best" collections -- though Miss Merrill designates her choices as the "greatest". Avoiding the actual term, but by implication endeavoring to present the presumably finest examples, Messrs. Campbell and Gold have assembled an Anthology and two Readers from the pages of their publications. Leo Margulies and Oscar J. Friend did a variant of this, in that they presumably allowed twenty-five writers to each present My Best Science Fiction Story, and then there was the volume called Editor's Choice.

But no matter who makes the decision, it comes down to a matter of personal (and highly fallible) opinion, and as the most ignorant cannibal can tell you, one man's meat is another man's person.

To compound the confusion, professional publishing is a highly involved business, where consideration of printing costs and royalty rights plays an important part. Thus, all too frequently a "best" collection in any field will omit a number of items which are just too lengthy for inclusion in a book of limited size. The publisher, editor, and anthologist may privately agree that The Best Rape Stories of 1958 should include three outstanding novelets printed during that year. But using them will mean that there's only 150 pages left for other selections, and the publisher knows he needs a "ballanced" book with a lot of titles. So out go the three novelets, to make room for nine more short stories.

Sad to say, in many instances a publisher will also include inferior efforts by "name-value" writers, at the expense of comparative unknowns. This principle, in the case of "snob-appeal" anthologies, may be deftly inverted; sound offerings from major writers in major markets may be sacrificed to showcase the obscure talent of Henrietta Snoopwhistle, whose brilliantly lucid excursion into obscurantism appeared in Coprolith, a literary quarterly with a circulation of 33½, published in Chaos, New Mexico.

Even more involved is the question of prior rights. All too often, the truly popular or distinguished stories are snapped up for republication immediately following their magazine appearance; general anthologists make an offer to the author before the annual "best" compilers get around to the job. And almost as frequently, the writer of a successful story -- or his hardboiled agent -- insists on receiving a decent fee for reprint instead of the miserable \$25 or \$50 bid from an anthology-editor. An anthologist whose publisher is willing to pony up \$2,000 for story rights is going to wind up with an entirely different "best" collection than one whose budget is \$1,000 or less.

As a result, it is easy to see why "best" collections so seldom deserve the appellation: matters of individual taste, of mechanical limitations, cost, and sales-appeal are involved.

Fortunately, insofar as I am able to determine, these problems do not constitute major obstacles in the case of amateur publishing. And that is why THE BEST OF FANDOM-1957 may well be just that.

In a minor sense, these considerations do of necessity play a part: space limitations would naturally preclude republishing of such lengthy but admittedly worthy items as The Harp Stateside, The Cacher in the Wry or The Science Fiction Market Survey. Individual taste still must enter into consideration, but the number of editors involved in selecting material for a "best" volume mitigates against the danger of a single viewpoint influencing the whole criterion.

In my capacity as a member of fandom and as a professional reviewer of fan magazines, I am probably familiar with the greater portion of the 1957 fanzine output. A casual inspection of my Imagination review columns for the year shows that I singled out for mention a little over 100 issues during that time; or between one-third to one-half of all general fan magazines received. In addition, there were the "newszines" (Science Fiction Times and the frequently-issued letter-sheets) plus a huge number of periodicals issued by members of the amateur press associations in the fantasy and science fiction field.

Any selection of the "best" from these thousands of pages is necessarily tentative. The editor of a small, irregular fanzine which made only two appearances during the course of the year will naturally have a more limited choice than one who put out ten or a dozen fat issues. The oldtime, established, experienced BNF may revel in contributions from a host of other oldtime, established, experienced BNFs, and a neo may be forced to consider only the material offered to him (or extorted by him) from other neos. Some of the "best" material may appear in magazines written solely by the editor himself, in which case modesty can well debar him from a nomination. (And believe it or not, amongst the hundreds of fanzine editors there are some modest ones: two, I think).

When we come to the inevitable question of editorial taste, we must again realize that fandom offers a diverting diversity; there are Sercon fanzines, Insurgent fanzines, frivolous fanzines, fanzines which sedulously avoid any mention of science fiction, fanzines devoted exclusively to fan-fiction, or poetry, or a particular clique; letterzines and club organs and one-shots and highly-personalized extensions of individual opinion alongside of publications which deliberately subordinate the editorial personality.

And yet this very confusion serves to allow for a truly representative selection; publisher Terwilleger has wisely allowed a cross-section of editors in the field of fandom to choose what they will from the pages of their own magazines, and the result comes a great deal closer to an idealized "best" than is the case in most commercial ventures.

The emphasis, it may be noted, is on humor; the style leans heavily towards the essay. As such, the present selection is again, truly representative.

It may well be that representative is a more accurate term than best. In any case we need not be concerned here with the mot juste. There are enough motes juste in the following pages, enough examples of entertaining and illuminating writing, to make such a collection a worthy project, and to demonstrate that fandom offers an opportunity for self-expression almost unequalled in any other group of hobbyists, amateur or professional.

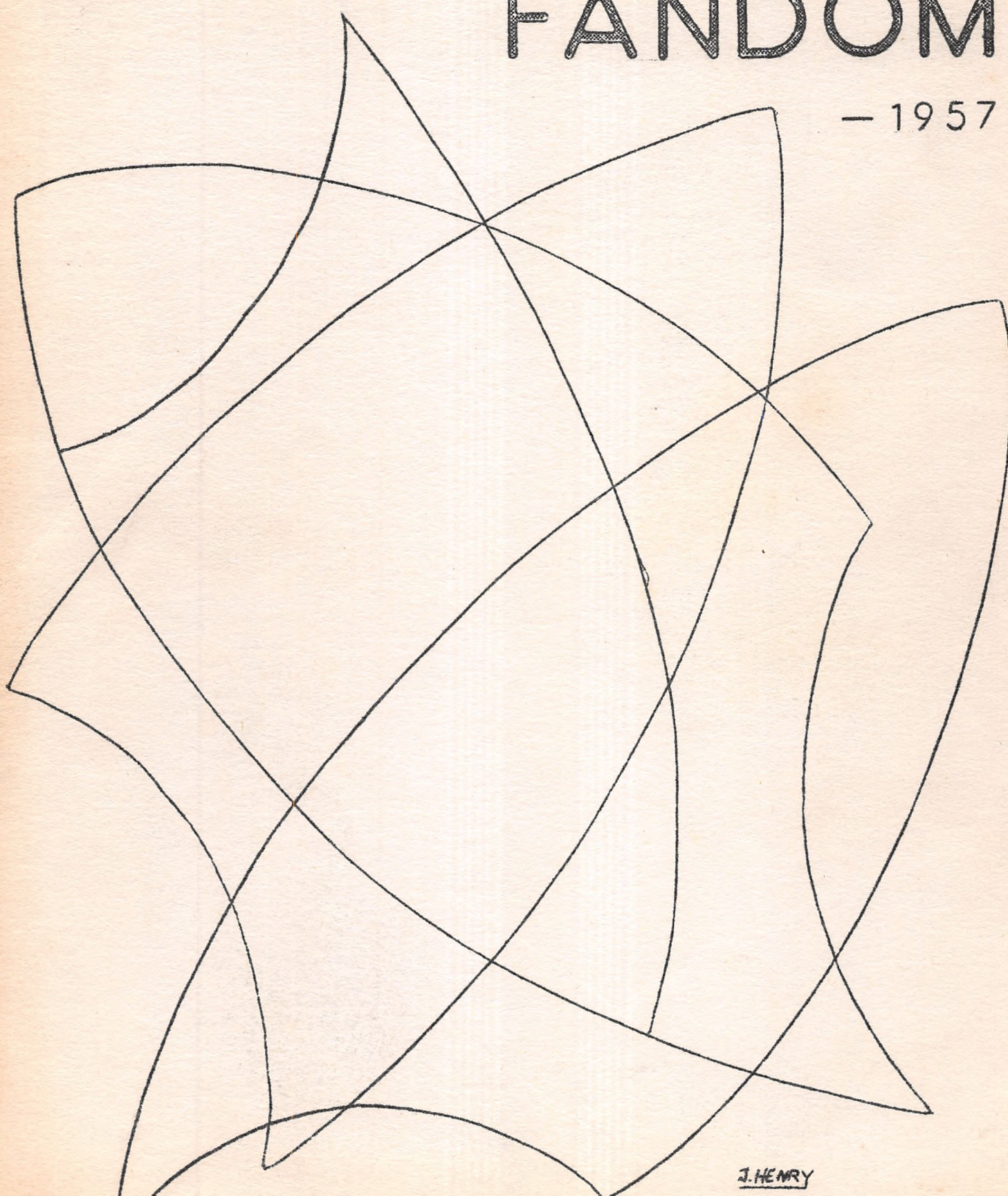
I believe Guy Terwilleger is to be congratulated for his inspiration in publishing this collection; that the individual editors and contributing writers deserve commendation for their cooperation, and that all of fandom has reason to be proud of the result.

Here is ample evidence of fandom's vitality, enthusiasm, and creativity; of its commendable desire and ability to communicate. In the aggregate, this generous, unselfish flow of self-expression is the "best" of fandom -- in 1957 or any other year.

--Robert Bloch

THE BEST OF FANDOM

— 1957



J. HENRY

A Twig PUBLICATION