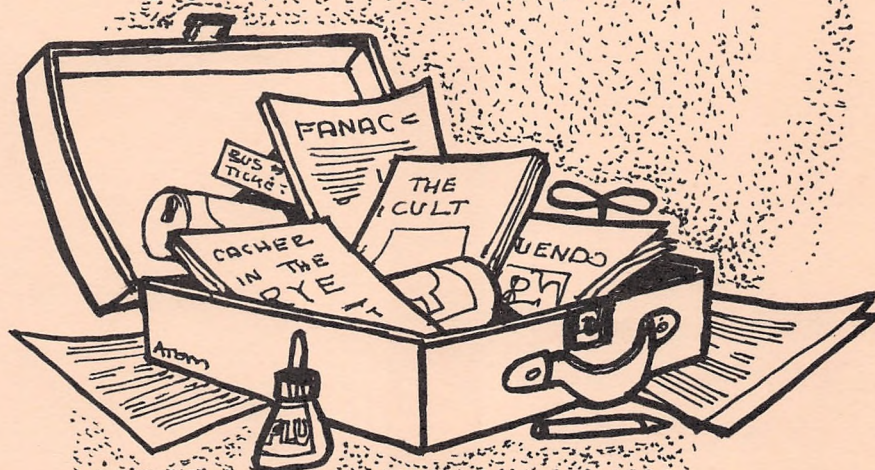


the portable Carl Brandon



the Portable

Carl Brandon

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recd. 4/29/88
(Carr)

Preface to The Portable Carl Brandon:

It was just about a year ago that Terry Carr died. While sorting through his papers, Robert Silverberg discovered quite a number of typed stencils. He passed them to Tom Whitmore, who sent them to Patrick and Teresa Nielsen, who sorted them out. One large stack was a projected collection of Charles Burbee material. The other, smaller stack was a selection of Carl Brandon pieces, none of which had ever been reprinted before.

Patrick called me and asked if I knew of anyone who would like to publish the Brandon pieces. Since I was one of the Seattle Corflu committee, I leaped at the bait, seeing it as a perfect Corflu Publishing Project, a companion to The Incomplete Terry Carr. I've always loved Terry's writing, and like many fans I hold a special place in my heart and library for those many pieces Terry (along with Bob "Boob" Stewart, Dave Rike, Pete Graham, Ron Ellick, Miriam Carr Knight and Karen Anderson) wrote under the name of Carl Brandon. My vision of fandom in the fifties is colored by the Brandon legend: from 1953, when Carl first appeared as a simple pseudonym, to 1956 when Carl joined the Cult (that oddity among apas) and began to write his best pieces, to culmination in 1958 when Carl stood for the exalted office of Official Editor of the Fantasy Amateur Press Association and was finally revealed as a complex and convincing hoax.

The hook being firmly set, Patrick explained to me how this publication must be done. Since the stencils Terry had typed were old, brittle, and glued to their backing sheets by many summers' heat, I would have to type fresh stencils. I was to find a Selectric with exactly the same typeface, and precisely imitate Terry's layouts and line lengths. The art, of course, should be art in the Terry Carr manner. I would be free to add such matter as this preface. Patrick had already supplied the sources of the pieces, as much as possible, copying from the bibliography in Jeanne Gomoll's edition of The Cacher of the Rye.

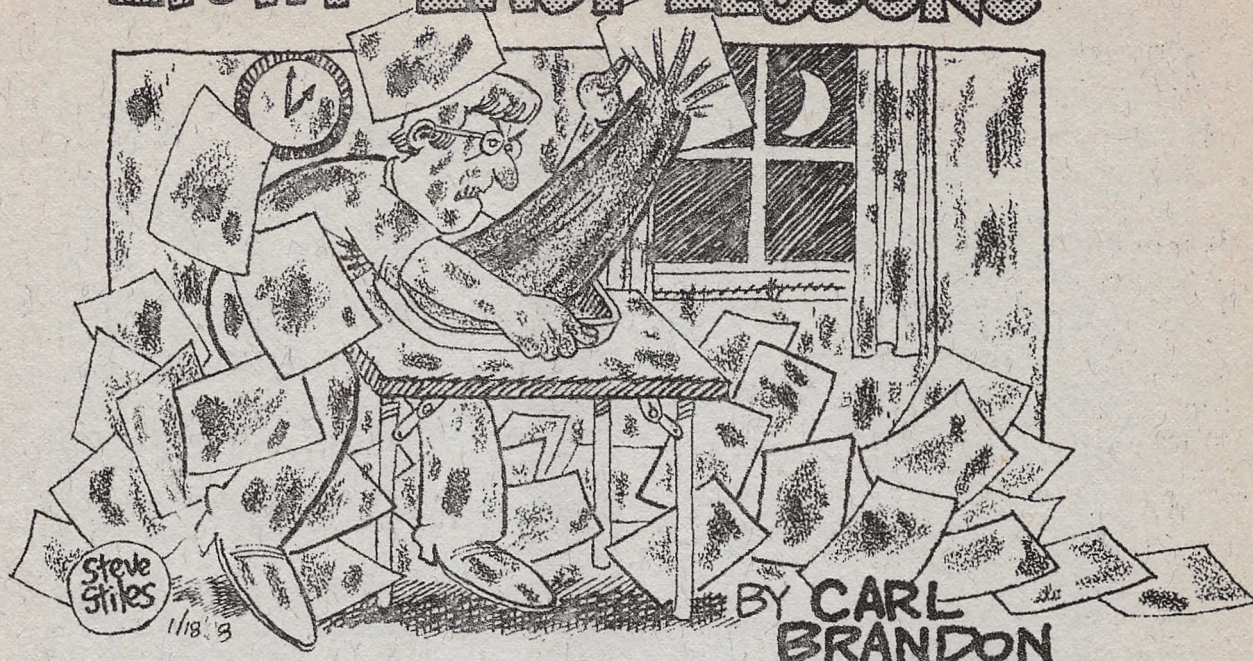
I think the art I commissioned is all excellent. However, one artist who wanted to work directly on stencil still has those stencils. So "Josh Brandon's Blues" has been on a different typer, since I don't have time to track down another Selectric. The decoration for the piece is the result of my own bumbling with Prestype.

Besides the people I've already mentioned, and the artists listed on the table of contents, there are other people to thank. Carol Carr graciously gave her permission for this publication, and suggested that we put the income towards Corflu expenses. Ted White helped to track down sources for the more elusive pieces. Jeanne Gomoll helped by publishing The Cacher of the Rye; from its introduction by Terry came the brief summary of Carl Brandon's career. Suzle pasted up the art and gave me the usual invaluable suggestions and support.

It's my belief (fueled by comments Robert Lichtman made) that Terry intended to produce a complete Carl Brandon collection, or at least something larger than the twenty pages that follow. Wouldn't it be nice to have "The BNF of Iz," "The Purple Pastures," "The Daring Young Fan with the Three-Speed Mimeo" and others back in print, alongside Brandon pieces that appear in The Incomplete Terry Carr with no acknowledgement of their original attribution, such as "Egoboo for Algernon" and "My Fair Femmefan?" I hope some energetic fan will consider the task. Think of this collection as one step towards that ideal one.

Jerry Kaufman

HOW TO BECOME A FAN IN EIGHT EASY LESSONS



ONE: The Assets of a Fan:

Before starting this course, you must have: (a) A typewriter, this monster being rusty, hard to manage, and with keys in the wrong places on the keyboard. A left handed typewriter is best. This will explain to your correspondents why there are so many typos in your letter. (b) Several photographs of yourself to send around fandom to people who doubt that you are a real person and not just a figment of Sandy Sanderson's imagination; these photos must be taken while wearing your propellor beanie (if you are a femme, have the photos taken while wearing prop beanie only). (c) A duplicator of some sort, preferably missing several integral screws and bolts. (d) A bad temper, which you will put to use on young fans and fuggheads. All these may be purchased at your local apothecary, except for (d), which is supplied in three sizes (bad, wretched, and evil) through Proxyboo Ltd.

TWO: How to Become Well-Known:

As you go along with this course, you will see that it is necessary to have a source of egoboo. This should be the fanzine of one of your correspondents. To become well-known via leeching egoboo in someone else's fmz, you must deluge the editor with stories, columns, articles, and all sorts of sparkling, witty fan material. If you have properly shined the apple, so to speak, with that fanned, he will accept all of it, and you will get huge gobs of egoboo in his lettercolumn. Caution: fanzines without lettercolumns are unsuitable for this purpose.

THREE: Correspondents:

You will have to put out a fanzine of your own soon, so it is best to start preparing for it now. An effective method of obtaining material for your fanzine is to contact as many fans as possible, write to them regularly, and they will surely send you something. When corresponding with a femme, be sure to compliment her on her good looks (regardless of whether or not she has sent a photo; say your correspondents have raved about her). When corresponding with a male fan, compliment him on his wonderful style of writing; if he sends a picture, say he has a sensitive fannish face.

FOUR: Your Fanzine:

Now you are ready to publish your own masterpiece, so here we will discuss how to use your hekto/mimeo/fingerpainting set. The hektograph is by far the cheapest method of reproducing a fmz, but does not get such good results as a mimeo. To work a hekto, first put the master in the typewriter backwards. This will produce a backward effect, but can be remedied by pasting a mirror on the page opposite. Next step is to place the master on the gelatin. By rubbing hard and consistently on the reverse side of the master while it is lying in the tray, you can cause a purplish stain to come off on your fingers. This is very important to a young fan who wishes to distinguish himself from an ordinary non-faned type plebeian fan. Next, apply the paper to the gelatin. If, when lifting the paper off, you find that the gelatin comes up with it, place your knee firmly on the edge of the tray and give the paper a hard yank. Of course, this may have some effect on the color of your pants, so I suggest that you use your hekto while naked. Though you may not have noticed it, all experienced fans have purple knees.

The mimeo: To use the mimeograph, you must first cut a stencil. The average stencil uses about three gallons of correction fluid, but Mother's nail polish will do the job just as well, and the stencil looks much prettier once it is on the mimeo drum and whirling, with the red nail polish dabs circling and circling, circling and circling...after a time you will get sick of running off pages, and then you must assemble the issue. This is done by laying each stack of pages next to the preceding stack, clockwise around the room. If you are an ambitious-type fan who puts out a 100-page fmz, this trail of pages will lead you from your bedroom to the kitchen, the front room, down the stairs to the garage, through the front seat of Father's car, and halfway across the street. Be sure to dress again after running off the pages and prior to assembling the fanzine. After it has been finished, take the copies to the nearest mailbox, write "Congressional Record -- Free Postage" on the mailing wrapper, and cram them into the box. If some copies are torn as you cram them in you can blame it on the post office, which would tear them anyway if you hadn't.

FIVE: The Hoax:

The next step in becoming a fan is to pull a hoax. There are several types, and your choice must rest with your temperament. If you are a frustrated murderer, the death hoax is your best bet. If you have a strong maternal tendency, the hoax-fan a la Joan Carr is a

How to Become a Fan in Eight Easy Lessons -- 3

wonderful outlet. There is also the opposite-sex hoax a la Lee Hoffman, but I hesitate to classify the temperament which this would satisfy. When you have fooled everyone, announce your hoax. This will elicit three types of reaction: the fans who will berate you for your falsehood; those who will say they knew it all along; and those who will ignore you. When this is through, you are well on your way to becoming a Mature Science Fiction Fan.

SIX: The Grudge:

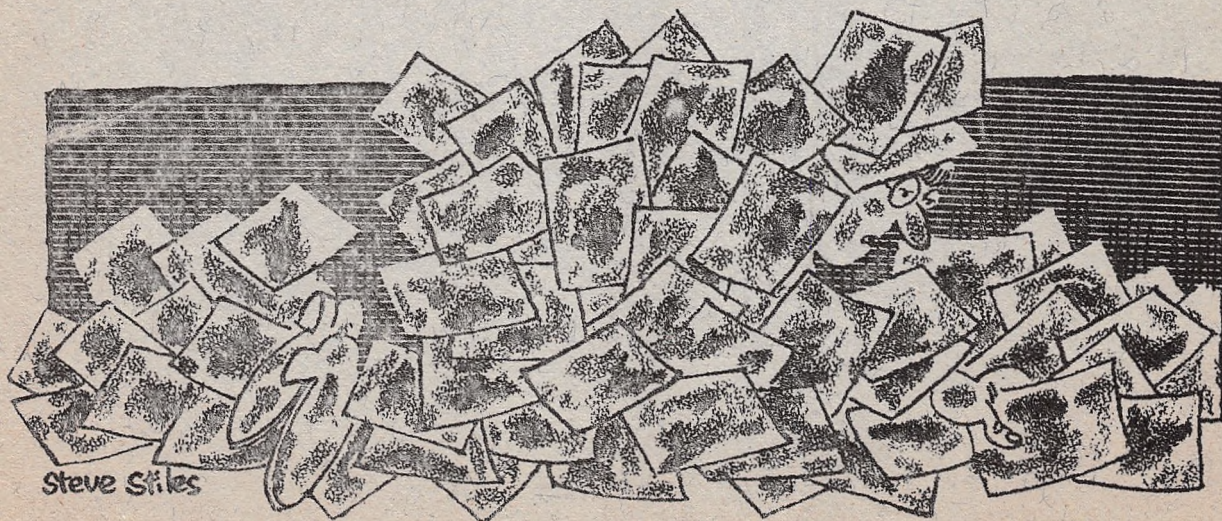
Having a grudge against someone is a sure sign of maturity. Most likely, you will have many grudges after your hoax, and so you must blast all these fans in your columns and in your fmz. When you have needled them into feuds, send nice letters to each of them saying that you are truly sorry and realize what a fool you were. After this, you will gain their confidence and they'll start sending you material for your fanzine. On top of this, you will gain a reputation as a Fair-Minded, Forgiving Fan.

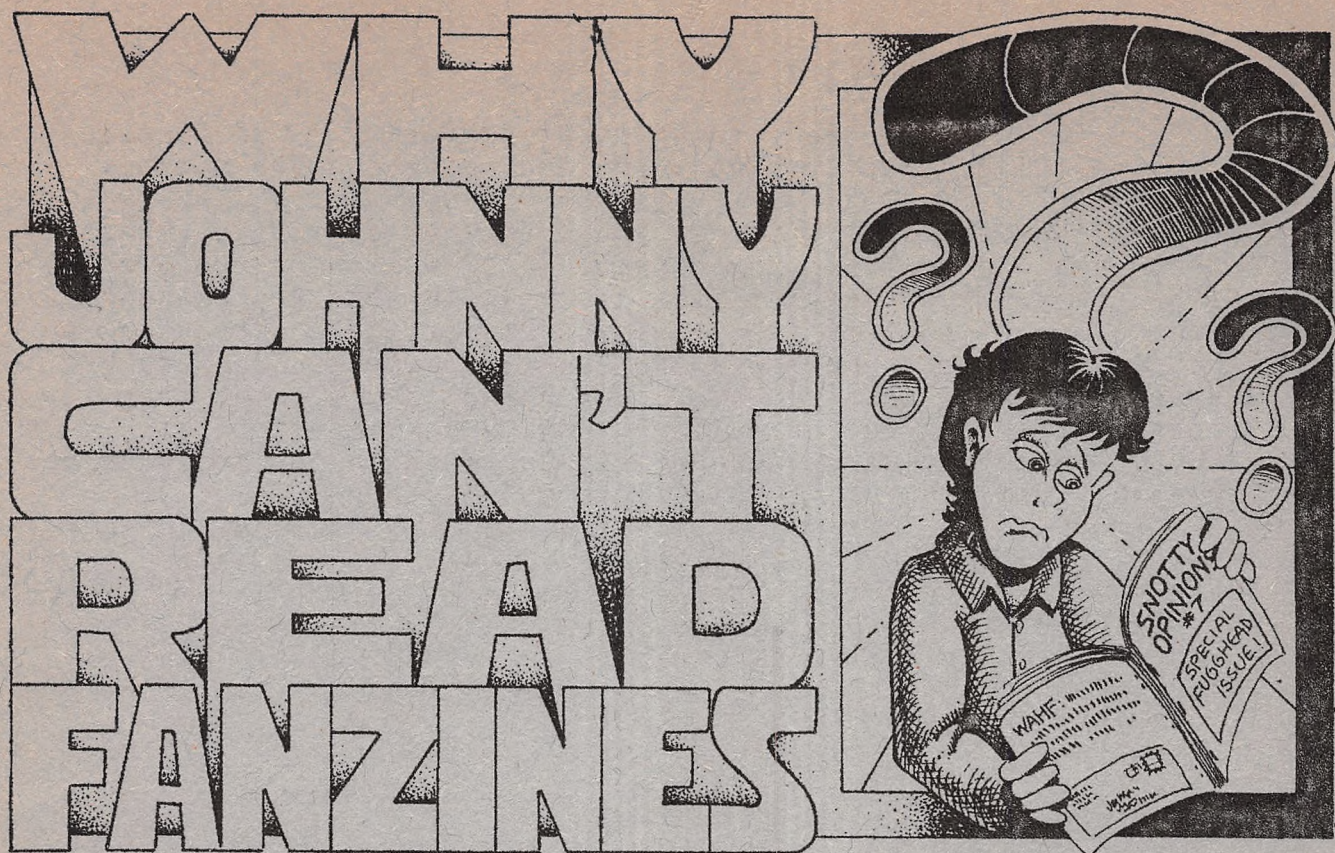
SEVEN: Pro Writing:

Though you will learn in time to hate pros, you must at one time in your fanhood accumulate a large number of rejection slips. If by some chance an editor accepts one of your stories, have it printed under a pseudonym and hush it up. Professionals are scorned by all true fans.

EIGHT: The Final Step:

If you have followed the course carefully, you are now steel-nerved, a hardened fan who is ready for the ultimate step: buy several science fiction magazines and read them. You will never wonder about anything again.





Dear Jophan:

I have decided to write this article in the form of a letter to you. You know that the idea came to me when I offered to help Johnny to read fanzines. It's really his article -- or yours.

You remember when I began to work with Johnny half a year ago. That was when he was twelve and he still couldn't read fanzines. Oh, sure, he did all right on those nonfan things like War and Peace and Kiss Me, Deadly, but he couldn't read fanzines. So I told you that I knew of a way to teach him how. Well, you trusted me, and you know how your son Johnny has improved since. Today Johnny can read fanzines -- not HYPHEN, to be sure, but in a few months he should be subscribing to fanzines on his own.

I think Johnny will become a BNF. He has a very good sense of humor and he cuts a mean stencil. There are a lot of good fannish traits in Johnny that have never come to the surface because he couldn't read fanmags. And after all, how can you become a BNF unless you can read fanmags? I mean unless your name is Robert Bloch.

Since I started to work with Johnny, I have looked into this whole reading business. What I found is absolutely fantastic. Johnny couldn't read fanmags until half a year ago because nobody ever showed him how. Johnny's only problem was that he was unfortunately exposed to an ordinary American school. In our schools today they don't teach the phonics system -- whereby Johnny would learn what "a" stands for,

Why Johnny Can't Read Fanzines -- 2

and what "b," "c," "d" and "e" and so on stand for. In our schools they teach the children to look at words and guess what they mean.

You don't believe me? I assure you what I am saying is literally true. Go to your school tomorrow morning -- or if Johnny has brought home one of his readers, look at it. You will immediately see that all the words in it are learned by endless repetition. Not a sign anywhere that letters correspond to sounds and that words can be worked out by pronouncing the letters. No. The child is told what each word means and then they are mechanically, brutally hammered into his brain. By this method, if we were to try to teach Johnny to read fanzines, we'd have to give him readers like this:

"We will pub," said Susan.
"Yes, yes," said all the neofen.
"We will pub a fanzine."
So all the neofen pubbed.
They pubbed and pubbed.

Or this:

Hack, hack, went the fan.
He was hacking out something.
He was not hacking out a story.
He was not hacking out a column.
He was hacking out a letter to an editor.
He hacked and hacked and hacked.

All the reading books used in all our schools, up through fourth and fifth and sixth grade, teach words in that way. If we want Johnny to learn the word hack, under that system of teaching he would have to read over and over again about a fan or a pro who hacked and hacked and hacked. And so would it be with every word in the FANCYCLOPEDIA.

Every word in the FANCYCLOPEDIA! Do you know what that means? It means that if we were to teach Johnny by this system, we couldn't use ordinary fannish material for practice. Instead, Johnny would have to work his way up through a battery of carefully designed readers, each one containing all the words used in the previous one plus a strictly limited number of new ones, used with the exactly "right" amount of repetition...and of course there are no such readers for Fanspeak. Johnny wouldn't read The Enchanted Duplicator or LE ZOMBIE or The Immortal Storm because he wouldn't be able to! If a child who had been "taught" reading by the system used in our schools faced the word fanac for the first time, he would be absolutely helpless because nobody would ever have told him how to sound out f and a and n and a and c and read the word off the mimeoed page.

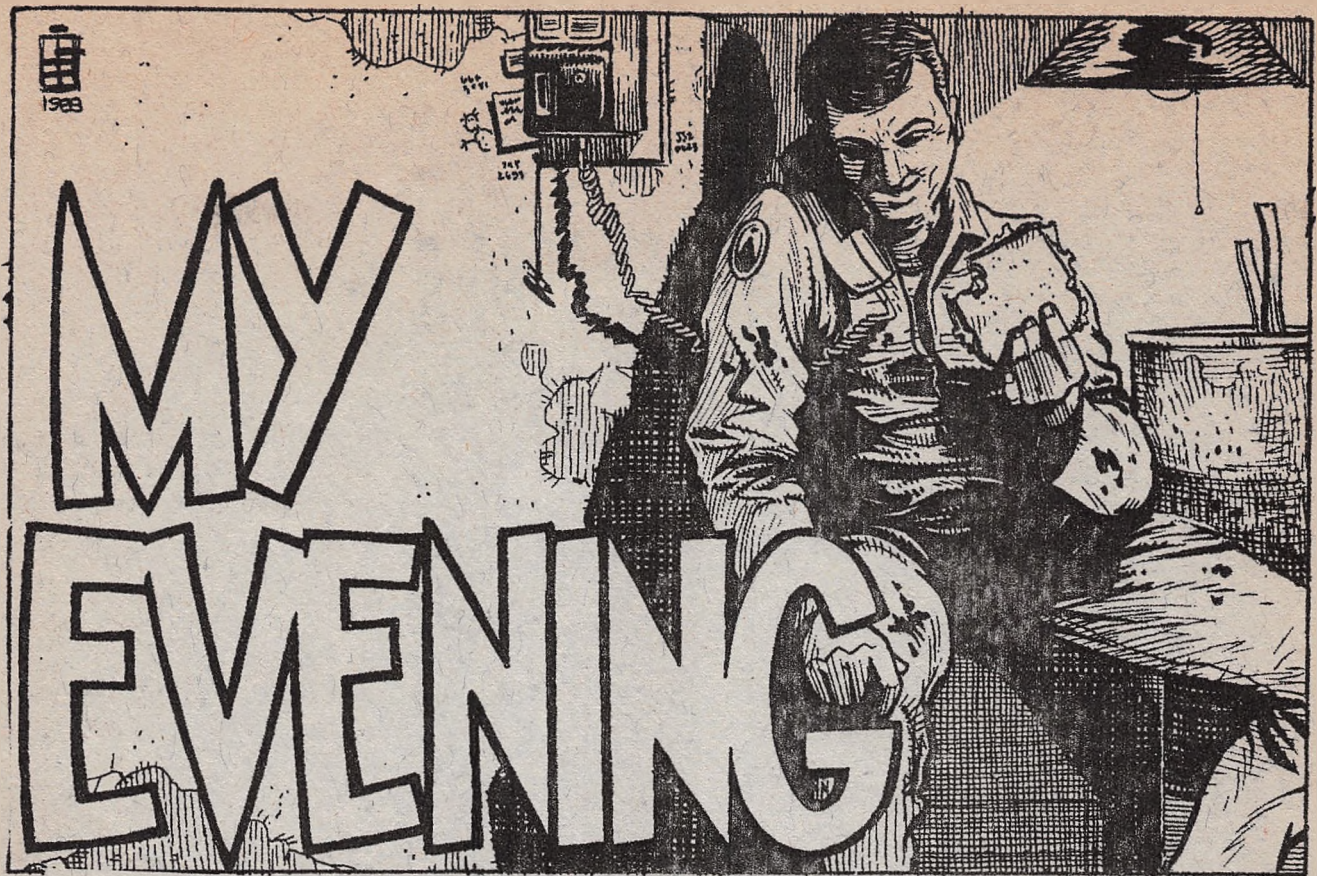
Children today, instead of being taught how to read, are carefully trained in the art of guessing. There is no other way, you see: if a child isn't taught the sounds of the letters, then he has absolutely nothing to go by when he tries to read a word. All he can do is guess. Suppose Johnny tries to read the sentence "I had one grunch." He has never seen the word grunch before, but if he has been trained in phonics, he simply sounds out the letters easy as pie. ("Ah, grunch!

But the eggplant over there," he says.) But if he has no training in phonics, if the meaning of the letters has been carefully hidden from him, he can only guess. How? Well, the educators say he can guess from context. With the sentence "I had one grunch" that is extremely difficult, however, because it could just as easily mean "I had one typo" or "I had one Gestetner" or even "I had one fugg." So, the next best thing, the child looks at the top of the page to see whether there is a picture. But fanmags, unlike the readers to which he is accustomed, do not always have pictures, and even when they do they are often so poorly drawn that they would do Johnny no good. So he has nothing to go on but sheer luck. He might guess "column" or he might guess "stencil" or -- most likely -- he might just sit there with a vacant look, waiting for someone to tell him that it says "grunch." That's how he learns in school.

When I started to work with Johnny, I didn't quite realize all this. In my fuggheadedness, I gave him what I thought was an easy word for a twelve-year-old: neofan. He stared at it for quite some time, then finally said: "Nephew!" I tell you, it staggered me. Anyone who has been accustomed to sounding out words would have been staggered by a twelve-year-old who read "nephew" for "neofan" simply because they look somewhat alike.

So you see, Jophan, the reason that Johnny couldn't read fanzines was that our schools don't teach him how. He could read those other books like Ulysses and The Trial -- because he had been taught what those normal English words meant. And as long as he didn't know how to use phonics he was destined to go through life as a literate nonfan but an illiterate fan.

But you trusted me, and I taught Johnny how to use phonics. Now he's a normal, happy neofan. Remember yesterday, when we found him looking through your old fanzines, and reading an article in one of them? Do you remember that, Jophan? Well, that article was written in Ackermanese.



"Boob" Stewart called me while I was eating dinner and mulling over George Spencer's failure to win this year's Keith Joseph Award. Ghod, how I hate to see Wetzel win it; he doesn't even put out a fanmag, for ghusake.

Anyway, I was thinking that such are the trials of fandom when "Boob" called.

"Hullo," he said. And then there was this monstrous silence. That's what I hate about "Boob" -- if he's the tiniest bit potted or anything he doesn't say a word. He wasn't potted yet, since it was the evening before the Westercon, but I can remember at least five minutes of silence from him.

Finally I said "Hullo" back at him.

"You going to the con?" he said.

"Nope. I gotta work."

"Oh. Well, if you get a chance, come on over, and we'll see ya." Then there was another big silence, until I realized he'd hung up.

Anyway, I finished eating and went to work. When I got to the service station where I work, Norm Harris was there, slamming his fist into his palm, all redhot and everything. He'd brought in his car to be fixed a couple of days before, but I hadn't been able to get it done yet. It takes time to change the oil in a car, for ghusake.

"Wonder what they're doin' in Oakland?" I said.

"I dunno," Norm said. He's really not much of a fan -- he just writes the stuff once in awhile, but he's a promising writer.

"Probably Marilyn Tully is climbing up to the speaker's stand right now and saying, 'Free bheer will be sent to all rooms at your request, poker chips are optional, and the house dick is home in bed with a cold.' Then I bet they play a tape by the London Circle."

"I don't really care too much," Norm said.

"In a couple hours the parties will be starting," I said. "Dave will be writing down interlineations and Terry'll be drawing face critturs, and Bob will be getting potted. There'll be fans all around, saying witty things, or at least thinking witty things, in Bob's case. Maybe Dave brought his ditto and they'll put out a one-shot."

"I'm not really interested," Norm said.

"They'll have a wonderful program, no doubt," I said. "Boucher is always good, and Richard Matheson is Guest of Honor. Maybe Bradbury will be there." This interested Norm more, which was why I said it. But I stopped there, because I'm a fakefan and those are the only pros I know.

"Well, maybe they do have a good program," said Norm, "but right now I'm not interested."

"Ghod, how I wish I was there," I said.

"I'm glad you're not," said Norm.

"But why?" I said. "Why, why? The bheer will be flowing and -- "

"Because I want you to get my God damned car ready!" Norm shouted. "Now for Chrissake get busy!"

Norm really isn't much of a fan; he's only written one stf story, as a matter of fact, and that was cruddy.



FABLES FOR FANDOM



The Hoax and the Gripes

There once was a young fan who wanted very much to be a famous BNF. But nobody had ever heard of him, so he was very unhappy.

One day he got a wonderful idea. He would start a hoax! Then everyone would know who he was, and they would respect him for his wit and intelligence.

So he announced in his fanzine that Bob Tucker had died. "There!" he said. "That will show them that I am very clever. Who else would be able to think of such a thing?" And he waited for all the wonderful, wonderful letters he would get.

But when the letters came, he found to his astonishment that everybody was mad at him. They said he shouldn't do such things, and that everybody knew it was just a hoax, and that if they hadn't known it would have caused Bob Tucker a lot of trouble, and that he was a foolish neofan who would never become a BNF.

And so the neofan thought awhile and then he said, "Oh well, I don't want to be a BNF anyway. If I was a BNF, foolish neofans would start hoaxes saying I was dead."

MORAL: Dishonesty is at best fallacy.

Rigor Mortis and the Dare

There was once a young fanned who was very boastful. He told all his correspondents that if he really wanted to, he could make his fanzine the most popular one of all.

One day one of his correspondents who was also a fanned made a bet that he could make his fanzine more popular than the boastful fanned's zine. And of course the boastful fellow took the bet.

He decided that the best way to make his fmz popular was to publish it often, so he set a monthly schedule. He changed its name to MORTIS because he didn't know what it meant and thought it sounded very intelligent and would impress everybody.

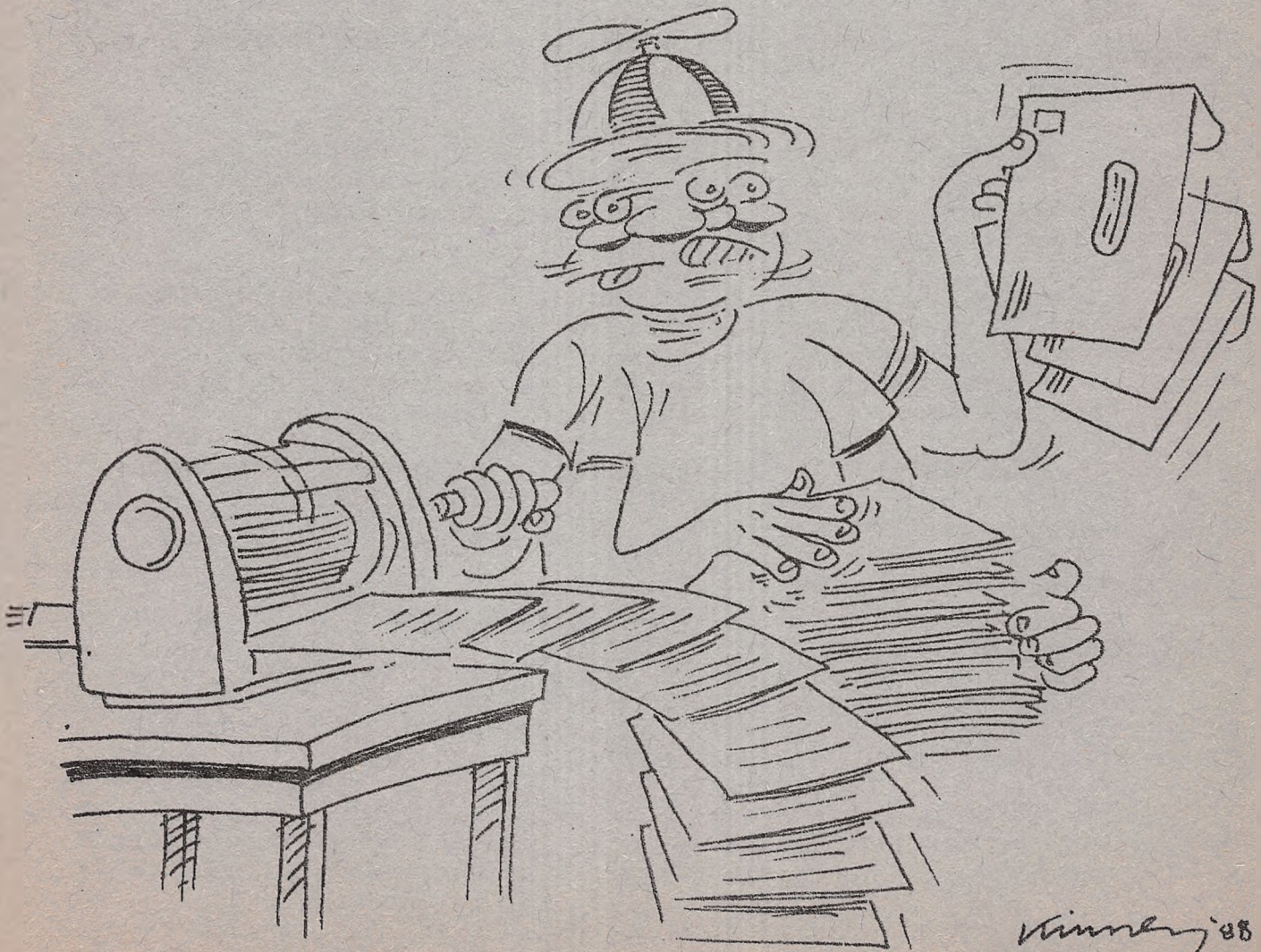
Fables for Fandom -- 2

But he had to work so fast to get his fanzine out every month that the fanzine wasn't very good. He had to write most of the material himself, and he had no time to rewrite it, so it was no good. And his layout was hurried and sloppy, his reproduction poor. His fanzine was not very popular even though it did appear every month.

Meanwhile, his rival faned published his fanzine quarterly, and he took time to get the best of material, and he was careful with his layout and reproduction. His fanzine was much more popular than the boastful faned's.

So the boastful faned decided to publish his fanzine even more often -- every two weeks. But now it was even more rushed and sloppy, and even less popular than before. At last the rigors of publishing MORTIS so often got the boastful faned down and he went off to FAPA to die. The other faned had won the bet, for his fanzine was voted into the Top Ten.

MORAL: Haste lacks taste.





GENERAL PROLOGUE

When that August with its Progress Reports
 Of plans being made for fun of all sorts
 At the yearly worldcon to be held Labor Day
 Has run half its course (as Chaucer would say);
 When conreports eke of the worldcon last year
 In fanzines galore at last start to appear,
 And memories run dimly back through the fog
 To Room 770, poker and blog,
 Then budgets and brains prove to be no prevention
 For fans who are bound to attend the convention.

Each year now of late there is always a plan
 For fans to join up in a car-caravan,
 Thus to travel cross-country in fine fannish style,
 Singing folk songs and drinking songs all of the while.
 And it happened one year that I joined such a throng;
 Now I'll tell you what happened as we went along.

But before I go on with my tale of the trip,
 I'll endeavor to give it some--what's the word?--zip!
 By telling what manner of fen were with me
 And eke of their backgrounds, as you will see--
 For I've oft heard it said, and you know that it's true,
 Good reports tell of fans who are well-known to you.
 So I'll give a brief fanfile on each of the fen,
 To acquaint you with all, then I'll go on again.

A Clubman there was, a full serious sort
Who would frown upon stfans who liked to make sport
At what was to them just a hobby, no more.
He would lecture at them, and quote First Fandom lore
Of Gernsback's Amazing and the early Weird Tales,
And he'd finish by trying to make high-priced sales
Of his duplicates (bought for a dime or a quarter)--
For he was a collector, but never a hoarder.
Energetic he was, and full oft at his club
The Recorder's fresh pencil was worn to the nub
Setting down in the minutes the speeches he made
To explain and support some new project he laid
At the door of the club with a rousing injunction
To remember that fostering stf was its function.
A noble appearing Clubman was he,
As it's really quite fitting an old-guardist be,
But his talk soon suggested that his true fan's ardour
Was less for s-f than increasing his larder;
For the fine stefnal projects he backed with such vim
Always seemed to involve paying money to him.
He oft to club meetings brought with him to show
To the members rare relics of fandoms ago:
The pen Weinbaum used when he wrote his first tale,
A handkerchief once used by Otto Willi Gail,
Some dust from the floor of Hannes Bok's garrett,
And a butt which he claimed had been smoked by A. Merritt.
With these souvenirs, and a story of each,
He would interest the members, and then make a speech
Calculated to stir up their old stefnal passion,
Then take up a collection, in his usual fashion.

A Feuder eke was with us there,
With narrowed eyes and fire-red hair--
A superfan, he, of Vorzimer's race,
And children, I'm told, were afraid of his face.
His voice was like thunder, or the pound of a gavel,
And if fans interrupted to argue or cavil,
By the end of the week he would have them in court
On charges of slander or ought of the sort.
Full oft he'd drink heavy, and lose inhibition,
Then would stand on a chair and damn fans to perdition.
For fans professed interest in s-f, whereas
Their fanzines concerned only sportscars and jazz.
This proved them all liars, and fakefans as well,
And thus he full roundly consigned them to Hell.
But somehow I feel that this Feuder's loud curse
Struck only at fans with their souls in their purse,
For he had no real pow'r for invoking damnation
And could back up his threat only through litigation.

A nonfan Wife from Bath there was,
But she knew well of fandom, and that was because
Three times she'd been married, each time to a fan,
And three times she'd been widowed--though never by plan;

For when each of her husbands had gone to his fate
His collection had comprised his entire estate.
Three times she'd attended science fiction conventions,
And each time she had gone with the best of intentions:
She'd sought at each con for a fan she might wed,
Though in truth she oft thought they were sick in the head.
Still, though they were eccentric, she found fans to be
Not one whit more eccentric at all than was she,
And considering the state of the world, she admitted,
Surely all of the nonfans too should be committed.
And in favor of fans there was much she could say,
Not the least being that they were good in the hay.
Her third husband, for instance, always joined her in bed
By leaping upon her from a wardrobe, she said.
He'd learned this technique from a story somewhere,
And he'd said the practitioners of it were rare.
Only fans knew the method, and so when he died
She set off for the con, and joined us for the ride.

A Faned there was, a boy still in his teens
Who'd but lately encountered the world of fanzines.
He pubbed amateur fiction and other such trash
And he dreamed of subs bringing in barrels of cash.
He charged thirty-five cents for his zine, FAR-OUT STEF
Saying, "That's five cents cheaper than F&SF."
But to speak of his figure, his clothes were quite old,
For his fanzine used up all his money, I'm told,
And his hair needed cutting, his shoes a good shine--
But he said once he got to the con he'd be fine,
For he had in his suitcase one change of underwear
And two hundred fanzines he planned to sell there.
He had also with him ten stories he'd written
Which he hoped he could sell, for he was quite smitten
With visions of fame, great fortune and glory
To be his by the sale of a single stf story.
But to be fully honest I must make defense
Of the Faned's ambitions, for he did have some sense:
Though for years he had always wanted to sell
To Campbell, he said Gold would do just as well.

Eke there was with us an Old Guard Fan
With a beard as white as had any man.
He had bushy grey eyebrows like clouds of thunder,
And he spoke many times of his sense of wonder.
But he was no fan of the Moskowitz school,
For he said that nostalgia was the mark of a fool.
A good sense of wonder was healthy, he'd say,
Only when it concerned stories written today.
For the sense of wonder, he'd often state,
Meant an inquisitive mind, which must keep up to date.
And to read science fiction, he said, was correct,
But only a damn fool would want to collect.
"To retain certain classics is most wise," he said,
"But the collector's critical instincts are dead.
"To bury oneself in old magazines

"Is a mark of regression, if you know what that means.
"To return to the womb, to the state of the foetus,
"Is the aim of the collector, especially the completist."
Full oft he would lecture us in that way,
And always we listened to what he would say,
For the young like to learn from the old when they can,
And he was a very wise Old Guard Fan.

A Trufan had also joined with us,
For he hadn't the money to take the bus.
His figure was slim, even gaunt, as they say,
And his eyes always seemed to look far, far away.
His voice was full soft, but he didn't speak much,
And then only of fandom and s-f and such.
"I have no other interest at all," said he,
"For fandom and stf are enough for me."
A really true fan, so we were told,
Would rather have fanzines or prozines than gold.
He said, "Money's the curse of the nonfan class,
"And they worship it every day at High Mass."
We asked him please to explain what he meant
And he said that all nonfans were decadent.
With each word he uttered he grew more obscure
For he didn't know what he was saying, I'm sure.
His idea seemed to be that true riches lay
Not in gold but in happiness, I would say.
Now, the usual idea of this sort says that health,
Love, friendship and peace go to make a man's wealth;
But to this Trufan riches were stencils and ink
And paper and prozines and fanzines, I think.

A Convention Fan had also come,
And he was our leader, according to some,
For they said we were going to a con, after all,
And therefore to him should the leadership fall.
This did not make much sense to a few of our group,
But none really cared, and so he led the troupe.
Now to speak of the man, his shoulders were broad,
As were most of his jokes, and J.D. was his god.
He was the hearty talking sort
Whose words made good copy for a conreport.
Once begun on the WSFS he would talk for an hour,
For he felt there was danger it might get too much power.
It might take over fandom if not watched, he said once,
Declaiming as theatrically as ever did the Lunts.
But though he thought that fandom consisted of conventions
Not a one of us disliked him, for he had the best intentions.

Now that I've told you as briefly as I can
Of the fans who were gathered in this caravan,
I'll relate of the things that took place on the day
That we left for Detroit two thousand miles away.

The Convention Fan said, as we piled in our cars,
"No doubt we'll be stopping at diners and bars,

"And at gas stations also, to empty and fill--
"Therefore I propose a game, if you will,
"Whereby in the evenings when we stop in to eat
"We'll take turns telling stories till the trip is complete.
"We'll have one tale a day, and the trip lasts a week--
"That should give each a chance, if he wants, to speak."

To this plan all among us agreed with full heart,
And the Wife of Bath said she would start.

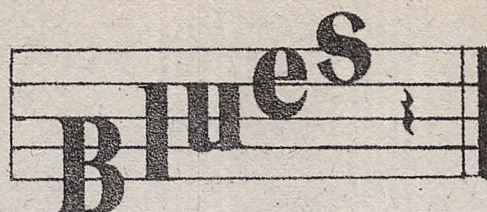
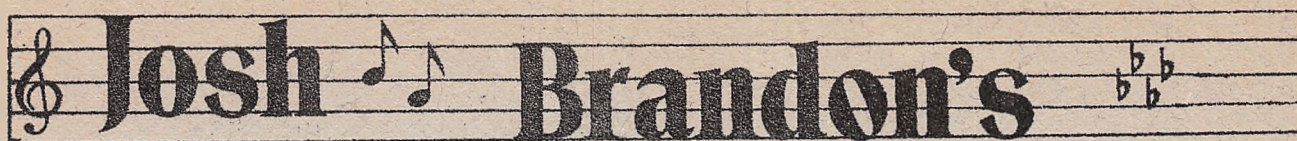
THE WIFE OF BATH'S PROLOGUE

There is a saying spreading in the lands
That fans to other fans should join their hands
In matrimony--never marry out
Of one's own class (that's fandom, have no doubt).
For--as the saying goes, at any rate--
Miscegenation is a bad estate
When it's between a fan and one who's not.
The grievances are many, well I wot,
Against a nonfan in a fannish home:
The carpings well could fill a weighty tome,
Were they collected, big as any annish--
And in these days 'twould be considered fannish.

Anthologies of fancrud are the rage
These days, and often page is piled on page
In order to amass an impressive book
Which fans will buy, put on their shelves, and look
At, thinking it so fannish and so fine,
The meanwhile calling stf collectors swine.
They grate at those collecting science fiction
Yet from their piles of fanzines feel no friction.
This is just fannish chauvinism pure,
And against it I'll have words, you may be sure.

The fan who thinks himself so fine and fannish,
Whose writings are obscure, whose actions clannish,
Has only one thing wrong: his head's too big.
Of things without his circle he's a prig:
He draws his circle round him, says "Begone!"
To nonfan things, as 'twere a pentagon.
I've never met a fan in all my days
--And be assured I well know fannish ways--
Who didn't have a touch of snobbery.
Now I will tell how this applies to me.

/Here the manuscript breaks off./



THE BLUES MY NAUGHTY HEKTO GIVES TO ME

Now, there are blues that you get from gafia,
And there are blues that you get from beer,
And blues when your witty column turns out to be solemn --
The blues that I earnestly fear.
There are blues that you get from deadlines,
But the very meanest blues that be
Are the kind that I've got on my hands,
 the purple curse from hekto pans,
The blues my naughty hekto gives to me.
There are blues you get when stencils
 make your repro reprehensible,
But you've bought the things in twenty-quire lots;
There are blues you get from typing
 when the sercons are all sniping
At the lack of cosmic meaning in your plots.
And there are blues that make a fan feel old and tired --
That's when he finds his HYPHEN sub has just expired.
And there are blues you get from planning
 some ambitious, high-cost fanning --
Next day at work you find that you've been fired.
And there are blues you get from thinking
 of the things you did while drinking
At the big con-party held the night before;
And there are blues you get from waiting
 for the conreports berating
You, and swearing that you won't drink any more.
But the blues that top all other forms of trials and tribulation,
The blues that make you want to end it all in gafiation,
Are the blues my naughty hekto gives to me.

DEGLER'S BLUES

I've got a cosmic mind, so what do I do now?
Yeah, I'm cosmic-minded, tell me what can I do now?
It's got me so upset I can't thin straight nohow.

Well, I'm star-begotten, I've got a very good family tree.
I said I'm star-begotten, and I've got a fine family tree --
Two parents in Newcastle, fairy godfather on Deneb III.

Some folks think I'm conceited, but I act modest as I can.
Some fans say I'm conceited, but I act modest as I can.
Well, I don't want to be God -- just call me Superfan.

Well now, I traveled corss-country on a goodwill tour,
But all the snob-fans said I was just a boo.
My thinking's so advanced that I can't make myself clear --
I've got a cosmic mind, so where do I go from here?

STAPLIN' BLUES

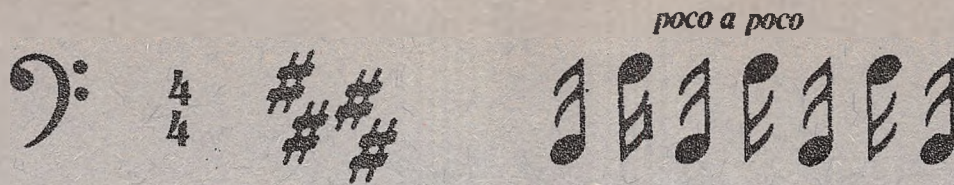
I've got my fanzine stenciled, got it run off too.
I've got my fanmag stenciled, got it mimeoed too.
So now comes the assembly -- got the staplin' blues.

The pages are in order, laid out on the floocr.
I've got 'em all in order, laid there on the floor.
I swear when this is finished I won't pub no more.

'Cause stapling's a job that I just cannot stand.
Oh this assembly work is something I can't stand.
I always get a sore back and a calloused hand.

I make a trip around and bang the staples in.
I make a second trip and bang the staples in.
Then I run out of staples -- man, you just can't win.

So now I'm sittin' here with pages on the floor.
I'm stiin' here with pages cluttering up the floor.
I got the staplin' blues, swear I won't pub no more.



FAKEFANNISH ME

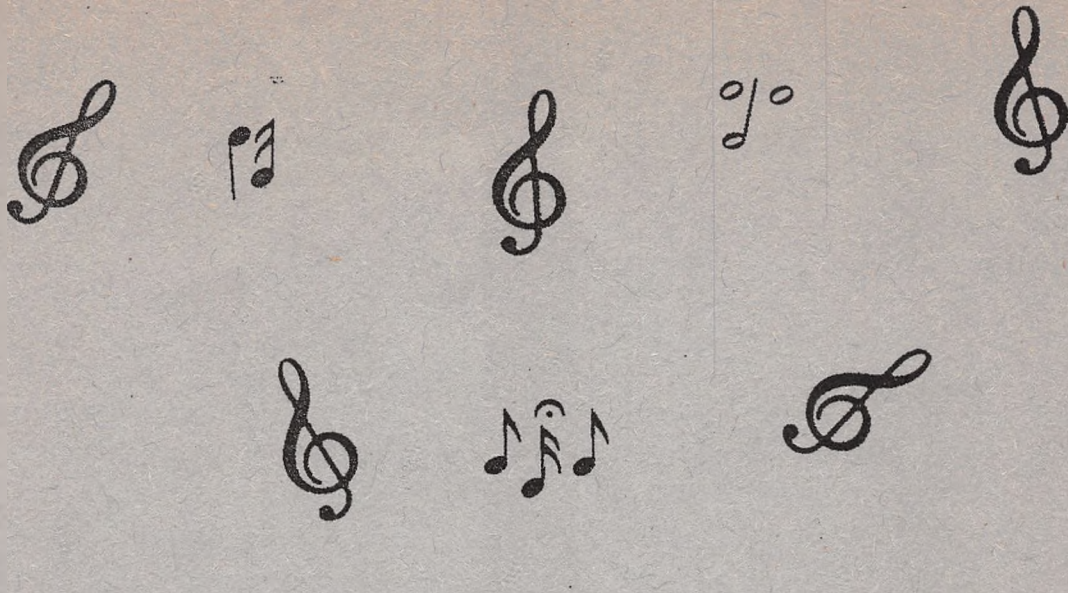
Now, when the mail cam this mornin' I was feelin' mighty bad
The mailman brought a new If -- well, it made me mad.
Because I'm a fakefan,
Plain ole fakefannish me.
I'm just a plain nonfan, mundane as any fan can be.

They even had it wrapped so careful it arrived completely mint.
I ran it through the garbage-disposal, now it's nothin' but lint.
Because I'm a fakefan,
Plain ole fakefannish me.
I'm just a plain nonfan, mundane as any fan can be.

Now if I ever went to a con I'm very sure that I'd be snubbed,
Because the stfmag I'd read has never been pubbed.
Yes, I'm a fakefan,
Plain old fakefannihs me.
I'm just a plain nonfan, mundane as any fan can be.

Well, I wouldn't even care if stf should die out right now.
In fact, if I could kill it off myself, I'd take a bow.
Because I'm a fakefan.
Fakefannish as I can be.
I'm just an outright nonfan. you won't find any tendrils on me.





NEW YORK FANDOM BLUES

In New York fandom the fans are mean as they can be.
Yes, in New York fandom the fans are mean as they can be.
Well, each fan saves all this money just so he can pay his lawyer's fee.

Now, in New York fandom there is no sweetness and light.
No, in New York fandom there ain't no sweetness and light.
'Cause if you make freinds with one fan his enemy will start a fight.

Well, when I moved to New York I didn't know what it was all about.
When I moved to New York fandom I didn't know what it was all about.
Five feuds and a lawsuit later I finally began to find out.

Well, if you move to New Ycrk, boy, you're surely sealing your own doom.
No, don't move to New York, boy -- you'd only be sealing your doom.
'Cause there are twenty feauding fanclubs, and they all meet in the
same courtroom.

I can't move away, boy, though stayin' here ain't no fun.
I'd like to move away, yeah, 'cause stayin' here ain't no fun.
Well, they'll sue me if I stay here, but they'll extradite me if I run.

The fans here are mean, they read court dockets to get all the news.
Yeah, the fans here are mean, they read court dockets just to get
the news.
And I'm caught in the crossfire, I got the New York fandom blues.



BLUES FOR THE SENSE OF WONDER

Well, I went down to the used-mag store last night.
Yes, I went down to the used-mag store last night.
There wasn't no good ole pulpzines in sight.

Went to the newsstand, bought an F&SF.
Dropped by the newsstand, bought me an F&SF.
Read all the stories -- no sense of wonder left.

They had a story there about some interstellar doom.
You know I read this story about some interstellar doom.
No sense of wonder there -- it all took place in one room.

CHORUS:

When good old Doc Smith wrote 'em, the aliens always kicked up a fuss,
And Edmond Hamilton would always wreck a world for us.
Why, even E. Mayne Hull had her princesses on Venus,
And when the bems attacked, Kuttner'd raise force-fields to screen us.

They don't write stories with a sense of wonder anymore.
No, they don't write stories with a sense of wonder anymore.
And the stories that have it I've read ten times before.

Well, people call me a fakefan 'cause I find stf such a bore.
A lot of folks say I'm a fakefan 'cause I find stf such a bore.
But man, they just don't write stf with a sense of wonder anymore.

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the portable Garl Brandon

