



Number 23

Redd Boggs, editor

Summer 1972

"Improve every opportunity to express yourself in writing, as if it were your last." -- Thoreau, Journal, 17 December 1851.

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Nowadays Pot is the only true ghod.

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Continued on the Next Burma Shave Sign \*

(Scene: Hugo's Garage)

HEINLEIN: Say, fellow, I want some repair service!

HUGO: Okay, bud. Just let me finish gassing up this high-octane guzzler. Some beauty, ain't she?

HEINLEIN: It looks like a hearse, painted lavender. And both the tail-lights are broken. It would be hard to follow, in a procession. Who drives that contraption?

HUGO: Her name's Le Guin -- you wouldn't know her. Now let me fill out this work-order on your car. Lessee, which car's yours?

HEINLEIN: That Packard there. All it needs is a tune-up to be as good as new. And you might calibrate the compass attached to the dash.

HUGO (chewing cigar): That machine's from the 1930s -- a 16-cylinder monster. I dunno whether we can get the parts.

HEINLEIN: But it's a sound automobile -- it will last. It always has.

HUGO: Not like Mr Wells' Rolls, buddy. That's still running, better than ever. Hey, will you look at that!

HEINLEIN: Why are you waving at that plutocrat riding past in his chauffeured limousine? Who is that?

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\* The characters, places, incidents, and situations in this story are imaginary and have no relation to any person, place, or actual happening. All resemblances are coincidental.

HUGO: An old customer. He don't come in here much any more, except for retreads now and then. He moved out of the old neighborhood a while back. His name's Asimov....

HEINLEIN: I don't really blame him for avoiding this dump. Nobody who could get out would want to be caught dead around here.

HUGO: Oh, now, I dunno about that. Mr Tucker still drives in once in a while with his old green Studebaker, and he's been around. And lookit that repainted Peugeot up on the grease rack. That belongs to a Mr Sil -- Watch out! JUMP!

HEINLEIN (recovering): Who is that maniac in the pink VW?

HUGO: He don't drive so good yet, but maybe he'll learn. Good thing he ain't driving a Jag. Oops! Will you look at that! He just totalled Miz McCaffrey's little motorbike! Hey, Mr Zelazny, I tol' you last time you should oughta take driving lessons.

HEINLEIN: I must leave -- I'm a busy man. When will my car be ready?

HUGO: Who knows? Hey, here comes another vintage automobile -- ain't that a beautiful wreck, though? That's Mr Van Vogt's car. Hiya, Mr VV, what can I do for you?

VAN VOGT: I need some repairs. My Stutz Bearcat is running a little rough lately.

HUGO: And why the hell shouldn't it? I tol' you a couple months ago that you needed a valve job. And now you got two flat tires.

VAN VOGT: Then fix the flats, and give me an oil change. It'll be OK.

ZELAZNY: Listen, Mr Garageman, I just dropped by for some of your cut-rate gas, but I need your advice, see? I'm thinking of buying a better car. What would you recommend? I'm a seafaring man, and I don't know much about this sort of thing.

HUGO: Well, Mr Delany gets a lot of mileage out of a Pinto -- pretty, but nothin' under the hood. Then there's Mr Brunner, who drives that MG over there -- the one with the psychedelic colors. You can see him coming a mile away, it's so fancy and loud, but on the other hand....

ZELAZNY: I had in mind something like a Chevy.

HUGO: Well, Mr Aldiss drives one of them -- solid but dull. Can you step back a bit and let Mr Koontz up to the air-hose with his unicycle? Looks like he wants to inflate that tire again. It's always leaking.

ZELAZNY: God, the things people use for transportation these days. It makes one pang for the days of the good old horse-and-buggy.

HUGO: You mean like Mr Lin Carter owns? That would be a good rig for you too, Mr Zelazny. But as for crazy vehicles, you tell 'em, bud. Just look over there at Mr Bob Shaw's soapbox racer -- it's got square

wheels! Mr Piers Anthony, of course, always comes in here in a hot-air balloon. And you ought to have seen Mr Gene Wolfe trying to steer into the garage across the street on his skateboard some while back. Nearly made it -- what a pratfall! But speaking of all this, do you see what's coming?

ZELAZNY: Good lord, what is it? Makes me dizzy to see it bobbing along like a mad jackrabbit.

HUGO: Sure, that's Mr Ellison on his pogo stick!

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Come back, Bill Stoy!

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### The Times They Are A-changed

Fancylopedia II (Richard Eney): "CHRISTMAS CARD ...the most significant historically was the one received by Will Sykora, in 1939, when he was at feud with the Futurians. It was a card with a slit in it thru which was thrust one of the fingers of a rubber glove, with the legend: 'To help you make merry Christmas eve, here's something else to screw your friends with.' He assumed this to be a Futurian joke, and sicced the Postal Authorities on them for transmission of such stuff thru the mails. Despite the offer of a reward for information, neither Sykora nor the Post Office was able to find any evidence against the FSNY."

The Daily Californian, University of California, Berkeley, 3 December 1971; ad for Population Planning assn, 105 N. Columbia, Chapel Hill, N.C., 27514: "Make Christmas merrier this year, with our unique Christmas sampler containing 13 assorted condoms in a gold foil box trimmed with a bright red and gold tie. Contains quarter-dozen packets of the 4 brands mentioned above [Trojan, Prime, Conture, Koin-Pack], plus one Crest-Skin, made of super-sensitive animal membrane. For each sampler, plus our brochure, send just \$5 plus 50¢ postage and handling. All orders filled the same day received and shipped first class. Money back if not delighted!"

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"I'll tell you a story / The map is not the territory, shouted..." ftl

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### A Voyage to Pollutia

"Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird."

-- Revelation, xviii, 2

Not long ago I ventured forth from my ground-floor ivory tower in Berkeley to visit Fresno, regnant city of the San Joaquin valley, wedged in among furrows and fences like a prairie-dog town. So seldom do I seize staff and scrip and go as a pilgrim among fans, fundamentalists,

Republicans, and other vaguely reprehensible types, that I looked with the innocent eyes of a stranger deep into the polluted heart of America. The sights (and sounds and odors, and the gritty soot, as well) that assailed me from that core of desolation sent me hastening back to my blessed solitude, guarded round and caressed day and night by the civilized art of Mozart, Breugel, Wordsworth, and cogeners, where for the moment I am safe.

Driving alongside the San Joaquin valley at night, one might suppose that the whole vast gulf of darkness off the larboard bow is a mighty city like Los Angeles, or else that the principal crop of the region is blazing electric lights. But by day, whizzing past endless orchards and vineyards, one finds that the people are almost lost amid the carefully cultivated products of the fields, cherries, olives, walnuts, almonds, grapes, and raisins. Despite the manifest exploitations of the California "agribusiness," one finds pleasure in such rincons of spaciousness and vegetation, where one can be assured again that "the earth abideth for ever."

At the end of the season that passes for winter in this climate, there was little being produced in the fields, and the only ripe fruit in view were the oranges burning bright amid the dark foliage of trees in private enclosures here and yon and scattered on the grass beneath. Enough fruit was rotting away, one would think, to supply all of California with orange juice, but as everyone knows, fresh orange juice is harder to come by in California these days than Courvoisier Napoleon.

The roads and streets of America are littered -- much less picturesque than the lawns under orange trees, I can tell you -- by scrofulous wastelands of flashy, jerry-built motels, bleak, cutrate service stations, and franchise hamburger stands and restaurants dispensing the haute cuisine of our abused age: null-vituals for a public fortuitously equipped with cast-iron innards -- the necessary equipment not only for the purpose of digesting the indigestible, but for the ordeal of even contemplating such stuff. The number of franchise restaurants has incredibly proliferated like quackgrass since I last sojourned on the pikes and highways of America.

The abomination of such chrome-and-imitation-leather feed-troughs spreads upon the wind like the stench of industrial wastes, which indeed may be the prime ingredient of its ersatz goods. The whiff that assails the nostrils as one rushes by places festooned with neon signs offering 29¢ hamburgers is that of something far less savory than meat afrying.

Suffering pangs of hunger in the midst of plenty, we paused at Los Banos (Spanish for The Boondocks, I believe) to take viands. Charles Hornig, believe it or not, once lived in this town (population 9000), though it is unlikely that he survived for long if he did not quickly take to his heels. We chose a pancake house (a rival of the bigger and more famous International House of Pancakes chain) as probably the least poisonous restaurant in town. What can even a shark-toothed capitalist do (we reasoned) to debase pancakes? The answer is, quite a lot.

We should have jumped up and departed as if pursued by hounds as soon as we took one sip of our coffee, brought us while we awaited our

orders. What was tepidly drizzled into our cups was that indeterminate swill of bad restaurants that Abraham Lincoln protested, back in a better day, by asking the waiter, "Say, if this is coffee, then please bring me some tea, but if this is tea, bring me some coffee." But we remained, and eventually were served some cold, tough, bleached things, resembling paper coasters, that were said to be pancakes of some exotic variety. They were not. Visions of stomach pumps danced in our heads. Even drenched in imitation maple sirup, the things were inedible.

Pancakes are made of batter that is mixed of the simplest sort of ingredients: flour, salt, baking soda, milk, butter or margarine, and eggs. These items are cheap in bulk, but the pancake makers evidently have discovered how to save perhaps  $\frac{1}{2}\%$  per 10,000 flapjacks by constructing their goods of even cheaper, if unpalatable, stuff. The cakes that were shoved before us were apparently built of thin, compressed layers of a slurry cooked out of soy beans or sawdust and mixed with axle-grease. The cakes can be prefabricated at a central factory and shipped frozen to retail outlets, ready to be warmed in electronic ovens.

The ovens are hardly marvels of technology, since the pancakes were hardly warm, but the fraudulent flapjacks were soundly made and had survived months or years of storage and shipping without getting chipped or cracked. Nitric acid would not damage them. The people who worked in the kitchens were not cooks at all and hence do not at all qualify for cooks' wages or even for membership in a cooks' union. How fortunate for the pancake house owners, if not for their hardy customers.

In Fresno itself, by the way, we did discover one admirable restaurant: Estrada's, serving Mexican-style food at reasonable prices and in a pleasant setting. It stands on the main drag, Blackstone avenue, down in the center of Ur-Fresno. So all is not lost if you end up in Fresno half-starved. But even here anyone in quest of good food will do well to avoid Estrada's take-out place at the far end of North Blackstone, which warms up tortillas, frijoles, and rice packaged at the downtown kitchens.

The patrons of most eating-places on the road are beaten in at the ears or sorely bedraggled by heavy applications of canned music. Either it is rock music from coin machines, or the tight-throated howls of Bob Dylan and his equally untalented competitors, or else the somehow even more obscene noise of Muzak. What a world this is when people must dull their minds or stamp out thought altogether with such pervading din, or else resort at home to ministrations of pot or other drugs, guaranteed to vegetablize one for a space.

Most motels, we found, seem to come equipped these days with vibrating units in the mattresses and full-length mirrors placed alongside, or at the end of the beds. As accessories in the pursuit of sexual adventure, these are excellent, but where are the TV cameras mounted over the bed, with devices for instant replay? Here, as elsewhere, the Japanese are far ahead of us.

There is a TV set in every motel room, of course -- better a room without a bed than without TV. At our motel, the indispensable set, a huge cumbersome box, was fastened to the wall like a bloodsucking leech.

Three years and more had passed since I was assailed by television programs and commercials, except for occasional glimpses of them in homes and stores (from which, of course, I averted my eyes), and I was not at all prepared for the fortissimo onslaught. It was like being buried to the ears in steaming garbage and assaulted at the same time by hordes of shrieking rats. I marvel that nearly everyone else in America bathes in such sewage many hours each and every day. Half an hour was as much as I could endure, even for the purpose of carrying out a clinical study of simian behavior in America today. The quality of the programs is lower, if possible, than that of comicbooks, and good taste has departed here as in the restaurant trade. I offer these observations based on quick glimpses of something between the commercials.

People assure me that they turn off their minds when the commercial interludes come on. (The process must be as relentless as the flicker of the light in a refrigerator loaded with beer on a hot evening.) They say they don't really watch or listen to the commercial plugs at all -- but their subconscious sees and hears. I most seriously question whether anyone can remain sane under regular applications of such drivel. No wonder there are so many mindless people around. People conditioned by TV will believe in anything: astrology, Scientology, Hare Krishna, Mick Jagger, Tang, Richard M. Nixon, all of which are frauds or imitations of mind and matter. (Many of our politicians, elected to office by the teeveed multitude, strike me, with their hard, venerated faces and their stiff, uptight behavior, as nothing more than homunculi or androids that have been cleverly programmed to mimic human behavior without being in the least human themselves. Do our masters turn off Ronald Reagan at night to save electricity?)

The futuristic nightmares depicted in Frederik Pohl's science fiction lie all around us, perfectly credible but entirely unremarked. I feel like the narrator of Wallace West's "The Phantom Dictator," when he found that the rest of the world had been taken over unawares by Willy Pan. The America that we (or at least I) knew as children has been flushed down by a deluge vaster than the one that engulfed Atlantis, and hardly anyone has noticed that we are all swimming in the cesspool.

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Christine Jorgenson is an MCP.

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Law-Abiding Citizens department

(Extinct Species division)

(from a letter in the Co-op News of Berkeley, 22 February 1971)

"Editor: Why don't those bleeding hearts [people who protested a cop shooting a holdup man in a crowded supermarket] face the facts of life? A thief is a thief -- thief -- THIEF. He's committed a crime. If he's not stopped he'll commit other crimes, and some day he may kill someone.

"If I'm in the way when you catch a thief, shoot. I'd rather be shot by accident, if the crook is stopped, than see him walk out, scot-free. Any law-abiding citizen will say the same...."

### My Thirty Years in Fandom -- and How They Flew

I find in my files recently revived from storage since 1962 in a Minneapolis basement an incomplete and undated MS of nine doublespaced pages which I deduce from typeface and occasional references was written sometime around 1958. It was evidently intended to introduce an annotated "catalog" of my fan publications up to that time, a span of 11 years or so. Unfortunately the "catalog" itself has not turned up, although I believe it was at least partially compiled. Without that listing of early publications, the task of making a complete register of every Gafia press publication is a formidable one because I began to keep a running account of them only at the beginning of 1963. However, the introductory material is interesting in itself, for it recalls some things about my fan-nish career that I had forgotten.

The following installment of this series of fannish memoirs, and some future ones, will be based on the facts and observations recorded back there, 14 or more years ago.

#### 3. The Naming of Names

My first fanzine, Caprice -- which amazingly was issued in March 1947, more than six years after I first entered fandom -- carried the imprint line, "A Redlance Publication." The name was chosen without much forethought, I remember. One who is about to make history by issuing his First Fanzine should not do anything connected with it so casually as I chose my original press name. I lifted the name "Redlance" from Jack Williamson's "The Crucible of Power" (Astounding, February 1939) because I admired the story, of course -- I was pretty naive in those days, as you can easily see -- but also because I was pleased with the associations it conjured up between "Redd" and "lance," thinking at first of a weapon qua weapon and only belatedly realizing the Freudian implications. Nobody ever mentioned the latter possibility, but I was uncomfortable with the name, finding it juvenile, if nothing else, and early contemplated changing it.

But meantime, while I considered the matter in a solemn and peristaltic fashion as befitted my dignity as a fan of infinite wisdom, I issued a number of publications under that aegis. The last was the only issue of Chronoscope, autumn 1948, thereafter combined with Sky Hook. Most of the time, however, the name "Redlance" was hyphenated with "Neotoric," the press name chosen by Bob Stein of Milwaukee for his fan publications, Fantasy Illustrated and variant titles, which began appearing late in 1946. The combination imprint was used for most of the fanzines published jointly by Bob and myself, although the first two issues of Tympany were ostensibly done for Stein and not with him and thus did not carry the imprint. The remaining 20 issues of Tympany/Tympani, and the special Philcon Memory Book issue (which finally appeared when the Philcon was indeed only a memory), were slugged "A Neotoric-Redlance Publication."

So far as I remember, the "Redlance" imprint never appeared on Sky Hook, although the first issue of that fanzine appeared in February 1948

-- months before the final appearance of the press name on Chronoscope. This may only indicate the fact that Chronoscope was stenciled long before it finally was run off, but likely it also indicated that I was embarrassed to use the "Redlance" name on a fanzine intended for the eyes of FAPA's fannish elite.

With Sky Hook #6, spring 1949, the imprint "Gafia press" began to appear for the first time, and it has continued to appear on most of my fan publications ever since. After more than 23 years, I suppose I must be satisfied with the name.

The term "gafia" was coined in the 1930s by Richard Wilson from the expression "get away from it all," which -- as Speer's Fancyclopedia points out -- was the "motto of escapism." The term seems to have had to do with the then-current controversy in fandom between those who considered science fiction merely escapist literature and those, such as the Michelists, who believed that it could change the world. (See "escapism" in Fancyclopedia I or II.) I knew about "gafia" as defined in the Fancyclopedia, of course, but its use as a press name was first suggested to me by an interlineation in a Burbee publication about 1947, which consisted merely of a reiterated "gafia gafia gafia" across the page. I adopted the term mostly because it appealed to me as a gen-u-wine fannish coinage of esoteric meaning.

A year after it became my press name, the term having been brought to fresh prominence by my use of it, Arthur H. Rapp essayed the task of defining "gafia" for his original Fanspeak (1950) and in the process thoroughly altered its meaning. As Richard Eney's Fancyclopedia II expresses it, "gafia" at that point underwent "a complete reversal of significance so that now 'that flash of sanity known as Gafia' refers to a vacation from fandom back in the world of normalcy, where nobody reads that crazy Buck Rogers stuff." The Rapp definition gave the term a useful and ever-pertinent meaning for the first time, and it has been a popular expression ever since. It has also made my press name especially appropriate all these years, for I have been in a state of permanent gafia since 1949.

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Do crush that dwarf -- off the pygmy!

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BETE NOIRE (formerly Cockatrice) is edited and published occasionally for the Fantasy Amateur Press association by Redd Boggs, Post Office Box 1111, Berkeley, California, 94701. This issue, marking the tenth anniversary of this herenow fanzine, is intended for circulation with FAPA mailing #140, summer 1972, which is my hundredth mailing as a member. In 1867 was found a Runic inscription on a rock near Washington D.C. which reported the discovery of America by the Irish in 875. The text of this issue was cut on Ritefine stencils and Gestetnered on Fibertone lime bought at Arvey Paper (King has abdicated in favor of Arvey). Logo by Bjo Trimble; this issue it is offset from an early Gestetnered impression made before her signature was belatedly added. The Gafia press.

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Whiffy-zut to you, Eldrin Fzot.

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