

Model D 77



BY OWL LIGHT 8

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** ** ions are 6/\$1. A Bran & Skolawn Press Publication. August 1, 1974

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WE'RE NOT THE ONLY CRAZY ONES There's nothing like a science fiction convention to bring out the craziness in people. I guess this is fresh in my mind because I've just returned from Westercon held at the Francisco Torres in Goleta near Santa Barbara. Those of you who have attended cons there know that there are two residence towers each ten stories high. Elevators are the mode of transportation between floors and by convention's end the interiors are plastered with signs, some clever and some not so clever. The best and the worst come out during the four days of a con. I've often wondered whether other hobby groups are as clever and creative as sf people. I don't have much of an opportunity to look in on other hobby groups but in opening the mail stacked up from a ten-day absence, I came across an announcement that a folksinger of some repute was coming to town to give a couple of concerts. After one of the concerts a party for members of the Seattle Folklore Society is being given by a Dr. Bear. He calls his place Ursa Manor. The directions indicate that he lives on Robin Hood Drive. Parenthetically this remark was made: (Errol Flynn lurks in the forest hereabouts, robbing the rich and giving to the poor, deducting only 25% for postage and handling.) Well, I guess that gives me a small glimpse into what other people do with their brains. I suppose they're all just as crazy as we are. Fascinating!

ROGER ZELAZNY With all due respects to Denis Quane (whom I admire highly not only for the frequency of NOTES FROM THE CHEMISTRY DEPT., but equally as highly for the quality of the material therein) I am not what you would call an inveterate reader of Analog. Oh, I buy it; a collector, you know. But I seldom read anything from it. It does seem to be changing, however. The July issue has a story by Roger Zelazny and I'm likely to read anything by Mr. Z. All argument about his early heights and being less successful in recent works aside, I still enjoy Zelazny's work.

"The Engine at Heartspring's Center" is a slight story, only six-and-a-half pages long. Yet it is a touching story of two people waiting for death, preparing for it and in the process changing their minds. A slightly twisty ending detracts somewhat from the mood it had established in my mind, yet I was pleased to see the story and to have a chance to read it. Thank you, Ben Bova.

In the August issue of The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction, Sidney

Coleman reviews TO DIE IN ITALBAR in a brief page. Ah, but the preceding three pages make a fine exposition of Zelazny as mythmaker in his earlier works. There are comparisons with Samuel R. Delany and Cordwainer Smith and a too brief analysis of Zelazny's method of creating myth. The review of TO DIE is not kind and I'd have to agree with Mr. Coleman that the book does not come anywhere near Zelazny's earlier successes. Still, in my mind mediocre Zelazny is better than lots of other stuff that is being written. Ah, such is loyalty.

At Westercon I managed to pick up a hardcover 1st edition of DAMNATION ALLEY from Ted Pauls of T-K Graphics and from Tom Whitmore I obtained an ex-lib copy of NINE PRINCES IN AMBER. So I was able to add somewhat to my shelf of hardcover Zelazny. Would that I could be at Discon to hear and meet the man. Perhaps someone will tape his GoH speech.

PROCOL HARUM Aha! Procol Harum came to town and Anna Jo and I went to see and hear them. They appeared as headliners at Paramount Northwest on a show that was supposed to include Steeleye Span and Peter Frampton's Camel. Steeleye Span is a favorite of mine, quite traditionally ballad-oriented but with contemporary instrumentation. I was anxious to see and hear them and thought that a double billing with Procol Harum would make a great evening. Well, Steeleye Span cancelled, so I was partly disappointed. But PH put on a great show, playing for an hour and a half or better, much of it from their two most recent albums, "Exotic Birds and Fruit" and "Grand Hotel".

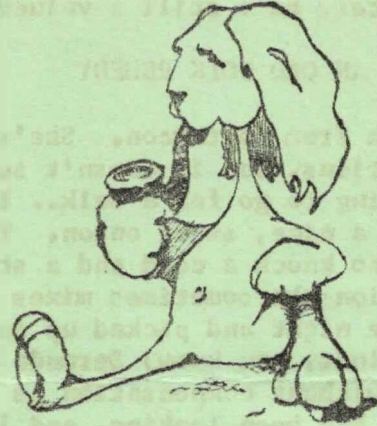
I had seen the group two years ago as a Father's Day present and was delighted at the much superior stage arrangement they used this time with B.J. Wilson on drums at stage right and Gary Brooker on piano at stage left facing each other. Chris Copping's organ faced directly out toward the audience from center back and the open space in front gave Alan Cartwright on bass and Mick Grabham on guitar room to move around. Mick fits this group far better than Robin Trower ever did, in my opinion. He made the guitar really sing. It was a fine concert and I enjoyed it. Anna Jo has reserved her opinion. We are not rock concert goers as a rule, but Procol Harum is something special. Anna Jo had never been to a big concert of this nature before and we were quite obvious and had to be the oldest people there. I decided to not let that bother me and to act like I belonged there, but we did get a lot of curious looks.

I was delighted when Gary Brooker mentioned that he had just finished reading WATERSHIP DOWN by Richard Adams. B.J. Wilson also mentioned a book he was reading, RINGOLEVIO. I know I've seen this book but now that I've been keeping my eyes open for it, I haven't seen a copy so I can't tell you who the author might be nor what the book is about. But at least we know that the group is literate.

Peter Frampton is ex-guitarist with Humble Pie and his group, Camel, is loud. I wasn't too impressed. Although Frampton is a pretty fair guitarist and has a good voice, I didn't think his songs were all that great. Fortunately they only stayed on for about 35 minutes, by which time I was nearly deaf and needed to escape, however momentarily. I'm told he made a fine record shortly after leaving Humble Pie, but I also hear that it was done primarily with studio people. The keyboard player, bass and drums weren't even introduced by Frampton, got no solo work and did no vocal work except as background to Frampton. Too bad. The band looks young, needs maturity, better material and was a poor choice to bill with the more sophisticated, older, more classically oriented Procol Harum.

Well, Procol Harum fans will know that I enjoyed myself, other will say "Eh!" and some will ask, "What's a Procol Harum?"

HIERO'S JOURNEY I won't go into a lengthy review here, but I'd like to plug Sterling E. Lanier's **HIERO'S JOURNEY**. It's got to have one of the worst covers in terms of selling a book that I've seen in years. Surprisingly, the cover is fairly accurate once you have read the story. But before you know what the story is about, you might be led to believe that contained therein is a Japanese mutated horror story. What is there instead is a whang-bang tale of adventure set some 5000 years in a future North America. I'll review it more fully in *Ash-Wing 15* but meantime, believe me that it is a fine tale, and believe Fred Pohl, who selected the book. He's hit on two out of three of his selections. At least both of the stories which I have read have been satisfying. The other one is Doris Piserchia's **STAR RIDER**. His third selection, which I have not read is Mack Reynold's **COMMUNE 2000**. Anybody out there read it yet? Back to **HIERO'S JOURNEY**, I understand that it is the first book of three in the series. I'll look forward to the two upcoming sequels, as I enjoyed the heck out of this one. One thing in its favor is that it is long enough to really sink your teeth into, running over 370 pages.



OWLS COME HOME TO ROOST Every year at Westercon I manage to run into Jeff Yates. And every year Jeff manages to apologize profusely for not locating my zines. "You know, Frank," he says, "I just never seem to be able to get around to writing you a loc. I have good intentions, but somehow it never happens." Then I respond to Jeff with: "Now, never you mind, Jeff. As long as once a year you tell me that you are still enjoying *Ash-Wing*, then I'll keep you on the mailing list." It's a little role-playing game we play and then we manage to go on to more important things, like what books he has found during the year since we've last had a chance to talk, what the book shop is doing, whether he's still smoking the same old tobacco, and what has he read lately that I have not and was it worth it.

This year was like every other Westercon. Jeff and I did our little act and then got down to a few minutes of serious talk, to be followed up later at meals where we sometimes found ourselves sharing the same table. Well, I enjoy our relationship and even if Jeff doesn't write, I still like the guy and I know he enjoys getting my stuff even if he can't respond (I figure it's a deep seated psychological thing; see, I even figure things out to take him off the hook).

So in the mail on July 20th arrives a tube with two lovely owl posters inside. On the back of one poster is a note to the effect that a sage Chinese once said something about a visual being worth many, many words and so Jeff figured that these ought to be worth a couple of locs anyway. By Crom, you know, he's right.

I used to always have a poster hanging on the back of the front door; I used to change it about once a month and kept my stock of Tolkiene posters, owls, Sierra Club scenes and other riff raff circulating and ever changing. Some time back the poster got taken down and for some obscure reason wasn't replaced. Perhaps it was a formal dinner coming up and we didn't think that the poster quite

fit for the evening. Anyway, it's been lacking, but within fifteen minutes after the arrival of Jeff's owls, I had found the sticks I used to use for hanging the posters and one of them is now gracing the door for the next month. All of which is by way of saying thanks to Jeff and reassuring him that even though he's a poor loc writer, he's still a valued reader.

ONIONS: AN OLD FOLK REMEDY Anna Jo has been suffering from a cold, an earache and infection of the eustachian tube ever since we got back from Westercon. She's been to see the doctor once and has been following instructions, but it doesn't seem to be improving. Last night she asked me if I were going to go for a walk.. If I were, would I stop by the local Safeway and pick up a nice, sweet onion. There is nothing like an onion sandwich, in her opinion, to knock a cold and a stuffed up head. Unless it's onions and vinegar, a concoction she sometimes mixes up for about the same symptoms. So I trudged off into the night and picked up one white, sweet-smelling (you don't thump them like watermelons, you know) Bermuda onion, cost 20¢ plus 1¢ tax. The trip was not entirely without compensation as I managed to spot the first novel of a series for which I had been looking, and I had also managed to get a little exercise. So all was well until I got the thing home.

Let me tell you, she whomped up an onion sandwich and took it into the family room while she was doing a bit of sewing and television watching. Meantime, I was in the dining room a good fifteen feet away. And at that distance it made my eyes water. I threatened to make her sleep on the davenport, in the spare room, the garage, or the shed where the garden tools are kept. I told her that if she breathed anywhere near me, it would be grounds for divorce. Well; it didn't do any good. She claimed squatter's rights in the bed. Fortunately, it's a Paul Bunyan size, I don't think they come any bigger, and as long as she turned away from me and breathed in the other direction, I was safe.

In spite of all the folk medicine treatment, it didn't work as well as it has in the past, so this morning (20th) she went back to the doctor and got a different prescription which he hopes will knock the dumb thing. This is a stupid time of the year to have a cold and ear infection. And besides I don't know if I can take much more of the onion remedy. The walk I didn't mind, but it's dumb to see a grown man cry, even if it's from the onion.

BLACKSTONE The book I mentioned above san title was the first of the Blackstone series. This looks as if it has the makings of a crackerjack of a series. It takes us back to the Georgian era and gives us as a hero one of the Bow Street Runners. Blackstone is his name and he has a background rough enough to handle the kinds of crime rampant in the rather seedy streets of London at that time.

The first novel, **BLACKSTONE**, the hero is called upon to foil a plot for the daring kidnap of Victoria, heir to the throne of England. The setting moves throughout the fabric of London society, from the slums to the drawing rooms of aristocrats.

The second novel in the series is entitled **BLACKSTONE'S FANCY** and deals with the prizefighting of the day, outlawed already, but still being carried on clandestinely. Blackstone is given the mission to put an end to the outlawed sport and the corrupt men who were growing wealthy on it at the expenditure of the fighters. If you like your mysteries with a little bit of historical background in them, Blackstone might be just what you are looking for. London's underground and the Bow Street Runners ought to provide all of the action one could wish for. The author is Richard Falkirk and seemingly is not a house name. The hardcovers were originally published in 1973 by Stein and Day. Good reading. Try them.

SAY GOODNIGHT, DICK (August 8, 1974)

Tonight saw the resignation of the 37th President of these United States. I

really don't want to do much more than record it here. We've all read, heard, discussed the Watergate Affair and the President's role until we are more than likely sick to the death of it. We'll hear more of it to come. Arguments will continue as to whether for the good of our constitutional law the impeachment proceedings should have gone the entire distance. Others want us to get on with the business at hand. I've been pleased with what I have seen thus far of the constitutional system. It works. One of the most interesting commentaries that I heard in the rather extensive post-mortem this evening was that in a weaker nation revolution may have taken place long before this. Well, enough. I probably won't agree with President Ford's political philosophy and perhaps some of his policies which may be forthcoming, but I do think he has a chance to pull the nation together and let us get to some more important things. Not that Watergate wasn't important nor that I don't think some legislation ought to be forthcoming so that it doesn't happen again. But we've been bogged down with Watergate for long enough. I won't even comment on whether Nixon should or should not be criminally prosecuted. I'm sure that will all work out one way or the other. Perhaps one thing that I hope very much is that Ford will act sufficiently strongly to pull the Republican Party back together and give them a fighting chance in the elections of 1976. I wouldn't care for one party dominating so strongly that there was virtually no opposition in the ensuing congress.

CLEAN UP TIME (August 8, 1974)

In the meantime, having wearied of about three hours of post-mortem on the above we fled to the yard and loaded up all sorts of junk that's been sitting around for long enough and trundled off to the dump. Just as I was about to load two old rusty bedsteads onto the top of the car, the young fellow from across the street came over to enquire whether we were throwing them out. When I said that we were, he asked if he might have one or both of them. There were no springs, but he was welcome to the bedsteads and the railings. With judicious use of naval jelly he ought to be able to get the rust off of them and give them a spray paint job and make them entirely serviceable. Lucky thing he took them because I managed to find enough other stuff around to make up a complete load to haul down to the transfer station. Why all of this yard activity? Ah, read on, gentle reader.

WEDDING TIME (August 8, 1974)

Yes, there is to be a wedding this Sunday, August 11. Shannon, daughter and youngest of the Denton tribe, is to become the bride of Joe Fasekas. It will be a garden wedding, not however at this house, but at hers. She's been away from the nest for about a year and a half. But there is great anticipation of huge numbers of relatives who will come over to our house after the wedding is over, and the feast has been devoured. Preparations have been made for a caterer to lay out turkey, ham, salads, punch and all sorts of other goodies for about a hundred people. Obviously we pray that it does not rain; the Northwest, you know. It hasn't rained here for about three weeks. Very lovely.

You wonder? If the wedding is to be at her house and a feast afterward, why are we cleaning up our yard and house? Relatives is the name of the game. We anticipate that many relatives whom we have not seen in a long time, most often, sadly, at funerals. So on a happy occasion we expect to invite them over to spend some time. Anna Jo has pots of spaghetti sauce abrewin'; garlic bread is all spread and salad dressings of various types prepared. Tomorrow is buy the booze. How'd you like the booze bill for about 35 anticipated guests? Well, it should be great fun, merriment and joy. Only three days away. Pray for sun!

Do they know more than their childhood game? - GENESIS

GRAINGER AND THE HOODED SWAN (August 8, 1974) I'm afraid I've bogged down in typing the pages of Ash-Wing and doing some of the book reviews that need doing. Blame it all on Brian Stableford. Somewhere I stumbled into his series of books concerning Grainger and his ship, The Hooded Swan. There are four books so far in the series, and there are to be two more. I kinda dig series if they are well done, and don't ask me what that means. I guess it means that I want to keep reading them. Grainger is a guy that I didn't particularly like when I read the first book, but by golly, he does change for the better as the books progress and by the fourth book, I really do like the guy. The books are well plotted and in some ways remind me of Edmond Hamilton's Starwolves series, except that these are much better. I'm going to try to get the four of them reviewed as a package for the next Ash-Wing. Meanwhile, if I have piqued your curiosity, they are all DAW Books and the four titles are The Halcyon Drift, Rhapsody In Black, Promised Land and The Paradise Game.

Ghood Ghu, do you mean to stand there and tell me that you haven't bought and read Ursula LeGuin's The Dispossessed yet? Well, get a move on. Surely a Hugo and Nebula contender next time around, and I can't imagine that anything will come close to it. Hard to tell, though. It may be too philosophical for the fans.

CLEAN UP, FIX UP, PAINT UP, MOVE UP TIME (August 8, 1974) What's all this? Cans of paint all over the place? Ladders? Boxes? Paint brushes? All this because you're having a few people over after a wedding? Well, no, not exactly. This summer seemed to be painting time. One side of the exterior of the house is finished. But in addition, there's some interior painting to do as well. The kids have been out of the house long enough now for us to be fairly confident that they won't be back. That means two spare bedrooms. "I dibs this one," Anna Jo says, "for a sewing room." "Well, I dibs this one for a science fiction room," I reply. So both of these rooms need to have a new paint job. Fortunately there have been some great paint sales recently.

My book collection has been confined primarily to the family room but the shelves have been full to overflowing for well over a year now. About five sections of shelving has been the sf collection. Meantime, acquisitions have been stacked on top of the desks, been placed lovingly into boxes, and otherwise have just been plain unavailable. Once the room is painted I'll be able to have about 240 linear feet of shelves in the one bedroom which ought to take care of the collection pretty well, and will also give me a place to write. One of the things that has held me up for some months has been the problem of shelving. I had an idea of what I wanted and when I made out a list of materials with which to build the shelving, I came up with a cost figure of over \$300. Now that's enough to scare anyone off. So I sort of sat on it for a long time.

Recently I had to drive into Sears for something. Of course, I know what it was. Exterior paint, that's what. I thought I'd pick up a new Sears catalogue. We have not had a "wish book" around here for a long time. Over coffee that evening I was idly thumbing through and decided to look up office supplies to see if there was anything new and scintillating which I might find use for in the production of my fanzines. You know, like stencils. (Aside: Sears stencils are about the cheapest I can find that have any quality to them. If you haven't tried them you might give them a shot; \$3.39 a quire. No, I don't own any Sears stock.) Anyway, there was shelving in the pages close by. And I've decided that I can probably make do a lot more cheaply with some of the Sears steel shelving and can even contemplate being able to afford it sometime in the near future. I'm not exactly crazy about steel shelving, but it would be oh so nice to have the collection out of boxes and available once more. I'll give you a progress report from time to time and let you know how I'm coming with the project. When I got to moving the boxes of packed-away books

I began to get worried. There seems to be a lot more stuff than I ever remember having acquired. I hope it all fits on those shelves and that I'm not behind in the game before it ever starts. I have a suspicion that a lot of it, the magazines especially, are things that I have picked up here and there at cheap prices and that a lot of it is extra stuff that can go up for sale if I can get it together and get a list made up for advertising purposes. I sure hope so, anyway.

WEDDING ACCOMPLISHED (August 11, 1974)

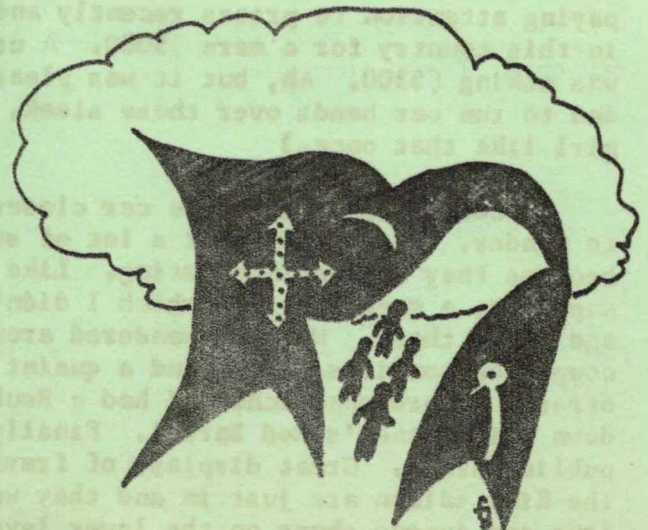
I don't want to dwell overlong on the wedding, but it came off beautifully.

The day dawned dreary with clouds from horizon to horizon, but by noon it was clearing quite well and by 1:00 p.m. it was bright and sunny, albeit a little bit breezy. As I mentioned, Shannon was to be married in her own yard, and they had tied back some boughs of a marvelous old willow so that a bower was formed within. It was a perfect place for the ceremony to take place. Shannon's groom's sister acted as bridesmaid, and her brother-in-law to be opened the ceremony with a song. I don't know what it was as I was to give Shannon away and we were in the house awaiting a later cue. Then the minister read a piece which had been written by Joe and Shannon. Then my two sons and members of the Gryffyn band played acoustically and sang "The Journey" from Rick Wakeman's JOURNEY TO THE CENTER OF THE EARTH as the bridal party came through the front lawn to the old willow. There the ceremony was very brief, with double rings. It was all over except the congratulations, lots of food, punch, a chocolate wedding cake, three tiers high. Lots of conversation and good feelings. It was really a young person's wedding, not one put on for parents and relatives. Nice and simple and beautiful. Much luck to them.

PICNIC TIME (August 13, 1974)

Gene Wolfe says that he thought nothing could be as boring as baseball, until he found me writing about soccer here in Seattle this summer. Well, I had hoped it wouldn't be boring for all. Anna Jo and I have been staunch supporters of the Seattle Sounders in the North American Soccer League and only missed one game. That was when we hurried south for Westercon. Seattle had a tremendous year for a new expansion team, and just narrowly missed the playoffs by two points. Anyway, we went to the final Booster Club event of the year, a picnic for the players and their families, many of whom were leaving the following day to fly home to Europe to begin play that same weekend in the English League. About 120 people showed up, all but two of the team members were there and a great time was had by all. I can't help but think in terms of the National Football League. Would the players come, week in and week out as soon as they had showered after a game, to share a party with some of their fans, to drink a beer with them, to sit down and visit, to sign hundred of autographs for the kids? Would they come to a picnic and end up playing soccer with the little kids? Not very likely. These guys were just super, so forgive me, Gene, if I rave a little.

Since the picnic was over about 9 in the evening and since Gryffyn was playing a gig just up the road in Kirkland, we drove on up to lend parental moral support to the band. They practice in our garage, of course, but it's different hearing them perform live. They were really playing



well that night, and we enjoyed a couple of beers and a couple of hours of music. Not bad. They played a bit of everything, Traffic, Yes, Edgar Winters, Rare Bird, Mountain, Taj Mahal. We had a good time and listened to two sets, and finally stumbled home at midnight.

WHO? (August 19, 1974) I read about a Political Items Collector's Convention which was held recently. There were a lot of things for sale; political banners, buttons, and other ephemeral items which are passed out during political campaigns. A couple of rare items were best sellers. They were political buttons from the 1972 Presidential campaign. One said: The I in Nixon Stands For Integrity. Another proclaimed: Nixon and Agnew for Law and Order. Hee, hee.

VACATION AT HOME (August 20, 1974)

We made a serious mistake in the check book last week, but it turned out to be quite nice. With a great number of expenses for the wedding, we took a look at the bank balance and decided that we didn't have enough left for a long weekend in Victoria, B.C. We had thought that toward the end of the summer it might be nice to go up to Vancouver Island for several days, but our hopes dimmed when we looked at the check book. More of this next issue, probably, because we did discover a mistake and it looks as though we will be going after all. In the meantime, however, we thought we'd settle for a vacation closer to home, like in downtown Seattle. We live in Burien, a suburb of the city, and have little reason to ever venture downtown. A huge mall complex nearby provides all of the shopping we need to do. So we thought we'd just wander around downtown and see what had changed since the last time we had been there. We set off about 11 in the morning on Saturday.

Our first stop was British Motor Cars. We had been thinking ahead to another trip to England and thought we would find out what arrangements, if any, might be made for taking delivery on a car there. We usually spend several hundred in car rental while we are there, and we felt that this could just as easily be applied as a down payment on a nice sleek sports car which we might bring back. Well, many models are changing as the British motor industry undergoes to belt-tightening and nothing much could be told to us at the moment. Everything is pretty much in a state of upheaval. We did learn, however, that prices have changed considerably since the last time we owned a couple of English sports cars. I'll bet that you'd even guess that they might have gone up. Score ten points. A couple of cars which we had considered at least as talking points were the MG and the Triumph TR-6. Oh, but didn't we get our comeuppance in a short few seconds. I hadn't been paying attention to prices recently and didn't realize that an MG-B-GT now lists in this country for a mere \$5000. A used Triumph with about 10,000 miles on it was asking \$5300. Ah, but it was pleasant for a few seconds to have our dreams and to run our hands over those sleek, shiny, automobile bodies. (Gee, I knew a girl like that once.)

After we had parked the car closer to the central downtown section, we began to wander. We looked in at a lot of stores which we wouldn't normally visit, just because they looked interesting. Like a uniform shop, a nautical instruments and map shop, a magazine shop which I didn't even know existed. Found the latest Savage Tales there. We just wandered around taking in the sights as if we were a couple of tourists. We found a quaint little restaurant called The Snug which offered superb sandwiches; I had a Reuben and Anna Jo had a pastrami, both washed down with Watney's Red Barrel. Finally we walked over to Seattle's old time open public market. Great displays of fresh vegetables, several fresh fish markets. The King salmon are just in and they were beautiful. \$1.49 a pound. Lots of antique and junkie shops on the lower levels of the market. Plenty of head shops of various sorts, many belts and buckles and other leather goods, lots of pottery.

The Market also has the distinction of being the home of Dyke's Comics, the firm which just recently sold Action Comics #1 for \$2001.34. Believe it or not. I bought a Matt Chisholm "McAllister" western for 40¢. That's the kind of piker I am.

By 5:30 we were staggering. Out of shape, I guess. So we came home and took a nap. It's tough to get old. But we had had a most enjoyable day in our own town, spent about \$7 altogether, a very inexpensive day. Even got to hear a little street music as it was the 67th Anniversary of the Market and there were minor festival attractions here and there. But it's always a festival at the Market, with old style selling, the hawking of vegetables fresh in from the country every morning, open stalls, huge piles of iced whole salmon and other fish, Dungeness crab, and many voices vying for attention in the selling of their wares. Oh, I almost forgot the hurdy-gurdy man. A real old fashioned hurdy-gurdy that a slim young man would wheel from corner to corner and then crank out the tunes. People would hear it and yell, "That sounds like the circus" and then come running to listen. He'd stand there calmly cranking away, a splendid black top hat perched on his head. No monkey, though. Fun to listen to and I blew a whole quarter in donation because I had enjoyed it.

RUTH BERMAN WRITES TO RECOMMEND A BOOK (August 21, 1974)

An odd sidelight to your comments on books

of photos of nature... Have you seen a book called C.S. Lewis: His World? It's fairly expensive, as all picture books are, so probably not worth getting except to the most enthusiastic Lewis fans, but if your library has it, it's well worth looking at. About half the book is photos of Lewis and associated people (along with some photos of a few of Lewis's childhood drawings and descriptions of Boxen, the imaginary world he and his brother created), but the rest is photos of places in England and Ireland. Bonhomie & rumination, Ruth Berman.

Yes, indeed, it is a lovely book. I bought it for Anna Jo last Christmas, sly devil that I am. But she enjoys Lewis more than I do and I thought it would be a nice gift. If you are really into Lewis, buy it, by all means. If you are just vaguely interested, ask your librarian about it. I've forgotten the cost at the moment.

BEWILDERING CONFUSION AT THE BUS by Wayne W. Martin

I got up this morning and stumbled into the kitchen

to fix myself some semblance of a breakfast. My mother's been ill lately and hasn't been fixing breakfast, so... Anyway, I threw two slices of bologna into the frying pan and snatched a can of pears out of the refrigerator.

I downed the fruit and drank the juice and by the time I had completed that, I found that the bologna had burned. I plucked it out of the pan, soaked up the grease and gobbled it down. It wasn't what you'd call a gourmet's delight, but it filled the vacancy.

After breakfast I trotted out to the bus stop, but there was not a person there. That wasn't right at all. Normally there are at least five or six of us at the bus stop every morning. It dawned on me that my electric clock might have been slow and that I might have missed the bus. According to the clock, the bus was due in ten minutes and if the electricity had gone off for a short time in the middle of the night, that could have done it.

I immediately set off for school, which is fortunately only a mile off. Only by the good grace of a generous school board did we have a bus in our particular area, since it is within a tolerable walking distance.

The walk to school was relatively uneventful, except for getting my feet soaked by walking along the unpaved road to the school in three-inch high grass. It wouldn't have been so bad, but it had rained heavily the day before and it hadn't dried yet.

Living in northern Florida this kind of weather is not unusual, but my walking to school in its early hours is quite rare. As things stand, I only wish it were rarer still.

It only took me about a half an hour to reach school and when I got there, neither buses nor students were to be seen. The students must be in class, I figured, but the buses I couldn't figure. I was never around in time to make sure if they remain after all of us bedraggled students trotted off dutifully to class, but they were always there (back?) at lunch time for us to notice while making the mad rush for the cafeteria.

I knew that this wasn't Saturday. I had seen the Friday morning paper on the front porch as I left the house. That wasn't it. I glanced through windows of a number of classes and saw that none of them were in session. This bothered me; it would be too coincidental that the particular classes I was looking at were all on the first period planning period group. Even in that case, some of the teachers, at least, should be in their rooms.

I was able to find a room with a clock visible from the window. It read 8:05; class wasn't due to start until 8:15. That would explain why there were no students in class, but then, where were they? I must confess I was quite upset and totally confused at this point.

I spotted a janitor - pardon, a custodian - and thought, "Ah, an actual human being here." I quickly assailed him.

"Where is everyone? I asked.

"Schools out today," he said gruffly. "Teachers planning day."

Thank you, Wayne. I kind of enjoyed that. Art: p. 31 - Gene Perkins; p. 85 - Denton. Dates in parentheses refer to date written, one hint of keeping straight.

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