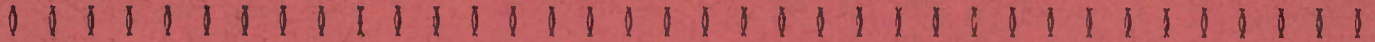




4:13

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LOOK, MA -- NO HANDS! "Remember, you fly with pressure," Max told me, "pressure against the control surfaces."

The Cessna 172 was taxiing down a short side strip. I pushed in the throttle, gunning the engine a little, and we sped up. Then I gave it right rudder, and we were taxiing around the corner, and up towards Strip #1.

"Now, when we get up there, you just follow the white line, right?" Max is a grizzled, gruff-speaking man in his early fifties. "You focus on the end of the strip, the far end -- pick out a tree or something and take a heading on it. Then you just push in the throttle, nice and easy, and keep on that white line."

As we approached the near end of #1, a plane approached for landing. I raised my feet on the rudder pedals, and toed the brakes. Then it was in, and down the field, taxiing off to the side. I gunned the engine, and pulled us around, and onto the strip, dead on the white line.

"Okay," Max said.

I opened the throttle, and we started down the strip.

"Just keep your eyes fixed on that heading," Max said. "Okay, now start easing back on your wheel."

I had been gently correcting with the rudder, to keep our course straight; there was some cross wind. Then I applied back pressure on the wheel, and, without my ever being aware of the transition, we were airborne.

"Now, keep your eyes on the horizon, and keep it flat across," Max said. "See how much land shows above the nose? Keep just that much." We were climbing, up to around 2,000 feet. "Okay, level off." I stole a glance at the climb-bank-indicator. "Keep your eyes on the horizon. Don't worry about the instruments. Okay, now, left bank and left rudder. Remember, once you go into a bank and a turn, return your controls to neutral, until you're ready to come out -- then apply the correction."

The horizon suddenly angled over. I held it until Max told me to straighten out.

"Now, don't clutch the controls so firmly. You can't feel anything that way," he said. "It's all pressure, that's what you're working with. Look -- let go of your controls. Hands off, feet off. Right? The plane flies itself. What you want to do is, you want to apply pressure, when you change course."

We were flying the pattern. I banked to the left again, and we began the glide path back towards Strip #1.

"Keep your nose down," Max told me. "Keep it down until you're eight or ten feet above the strip, then ease back, and let it fly level, and it'll settle right in." I zeroed in on the white line, and in moments our wheels were on the ground, our speed still fifty or sixty mph. I toed the brakes gingerly. The end of the strip was coming up awfully fast. But we slowed, then made a turn and taxied onto the grass.

"Just take her on up," Max said, and I taxied back on the grass towards the administration offices.

We were in Fredricksberg, Maryland. I unfastened my seat belt, and climbed out. My mother climbed from the seat in back, and I took her place, next to Robin. Then she climbed into the pilot's seat, strapped in, and we took off again, to return to Leesburg, Virginia.

It was one of the nicest Christmas presents I've ever had.

Mlg. 60, Continued

TOPAZE #15: Jayn - The morning I got home from doing the Amazing Randi Show -- about 6:00 a.m. -- I developed a tooth ache. It was an upper front tooth. It kept me from falling asleep, despite a massive dose of asperin. At 7:30, I called up Robin, whom I knew to be just rising for work. She immediately got all worried. "That sort of thing can lead to blood poisoning," she told me. "You've got to see a dentist."

I explained that the last time I'd been to a dentist, a diagnostic x-ray showed an impacted wisdom tooth, and the next thing I'd known, I was in oral surgery, needles were being stuck in me, and they were cutting my gum open to reach the tooth. My reaction to this sort of thing is a mite extreme -- that time I went into a state of shock, cyanosis, blue lips and all. It was pretty embarrassing. That was in 1961...

"You've got to go to a dentist," Robin repeated. She told her father about the situation. He was going out to Long Island to see his former Brooklyn dentist anyway, for work on a chipped tooth. I saw him the next day, when we were looking over a property of his which had been burglarized (nothing was stolen but every inch of brass pipe in the house...), and he recommended the dentist he'd seen. "Dr. Schwartzman saves teeth," was the gist of what he told me. By now I had a decided abscess, and felt somewhat feverish.

Robin kept telling me horror stories about blood poisoning and people dying of abscesses. "I had one before," I told her. "Nothing happened; it just popped into my mouth, and went away." But she prevailed upon me, and that Saturday we took the L.I.R.R. out to Masapequa, on Long Island's south shore, to see Dr. Schwartzman.

The Doctor was all he'd been billed as being; I liked him immediately, and he knew his business thoroughly. "We'll have to cut open that tooth from the back to drain it," he said. He swabbed some anesthetic on my gum, preparatory to injecting novocaine. And it happened again. This time I went into a complete psychosomatic seizure. It was a mild epileptic-type fit. I went spastic. I lost all feeling in my extremities, except for a tingling-like vibration. My stomach pulled into knots. My hands were very cold, and my fingers splayed out rigidly. I watched all this with both astonishment and fear, as well as embarrassment. The fit lasted for some fifteen minutes or longer, and then gradually wore off. When at last I was somewhat relaxed, the Doctor drilled a hole up the tooth into the pulp to drain the abscess, wrote me a prescription for drugs to kill the infection, and it was over.

In the last analysis, I have more to fear from my reactions than from the dentist. I've determined to lick the whole thing, so I've signed up for a whole 'mouth job,' which will be, I'm afraid, quite extensive. But it will be a relief to have good teeth again.

Yesterday Robin and I were in DVA's office, and his Beautiful Blonde Boss mentioned she had an abscess. "See a dentist," I told her...

HET BPEMR #60: Pelz - I've read "Apology to Inky" several times myself; I think it repays the effort. I marvel over the construction. Ever since the halycon days of van Vogt, I've loved the box-within-boxes construction in which the reader pieces his facts together as he goes along; it's a sophisticated form of narrative hook.

My tenure as OE of FAPA was what destroyed a lot of the enjoyment of that group for me; I enjoyed receiving a complete bundle, and when the zines just trickled in, it took the fun out of it for me, and the anticipation. Being OE is a thankless job for any apa.

GRUNION #60: Shaw - About half a year before we broke up, Sylvia ordered a variety of books and records from different clubs to the name of T.G.White, not bothering to tell me about it until they started coming. Soon after most came, we moved from Greenwich Village to Brooklyn. Soon the bills for "T.G.White" were coming addressed to our Brooklyn address. After a spell, letters started coming from collection companies. This was in early 1962. By mid-1964, they were dribbling off, but one or two still came in 1965. All sorts of legal action was threatened, but none undertaken. I heard, sometime around 1963, that it is never feasible to sue to recover less than \$50.00, although I cannot swear to the accuracy of this report.

When I terminated my membership in the SF Book Club (which I'd held since its inception) it took repeated letters to the company to succeed in halting the flow of books. I returned at least six months' worth, marked "refused". Then threatening letters started coming from a collection agency in Delaware (where it is cheap to incorporate...). I never read those addressed to T.G.White, but these I read -- and answered. I would write on the back of the letter threatening to sue me, and I would state that a) I owed no money, and b) if I heard any more from them I'd turn their letters over to the PO for mail fraud, and complain to the Better Business Bureau. This would shut that collection company up, but in about three months I would get a letter from a new company, threatening suit. I would reply as before, adding that I had already dealt with one such company, or, later, two... Finally they stopped coming.

My conclusion is that the book/record club business is rife with confusion, especially in the billing departments, and that the main reason suits are never followed through on is the knowledge that in many cases it is an error by the book club, and no money is owed.

ALL DIGRESSION WEEKLY: Stevens - I shall miss Milt; he was always one of the most readable and most interesting contributors to APA L, even when his writings did not provoke me to comment. A great deal of his material is suitable for the next BEST FROM APA L.

PURITY TEST: Gold - I've seen purity tests better than this before (one was circulated through the Cult some five years ago). Questions about castration by a rodent, et al, strike me as pointless, if not outright stupid. DVA had his mailing at a Lunarian meeting, and a number of us checked out our scores. Charlie Brown scored lowest, with 14; I had a 21. Two females present (both Fanoclasts) scored in the 20's, while most of the others who took the test were in the 40's, 50's, and up. A party seems about all this sort of thing is suited for.

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Mlg. 61

HET BPEMR #61: Pelz - I think that once a certain concentration point number of fans are active in one city, personality clashes will develop, and feuding will occur. LA and NYC have the most fans, and, resultantly, have historically boasted the most feuds. Aside from the LA feuds of the 40's, though, the first the Outside World became aware of was the one resulting in the mass circulation of a puzzling document by one Dr. Destrukto. Most of us could make neither head nor tails of it at first.

The trouble with committing feuds to print seems to be that it perpetuates them, and embalms them for All Eternity.

EXPLETIVE: Bjo - Re your comment to Barry on his purity test: it seems as though these appeal most to the have-nots -- the virgins and sexless. And judging from some of the questions, I suspect they're written by such types as well. But they have been circulating in the colleges for many years, for all of that...thus proving something or other about college men...

RABANOS RADIATIVOS #61: Patten - Come on, now. The two Neill Oz books are almost entirely without plot, and written on a sacharine level unmatched by Thompson at her worst. But Snow's books harkened back to Baum's original mythology, and had a hint of real menace to them.

Some years ago, I began plans to publish a Lin Carter Oz book. DVA cut the stencils, but never corrected them. And I never got around to sending the ms. out to Bjo for illustrations, although at the Chicon (*sigh*), she expressed an interest in doing them. Now Lin thinks he might be able to sell the book to the Oz publishers. It would be nice.

Our tastes in books is somewhat divergent. I found the last three Farmer books dreadful failures of one sort or another, and Terry Carr tells me that despite an outline brimming with wonderful ideas, The Maker of Universes is wretchedly written, a fact which does not surprise me, since I think Farmer has lost all contact with good writing.

I recently read Brunner's The Squares of the City, and I don't think it's anywhere near the quality of The Whole Man. I don't think the chess gimmick comes to life, the ending strikes me as impossibly weak, and the book tediously slow. We'll have a much better Brunner novel coming up in F&SF, this spring or summer, by the way.

ROWBAZZLE #7: June Konigsberg - "...the anti-playing cards and anti-dancing of the Presbyterians..." Are you sure about that? I was raised a Presbyterian, and I never encountered that. Our family played cards all the time, and my church sponsored Young People's dances. I've always considered the Presbyterians middle-of-the-road, upper-middle-class types.

THE BOOK REPORT: Kirsch (LA Times) - Kirsch obviously knows not at all whereof he speaks. He refers to "These eight stories, brilliantly and effectively drawn by Feldstein," in Bradbury's The Autumn People, but while Feldstein is credited with adapting the scripts, the art is done, respectively, by Graham Ingles, Jack Kamen, Johnny Craig, George Evans, Ingles, Joe Orlando, Jack Davis, and Davis again. Feldstein's own art is mercifully absent.

Ballantine has just brought out its first original comic book, Dracula. This book is credited to Russ Jones, but was actually drawn by Al McWilliams (of "Twin Earths"), and written by Otto Binder. Jones apparently subcontracted all but the by-line. The art is fine (I suspect some of the inking is by a Wally Wood assistant), but the script, in common with the original book, is terrible.

#61, Gold - It is never funny to call a person a junkie; one is, whether knowingly or not, accusing that person of a serious crime. If the charge (taking illegal narcotics habitually) is false, it is slander. If true, it endangers the person in question to the harsh and feudally-administered narcotics laws, and is, shall we say, Uncool. Considering the comments made on this topic by both other parties, I'd say you are left with your pants at half-mast, Barry, so don't presume to lecture me about my sense of humor.

I must say your judgement of Stranger as "great," or "great liter-

ature," leaves me wondering if you've read any real literature. And Glory Road is, if anything, more poorly written than Stranger. Both lack the stylistic strengths and plotting of Farnham's Freehold.

REKCIPTIN #28: Hoffman - Plastic Man was never a Marvel character. He was created by the late Jack Cole for the Quality Comics group, the same company that did Dollman, Blackhawk, the reprints of The Spirit, and a variety of others. The idea was stolen by both Marvel (Mr. Fantastic) and D.C. (The Elongated Man). Neither have realized the potentialities of the character as well as Cole did in Plastic Man, although The Elongated Man comes closer. Stan Lee ignores Reed Richards' abilities most of the time.

I seem to have misplaced my copy of Mlg. 62, in the process of the Massive Housecleaning which was necessary for the Giant Fanoclast Open New Year's Eve Party -- which was, by the way, an unqualified success, I think. The house was packed...

Things have been quite busy for me since returning from my Christmas vacation in Virginia. I sold a new book to Belmont (as Andy Porter has already mentioned), have been embroiled in plans for an ambitious non-stf book for a major publisher (if it goes through it'll be one many of you will be interested in, I think), and somehow catching up on F&SF work and some carpentry for my future father-in-law -- amid battles with the controlled chaos caused by the criminal transit strike.

APA L has directly suffered from this cessation in my fanac. And also among the sufferers has been Robin, whose second contribution for this zine has been languishing here, unpublished, for nearly a month.

BLATHER by Robin Postal

"Oh, gosh-a-roo." said Ted White. (You out there are not going to believe that, are you? Well, how about a...)

"I'd like you to write something every week," he said.

"Oh, gosh-a-roo," I said. (Come to think of it, that's more in character.) "I'm too scared to do that. Please, honey -- don't count on it."

On Thursday, Dec. 16, 1965, I attended a preview of the new Edward Albee play, "Malcolm." This opportunity was offered to me by Dave Van Arnam and his boss lady, Lillian North, whom I thank most sincerely for a most enjoyable experience. Dave was able to get tickets for both myself and a girlfriend with whom I was living for a short time.*

When the show was over we met up with Lil and two people she was with, and discussed the play as we walked down 44th St. and then Broadway to the subway. We all kidded each other about understanding (or not understanding) the play. Albee is deep and sometimes a little obscure, at first. Then Lil saved the day by explaining the basic theme, or What The Hell It Was All About.

Paraphrased, she said, there are those people who have innocence and want to lose it; those who have lost it and want to find it; and those true innocents who don't realize their innocence or their state of grace. I think I'm mangling this a bit but these ideas on innocence do describe the theme of the play.

We begin with Malcolm, a boy of 15 years, who, according to Lil, had just one thing-- innocent belief in his father, who has disappeared, died, or never existed. In a larger sense, he had religion.

In the course of the play, Malcolm meets people. He learns about love, and dependence, as in the case of Kermit, an old man married to *Dave had two extra tickets, and offered them first to Robin and me. I suggested her girlfriend, since I was busy finishing Dave's book...-tw

a rather younger whore. In the Gerrads, two filthy-rich types, he sees immaturity, again dependence, and status-seeking in its classical ego-building sense.

There are other characters, Eloisia Brace and her husband, Jerome, the burglar. They are art (fourth rate), music (God knows what quality), and general opportunism, in practice.

Then our boy meets Melba. She's love and sex and alcoholic depravity, but his very own this time. She marries him.

Malcolm loses his innocence and in the process is not really aware of the consequences of his loss. He is dragged from character to character, situation to situation, but is not so very changed by it all.

Here we come to what I feel is the main failing of the play. Malcolm is a symbol. This boy goes through hell and eventually dies of his depraved way of life, and yet, even in his death, he is unchanged. The other characters -- they are also symbols, just symbols. Symbols of love, hate, passion, greed, etc., who are unchanged and really quite unaffected by what has happened around them.

In comparison to "Virginia Woolf," whose characters were also symbols, "Malcolm"'s characters are wooden. They are not real. They do not interact. They cause situations to arise and then are not affected by those situations.

Well, all I can say is that I'm glad that I saw a preview of "Malcolm," and not a finished performance. The show won't open until Jan. 11, and I hope that they can clean it up some. Of course, I doubt very much if there will be very many major changes in the script at this late date, but at least, perhaps, they can improve upon the acting of the young man who is portraying Malcolm, the innocent. He was doing an awful job at the preview.*

Anyway, I thank you again, DVA; I certainly enjoyed myself. You are a gentleman, and one of the few remaining, but you didn't have to refer to my girlfriend and myself anonymously as only "two beautiful young women." It really wouldn't have besmirched our reputations. I'm a one-man woman, and my girlfriend wouldn't care anyway.

Still, let me add that even though I think such chivalry unnecessary in this instance, it is nice to know that it can still happen. DVA, you are a Good Man.

- Robin

*Lillian, like Dave, was familiar with the play before seeing it, since they both typed up the scripts. However, after the preview and before the opening, extensive changes were made. Despite these, the play closed the night of January 15th, after only a few days. Apparently bad notices were responsible, but the transit strike, which left Broadway all but deserted at showtime, could hardly have helped. The strike was settled the morning of the 13th. -tw

A LETTER FROM AMERICAN MOTORS: After reading in NEWSWEEK the report that the Rambler image for economy was hurting the sales of American Motors cars this year, and that the Rambler name had been dropped from the Ambassador line, I suggested in a note to the company that the Hudson or Nash marque be revived. I mentioned that my family had always owned Hudsons, and thought highly of them.

The brief reply from Albert Latta of AM's Patent Dept., states that "We have your recent letter and are pleased to learn of your association with Hudson cars.

"For some time now, management has been considering certain trademark changes and I hope that when they are manifested, you will be in accord." This is a fancy way of saying little, but suggests the Hudson or Nash may be revived. -- Ted White

STOPPRESS! OWING TO A GOOF ON MY PART, THIS IS NOT L:13. THIS IS ACTUALLY L:12. REPEAT -- THIS IS ISSUE NUMBER TWELVE. SIGH