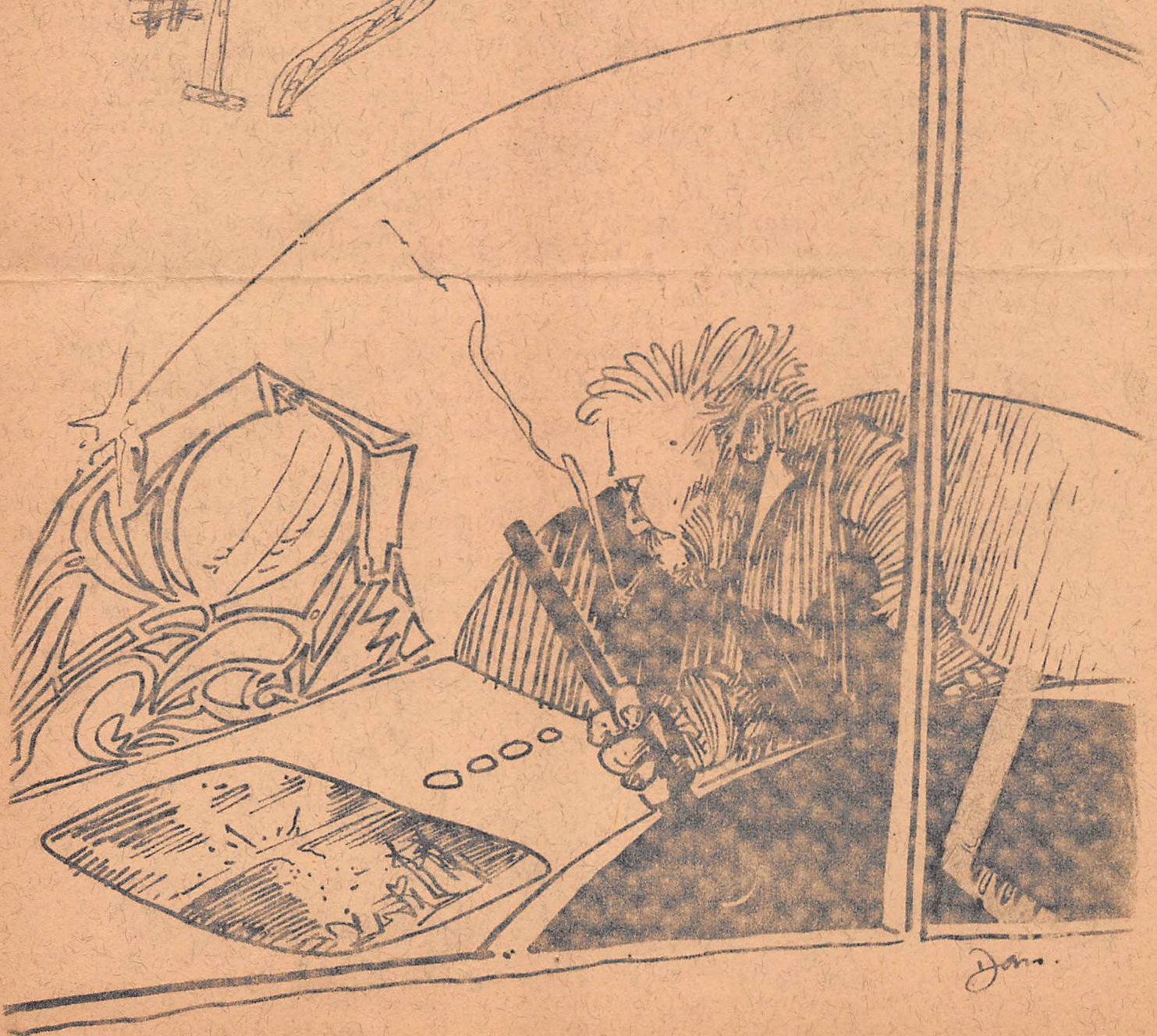


MAYBE

#15



Dana.

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Send all money and regular trades to Koch, non-letter contri-
butions to Davis, and letters to Fox. PERSONAL letters not intended for the lettercol
should go to whoever you want--we give most contributors' addresses.

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 ++++++

By: ALLEN UNDERWOOD / 1805 Alpine Drive / Columbia / TN / 38401

William Drake's knuckles were white as he tore open the envelope. His rugged
features were pale, the lips bloodless and eyes wide with anxious fear. When he fi-
nally got the letter out of the envelope and forced his hands to stop shaking, he be-
gan to read. As he feverishly scanned the lines, the shaking returned and tiny beads
of sweat began to trickle down his face. Drake began to pant for breath and sat down
heavily in a chair. He was alone in the hotel room and dimly thankful that no one
could see the state he was in.

The envelope and letter clutched in his hand, he stag-
gered into the bathroom and gulped down several glasses of water, subduing an urge to
throw up. He went back into the bed room and sat back down and again read the letter,
this time more slowly.

To: Mr. William Drake

From: Dr. Alfred Benson

Bill,

The tests are definitely positive. There is some type of cancerous growth
in your system, centrally located in the area of your stomach. The tests re-
veal that it is alive. Impossible as that seems we received definite life im-
pulse readings from it. There is a separate living organism growing in your
body. I'm sorry, Bill, I know how you dreaded that the tests would bear out
your story. I'm afraid that it is almost beyond even laser treatment, but if
you'll come to the clinic, I know that we can do something for you.

Jackie - if you have
not gotten MAYBE
BABYS - write me -
I think I messed up my file cards

MAYBE

3

I've respected your request not to bring the report to you myself; you now must respect mine. Come on down to the clinic. Come there immediately! I'm your friend and I won't lie to you. There isn't much that can be done about a case like this, but at least you can be with friends. Ed, Sherry and I want you to be with us. I know you. Bill, how you hate pity and all that, but this is too far. It's tearing Sherry to pieces. I would have come up after you, but I'm afraid that you'll do something silly like running off. You may still plan to, I don't know any other reason why you would request this ridiculous way of getting in touch with you. For your sake, as well as Sherry's and Ed's and mine, don't do anything rash.

Fred

P.S. Bill, this is Sherry. Fred has told me everything. Please don't do anything foolish, Bill. I love you. There's still a chance that they can do something. Please, just come to the clinic.

Drake felt a twinge of anger at the solicitous tone of the letter. They were talking to him like a baby. Perhaps they thought that what was happening to him was driving him out of his mind. But the blight anger he felt at his friends was drowned out almost completely by the horror that the first words in the letter had brought. A living organism growing in his body, planted there by the thing in the cave.

He bit his lower lip until blood began to form beneath his pressing teeth. He remembered the time when he was a boy and had seen a large wasp attack a spider and sting it, then carry it off to its nest. He had been intrigued by what had happened and had studied to find out why the wasp had done that. In a thick biology book he had found why. The wasp injected the paralyzed spider with its eggs and when the wasp larvae hatched, they used the helpless spider as food, eating it alive until they were large enough to take care of themselves. And now, Drake thought with a racking shudder, he was in the same predicament as the spider.

He flung himself across the bed and buried his face in the covers. While he lay there, still and quiet, he felt something, a tiny movement deep within him. Drake stiffened in horror, listening and feeling. He could feel the blood pulsing madly throughout his entire body, his heart pounding with fear, and far beneath the protective walls of skin and muscle, a small throbbing just above his stomach, beneath his lungs.

He rolled over and pulled up his shirt, putting his hand on his trembling abdomen. There! He was sure now. Movement, life, where none should be, beneath the bright red scar in his abdomen. He tightened his fingers on the flesh, pulling the tight muscles up in his fist, squeezing, hoping to crush the thing growing within him. But all he did was bruise himself. The thing still throbbed, still grew within the crimson labyrinth of veins and nerves.

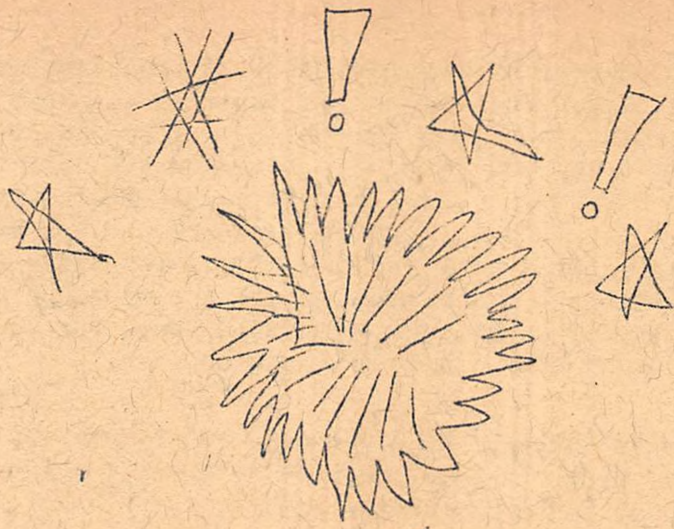
He threw his arm over his eyes to blot out the bright ceiling light. Laying there he remembered the trip through the cool dark cavern, down twisting underground passages where stalactites hung like fangs and subterranean streams gurgled into unguessable caverns and distances. Sherry had always told him that he must be a masochist to go down into caves alone and actually enjoy it, but he had always been fascinated with spelunking. The mystery, the cool solitude had attracted him like nothing else. And now the caves had paid him back for nosing among their deepest secrets.

In the deepest recesses of a titanic chain of endless caverns beneath the Smoky Mountains, he had come across an odd stalagmite, one formed differently from the others, as though something had been covered by the gripping rock. He had struck the stone with his hand pick and knocked off a large section of brown rock, revealing gleaming metal.

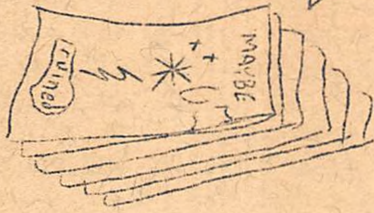
Before he had been able to recover from his surprise, the entire stalagmite had begun to vibrate incredibly. Then a shaft of black metal suddenly thrust out from the machine in the stone and buried itself in his stomach, doubling him up with agony, then retracted, dripping green ichor that it had pumped into his system

3A

Never
mind
how this
happened;
turn the
page



ZAP



to keep him from dying from the wound.

Then the whole mechanism, hidden behind millions of years' worth of growing rock, had disintegrated, collapsed in a brilliant display of electrical fireworks, as though it had performed the function it had waited countless centuries to do and no longer had a reason to exist.

Drake's finger idly stroked the scar on his stomach as he remembered how frightened he had been in that cavern, the ruins of the eons old machine crumbling before him, the pain in his belly. He couldn't remember the trip back to the surface, but knew that he had run, or rather staggered, most of the way. Then the first pains began to come and he thought of the spider and the wasp.

Fred and the others had told him it was ridiculous and impossible at first, but as the tests that he had insisted they make began to bear out his story, they no longer laughed. Instead, they pitied him and Drake couldn't stand that. He had left and told Fred to telegram the final results to him.

But now that it was definite what was he going to do? Drake sat on the edge of the bed and thought.

Perhaps he should kill himself, before the thing, whatever it was, began to eat away at him, devouring his living body. He covered his face with his hands. He couldn't kill himself, he couldn't give up hope while he still lived. He decided to go back to the clinic, to endure the pity, just to be near Sherry and Fred and the rest. If he must die, he would die with his friends and not alone in a hotel room.

But to die to give some other creature, a creature preserved for a millenium in a machine in a cave, life.... Drake began to shudder again. He stood up and gasped, clamping his hand to his stomach and bending over in agony.

The pain was worse than it had ever been before. There was no time to lose. Forgetting about his clothes, his luggage, everything except the fact that he had to get to the clinic, not because he could get help there, but because he couldn't die alone.

He stumbled to the elevator and pressed the down button. Red pain hazed his eyes and his skin was tight and dry. The pain hit him again as he entered the deserted elevator. Drake gripped the handrail and groaned, the agony ripping the sound from his throat. The elevator descended to the ground floor.

Drake stepped out into the bright lobby and began to walk toward the door. A clerk stopped him concernedly. "Is there anything that I can do, sir?"

Crake shook his head.

"You look terrible, let me call a..."

"No," Drake said through gritted teeth, walking as best he could out into the night. Pity again, he thought angrily. But perhaps I'd better get used to it. That's all that the others can give me now.

The streets were dark and almost deserted. The few people that passed Drake thought that he was drunk and avoided him. The clinic was only a few blocks away and he couldn't bear to wait for a taxi. He walked.

As he passed a dark alley, the pain came again, blinding, stabbing, like a thunderbolt that ripped through his body and left him helplessly gasping on the ground. Drake thrashed on the sidewalk and rolled into the alley, knocking over some garbage cans.

The pain passed and he felt as though he were floating, above the agony, as though he were just about to go to sleep. Or die, he thought with horror. Drake tried to lurch up but found that he couldn't move. His eyes rolled in panic, but they were the only part of him that could move.

The throbbing grew, pounding and pulsing inside him. A clammy sweat began to ooze out of his pores and cover him, drenching his clothing. His vision blurred, doubled as though he was cross-eyed and he began to gasp for breath. The alley swam

before his eyes and winked out, replaced by blackness as he became unconscious.

In the dark alley, unseen by anyone, William Drake's body began to melt, like candle wax in a furnace. Even the white skeleton dissolved into the glowing blob of pink protoplasm. Four blue eyes bobbed on the top of the flowing mass as it began to move, groping among the trash cans, muscular pseudopods knocking over refuse piles and pulling the amorphous mass of flesh along, slowly, deeper into the alley, away from the bright street and danger of detection, as though some primordial instinct led it to hide. In the blackness, the protoplasm grew, larger and larger until it was twice the size of William Drake, the cells dividing madly to add more mass to it.

Then it was dormant for a time, as though resting after the first phase. The four blue eyes stared mindlessly up at the night sky visible between the shadows of the looming buildings.

The pink mass began to move again, but differently this time. It flowed apart, split into two sections, then rested again. The two pink blobs began to quiver and change, tiny lights pulsating among the muscular folds of flesh. The two eyes on each form began to sink back into the skin. The flesh jerked and lifted taking on a more definite shape as the skeletons began to form and layers of muscle slid into their proper place. Pseudopods became arms and legs and the faces began to take on human features.

At last two men, both William Drake, lay among the tatters of his clothing and the garbage in the alley. Then one of the men moaned and rolled over. The blue eyes blinked open and stared out uncomprehendingly at the dark bricks. Then the man stood up and grinned. He stretched and looked down at the man who lay below him, his twin in every respect.

The man frowned and looked about. He found a brick and brought it down with a dull thud on the unconscious man's head. He felt the bone crack beneath the impact and grunted in satisfaction. Then he rummaged among the refuse and found a tattered pair of pants and a sweat shirt to cover his nakedness. His brow furrowed, as though he were remembering something, then he smiled again.

"Sherry," he said quietly, with a grin as he walked out of the alley.

Behind him, the other William Drake lay still for some time. Then lights began to pulsate in the terrible wound in his skull. The shattered bone lifted and reformed and his eyes opened with a jerk. Drake sat up and gingerly rubbed his forehead, aware of a splitting headache. Then he noticed that he was naked and his clothes, even his shoes were in shreds. He shook his head in wonder at his tattered clothing, his surroundings, and the fact that he was alive.

Realizing that he couldn't go about naked in town, he, just as his twin had minutes before, looked among the piles of cloth and found some short pants and a shirt with one sleeve gone. He put these on and walked out, deciding to go on to the clinic.

He realized that the throbbing was gone, that whatever it was that was growing inside him had stopped. Perhaps, he thought, his body defenses had killed it at last. He felt like a man who had had a reprieve from death. He ignored the stares of people who watched him run barefoot and in short pants and a tattered shirt through the streets to the clinic.

There weren't as many buildings on the street where the clinic was situated and a few ornamental trees were set about the one-storey, modern office. The clinic was supposed to be closed for the night, but Drake knew that his friends would be waiting for him inside. He could see a light in one of the back rooms. He reached above the door for the emergency key and unlocked it.



The entrance hall was dark and quiet, the thick carpet muffling his footfalls. He heard low voices coming from one of the rooms in the back and walked toward the closed door, a small line of light shining through the crack in the bottom. Drake grinned, thinking how happy everyone would be when he told them that the thing was gone. He paused outside the door, readying to open it.

Then he heard, through the wooden door, a voice he recognized, a voice that caused the hair to raise on the back of his neck. It was his voice. Drake cracked the door and peered in.

Beautiful Sherry was kissing someone and talking in a whisper. The man she was kissing was him, William Drake. Drake shook his head, thinking that he might be dreaming, but he knew that he was awake, that this was really happening. But how could it happen? Sherry stood up and left the room for a moment. The twin was alone in the room and Drake rushed in angrily.

The twin stood up, astonished to see the man he thought that he had killed. Drake strode up to him, not quite sure what to say or do. "Who the Devil are you?" he demanded. He was afraid that he already knew the answer.

"William Drake," the other said with a maddening grin, "and who does that make you?"

"The Hell you're me!" Drake shouted, grabbing the other by his tattered shirt collar. "Where did you come from?"

"From you," the twin answered, "I am you. I have your body, your face, your every memory."

A cold knot worked into Drake's stomach and he backed away from his double. "You're the thing from the machine!" he exclaimed, the fearful truth beginning to dawn on him.

"No one likes to be called a thing," the twin said chidingly. "Don't do that!" the man said, leaping forward as Drake began to edge toward a desk. "I know that there is a pistol in the upper right drawer too." The two men grappled but neither could gain an advantage. Both were equally matched in strength.

At that moment, Sherry reentered the room. "Fred'll be here in a... Oh!" She saw the two identical men wrestling on the floor. "Bill!" she exclaimed, not sure which of the men she was referring to.

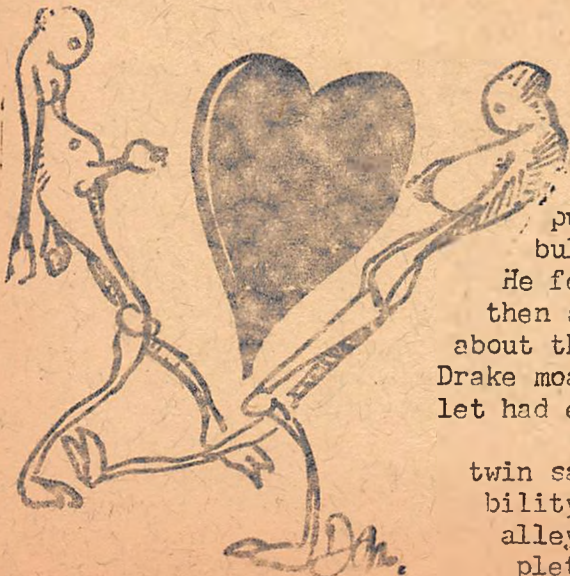
One of the men leaped toward her and, before she could move, hit her viciously, knocking her out. The other man, the other Drake, yelled and rushed to her while the twin went to the desk and pulled out the pistol.

Drake checked Sherry's pulse and was relieved to find her only unconscious. He looked up and saw that his mysterious twin had the gun trained on him.

"You crud," he said, getting up quickly.

The twin grinned mirthlessly and pulled the trigger. The gun went off and the heavy bullet smashed into Drake's chest, piercing his lungs. He fell to the floor with a gasp and twisted in pain, then stiffened. Glowing motes of light began to play about the bullet hole and the wound healed instantly. Drake moaned and sat up, feeling in wonder where the bullet had entered his chest.

"I hadn't counted on that," the twin said. "Evidently the process left you with the ability to heal rapidly. That is why my blow in the alley didn't kill you. Your body hasn't become completely stable yet."



MARIE
more
pencil
pages

And this one
is needed to
balance out
the other one.

LOVE



①

If you are so
great why don't
YOU do a zine?

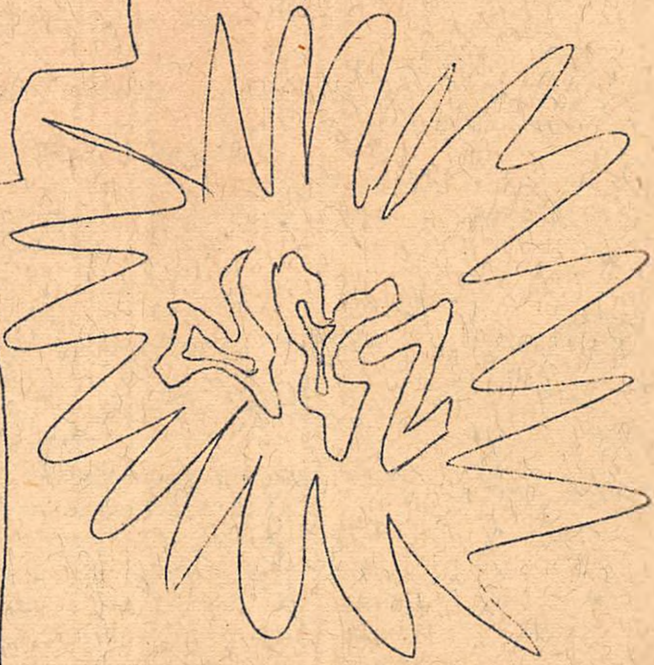
②

125 ★
Mexican
Mummies

INFIN ★

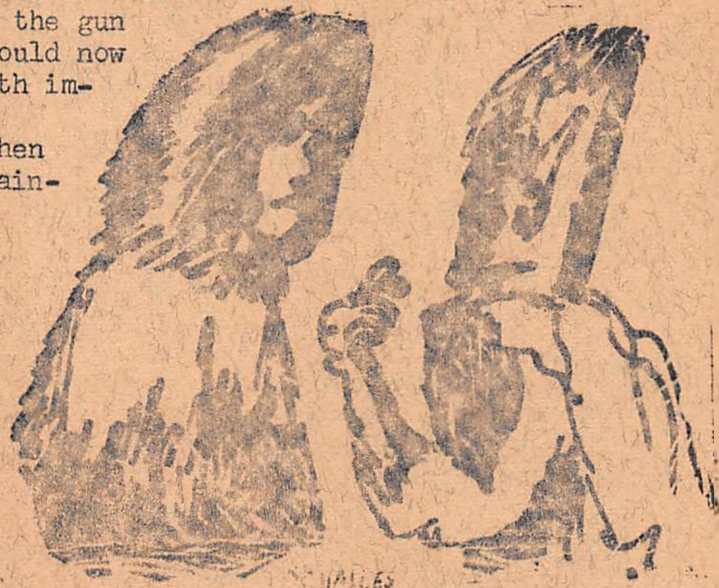
FLOWERS ★

well, er...



Drake didn't fully understand what the man with his face was saying, but he did know that the gun was ineffective against him and that he could now attack the man who had hurt his Sherry with impunity.

Drake leaped forward, but halted when he saw that the double now had the gun trained on Sherry. "One more move and I shoot her," the twin said calmly. Drake backed off. "Now what to do with you," the twin mused. "I can't get rid of you with this-" he waved the gun "-but there must be some way." He thought for a moment, then said: "She mentioned that Fred'll be here soon, that would be your friend Doctor Alfred Benson." He motioned to Sherry. "Pick her up. We'll take her car. And don't try to get between her and the gun or I'll shoot you and while you flop, I'll kill her."



Drake glowered, but did as the double told him. They went out the back way and found Sherry's car in the parking lot. "Put her in and you drive. I'll sit beside her and keep the gun trained on her at all times."

After both men got in, Drake started the car, using the keys which Sherry always kept in her car and drove away. "Where to?" Drake asked angrily.

"Just drive around until I can make up my mind what to do next," the double said. Sherry was slumped in the seat between the two men, a bright bruise on her forehead showing where she had been struck.

"Who or what are you?" Drake demanded as he drove.

"I guess I can tell you," the double smirked. "You won't tell anyone else. As soon as I can think of some way to kill you, you're a dead man." The twin sat back to make himself comfortable, but never took his eyes from Drake or the gun from Sherry. "From your mind I have come across the knowledge that you humans feel that you are the only, the supreme race in the universe. You aren't even the first on your own planet. My people lived billions of years before. We colonized this world while the seas were still boiling and life was only a puddle of protoplasmic slime."

"We were galactic criminals, the last of a race that almost conquered the universe, beaten and exiled by a federation of other races that rose against us. We were imprisoned on your world and I, the last leader of my people vowed that I would not perish with the rest. Using the biological code and neural pattern and impressed them into an almost indestructible machine programmed to inject the fluid which contained my essence into the first creature that jarred it."

"Then I died, or rather my other self died, but in that machine I lived on for eons until you were injected. The fluid worked like a cancer and split your body in two, reproducing not only your physical structure, but your memories and personality as well, fusing them with my own. Not only do I now possess my own vast intellect, but yours as well."

"Why don't I have your memories?" Drake demanded.

"Perhaps you do," the double answered, "but they are beyond your meager comprehension. It would be more difficult for you to adjust to my mind because of your restricted modes of thinking, while my greater intelligence had no trouble assimilating the facts from your mind and acting accordingly. As soon as I came to in that

alley where you divided to create a new body for me, I realized that the safest thing for me to do would be to kill you and take your place, so I hit you on the head with a brick and crushed your skull. Unfortunately, you haven't stabilized from the proto-plasmic state you degenerated into to create me and cannot be harmed by something so localized. But I think that I finally have a way to kill you. Drive to the city power plant." The double placed the gun against Sherry's head. "And don't pull any tricks."

"Electrocution?" Drake asked.

"That's right. That should kill you, no matter what your recuperative powers."

"What about Sherry?" Drake asked.

The double looked at her quizzically and stroked her hair. "In my other form I would have found her quite repulsive, I believe I used to look more like what you would call a crab. But now... I, or rather you, have some very pleasant memories of her." The twin leaned over to kiss Sherry behind the ear.

With an outraged roar, Drake released the wheel and lunged at his double. The gun went off and struck Drake in the shoulder, but he ignored the wound which was already beginning to heal and jerked the gun out of the twin's hand and flung it through the window.

A terrific crash came as the car smashed into a rock cliff that lined the road. Slivers of glass exploded into the interior and a terrible pain blossomed in Drake's chest. For several minutes he couldn't see, then, when he looked down, he saw that the steering wheel had crushed in his chest and stomach. Through the brilliant haze of glowing motes, he could see his bloody mangled flesh beginning to reform, covering the bared, broken bones. While he healed in a pool of light, he looked over at the others.

Sherry's leg was cut by a sliver of glass, but the rest of her was protected by her dress and her face had been turned away from the window.

The double was also surrounded by golden lights, but he had been nearer the actual point of impact and the motes covered him completely. Evidently, he too was not completely stable.

There was an odor of gasoline in the car and Drake realized that the car could catch fire at any moment. He grabbed Sherry and began to pull her gingerly across the seat, careful not to treat her too roughly for fear that she had some broken bones.

Seeing Drake pull Sherry from the car, the double raised a light-covered hand. "Help me," he begged, unable to move yet.

Drake bit his lip and continued to tug at Sherry.

"I know you," the double pleaded, "you couldn't leave me here. It would be against your basic nature."

"Don't be too sure of that," Drake said through gritted teeth, finally getting Sherry out of the car.

"No. Listen. I'm like you. I know you. You can't do this. It would be like killing yourself. Help me. Pity me."

Drake sneered, driving down all merciful feelings by looking at the bruise on Sherry's head. "I hate pity."

He strode away, leaving the double shrieking in the car. He was pinned to the seat by jagged metal and no matter how much he reformed, he could not heal the wounds still filled with the sharp steel or gain enough strength to get away.

People were stopping their cars and running toward the wreck when the car suddenly exploded into flame so hot that it blistered skin thirty yards away. "Let's see him reform himself after that!" Drake said fiercely, watching the leaping blaze.

But in spite of his hard words and the fact that the twin would have killed him and Sherry, he did feel sorry for it a bit, perhaps even pitied it. After cheating death for eons, it died only hours after its rebirth, in a car accident, like a simple human.

He stood at the edge of the road, still holding Sherry in his arms, when the police drove up.

-000-

+++++

SOME DAYS, YOU CAN'T EVEN
GIVE A FANZINE AWAY. . . .

...as yon drawing indicates
(yon is to the right, this time).
Pity, for he is missing out on read-
ing about other zines, such as...

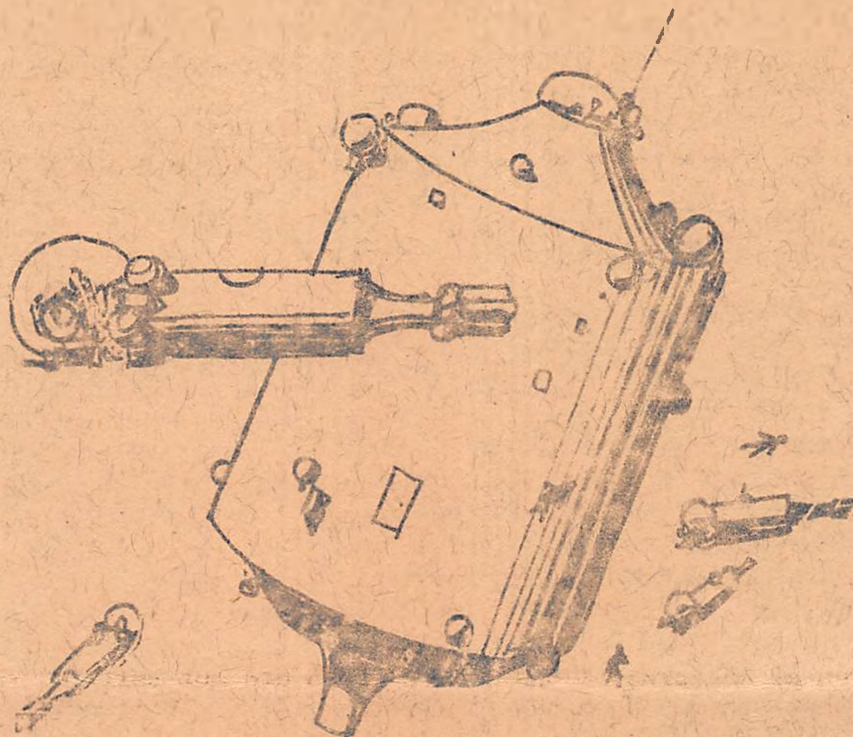
AFAN 2 (from Dave Hulvey, Rt. 1, Box
198, Harrisburg VA 22801 for
trade, letter of comment, contributions-
no book reviews - and maybe a pleading
note) -- This is not your usual zine. It
isn't even your usual fannish zine, and a
bit of fan fiction (by Dan Osterman) here is
not your usual fan fiction, either. My fav-
orite item was a fascinating piece by Aus-
tralian fan Dennis Stocks about his adventures
while mountain climbing and skydiving. Arnie
Katz contributed a bit of humorous speculation
on the topic of a fan in the White House. I
have often complained that Arnie's supposedly hi-
larious fannish writing usually isn't; but this one was fun. And you daren't miss the
lettercol, or you will miss the spectacle of none other than the undersigned fearlessly
inserting foot A in mouth B not once, but twice!



ENERGUMEN 9 (from Mike and Susan Glicksohn, Maynard St., Apt. 205, Toronto 150, Ontar-
io, Canada for trade, substantial LoC, contributions, or 50¢) -- has an
excellent Tim Kirk cover, and lots of nice cartoons, and not quite as much attractive
interior art as usual. Mike chats about what's been happening lately and says a kind
word for LOCUS (good show!). Susan writes interestingly on Lord Peter Wimsey, one
fictional detective whose acquaintance I have not yet made. Paul Walker interviews
Robert Silverberg by mail. Leon Taylor writes a long, disparaging review of a Philip
Jose Farmer novel. Bob Toomey writes a long, disparaging, and confused review of a
James Blish novel. Ted Pauls writes the most deadly serious "fannish" piece I have
seen since John D. Berry last did a fanzine review in AMAZING. andy offutt writes an
interesting article on the problems of extrapolation, though the fannish fans will re-
flexively hate it. Ted White writes an uneven article which finally just dies away,
though the fannish fans will automatically love it. And Rosemary Ulliyot does her usual
hilarious column, which everybody will love, if they have any sense.

TOMORROW AND... 7 (from Jerry Lapidus, 54 Clearview Dr., Pittsford, NY 14534 for
contributions, a LoC, trade, 50¢, five for \$2) -- has nice stuff
from andy offutt and Dean Koontz on writing, from "Lisa Tuttle", I mean Lisa Tuttle
on the Clarion sf workshop, and from Rosemary Ulliyot on being Rosemary Ulliyot. I en-
joyed greatly the illos (which do illustrate) by Dan Steffan. Editor Jerry Lapidus
writes an interesting, varied editorial. Darrell Schweitzer writes about "The Hugo
Mess" and unfavorably reviews Thomas Burnett Swann's The Goat Without Horns (with
which I violently disagree!). Interesting lettercol. . . . Hank Davis

F - I - L - T - R - A - T - I - O - N



John Wood Campbell, Jr.

... the Davis Lad's Own Column

John Wood Campbell, Jr. was born on June 8, 1910. He died on July 11, 1971. In between, he affected a hell of a lot of people's lives - including mine. I never knew him, so this can't be about him.

It has to be about me.

And, curiously, my connection with John Campbell was second-hand for many years; not in the sense that I know him only through his magazine, either. My acquaintance with the magazine itself was second-hand. In 1952, when I was in the second grade, I read a novel which had been serialized in ASTOUNDING, yet the first issue of the magazine I would see was the November 1955 issue, containing the first installment of UNDER PRESSURE. I never read that novel, for I would not see another issue of the magazine for over three years. That issue had been picked up by my mother while she was away on a trip. The magazine was not available locally, and there was no opportunity to make friends gradually. I did read the shorter pieces in the magazine, including one by Joe Hensley, of all people, but it was not love at first sight.

Oh...but I did read the editorial. And I never forgot it. Nine years later, when I bought another copy of that same issue, I thumbed through the editorial and - "Aha, that's where I read that."

You're wondering about that novel from ASTOUNDING which I read at age eight? Published in a pulp

ccusin of THRILLING WONDER which specialized in reprints, heralded on the gorgeous Alex Schomburg cover, eerie Finlay drawings making counterpoint with its text, it was SLAM! Heady stuff for one more accustomed to following "Kenton of the Star Patrol" in comic books, it ricocheted off my exterior, striking sparks. The sparks are still coming.

Ah, the joys of a small town which has only one newstand; which concern is, apparently, determined to supply only one, two at most, sf magazines at a time. And which concern is equally determined to permit each title to be sold only for a year, even in the face of 100% sales (i.e., I was buying both of the copies of both of the magazines sold!). IMAGINATION was available from 1952 through 1954, was replaced by IMAGINATIVE TALES and GALAXY in mid-1955. They vanished the following March, replaced by AMAZING, which was later joined by FANTASTIC. All crud, of course, except for GALAXY. Yet I enjoyed it all, and agonized each time a title disappeared, being young enough to groove on the good to be found in half-good or quarter-good stories. In a nearby town, four miles away, was an establishment picturesquely titled "The Trading Post" which sold guns, records, magazines. It offered sf magazines with greater constancy than the local store, but until 1958 my parents could not believe that I could set foot alone in that town without being scooped up by white slavers, ground up into dogfood, or, worst of all, being set upon by drunks, for that nearby town was one of the only two strongholds of evial alcohol in the otherwise dry county. And since we had no car and buses ran when the driver damn well felt like it and taxis were expensive (50¢), trips to the Trading Post were few. Later, when I was considered old enough at least to outrun the forces of evial, I was permitted to go alone for such vital necessities as getting my hair cut. I craftily began needing haircuts every two weeks. (This, of course, was not the Supreme Sacrifice it would be now.) But I could not buy an sf magazine if the Trading Post did not sell it. And ASTOUNDING was a stranger to that store. When the family took a trip to faroff Lexington, I saw the second copy of ASTOUNDING to come before my eyes: the April 1959 issue.

Now, from early 1952 to early 1959 is only seven years, hardly a long time to me now. But I was then going from eight to fifteen, and the subjective time was seven times seven years - half a century, seeing only two ASTOUNDINGS. Yet, during that time, I was reading stories from Campbell's magazine. Many of them.

The joys of a small town, in addition to those already cited, include going to a small school with a small library which boasts such treasures as a hundred copies apiece of UNCLE TOM'S CABIN and THE LITTLE SHEPHERD OF KINGDOM COME. Into this den of crippled words came a copy of ACROSS THE SPACE FRONTIER and one of Groff Conklin's mammoth anthologies, OMNIBUS OF SCIENCE FICTION, surely left by the elves and not ordered by the librarian, who promptly placed both on the reference list - not-to-be-removed. I was in the third grade and study halls were still five years away. And I was already having difficulties with the Keeper of the Books, for I was supposed to be getting my reading material from the section where MELVIN THE BUNNY RABBIT and such held sway, but I wanted to check out the books on astronomy, old and outdated though they were. No hindrance this time, for my parents, being teachers, could help and my pink little paws soon turned pages covered with the words of Ley and Von Braun and an occasional Bonestell. Conklin presented a taller pile of words, though, and I barely scratched the surface. I did, however, read "The Head Hunters," "A Subway Named Mobius," "High Threshold," "Nothing Happens on the Moon"....

Now, Class, what do these :

four titles have in common?

Why, gee, senile Professor Davis, sure looks like they all first appeared in ASTOUNDING.

Indeed. The last two in particular stayed in my mind and brought upon me the Urge to Re-Read, thwarted because a thief had permanently removed the not-to-be-removed anthology from the reference section. When I joined the Science Fiction Book Club in 1957 and got my very own copy for my own not-to-be-removed library, I searched for those stories, skimming the start of each story, since I could not re-



member the titles. Happy ending, for the time being; I found them. "Threshold" was authored by Alan E. Nourse, and came from 1951. But the "Moon" story, please note, by Paul Ernst had been taken from the February 1938 issue, one year after Campbell had taken over ASTOUNDING, and had begun making changes. I did not know that at the time, of course...

Then, I read the rest of the anthology. Can you guess how many of the stories in that fat book? No fair peeking. Nineteen out of forty-three, and only one came from the pre-John Campbell ASTOUNDING.

A few months later, in return for mere money, the SF Book Club gave me another splendid volume entitled THE ASTOUNDING SCIENCE FICTION ANTHOLOGY. Need I say more?

Berkley Books, then a spunky little new publisher, began issuing paperbacks, much-abridged, of the gargantuan anthologies of the early fifties. Their edition of the Conklin BIG BOOK OF SCIENCE FICTION had Fredric Brown's "Arena," Sturgeon's "Newhu's Jet," and a couple of others from ASTOUNDING. Six of the eight stories in the Berkley A TREASURY OF SCIENCE FICTION were from ASTOUNDING. Only two stories from that source made the paperback of Derleth's BEYOND TIME AND SPACE - but one of them was Van Vogt's "The Seesaw."

Later, I would learn from Sam Moskowitz's profiles in AMAZING that all but one of the stories composing Simak's CITY, which I had read as a Perma paperback in 1953, had originally been published in a magazine known as _____ (fill in the blank). Later, after having seen my third copy of ASTOUNDING (January 1960), I would read Katherine MacLean's brilliant "Incommunicado" in a new Conklin anthology. Later, I would learn where such novels as BEYOND THIS HORIZON, METHUSELAH'S CHILDREN, SIXTH COLUMN, THE WORLD OF NULL-A, (most of) THE VOYAGE OF THE SPACE BEAGLE, NEEDLE, MISSION OF GRAVITY, the "Foundation" novels, etc., had first been published. Later, ASTOUNDING, now rechristened ANATOC, would begin being locally available with the July 1961 issue.

(But, by then, the magazine was already an old friend, thanks to the anthologies I had read - and I have not listed them all. We simply had not been formally introduced.)

Later, I would obtain a used paperback of WHO GOES THERE? and become familiar with Campbell's sf in the "Don A. Stuart" vein. Later, Ace would begin reprinting his earlier super-science epics and show me Campbell's mastery of that type of sf, too. Later, I would read MODERN SCIENCE FICTION and Moskowitz's profiles and learn how much John Campbell had to do with science fiction being what it is. Others may have heard that until they are sick of hearing it. Tough! They haven't had their noses rubbed in the fact as I have, because....

Later, I would begin collecting - and reading - back issues of ASTOUNDING. At present, I have read all issues from January 1938 through September 1953. And I have read scattered issues before 1/38. Readers of my age or younger won't have seen the sort of stories - barely readable, with a few exceptions - ASTOUNDING printed before John Campbell became editor, nor will they have seen the gradual change in the magazine after the change in editors. I have; it is considerable.

Perhaps Robert A. Heinlein would have sold that first story, "Lifeline," to a Tremaine-edited ASTOUNDING, and would have continued to write and develop his talent, selling to other magazines. But how about Sturgeon, Van Vogt, Asimov? Would Clifford Simak have returned to sf otherwise? Would Henry Kuttner have written the "Lewis Padgett" stories? And there was the sudden improvement in the sf of such mainstays of

the pre-Campbell ASTOUNDING as Harl Vincent, Nathan Schachner, and Jack Williamson. If anyone cares to argue that some other editor could have sweepingly transformed the field as Campbell did, let him explain why, from 1926 to 1938, no one did!

The magazine has been much criticized in the last decade, the attacks usually making the charge that ANALOG publishes only engineer-oriented sf (such as, presumably, SPACE VIKING, DUNE, and DRAGONFLIGHT?). I may be biased toward the magazine, and my tastes may be those of a minority, but I have thought it strange that excellent stories like "The Message" (1966) and "Your Haploid Heart" (1969) fail to gain Hugo nominations while crud from ORBIT and F&SF is so honored. I suspect that Anne McCaffrey's "Weyr Search" owes its Hugo to the appearance of that superb story in the Ballantine paperback more than to the ANALOG publication. Too many fans avoid ANALOG, or open its pages with the attitude of Wow, this is gonna be lousy. I further suspect that much of this hostility is due not to the story quality, but to Campbell's editorial expression of currently unfashionable opinions. This attitude has been breaking surface to show its true nature recently, with two editorials in GALAXY and IF, both supposedly rebutting a Campbell editorial, but actually answering every issue but the one that Campbell had raised.

Again, I may be biased, since I probably agreed with more of Campbell's editorials than most fans, but much of the resentment has apparently stemmed from a stereotyped conception of John Campbell. But fans have short memories. All remember the Wallace editorial of 1968, but none remember the slam at Joseph McCarthy in the May 1955 editorial. Nor has anyone noticed that one of the points which led Charles Reich to wax verbose in THE GREENING OF AMERICA was made by Stephen Bartholomew in a story in the March 1957 ASTOUNDING, nor that Campbell discussed the point of that story in an editorial in the following month's issue. Too, I have noted ire apparently aroused simply by the idea that anyone, anywhere should even dare to express such opinions. The media are dominated by opinions ranging from moderately liberal to radically left, and one of the few exceptions, ANALOG, has scorn heaped on it as a result of the same attitude which put a stop to THE REPORTER. Such is not surprising, since there is a neo-fascistic tinge to many of the younger leftists who shout down speakers they oppose and favor academic freedom as long as it doesn't apply to Edward Teller. A fanzine XRYMPH recently emerged from New York and spoke harshly of Campbell, inviting the reader to watch future issues for "guest editorials by literate people who are sick of reading Campbell's right-wing philosophy..." The literacy of at least one of the editors is questionable, since he is capable of using the editorial "we" on one line, then referring to "my dictionary" on the following line.

Such gibbering is hardly likely to reduce Campbell's stature, for science fiction remains and remains what Campbell made it. Those stories in AMAZING and IMAGINATIVE TALES are unreadable now, but I have read SIAM three times and will certainly read it again. And I don't think that you can have a Zelazny until you've had a Van Vogt.

When Books form much of anyone's life, he finds himself with many friends whom he has never met. But John W. Campbell's impact was on all of science fiction, which in turn had impact on me. Campbell had an influence on me, even during the first 17 years of my life when I was not reading his magazine, greater than that of my parents. Now he is gone and ANALOG is orphaned; and I feel orphaned too.

... Hank Davis



THE
UNICORN

by

EDWARD

P.

BERGLUND



PART

TWO

(SYNOPSIS of PART ONE: JONAS MILNER, doing research for a treatise on mythology, becomes exasperated when the Univac he is using concludes from available data that the Unicorn was not only a real creature, but was of extraterrestrial origin, as well.

Almost immediately, he is contacted telepathically by a member of the Unicorn race. His visitor demonstrates other mental powers by putting Jonas's niece, ALICE MILNER, into a temporary slumber and by changing an eight-point buck to stone, then back to flesh. A similar fate, but without a similar reprieve, may await Jonas, for the extraterrestrials have been concealing their existence from warlike humans. But Jonas's visitor, suspecting that a re-evaluation is in order, feeds information on the current state of planet Earth into the computer, which reaches the verdict that the time is right for a meeting between the unicorns and mankind. Jonas is selected to represent the unicorns in arranging the meeting. Going to Washington, D.C., he persuades an old friend, GENERAL FAYRBOURNE; to meet with the unicorn. . .)

Jonas Milner and General Fayrbourne caught the next plane back to Milner's home town. From there, they took Milner's car to his home.

Alice met them at the door, kissed her uncle's cheek, shook the General's hand, and told them the Unicorn was still in the computer room.

The Unicorn didn't notice them when they entered. Milner noticed a sadness in the Unicorn's blue eyes.

"What seems to be the matter?" Milner thought.

Instantly, the sadness disappeared. In its place was a cold, harsh look, as if the Unicorn hadn't sensed their presence when they had first entered the house.

"This is General Fayrbourne, of the Pentagon. General, this is the Unicorn," said Milner as he introduced them.

"You want to set up a trade agreement?" the General said to the Unicorn. "What would the terms be?"

"You don't seem to be frightened by my being real, General," the Unicorn replied. "To answer your question, I noticed, while going through the library here, that several scientists have debated the possibilities of building an ionic drive for interstellar travel. I propose to give your race detailed, working plans for the building of a space ship powered by an ionic drive.

"Just what do we have to give you to get these plans?" the General asked.

"All that will be required on your part, will be to build a space ship from my specifications. It isn't powered by an ionic drive. This will be my transportation back to my own system."

"In other words, we build you a space ship and in return you give us the plans for another?" said the General.

"That's right."

"I was under the impression that your race was capable of teleportation. Aren't you?"

"We are restricted to teleporting upon the surface of planets only. For interplanetary and interstellar travel, we have to use space ships," the Unicorn answered.

"It seems to me that your race would have nothing to gain in a so-called trade agreement with Earth"

The Unicorn thought about this for a couple of minutes before answering. Shortly, it broadcast its thoughts to the two humans.

"My race would receive the satisfaction of helping an inferior race (as far as interplanetary and interstellar travel are concerned) over the threshold into space."

"Why don't you build this space ship yourself?" Milner asked.

The Unicorn stared toward Milner with an annoyed look in its blue eyes.

"It would attract too much attention. Most of the materials I would need are alloys. These are best produced in refineries built specifically for this purpose."

"What guarantee do we have that if we build this space ship for you, you will live up to your end of the deal -- giving a set of detailed blueprints for a space ship powered by an ionic drive?" Milner asked.

"You have my word of honor, as the only member of my race who is in contact with your people."

Milner and General Fayrbourne exchanged looks with each other. The General looked back at the Unicorn and said, "I thought there was more of your race on our planet? You said your race was responsible for legends of Greek Gods, except the ones with features identical to man."

"I regret holding you under this assumption. What you have said is correct. When we find an inhabited planet, we send out a certain number of . . . you would call them anthropologists. Periodically, we take tests to see which of us has absorbed the most understanding of your culture. The rest return home. The last one to score the highest on the test is left alone to act as a passive supervisor."

Alice Milner opened the door, entered the computer room. Jonas Milner and Fayrbourne glanced around. Milner frowned at his niece for barging into the room.

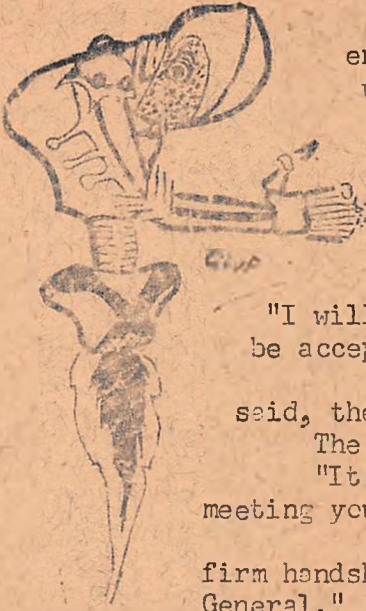
"Uncle Jonas, my curiosity got the better of me when you brought General Fayrbourne home, so I have been listening at the door," she calmly confessed. "If I may offer a suggestion, it may bring a solution to your problems."

Alice looked expectantly at her Uncle. He remained motionless, saying nothing. General Fayrbourne cleared his throat. Alice glanced deep into his brown eyes. A flush started to grow around his collar. To avoid her gaze he nodded his head for her to continue.

"As I see it, if you build a space ship for the Unicorn, it will cost money. If he leaves the plans for this ion-powered ship, we have gained very much. If he doesn't, we will still have the plans for his ship, which may prove useful. We will also know that we aren't alone in the universe. Maybe a few of the high personages will stop thinking of nothing but power for awhile," she said.

Alice looked questioningly at her uncle and the General once more. Noticing the deathly stillness of the room, she wondered if she should run out of it, after the blatant intrusion.

Milner looked at General Fayrbourne and their faces broke into wide grins.



Milner, clearing his throat, said to Alice, "very well spoken, my dear. Leave it up to a woman and they'll come through with flying colors."

The General turned back to the Unicorn, who had been feeding more information into the Univac.

"Have you gentlemen reached a decision, with the help of the young lady?" the Unicorn asked.

"Yes, we have," the General replied.

"I will fly back to Washington, and notify you tomorrow. Will this be acceptable?"

"Quite. I will return tomorrow at ten," the Unicorn said, then turned, walked out the door, and galloped off into the woods.

The General turned back to Milner, smiled, and stuck out his hand.

"It was nice seeing you again, Jonas, and it was very interesting meeting you, young lady."

Milner said, clasping the General's hand in a firm handshake, "You must come down and see us when this is all over, General."

General Fayrbourne received special permission from the President to speak to a joint session of Congress. Due to the importance of the matter, the legislative bodies granted him the speaking privileges normally limited to their own members. The length of the philabuster that resulted, proved that the General could be very influential in politics. They passed his resolution to build a space ship for the Unicorn with a unanimous decision, and the President signed it immediately.

By six o'clock that evening, the news was on the front page of every newspaper in the country, and the major newspapers in the rest of the free world. The entire free world was shocked that the United States had not only come in contact with an extraterrestrial, but was helping him to return to his own race on the other side of the galaxy.

Milner could hear the telephone ring from where he was, in the computer room.

Alice, half entering the room, said, "General Fayrbourne would like to talk to you, Uncle Jonas."

"Thank you, Alice."

Milner made his way to the living room, forgetting that the computer was still in operation.

He settled into a comfortable easy chair, picked up the receiver, placed it to his ear, and said, "What can I tell the Unicorn; have they reached a decision yet?"

The Unicorn walked into the room as the General said, "If you haven't heard the news, Milner, the resolution was passed unanimously. Have the Unicorn teleport to the vicinity of the White House. There is a Univac we can use here for the purpose of working out the plans for the ship. The materials that will be needed are being donated as soon as we find out what will be needed. I have to run now because I have an appointment with the President in just a few minutes. I'll come down for an informal visit soon -- I promise."

Milner stood up with the receiver in his hand, not getting a chance to say anything, for the line was dead.

He hung the telephone up and turned to the Unicorn. He gave it the approximate longitude and latitude of the White House.

"Your presence is required as soon as you can get there," Milner said.

"It will take me less than a minute. May our two races live peacefully together within this galaxy of ours. It has been a long time since I

have seen my home world. My stay on your world is equal to a five year journey in your life span. It isn't easy having a long life span such as mine. After three hundred years, it is hard to keep occupied to fight boredom of life. Goodbye, my friend. May the rest of your life be a glorious one."

Milner looked at the Unicorn and smiled. The blue eyes of the Unicorn shone with a happiness and a longing for a home among the far stars.

The pigmentation of the Unicorn started fading until there was but a faint outline of the creature. With a slight popping sound, as the air rushed in to fill the space vacated, the Unicorn vanished.

Milner stood outside a short distance from the house staring at the star-studded sky above him. Thoughts ran through his head like lightning through a stormy sky. He glanced down at the grass that the Unicorn had nibbled such a short time ago. As he looked back up at the stars, a tear rolled gracefully from each eye.

The Unicorn finished feeding the coded computer tapes to the Univac in the sub-basement of the White House.

"It will be at least ten hours," the Unicorn said to the President. "I have adjusted the decoder so that the information that the computer gives on its tapes will be translated into blueprints."

The blueprints were distributed to the companies that would be donating the time and materials to make the thousands of separate components that would be needed for the gigantic task.

Bit by bit, piece by piece, and change by change the space ship slowly took shape upon the White House lawn. One month went by. Two months. Three. At the end of the fourth month, the ship stood gleaming in the early afternoon sun. It brought to mind the fabled flying saucers.

An engineer turned to his companion and said, "Quite a piece of engineering ingenuity, isn't it?"

"Yes it is," his friend answered. "But why is there a destruct button on the control panel?"

"Who knows? Maybe when they fought wars, they had their own way to say 'Uncle'. But confidentially, I've left the wires disconnected."

The President, his Cabinet members, General Fayrbourne and Jonas Milner stood upon a hastily constructed speakers' platform. Forty feet away stood the Unicorn, next to the huge silver saucer-shaped ship.

Milner left the platform without attracting attention. He made his way unnoticed to the open hatch of the great interstellar ship and entered.

As the President finished his speech about a non-isolated Earth on the rim of the Milky Way galaxy, he turned toward his companions. Noticing that Milner was no longer on the platform, the President dismissed his absence as sentimentalism.

The Unicorn came within a few feet of the platform. It said, "Mr. President. Gentlemen. I thank you for the hospitality and help that your race has bestowed upon me. Just before I leave, I will connect a receiving unit to the Univac so that it may analyze the powers I use to drive my ship. I have here some



coded tapes that may help you in your analyses. Maybe you will be able to master this power that I have, and put it to use bettering your race.

"I will try to contact my race before I leave, that I may inform them that my presence is no longer required, and I am departing Earth for home.

"Mr. President. Gentlemen. I bid you farewell. May your world prosper in all it undertakes."

The Unicorn teleported into the sub-basement of the White House, connected the receiving unit to the Univac, and returned almost instantly, then walked to the ship, entered through the hatch and disappeared inside. The hatch closed with a hydraulic whisper.

Outside, the immediate area around the ship was cleared of spectators.

The maze of intricate machinery was fascinating, yet meaningless to Milner. He had decided to secretly accompany the Unicorn to its home world.

He found a hiding place within view of the control console unit as the Unicorn entered and the hatch closed. He kept his breathing under control, forcibly, so that his presence wouldn't be noticed until they had left the Earth, and possibly the solar system.

The Unicorn centered itself upon the control console and started the activation of the ship. A humming issued forth from the mighty engines beneath the Unicorn. The humming built in intensity and then slacked off as the Unicorn switched on the interstellar radio before raising from Earth.

"Sol Three calling Algenib Four. Come in, Algenib Four."

The Unicorn repeated his call several times before receiving an answer through the etheric static.

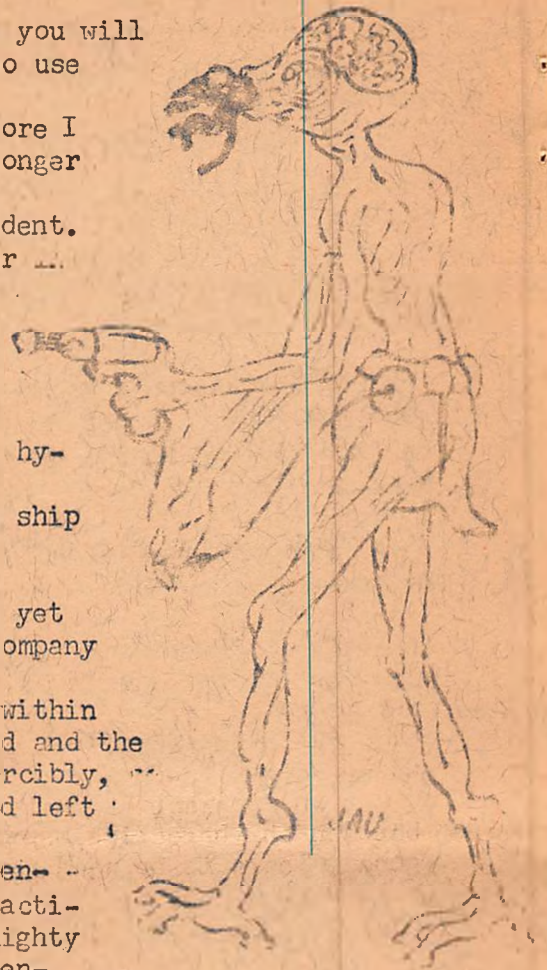
"All peoples of Algenib Four, your attention is required if you are receiving this transcription. For unknown reasons our scientists have only recently detected the symptoms which indicate that Algenib is going nova. We are at a loss to account for this apparent negligence, but more important is that we have approximately three weeks to provide our race with a livable planet circling another star of the same stellar type. We ask that all members of the race, disregarding legal restrictions, attempt to find a planet of this type -- No! It can't be! We are supposed to have three --"

The Unicorn couldn't believe the words that had issued forth from the speaker of the interstellar radio. The news that its home world was destroyed made the Unicorn go down on its front knees and put its head between them.

Milner swallowed a sob as he saw the Unicorn's eyes fill and overflow with tears. He wondered what the Unicorn was going to do now.

A radio receiver had been set up to pick up the Unicorn's last message to Earth. They received the call signal, adjusted the volume and tone, and plugged in the amplification system.

"Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen. I have contacted my home world and I will be leaving soon. I want to clear up one thing before I depart your Earth. I have explained previously how I was chosen for supervisor of Earth. On my



 SON

OF

FILTRATION

-- in which Davis tries the reader's
 patience not once, but twice in the
 same issue --



No, that unkempt ogre in yon sketch (yon is to the left this time) is not the son of Filtration, but merely yr. hmbl. srvt. in all his balding, overweight, double-chinned glory. And in uniform, at no extra charge. No charge at all, in fact.

It was sketched by a talented fellow whose name I would give, except that I exercised one of the Davis's very own talents and swiftly forgot his name. Give me time and isolation and I can forget anybody's name. Even Lyndon...uh, Lyndon...uh, even that guy.

Anyway, I definitely remember that he lived in Honolulu, if that helps. (the artist lived there, not Lyndon B. Whatizname) A very intelligent guy in spite of which, he had made sergeant E-6, the kind of sergeant immediately above the lowest kind of sergeant, during his three years. ~~in~~ them almost over. But brains are a luxury to the Army and he was a complete washout at the really important things, as was immediately obvious at first sight of the violet-tinged lenses in his spectacles. So, he was kicked down from the code section of the 501st Signal Battalion and set to watching over enlisted men while they went on police call, pulled motor stables, dug holes, etc., leaving the code work to lifers with an I.Q. of maybe 95 or less, but who exhibited military bearing, hence were suitable for important work.

(Of course, I do not discriminate against lifers. I have forgotten their names, too.)

But though I forget everyone's name, that sketch will remain to remind me of my time in, uh...now, what was the name of that country?

Sensitive souls may send a stamped, self-addressed envelope and 25¢ in coin, and they will receive a piece of paper cut to fit perfectly over the sketch, discreetly concealing it. Glue not included.

On the opposite page, to balance off the above loathsome thingey, is an Easter bunny rendered by another talented fella, William Rotsler. You may be wondering why we publish an Easter Bunny this close to Easter. But who ever heard of a Christmas bunny?

Except at Hugh Hefner's Christmas party...

 PROZINES ARE AN ENDANGERED SPECIES

Say, last issue was the annish, but this issue has the distinction of containing the "anncol." A year of Filtrations. Good thing it got crowded out of a couple of issues, or I might have gotten the idea that I was indispensable.

(Of course, if any of you want to scribble some little note to inform me that I am indeed indispensable, and slip it into the envelope with your order for the above mentioned Davis Caricature Concealer (D.C.C.), go right ahead. Contrariwise, if you feel moved to inform me that you consider me about as dispensible as I can get and still be breathing, do so, and

I shall respect you for it. Just don't forget that damn quarter.)

 FANNISH FANDOM IS NOT A REDUNDANCY

Alert readers of MAYBE 14 doubtless noted that, at the bottom of page 7 appeared the same two lines that led off page 8. And the same redundancy was repeated with pages 16 and 17. My fault, all mine. Though it may look like stupidity, it actually was failure of memory: I had typed too far down on one stencil, then realized the mistake, and calmly typed the excess lines at the top of the next stencil, intending to go back and conflu out the excess bottom lines. And I forgot...

While I am openly baring my sundry defects, I should remind you that I stated in lastish that I had received only nine issues of NEW WORLDS, after I had subscribed for twelve issues in 1968. I have checked my (thin) stack of copies of NEW WORLDS and found this to be untrue. I must apologize for misleading you, long-suffering reader.

I received eight of the twelve.

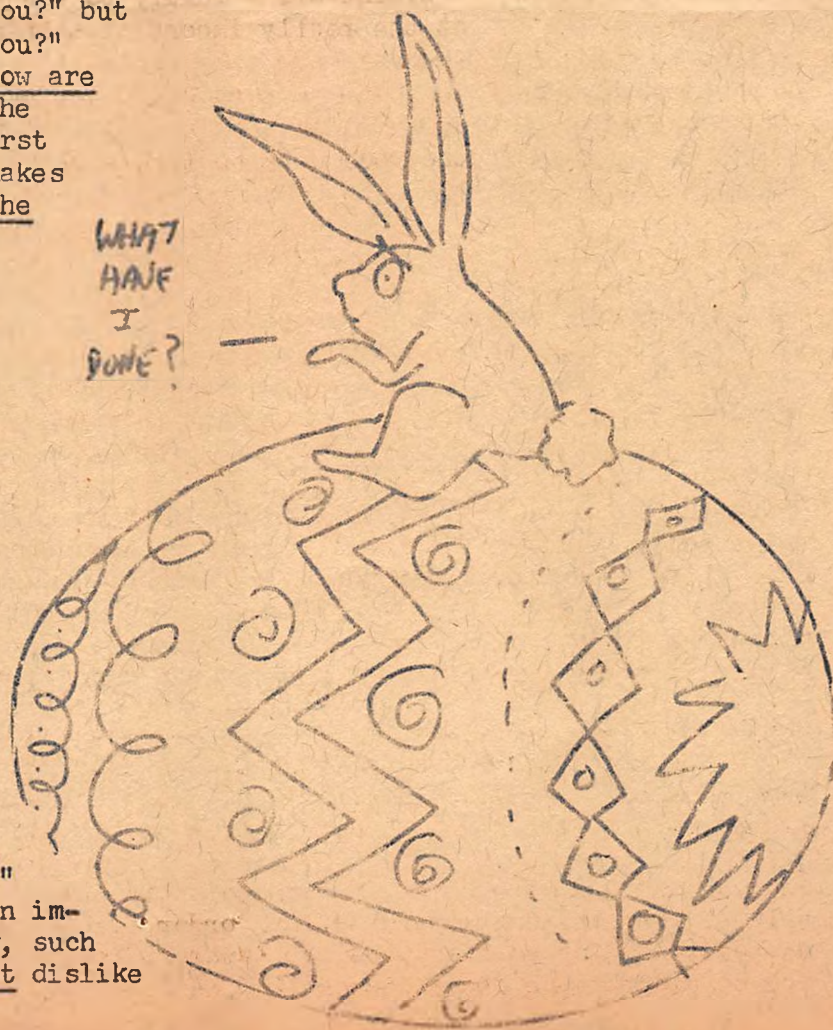
And, though I proclaimed lastish that I make no changes in contributions, that remark was typed early in the zine, and later in that ish (and in thish) I succumbed to the temptation to make some changes. I have, of course, always corrected spelling and grammatical errors, but lately I have been unable to bring myself to set onto stencil a certain recurrent blunder: the said-bookism.

The most common said-bookism is the one that goes: "How are you?" he smiled." Now, this is simply not possible. You can whisper, shout, stutter, drawl, scream, or yodel "How are you?" but mortal man cannot smile "How are you?" What the writer really means is "How are you?" he said, smiling. But then he should have written that in the first place. "How are you?" he smiled makes as much sense as "How do you do," he machine-gunned. Or, to use James Blish's favorite horrible example, "Good Morning!" he pole-vaulted."

Anyway, the said-bookisms of that sort were changed. And it would be overpoweringly appreciated if future submissions were free of the like.

However, future submission of fiction are liable to have tough going, even without said-bookisms. If anyone doesn't know it, yet, all submissions for MAYBE (other than LoC's) go to me now.

Irvin Koch thinks that I don't like fan fiction. He may have received this impression simply because of the several times I have said to him, "I don't like fan fiction." I can easily understand how such an impression might be formed. But now, such must be set aside, because I do not dislike



fan fiction.

I dislike bad fiction.

And most fan fiction is bad fiction; which is no surprise, even though fandom abounds with writers who can turn out interesting essays, penetrating criticism, humorous reminiscences, etc. But fiction is harder to write. Its writing requires that the writer have competence along the fronts necessary for good non-fiction (writing which is interesting and readable, knowledge of the subject, ability to explain clearly, etc.), and further requires competence in areas peculiar to fiction (creation of solid, interesting characters, ability to plot, ability to write convincing dialogue and vivid descriptions, etc.). Much as I hate to quote Ted White, he was right when he wrote that fiction writing requires "a different set of muscles."

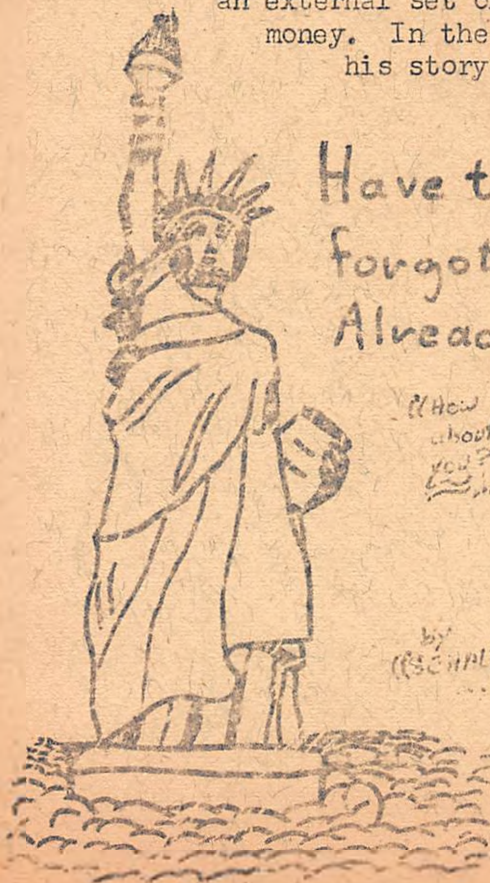
An argument often advanced: the publication of fan fiction helps aspiring writers develop those different muscles. I don't agree. A writer learns to write by writing (and writing and writing and writing and and and) and the publication of something in a fanzine is not likely to hasten the process in its author. If useful criticism comes from the readers, the publication of fan fiction might be useful to the that author, but such is not the case generally, and such has not been the case with MAYBE. Since Irvin publishes the addresses of contributors, readers may have been writing directly to the authors, but I doubt it. Darrell Schweitzer's letters commenting on the fiction have stood almost alone in saying something besides "I liked/hated _____ by _____."

Nor do I go along with the claim that beginning writers need the egoboo of seeing a story in print, even if just in a fanzine. Any writer who can get a high because his or her story was accepted by a fanzine is in for trouble. Into what depths will he plummet when he receives a form rejection slip with Andy Porter's scrawl at the bottom (or, more likely, no signature at all)?

Someone may write because he (1) writes stories for his own pleasure, (2) writes to reach other people, (3) writes not for anyone, at least primarily, but for an external set of standards (i.e., creates "art"), or (4) writes to make money. In the first case, the writer obviously needs no publication of his story for satisfaction, and the same is true of the third case.

In the fourth case, the writer obviously cannot benefit from fanzine publication, at least until such time as Howard Hughes starts a fanzine. Only in the second case does fanzine publication help the writer. But in a fanzine, he will reach only a tiny fraction of the audience that a prozine could offer. Occasionally, a good story cannot achieve publication, except in a fanzine, but such are rare, and generally the prozine editors know what they are doing, meaning that stories which have been rejected by all pro editors are seldom deserving of publication. Such stories may find a home in the pages of a fanzine, but does a writer who wants to reach an audience want to reach it with inferior stories?

I do not, then, think that a writer is helped by the publishing of his fiction in fanzines. This does not mean that I will automatically reject any fiction sent in. I only dislike bad fiction, remember. If someone sends me fiction which I consider of professional quality, I may have doubts about the writer's sanity, but it will see print. Professional quality, I said. Which is why I don't expect to



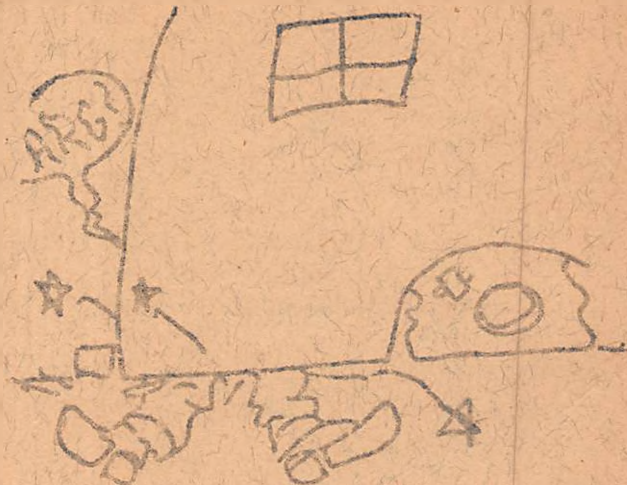
Have they
forgotten
Already?

(How
about
you?
...)

by
(SCHUBLES)
...)

CONFUSION REIGNS SUPREME...IMK

As usual I won't even have room to tell you the full story. Suffice it to say that issue 16 of this zine came out before issue 15--just call #16 an extra, all Koch, issue, and forget about it. Besides #16, back issues 6, 10, and 12 are available at the rates on page 2. If you have a number in a circle by your mailing address--that's your last issue; no number in the circle means THIS is your last issue. A "T" means you trade to Koch and the zine is then passed about by 4th class mail in batches. A "D" means Davis had this issue sent to you, an "F" means Fox. We've lost the 4th guy. Heed well the instructions on page 2 concerning where to send contribs and LoCs. The next MAYBE with LoCs will be #18 in March 72 (we go back bimonthly) and the letterzine, BABY, has seen its last issue. I implore Hank not to accept WNY fiction, even tho I no longer have any control whatsoever over either the normal or letters part of this zine after



HARRISON
COMES
TO
FLORIDA

issue #17--the special offset semipro fiction issue in which I will get even with the vocal majority which refuses to read zines of fanfiction.

+++++
ABOVE ILLO BY HARRY HARRISON--somebody PLEASE send me his address.
+++++

from IRVIN KOCH
835 Chatt. Bk. Bldg.
Chattanooga, TN 37402

use FL address at your own risk--esp on 3d class.



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