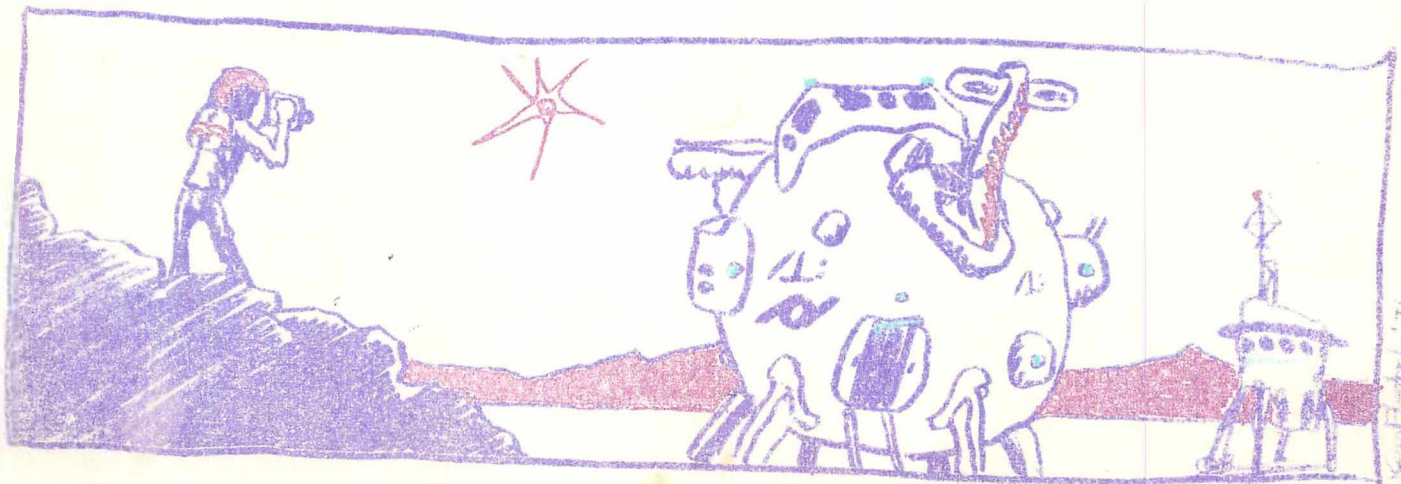


No 8



No 8 comes from Ruth Berman, 5620 Edgewater Boulevard, Minneapolis Minn 55417, for trade, letter of comment, or 25¢/issue. Contributors get the issue their material appears in and the following issue. No comes out irregularly three times a year. July, 1971.

Table of Contents

covers: Ken Fletcher

A Letter from Marjory Daw -- Nan Braude.....20

Look What They've Done to Strider -- Eleanor Arnason.....21

George MacDonald's Dreamers -- Ruth Berman.....13

The Saga of Olaf Loudsnore, Chapter CI -- John Boardman....20

No & Yes: Letters.....21

backcovers: Jim Young

Illus: Allan Asherman, p. 5; Jim Young, p. 9; Dick Tatge, pp. 12, 19; Bonnie Bergstrom, p. 15; Ken Fletcher, p. 18; Eleanor Arnason, p. 21.

- You paid money
- we trade
- You contributed/LOCed
- You collect these
- review copy
- sample copy
- You need to subscribe or write or something to get nextish.

Four Quarters (La Salle College, Philadelphia PA 19141, 50¢/copy) published a short fantasy by me, "The Statement of Mrs. Thaddeus Usheen to the Press Upon Being Rescued by the Coast Guard" in the March issue.

A Letter from Marjory Daw, July 12, 1985

by Nan Braude

Berkeley California

Dear Ruth,

You remember that we were playing around with the idea of writing each other make-believe adventures in our letters in order to liven up a dull summer? Well, I was all set to exercise my imagination for your amusement when it became unnecessary: the things that have been happening to me in real life have been far more exciting than the wildest stuff that I could possibly dream up.

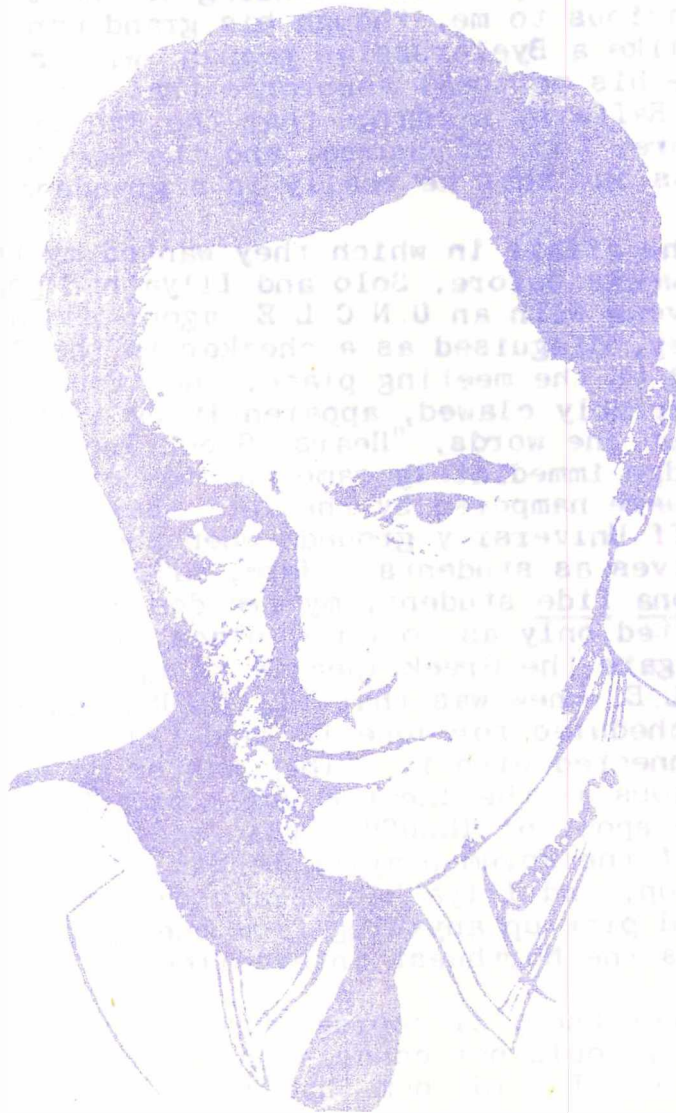
It all began when I discovered--quite by accident--that the bicycle-and-toy shop downstairs is actually the West Coast headquarters for U.N.C.L.E.!!! It happened this way: several people have suggested to me that since I live so far from campus it might be a good idea to get a bike. So I went in to see if they had any second-hand ones. As I entered the shop, there was a man at the counter who looked as though he was about to go behind it; but when I appeared he turned away rather hastily and began to price skateboards. The suddenness of his action attracted my attention, and his back looked vaguely familiar, so under cover of examining bikes I watched him. When he turned around, I got the shock of my life: it was Illya Kuryakin. I pretended to be engrossed in Schwinn Roadsters, and when I turned my back a moment, he vanished--obviously via a secret entrance behind the counter.

Three days later I was in Botts', buying an ice cream cone (Burgundy cherry), when I heard this Russian-accented voice behind me say, "One small cone, Burgundy cherry, please." It was him again. (Actually, it was he.) I decided to seize Time by the forelock while the iron was hot. I turned and said slowly, in a voice laden with meaning and lumpy with significant pauses, "Do you know, Burgundy cherry has always been my favorite flavor. I have a favorite uncle (pause) who always used to bring me Burgundy cherry cones." He turned and gave me his full attention. His dark glasses stared intensely into mine. I continued, "My uncle works for the Early English Text Society...in a confidential capacity." This made it clear that I knew who and what are really behind EETS, and that I was a person to be trusted.

He scowled at me for a minute and then asked, "Is your... uncle...by any chance a clergyman?"

"Why, yes," I said brightly. "As a matter of fact, he's a Canon of York Cathedral." His scowl lessened, but only a little; he asked Uncle Edmond's name, and if I lived in the neighborhood. But just as I thought things were getting interesting, the man behind the counter handed him his ice cream cone, and he left. (I mean Illya left; the counterman at Botts' may be seen there to this very day.) I was so crushed that I could hardly swallow my ice cream.

But the very next night, as I was finishing up my dinner dishes, there came a knock at the door (a sound which, as Charles Lamb says, is not exceeded in interest by many others, urban or rural). I opened the little blind that covers the window in the door, and there he was again! Needless to say, I let him in. Over a cup of tea (I'm so glad I brought the Wedgwood teapot back with me: I KNEW it would come in handy), he told me that he had suspected I'd recognized him and had had my background checked out to see if I were a suspicious character. (Just as I'd anticipated after our conversation in Botts'.) I came through the security clearance



with flying colors, naturally--I wonder if U.N.C.L.E. asked Uncle Edmond to vouch for me--what he must have thought!!--and Illya was there to ask me to keep quiet about him (N.B. YOU are hereby sworn to secrecy, too), and (unbelievably) U.N.C.L.E. wanted to ask me to help them in a very important affair. You can imagine with what alacrity I assented. It was then he explained about the toy shop being West Coast headquarters, and asked me to come in the next afternoon for a briefing.

The next day I met Illya, by appointment, three paces to the left of the Nutty Putty counter, and he took me through the secret entrance. No less a person than Mr. Waverly himself was there. (I learned later that it was very unusual for him to leave N.Y., but he'd been in S.F. for some preparations in connection with the anniversary of the founding of the UN. He was very charming and gracious to me, though his grand manner at first made me feel a bit like a Byelorussian peasant with straw in my hair; and he gave me his personal assurance that there wasn't a word of truth in Max Rafferty's charge that the FSM was THRUSH-inspired.) Solo was there, too, of course, and the bearded agent named Kittredge--it turns out that he really is a grandson of George Lyman Kittredge.

The affair in which they wanted my help was as follows: Three weeks before, Solo and Illya had gone to Long Island to rendezvous with an U.N.C.L.E. agent who had been operating in Berkeley, disguised as a checker in the Co-op. But when they arrived at the meeting place, they found the man dying; he'd been terribly clawed, apparently by a lion. He was just able to gasp out the words, "Hearst Greek Theatre." Solo, Illya, and Kittredge immediately came out to Berkeley, but their investigations were hampered by the fact that campus cops kept throwing them off University grounds when they were unable to identify themselves as students. Here, of course, is where I came in: as a bona fide student, my freedom of movement on campus is restricted only as to time, place, and manner; and I could investigate the Greek Theatre to my heart's content. All U.N.C.L.E. knew was that (1) THRUSH had some sort of diabolical plot scheduled for June 12, and (2) the Greek Theatre was somehow connected with it. They wanted me to look for anything suspicious at the Theatre while they hung around Berkeley looking for the spoor of THRUSH. (Kittredge sat at a little table in front of the Forum playing bongos, Solo was the new checker at the Co-op, and Illya kept skateboarding down Bancroft to see if he could pick up anything from the RF crowd. All he got out of that was the Northwest Intercollegiate Slalom Championship.)

They knew, of course, that June 12 was UC graduation day, but they could not conceive how THRUSH intended to profit from the fact. I told them that I was eligible to attend graduation,

since I was receiving an advanced degree, and that I could get two of them in on the free tickets to which I was entitled. The plan as we finally worked it out was that Solo and Kittredge would be in the audience, posing as my uncles (!), and that Illya would try to find some way to sneak in among the members of the procession. I promised to try to find someone I knew who had arranged to take part in the ceremony but had decided against it at the last minute. (I finally managed it by drugging Michael Warren in the I-House Coffee Shop--obviously he didn't notice the taste of the chloral hydrate in THAT coffee--and purloining his academic regalia.)

June 12 was a lovely day, and the ceremony went off without a hitch. So did our plot, with the exception of the fact that Illya, disguised as Warren, M., was obliged by the exigencies of the alphabet to be at the opposite end of the graduate contingent of the procession from me, and so we were unable to communicate when I made my important discovery. And it's lucky I made it, for from his seat he could never have seen the significant gesture which gave away the THRUSH plot.

When President Kerr got up to deliver the main commencement address, he came forward carrying a bulky mass of papers--notes for his speech, announcements, etc. When he put them down on the lectern, a few slipped to the floor. He bent down, retrieved them, and was ready to speak, all before the welcoming applause had ceased. But only I, seated as I was at the far end of the front row, was in a position to notice one curious gesture he made. As he swept the fallen papers together, he shoved something under the lectern. I would have thought nothing of it, but he made no attempt to retrieve it, which seemed odd, since the things he dropped were supposedly important enough to be worth bending over to pick up in front of a crowd--an act which would certainly have embarrassed ME! But in another half-second I knew I was on to something; for, as he rose, he looked around at us, in a manner which I can only describe as stealthy, to see if he had been observed. And he caught me staring at him! I immediately turned and began gazing out at the crowd, as if trying to pick out my relatives, but I knew my attempt at deception was futile. I longed to tell one of the U.N.C.L.E. men, but they might as well have been on the moon for all the chance there was of communication with them.

But there was worse to come. After that brief clash of eyes with Kerr, I concentrated on devising a method for getting out without his noticing me in the recessional procession (which was, inevitably, Aida). I had completely forgotten that the presentation of degrees would come first. You see, on account of the size of the graduating class they don't hand out the bachelor's degrees individually; but advanced degrees are presented--by President

Clark Kerr. When my name was called, I panicked. For one wild moment I thought of remaining seated, but then I realized that the resultant snarl would infallibly attract just the attention I wished to avoid. I went across the stage, my knees knocking under my robe and my face carefully set in the requisite blank expression. I tried to avoid Kerr's eyes, but when he took my hand in the ritual handshake, he gripped it so hard that tears came to my eyes. Involuntarily I glanced up at him, and the look in his eyes nearly withered me. I was absolutely terrified; I felt like a rabbit mesmerized by a cobra. If you've seen Kerr or his picture, you know how mild he looks, but for that moment he made Torquemada look like Walter Mitty. He knew my name now, of course; and in those few seconds I know he committed every line of my rather undistinguished physiognomy to a memory like a steel trap. Silently uttering a desperate prayer to Saints Teresa of Avila and Thomas Aquinas, I managed to take my diploma and get back to my seat without tottering.

At the first available opportunity, I collared Illiya in the disrobing area and poured out my story. At first he was inclined to discount it as (I quote) "the excesses of the overstimulated imagination of a romanticism bordering on morbidity," but he realized I was in earnest when I showed him the blood on my finger where Kerr's iron grip had made my ring cut the soft flesh below the knuckle. After my finger had been bandaged (Illiya had gauze and adhesive tape in his pocket), we turned in our academic gowns and went to meet Solo and Kittredge at a prearranged rendezvous point. When Illiya and I had filled them in, they agreed that nothing could be done until the crowd had departed, but that after that we must waste no time, for THRUSH might change their plans in the light of my inconvenient discovery.

"But won't whatever-it-is be in plain sight when they move that lectern?" objected Kittredge. "It's not a permanent installation."

I quickly explained: "The Greek Theatre has trapdoors in the floor; they used them for the final exit-to-Hell scene in Caestus. And the lectern is sitting right on top of one of them. It's sufficiently larger than the opening not to fall in; and I'll bet the microphone wires are connected through the trap to the Theatre electrical system. If whatever it was that Kerr dropped was small enough to be hidden in those papers, it won't be noticed in among the cables down there."

They agreed with my hypothesis. Solo set Kittredge to watch for the first available chance to search the trapdoor area, and to use it, while he followed Kerr in hopes that he would lead us to THRUSH. Illiya was detailed to keep an eye on me, in case Kerr decided that his only witness should be eliminated. They thought I'd be safe in the apartment since I hadn't registered my new

address with the University yet, and Kerr had no way to locate me. Solo told Kittredge to report there, and he'd join us if and when he found out anything; if not, he'd call.

Kittredge, as it turned out, didn't show till after 8; he had to wait until the cleaning crew finished at the Theatre; and then, when he'd picked up the packet Kerr dropped, he was almost caught by a couple of THRUSH agents and had to lose them in the Berkeley hills before he could safely join us. Around six, Iliya and I got tired of waiting and went down to the Co-op and bought a steak and some green vegetables for dinner. Afterwards we sat around over creme de cacao and fruitless speculations. I was still bemused at Clark Kerr, of all people, being a THRUSH agent; but Iliya explained that U.N.C.L.E. had suspected for a long time that he was one of their satraps. They also believe that a number of the Regents are involved--Carter in particular. We were at a loss, however, to figure out what Kerr had dropped and what on earth THRUSH could be up to in the Greek Theatre.

Our first question was answered when Kittredge arrived with the parcel. He and Iliya took it apart in my kitchen sink while I watched nervously from the doorway, ready to bolt. The device, which was about the size of a pack of cigarettes, was an atomic time bomb, set to go off at 9:30! Fortunately the timing device was the first thing they disconnected. Kittredge opined that the magnitude of the explosion would be about 7.5 megatons. It was easy enough to see that the bomb had to be planted at that time so that Kerr could get to the stage of the Greek Theatre without anyone wondering why he should be there--after all, no one suspects the commencement speaker of being up to dirty work at the crossroads! And at any other time the President of the University would be too conspicuous a figure, whose presence would attract attention. But why, why, WHY (we wondered desperately) would THRUSH want to blow up the Greek Theatre in the first place?

It was almost midnight when Solo arrived, bringing the solution to the problem. (I'd just put on the fourth pot of coffee.) He'd followed Kerr to his home and watched him through the study window. Kerr made a long-distance phone call (U.N.C.L.E. later had it traced; it was to a pay phone in Poughkeepsie). Then he unlocked a secret drawer in his desk, took out what appeared to be some sort of map, glanced at it, nodded, returned it to the drawer, and locked it. Then for seven solid hours, while Solo fumed with impa-



tiences outside the window, Kerr worked on his speech for the UCLA commencement. Finally Kerr left the room. After climbing a vine to make sure that Kerr had really gone to bed, Solo cut the burglar alarm and entered the study window. Picking the lock on the secret drawer, he removed the map, copied it on Kerr's own Xerox machine, put it back, relocked the drawer, and departed with the copy. Hopefully, Kerr will never know that the drawer and map have been tampered with.

We all huddled together to examine the map. It was like nothing I had ever seen before: a weird conglomeration of curved lines, crossed by several very broad straight ones, with a circle and a rectangle, the latter above and to the left of the former, added by hand. I stared at it uncomprehendingly. Why should such an utterly strange document somehow look familiar? I squinted at it. With my eyes half-closed, I could see only the broad lines. They formed a pattern that was vaguely reminiscent of something I'd seen recently. But I couldn't think of any streets in Berkeley that looked quite like that.

"It's some sort of geodetic map," I heard Illya say.

"What's that?" I asked, my philological instincts aroused by the unfamiliar word.

"A map that shows the configuration of subsurface areas," he replied unhelpfully.

"Such as?"

"Oh, rock layers, oil deposits, things like that."

WHERE had I looked at a map like that recently? I remembered a copy of Scientific American that I had inadvertently picked up in the Great Hall; it had had an article about California in it, an article about...

"EARTHQUAKES!" I yelled, startling Illya so much that he dropped a half-full cup of coffee on my new rug.

"When people have them, they are called fits," he said (rather nastily, I thought).

"No, no, you don't understand. I saw an article on the California fault areas just the other day that had the same map, only without all those curved lines. And THAT," I pointed triumphantly to the broad line near the top of the map, "is the Hayward Fault. And it runs right under the Greek Theatre."

Solo bent over the map. "Then that circle, which sits on the line, must represent the Theatre. But what is the other building, the rectangle?"

I rummaged through my books until I found an old Schedule and Directory, and opened it to the campus map. "There's only one building in that position relative to the Greek Theatre--the Lawrence Radiation Laboratory!"

"Of course!" exclaimed Solo, knocking over his cup in his excitement. "The Laboratory is too well guarded for THAUSK to attack it directly. But a 7.5-megaton explosion in the Greek Theatre would be bound to start an earthquake big enough to destroy the lab. And the U.S. atomic energy program would be set back years by the damage."

"Not to mention all the innocent people who would die of radiation," said Kierredge grimly. "If we hadn't found that bomb..."

"You mean, if this young lady hadn't spotted Kerr planting it," interrupted Iliya gallantly from the floor, where he was mopping up spilled coffee with one of my good damask dinner napkins. For that remark I nearly forgave him his crack about fits.

* * *

Well, that's about all that's happened so far this summer. Unfortunately, nothing could be pinned on Kerr. A search of his house later found no trace of the map: there must have been some sort of alarm device to show that the drawer had been tampered with. And we'd destroyed the bomb, so we have no evidence against him. Since he knew I was responsible for the failure of his plot, I made up my mind to get out of Berkeley instanter. I'd already written to Columbia and Penn for catalogues when I got a long-distance call from Waverly in N.Y. He asked me to stay on at UC, to keep my eyes open, as a personal favor to him. He promised me that U.N.C.L.E. would protect me, and they're going to pay me the equivalent of a University Fellowship for my time and trouble. Rather a switch from a Woodrow Wilson! Solo and Co. have gone back to N.Y., but the local U.N.C.L.E. agents drop in for coffee now and again. Now I have only three problems left:

- (1) My incomplete for Alpers.
- (2) Possible revenge by Kerr.
- (3) How am I going to explain all those coffee stains on my brand-new rug to the manager?

Your affectionate friend,
Marjory Daw



Look what they've done to Strider.
They've gone and made him a king,
And it never would've happened,
Except for that awful Ring.

He ought to be in a tavern,
Having a drink or a smoke,
Trading tales with a friend or two,
Or singing, or telling a joke,

With a good wood roof above him,
And a fire to warm his bones.
Instead he's playing foolishly
With fortresses and thrones.

So, now we'll sing King Elessar,
When winter nights are long,
And I'd rather be the singer
Than the subject of the song.

-- E.A. Arnason

George MacDonald's Dreamers

another in the series; and then we wrote for the Victorian
mythology seminar
by Ruth Berman

Near the beginning and near the end of his career as a writer, George MacDonald wrote two dream-romances, Phantastes (1858) and Lilith (1895). In between he wrote a number of realistic novels, now forgotten, although they were popular then, and a few fairy tales for children. His three book-length children's stories, At the Back of the North Wind, The Princess and the Goblin, and The Princess and Curdie, are his best-known and, indeed, his best books. They have become classics of children's literature, ranking close to the work of one of MacDonald's friends: Lewis Carroll.

Carroll and MacDonald are far apart in tone and theme. In Carroll, the tone is terror controlled by laughter; the reader is not frightened, because, after all, it's only nonsense ("but," said the Red Queen, "I've heard nonsense, compared with which that would be as sensible as a dictionary"). Alice gains control of her environment and wakes into the real world out of both Wonderland and Looking-glass land by refusing, in the end, to take the world on their terms: "Who cares for you? You're nothing but a pack of cards," she tells the Wonderland court, and she tells the Red Queen in Looking-glass land, "As for you, I'll shake you into a kitten, that I will." The terrors in MacDonald's fairy tales -- the rough life of the London poor, the fearful goblins, the wicked servants -- are openly frightening. There is little comedy. The child-heroes overcome the terrors only with the aid of semi-divine, maternal women.

It is curious to reflect that both MacDonald and Carroll were intended for the ministry. MacDonald was fired from his first kirk for his leanings toward such heretical doctrines as redemption (eventually) for everyone, including animals, and he turned to writing for a living; Carroll was ordained as a deacon but stuck to his mathematics (and his writing and theater-going and assorted hobbies) instead of proceeding further in the church. Both men professed a deep faith in Christianity, yet the Alice books are devoid of any figures of reliable authority, and MacDonald's figures of authority are nearly all mothers. Carroll did attempt to portray father-figures in his fascinating failure, Sylvie and Bruno, but the Warden of Outland, Arthur Forrester, and the Earl are dull, lifeless characters. In each of MacDonald's two adult fantasies, there is a father-figure, the knight and Adam/Mr. Raven, but they work jointly with their wives.

Both men turned to fantasy as a way of dealing with the world, turning experiences of the spirit into physical journeys

through symbolic landscapes. They had, then, to create myths governing the workings of their dream-lands, and in doing so they created mythologies widely different from the myth to which they had given conscious allegiance.

In themes, as well as in tone, the children's books of the two writers were different. The predominant theme in the Alice books is Alice's search for identity. Little Diamond, Princess Irene, and Curdie do not experience Alice's self-doubts. Their struggle is against active evil in the world outside and, within themselves, against lack of faith in the powers combatting those evils, not a struggle to define themselves in the face of active absurdity.

In Lilith, however, MacDonald takes up the theme of a quest for identity, combining it with the themes of a search for faith and a struggle against evil. Mr. Vane is never able to remember his name in the Other World when asked who he is (as Alice is unsure of her identity in Wonderland and unable to remember her name in Looking-glass land's Wood of No Names). The raven tells him he must make himself at home by doing something in that world. In Phantastes the theme is reversed; Anodos finds his "shadow" in Fairyland when he opens the Ogress' cupboard-door, and he spends most of the rest of the book trying not to be the self his shadow prompts him to be. But in addition to being an Everyman in search of himself and in search of a faith to live by, Anodos (whose name means either "a way up" or "no way") is also Everypoet, breaking spells of enchantment and arousing super-human courage in others by means of the power of song which fitfully visits him. The lack of thematic unity perhaps makes Phantastes a less satisfactory work of art than Lilith and the children's books, although its richness (or over-richness) makes it fascinating to read.

The two adult fantasies include one important theme which is, necessarily, excluded from the children's books: frustrated sexuality. The possibility of adult sexuality does not seriously enter the world of At the Back of the North Wind. Diamond and Nanny are too young. At the end of the book, Diamond dies. However, if he did not, it is possible that Nanny's belief that Diamond must be a little simple-minded to be so good and her consequent scorn for him would perhaps put Diamond into the unwillingly celibate company of Anodos and Mr. Vane. Irene and Curdie live to reach the traditional fairy-tale end; they marry and live happily ever after. MacDonald undercuts the ending; their marriage is childless, and after their deaths the kingdom crumbles (literally and figuratively). Still, despite the undercutting in The Princess and Curdie, MacDonald is

able to envision heroes whose lives include happy marriages, both in The Princess and Curdie and in some of his short fairy tales (as with the allegorical account of the marriage, life, death, and re-union beyond death of the boy Mossy and the girl Tangle in "The Golden Key").

In Phantastes, Anodos' beloved is wife of the knight, and in Lilith Mr. Vane is not to be united with Lona until Resurrection Day. The children's stories were closer to the external events of MacDonald's life (he married, apparently happily, and had several children), but it is obvious from the intensity of Phantastes and Lilith that MacDonald was dealing with fears that were important to him. Phantastes and Lilith, although separated by 41 years, tell very much the same sort of story and use similar divinities in their mythologies. Their landscapes, however, are widely different. The landscape of Phantastes is eclectic, borrowing from the German Romantics (especially Novalis and Hoffmann), from Spenser's Faerie Queene, from traditional fairy-tales, etc. The adventures change greatly in tone from episode to episode, and the geography rambles from stream to wood to castle to underground cave to island to kingdom to another wood without much sense of direction.

The tone of Lilith is unified and owes less to other writers (or owes it less obviously; there is, for example, a scene in which Mr. Vane meets an old man weeping because the Mother -- Eve, in this context -- will not let him die, but the scene blends so unobtrusively with Vane's own hard-won determination to accept the sleep of death and rebirth that I would not have felt quite certain the old man was borrowed from Chaucer's Pardoner's Tale, except that MacDonald uses a quotation from it as a chapter heading in Phantastes and so documents his familiarity with the Tale: "And on the ground, which is my modres gate, / I knocke with my staf, erlich and late, / And say to hire, Leve mother, let me in"). As W.H. Auden said in his introduction to a reprint of the two stories (New York, Noonday Press, 1954; the edition abridges Phantastes slightly), "If Lilith is a more satisfactory book than Phantastes, one reason is that its allegorical structure is much tighter: there seems no particular reason, one feels, why Anodos should have just the number of adventures which he does have -- they could equally be more or less --



But Mr. Vane's experiences and his spiritual education exactly coincide. The danger of the chain adventure story is that perpetual novelty gives excitement at the cost of understanding; the landscape becomes all the more vivid and credible to the reader because he is made to repeat the journey Adam's Cottage, to Bad-Burrow to Dry-River to Evil-Wood to Orchard-Valley to Rocky-Saur to Hot-Stream to Bulika-City several times."

In both books the hero is a young man whose parents died when he was too young to remember them, and who returns home to take possession of his inheritance on his 21st birthday. Anodos finds a locked desk and inside it, instead of old family documents, a fairy who says she is his grandmother and promises that he will have adventures in Fairyland. The next morning the water in Anodos' washbasin turns into a stream, the flowered carpet turns into a meadow, and Anodos follows the stream into Fairyland. Mr. Vane, following what is supposedly Mr. Raven's ghost (actually, it is Mr. Raven), finds an attic room he had never seen before and in it a mirror that lets light fall through into a strange landscape, instead of reflecting the light back. Vane stumbles through into a world which co-exists with this one, but is in a different dimension. (Both transitions are effective as exciting plot-turns and also as symbols -- the identity of likeness and object and the wondrous properties of mirrors are common to dreams and magic as well as to poetry, and so are appropriate to these dream-fantasies.)

In their other worlds, Anodos and Vane are fed, comforted, and given good advice by a series of wise old women. Some of the old women in Phantastes and all of them in Lilith have young faces or young eyes despite their old age -- a trait they share with Princess Irene's Grandmother. Anodos meets a woman who lives on the outskirts of Fairyland, the beech tree woman, a woman who lives on an island in a cottage with four doors leading to sorrows, and a woman of song who had been a child until Anodos broke her musical globe; Vane meets Eve and Mara (whose name means bitterness; she is a lady of sorrows, the daughter of Adam and Eve).

Each is given good advice by a man (in addition to the good advice given by the various women). Anodos' male adviser is a knight who is only a minor figure during much of the book. He appears near the beginning and warns Anodos against being seduced by the Alder-woman as he himself had been. After the knight has cleaned his armor in battle, he re-appears as a noble figure, whom Anodos serves as squire and dies for. Vane's adviser is Mr. Raven (who is Adam and also, when he feels like it, a literal raven, who explains that each man has many selves within

himself, bird and beast, vegetative and crystalline, etc.). Mr. Raven, unlike the knight, dominates his book. His importance perhaps reflects MacDonald's conscious use of Biblical sources, but perhaps also reflects a change in MacDonald's subconscious mythology.

Both young men ignore or forget most of the good advice they get. Most of the advice Anodos does not follow is of the seemingly-inexplicable variety traditional in fairy-tales: don't open this door, stay away from the alder-maiden and the ash and the ogress (even the ogress gives him good advice, in telling him not to open her cupboard door). Anodos is given some explanations for some of these prohibitions -- the ash kills men and uses their bodies to fill up his hollowness, and the alder is in league with him. Mr. Vane is given some prohibitions of the same type: don't take Mara's bread on a journey (it turns into a stone), don't trust anyone a second time who has betrayed him once, and don't do anything suggested by such a person. Vane asks Mr. Raven what will happen if he forgets and does something asked by one who has betrayed him. Raven answers, "Then some evil that is good for you will follow.... If you remember some evil that is not good for you will not follow...." Raven must know what he is talking about, for he is Adam, and his words describe the consequences of the "felix culpa," the "fortunate sin."

However, Mr. Raven gives positive advice as well as prohibitions. Vane twice goes against this counsel. When Mr. Raven invites him to come sleep the sleep of death in Eve's hall, because it is a rebirth into heavenly life, and Vane will not be able to accomplish anything of real value until he has undergone the sleep. But Vane does not accept the invitation until its third offer, made near the end of the book, when he brings Lona's body (she has been murdered by Lilith, her mother) and the captive Lilith to Eve's hall.

It is a fault in both books that the heroes are rather unsympathetic figures, who passively await guidance (which they don't follow) and tend to whine about their troubles. Mr. Vane is perhaps the more unsympathetic, because the guidance he is offered is less ambiguous. Moreover, MacDonald does not always make credible his failure to follow it. When Mr. Raven gives Vane his second invitation to go to Eve's hall and sleep, in order to give Vane a triggering motive for riding to the Little Ones' wood instead of riding the short distance to Eve's hall, MacDonald conjures up a previously unmentioned passion for horses and riding in Mr. Vane.

Both young men fall in love: Anodos, in strongly sensual terms, with the knight's wife; Mr. Vane, almost in passing, with Lona. Robert Lee Wolff suggests (in The Golden Key: a study of

the fiction of George MacDonald, New York, Yale University Press, 1961) that Lilith is an old man's work: "despite powerful and occasionally moving passages, it is feeble, ambiguous, and inconsistent in its imagery, full of senile hatreds and resentments." He points out that "Vane, unlike Anodos, feels little or no desire for the women he meets." He cites Vane's meditations on his love for Lona as one example of the relative sexlessness of Vane's emotions: "To see her...was to think of a tender grandmother.... I hardly remembered my own mother, but in my mind's eye she looked like Lona; and if I imagined sister or child, invariably she had the face of Lona! My every imagination flew to her; she was my heart's wife."



Anodos, unlike Vane, occasionally tries to clasp his beloved in his arms, and the whole tone and imagery of Phantastes suggest a glorying in sensual delight; Anodos' Fairyland is a terrifying place at times, but it can also be beautiful and welcoming: "Numberless unknown sounds came out of the unknown dusk; but all were of twilight-kind, oppressing the heart as with a condensed atmosphere of dreamy undefined love and longing. The odours of night arose, and bathed me in that luxurious mournfulness peculiar to them, as if the plants whence they floated had been watered with bygone tears. Earth drew me towards her bosom; I felt as if I could fall down and kiss her." Vane's other world is almost uniformly terrifying. Adam's cottage and the Little Ones' dwarf-trees (and, perhaps, the Hot Stream) are oases in the arid landscape of the Bad Burrows, the Dry River, the Evil Wood, the ghosts' ruined house, and the stony, waterless city of Bulika.

Yet in the ending of Lilith, MacDonald was able to portray a vision of a joy coming, as he could not in Phantastes. Anodos, after dying in Fairyland, wakes in his own world with the certainty that good will eventually come to him, but he cannot imagine what it may be; his only vision is of the ancient woman of the cottage, seeing her face "with its many wrinkles and its young eyes, looking at me from between two hoary branches of the beech overhead." Vane has a series of dreams during his sleep

of death. The longest of them is his vision of waking Leda, who has grown at last to full womanhood, on Resurrection Day. His last dream is of being back in his own world, like Anodos, with the rest of a lonely life to live through. But, unlike Anodos, he has a specific vision of the good that is to come, because unlike Anodos, he has managed to fall in love with a woman who is not barred from him by being (in one sense or another) his mother. Wolff feels the series of dream visions at the end to be unsatisfactory and suggests that MacDonald was trapped by the problem of finding a suitable way of ending a story in which the narrator has just died. This explanation seems unsuitable, because MacDonald could have had Vane wake in his own world after dying, just as Anodos did. My own reaction is to find the ending satisfactory, on the whole, although, like Wolff, I find the implications of evil still present in the dream-resurrection of Vane unnecessary and the device of describing much of the scene through the Little Ones' words disgusting ("The beautifullest... he said, 'Ou's all mine, 'tickle ones: come along!"). Nevertheless, I find the series of dreams and Vane's resultant uncertainty as to what reality is impressive. The usual way to end a dream-fantasy, as in Phantastes, or the Alice books, is for the dreamer to wake. The twist of having the dreamer fall into a dream within his dream and dream that he is awake lends force to MacDonald's ideas about the nature of reality. The deepest meaning of Christianity for MacDonald -- as his disagreement with his first and last kirk indicates -- was in its hope of a world more real (and better) than this one. Leaving Vane asleep in the other world and only dreaming that he is here stresses the essential unreality of this world, even more than the ending of Phantastes does.

(Both books, in addition to their own intrinsic interest, are of interest to the sf fan because they are early examples of important sfnal themes. Phantastes contains an inset tale of life on another world, a planet inhabited by men and winged women who literally find their babies in the woods; the orbit of the planet is such that each season lasts many years, by our standards, and a child born in winter may not live to see the spring. Lilith is technically sf, for its fantasy is "explained" as the difference between parallel worlds.)



The Saga of Olaf Loudsnore

Chapter CI

by John Boardman

Two days later, Jarl Olaf's ship landed at a harbor in Crete to get water and food. While his men loaded water casks, there came a sound of swords striking shields. Olaf and his nephew Sigfus Sigfusson followed the sound, and came to two Greeks who were fighting as if berserkers. As they and their men watched, one of the Greeks slew the other, and himself fell grievously wounded.

Jarl Olaf, seeing that the victor was wounded unto the death, sent for his chaplain Hogni the Fat, son of Hoskuld the Cuckold. He then asked the dying man, "Who are you, and for what cause have you fought?"

"O pale-haired strangers," the man replied, "I am Aithon son of Kastor, and this man whom I have slain is my brother Lukas. We have slain each other in a quarrel over a map, which shows where is buried a great treasure. Know that, ere the Emperors of Rome ruled Crete, this island belonged to a house of powerful and wealthy kings named Minus. 'Tis said that the first king of this line chopped down a great tree with his double-bladed ax. When the tree was dug up, he found that the chief root was of solid gold, equal in every dimension. This was the chief treasure of the succeeding kings of his house, but today no man knows where it lies. I had this map, handed down from ancient times, which showed where the gold is buried. I found this spot, and had just begun to dig, when my brother attacked me. Now, for our great greed, he is dead and I am about to die."

So saying, the Greek signed himself with the cross. When Hogni the Priest saw that Aithon crossed himself in the manner of the heretical Greeks rather than of the Church of Rome, he angrily stabbed the Greek, who got his death thereby.

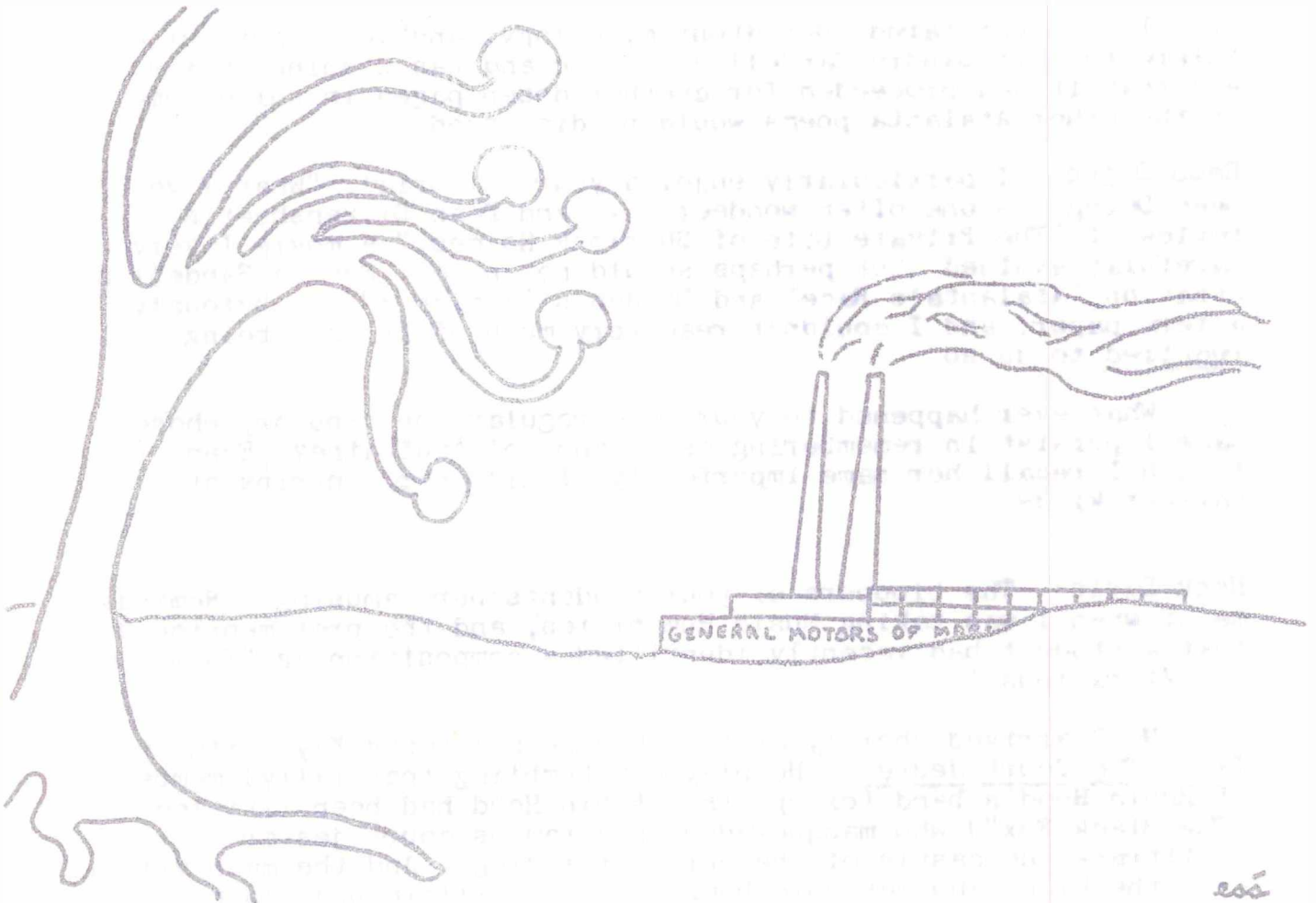
Then Jarl Olaf took up the shovel, and with his own hands dug until he uncovered the great golden root. When he and his men brought it to the surface, a great multitude of Greeks acclaimed him as a hero. Thus did Olaf Loudsnore find the Square Root of Minus I.

(to be continued)

NO & YES

Letters:

Susan Glicksohn: Students, yes indeed. I taught a freshman introductory course last summer -- set it up myself so I put some sf on. Was one of those lit-from-then-til-now courses, part of which was the concept of tragedy, part of which was Dr. Faustus. I explained that Marlowe's great defect was his reliance on "bombast," inflated rhetorical language, originally a word meaning "cotton stuffing" -- you know. So on the final I get: Christopher Marlowe was famous for writing large plays because he used a lot of cotton stuffing.



es

Harry Warner, Jr.: Dean Dickensheet's review of the Holmes movie is splendid, of course. But I raised my eyebrows at his statement that Swan Lake wasn't danced in London during good Queen Victoria's life. So I've been tottering from one bookcase to another, trying to find the book that will prove correct the instinct that tells me that the ballet couldn't have waited that long for a performance in such a large city, at least in the sharply abridged form in which it was performed almost everywhere for many decades after Tchaikovsky's death. I finally tracked down a reference to the work's revival by the Sadler's Wells Ballet in 1934, but there was no indication of how long it had awaited revival. My incredibly early edition of Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians barely mentions the ballet music of the composer which (because of its British origin) lends strength to Dean's argument.

I've never cared much about mythology, and yet I got quite interested in Sandra Sandell's article and was wishing at its end that it had proceeded for another dozen pages in which some of the other Atalanta poems would be discussed.

Redd Boggs: I particularly enjoyed your editorial, "What I've Been Doing" -- one often wonders! -- and Dean Dickensheet's review of "The Private Life of Sherlock Holmes," a movie I very carefully avoided, but perhaps should not have. Sandra Sandell's essay on "Atalanta's Race" and Dowden's "Atalanta" is obviously a term paper, and I couldn't read very much of it, not being required to do so.

What ever happened to your once-regular contributor, whose name I persist in remembering as Eleanor of Aquitaine? Even though I recall her name imperfectly, I miss her contribs of various kinds.

Hank Davis: The bloopers of your students were amusing. Reminds me of when I was taking Music Humanities, and the prof mentioned that a student had recently identified a composition as "Theme and Vibrations."

No 7 arrived shortly after I had seen a Danny Kaye film on TV -- The Court Jester. He played a bumbling (naturally) member of Robin Hood's band (except that Robin Hood had been retitled "The Black Fox") who masqueraded as a famous court jester to infiltrate the castle of the unrightful king. And the main villain (not the king, who was more bumbling than villainous) was played by Basil Rathbone. There were plenty of swords, but not much sorcery, excepting some hypnosis. Reminds me that the sweeping changes in movies have not brought only improvement. I can't imagine a movie like this being made now.

FOOT IS NOT
ETHNIC - IT'S
POLYMORPHIC.



YOU CAN'T SAY
THAT!



THE GREAT
GOD
UGGAWUMP



Fred
Hewson