

NOW?

BE PATIENT; THEY'RE  
SCREWING UP A WHOLE PLANET  
AS FAST AS THEY CAN



QUARO 33

W. NELSON



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## HAPPY NEW EARS!

End of August I went to Kaiser & got fitted for hitek Siemens Signia hearing aids. Unlike those that merely amplify & do me litl good, these are digital & address the problem of those like me who cant tune out background noise & focus on the person who is talking.

The audiologist was quite good. She carefully warned me not to xpect too much; that my brain wd have to be reprogramd to process what I wd be hearing, much as a blind person has to be trained to use the dog as much as the dog has to be trained to hir.

OK, I cd handl that. What I cdnt handl was the litl tubes that stuck into my ear canal, intended to squirt the sound in as far as possible tord my eardrums. These irritated the hell out of the tender flesh in my ear canals. I gamely tufdf it out for two days, then cald, abt ready to give up. She gave me an apntmt immediately, & snipt off the offending xtensions.

After that, I got better at manipulating the little controls for volume & "programs 1&2." #1 boosts the volume for everything, #2 mutes the ambient noise & sharpens up whats ryt in front of u. This is what I was looking for, to help me in

conversations in noisy restronts & room parties at cons. That will be the acid test, altho I think I already past at Donya's DUFF party on my birthday.

HEAVY IRONY: getting used to all sorts of "new" exterior sounds that I havent been hearing for a while is only half of it; I have to learn to cope with Interior Noise. This amazingly puts the shoe on the other foot. My own voice sounds very loud, as if booming out from the depths of a cave, so unconsciously, ive been cutting down the volume to the point where people have been saying "What?" to ME! Disconcerting, to say the least.

I was looking forward to a conversation in a busy restront & spent some time practicing with the controls *in situ*. What I was entirely unprepared for was, again, interior noise. I adjustd the volume nicely & got Pgm 2 on both ears, heard everything across the table, & made my reply loud enuf for the other person to hear. OK, then I took a bite of food & lookd xpectantly for their reply to me. Aargh! It was completely drownd out by the sound of my *chewing*, wch sounded like a cross between a concrete mixer & a boiler factory. The audiologist said that I'll get used to it, but I havent so far.

Then there are other litl things, like the other morning when I pound milk on my Rice Krispies. Yes, youre way ahead of me. I jumped back from the table & spilt the milk as a fearful racket ensued. It was like the 4<sup>th</sup> of July w/out the visuals.

\* # \* # \*

### MAILING COMMENTS

Harry Warner's memories of wartime (WW2 of course) baseball were of considerable interest, altho I lost interest in the game when it started to become more of a business than a game. My beloved Boston Braves, the miracle team of 1948, had their moment of glory then sank bank into mediocrity, from wch even "Spahn & Sain & pray for rain" cdnt rescu them. The final insult was changing the name to the Boston Bees, then the moves to Milwaukee & Atlanta capped it off.

The reason Yawn the Second got my attention was not political correctness or the onslot of commercialism, but having just read *Brittle Innings* by Michael Bishop, & I wonderd if Harry had read it, (altho he didn't mention it) bcoz it wd seem to be ryt up his alley (or shd I say basepath?). Its an interesting sf, or rather, fantasy tale combined with a baseball yarn. Im not quite sure what I think of it yet, since I was a bit disappointed, altho I probly brot too hi xpectations to it. I was much more interested in Frankenstein's creature, who appears as "Jumbo," the gigantic first baseman slugger for the "Highbridge Hellbenders, a class C farm club in the Chattahooche Valley League.

Jumbo doesn't appear, however, until ch 8, after a lengthy intro of Danny Boles, the protagonist-narrator. Danny is a pint-sized half-breed from Oklahoma, whose hero is Phil Rizzuto, & like him, plays short-stop. He has been traumatized by a

a vicious sargent on the troop train Danny had to take to get to Georgia & the ball club. As a result of this treatment, coming on top of having been abused by his father & having a stutter to begin with, Danny becomes totally mute, causing his yob teammates to dub him "Dumbo."

This is reinforced by his being assignd to room with Jumbo, who, however, befriends him & protects him somewhat from the hazing of the "regulars" who fear his classy fielding & hitting may put one or more of them on the bench. With good reason, it turns out. Buck Hoey, a Ty Cobb type without his skills, is replaced at shortstop by Danny, who incurs Hoey's implacable enmity.

I was impressed with Bishop's ability to capture the *feel* of the time & place, even tho it hapend bfor he was born. Either he must be a dedicated, nolejabl fan like Harry, or he did a prodigious amount of research. Altho the teams & players of the CV League are made up, the Phillies, of wch they are a farm club, are real, & many of the incidentally mentioned big leaguers & their characteristix & records are also hily authentic.

FDR's visit, coming over from Warm Springs, GA, his favorite get-away spot, is well handled, as are other references to actual persons & events. My only quibble was the frequency of smartass similes from an ignorant Oklahoma boy. They grew tiresome & forced after a while. But then, judging by Tennessee "Nervous as a long-tailed cat in a room full of

rocking chairs" Ernie & some other southerners ive known, perhaps it's a general meme in the South.

As for the general thrust of the book, wch I take to be redemption & loss of innocence, I'm not sure that I understood as well as I shd. I think *Frankenstein* is a remarkable work & the basic concept a master-myth of the 19<sup>th</sup> & 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. I'm hoping to live long enuf to write a long essay or even a book about it, but given my accomplishments in retirement, don't hold yr breath.

At any rate, I'm curious to know what Harry thinks of *Brittle Innings*, or any of the rest of you, for that matter. I also wonder if any of you have ever seen *Contrary Modes* (Proceedings of the Worldcon, 1985, in Australia). The leadoff paper, by Janeen Webb, a grad student at the time, is titled "The Monster as Hero," & is the best essay on the subject ive ever read.

*RIP, FAN WINKLE* (cont) Please don't be offended; just joking.

Ct Aalor: "*Bread and Circuses*" Still the samo samo, only today in Imperial America its "Beer & TV."

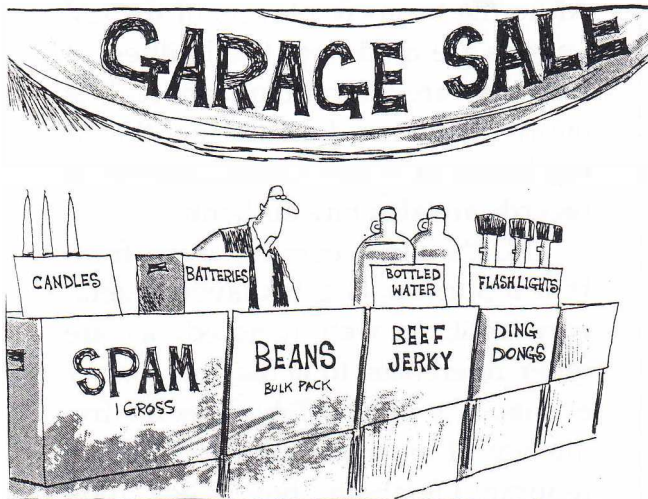
I think its worth trying *Dune* again, but I wdnt give u a nickel for any of the sequels, wch were pretty much \$ inspired by the publisher.

Ct me: ...[no] *reason for such a requirement...to stop* [people from] *walking through glass doors*. My Ouija Board senses the presence of a contractor with a huge stock of transparent plastic. True, plastic is stronger, but scratches easier and looks crummy after a while.

Ive added the SC quarter to my "collection" U didn't mention if u have both Philly & Denver mintmarx in yr set. I'll supply the Ds if u wish. No need to trade, since Don has already supplied me with Ps.

I forgot to add to my Happy New Ears bit on p2, that they are hideously xpensiv. I have until the end of the month to decide if theyre worth it. I probly will keep them, but u myt not, since u have your hermit rep to keep up. But these digitals will bring in female (not so good on children (who arent tot to enunciate any more)) voices, wether u want to hear them or not. I'm still relearning to hear phone calls.

I can dimly remember Bradburys *Futuria Fantasia*, & that I didnt think that it was worth a sticky quarter for three. The one I had somehow acquired probly went to Ellik & Cox when I moved from LA to Barea without 15' of early fanmags. \*sob\* I didn't want to sellem, but cdnt



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aford the fr8 up north, so I named what I thot was an outrageous price, \$50, which they happily paid on the spot.

Ct *Basingstoke*: on candles and power outages. Living in the middle of a forest, ive often had to cope with POs during winter storms, but am also reluctant to use candles, altho I did once when my Coleman lantern was on the fritz. Soon after, I got a pair of old fashiond kerosene lamps wch I feel more comfortable with in an emergency, altho im very careful withem as well. I also have a powerful torch run by a big 6volt battery, wch I usually keep in the car.

The last two years ive hardly had to use the lamps (wch are readily available in an area like this). But in the El Nino winter of 97, the lamp mfr mustv made a fortune.

I'm also concernd with *the ancient wiring in this house*. Your house, that is. Cant u have a circuit breaker panel put in? That wd cost a lot less than rewiring the whole house, & u cd find out wch circs cd carry a microwave or air conditioning & wch cdnt, & go from there w/out burning the house down.

Déjà vu, just like Q32, this RVW is loaded with comhooks, but I must get on & finish this. One last thing: I don't get yr ct Wally: *I can't bear to think about Art Widner modifying Spanish-American...* Y? Spanish orthografy hardly needs it. Nice regular rules; seldom broken. ???

**FORGET THE ALAMO; FORGET PEARL HARBOR; REMEMBER LINCOLN SAVINGS & LOAN!**

*MOOSE REDUCKS #14*: ct me: *...Cloverdale...doesn't seem that the climate there could be all that damp and cold.* You evidently werent here long enuf or didn't do enuf east-west travel on the same day to become aware of the many micro-climates that exist in the Bay Area. Altho Cloverdale is only 40mi from Gualala, several mt ranges are in the way, & there can be 40° F difference in the temperature, plus maybe ranging from heavy overcast to brite baking sun.

I live about 1000 yds from the ocean, up abt 200'. Shirley's home was only 5mi away, but on top of the first rij, about 1000' hi & not more than 2mi inland. There have been days when it was foggy & cold, I'd just jump in the car & go visit her. Or if it was too hot on the rij, she'd come down & visit me. She wd often get 2" of rain where I'd get only one. The avg temp at my house runs between 40° & 60° fall year long. In the depths of winter it myt get down to 30F; in summer, if the thermometer struggles up past 70°F, peopl go around mopping their brows & remarking abt the "heat wave." In the ten years ive been here permanently there was once a lite dusting of snow. The local paper ran big headlines, & sent the fotografer out to the snowiest place he cd find & took up half the front page with it.

Up at Shirley's place the yearly range is abt 30-90 with several heavy frosts each winter. So she was hotter in the summer and colder in the winter.

On top of all that is a local variation cald "The Banana Belt." This stretch- es rufly from Anchor Bay, where I live, to somewhat south of Gualala. The configuration of the coastal cliffs at Pt. Arena, some 10mi N, shunts the cold Japanese current coming down from Alaska out to sea a mile or two, taking the fog (or "marine layer" as the meteorologists like to call it) with it. This means Gualala & environs get more sun & less fog over the course of a year than areas to the N or S of it. The "hole" may vary in size, or it may shift a mile or so N & S, but its often there, & the local RE pepl have based many a sale on it.

Yes, Highway #1 does require yr *undivided* attention while driving. If u cd only persuade all the other tourists of that, & the second half of the proposition; Get the Hell off the Road & let me Go By! There are a lot more turnouts now than there used to be, but some pepl amble along totally clueless, sporting a string of vehicles behind them rivaling the tail of Halley's Comet—in a good year, that is. There's a state law that says if more than five cars have piled up behind u, the CHP will write a big fat ticket, as much as for speeding.

May I impose on yr good nature to do me another favor? I believe i have some relatives in the Rochester area, particularly in the suburban area known as Chili, pronounced by locals as ChI-II, I think, rhyming with "I lie." No, no, I don't want u to go thru the embarrassing task of contacting them, since I don't want to contact them either, (I don't really know

any of them) but I myt want to do some genalogical research later.

So, if u wd b so kind, & happen to have a year or two old fone book that u shdv thrown out, take just a few minutes of yr time to xerox a copy of the page with all the Wid- ners in the area. There shdnt b more than a dozen or two. Just the ones that spell it the same way I do. I'm not interested in the Weidners, Wideners, Widmers or any other variation.

Thanx, & if I can find a Sacaga- wea Denver dollar, its yours for your trouble. I'll call the bank tomoro. I have only one SC quarter so far, & no VA or NH, but as soon as I do, ill sendem on to u.

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## HEY, BRIGGS !!!

There, I hope that got your atten- tion. You've been ignoring me for some reason. Perhaps I insulted you, & im sorry, bcoz im very interested in yr case. I would like to second Don Anderson's motion: "*...you have been a real down to earth, honest-to-goodness, full-blown FAAN, and I love your fannish material..*"

Ive been talking with other old timers who knew you or knew of you back in the 50s when I had gafi- ated. They all said you were just another good ol' fan, with none of this current Nazi stuff. How did you become a Nazi? I'd really like to know. Were you abducted by a UFO? Did Hitler appear to you in a dream? What? First, you were just an ordinary Jophan, then you went away, & came back a Nazi!

*LUCUBRATIONS #53:* I hope your pain problems have gone away, but given the background, I'm afraid not. You otto apply your poker skills to dealing with doctors. Those dox were bluffing their asses off & u didn't call! Im no doctor; I don't even play one on TV, but I think my xperience myt be helpful.

First, Im gabberflasted that you don't even mention Xrays or physicl therapy. Any dr worth hir salt wdv gone to those rt away. Second, in dealing with drs, the squeaky wheel is the only way to go. U did get a 2<sup>nd</sup> opinion, but u need to persevere with a 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> until u get some results.

Third, from my xperience, the fact that yr pain is bouncing around like a demented pinball, leads me to think that the cause is in yr spine. Get an xray, & I'll bet a \$ to a donut they'll find a misalined vertebra. Theres 20 zillion cables going down yr spinal cord with branches to every part of yr body. Depending on wch one is getting pinchd, u get what the drs cald *referred pain*, & yr drs shdv known that.

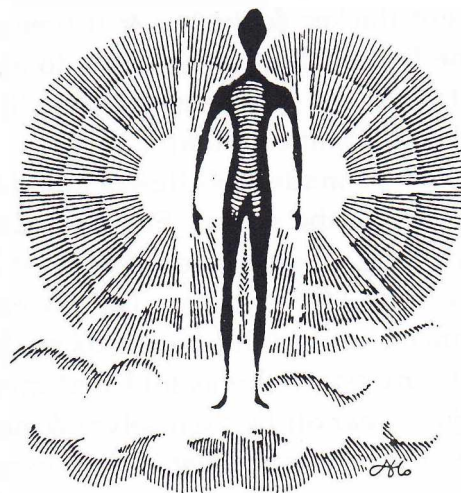
Abt 10 yrs ago I went to a Wiscon, & had to take a bus from OHare to Madison. I was schlepping a big carrion bag full of fanzines. If I had the brains that God gave a goose, Idv put them in a back pack, but no, I went with the sholdr strap & didn't anticipate the nitemare that is Ohare, & trujing the weary miles with the strap pulling my neck out of line.

When I got home, I startd having severe pains in my sholder, & after much bitching & grumbling, found a good phys therapist who knew what she was doing. I thot I had "travel-

ing arthritis," wch in a sense, I did, but it was being aggravated by a geriatric spur on a vertebra in my neck. She put me in traction & I got immediate relief. I went back for abt two wks of 15m/day treatments, & she cut me loose with a home gajet I cd use if the pain returnd. Ive only used it a few times since.

Are u in an HMO? I'm in Kaiser wch im quite happy with. U pick a 'family doc" (who is like the oldtime GPs, General Practitioners) who nose a little abt a lot, & s/he refers u to a specialist, who nose a lot abt a little, at no xtra charj. A good system,xept for their fone net, wch sux Big Time.

I shd mention that that PT gave me a cupl of sheets with mild xercises on them. Its important that u keep using the parts involvd but not overdoing it as you evidently have been. And it does take time. You probly shd not do any more heavy foosball tables, but con some young muscleman into doing it, even if you have to pay him. A little flattery will get u somewhere, or at least itll get the table somewhere.



Alien cot in the headlights



*BE BOP #34:* Since I got rid of my gall bladder, ive been astonished at the number of young pepl who have had the operation. Also those like you whove done it the hard way with an incision two feet long, like LBJ. I only have three small scars abt a half inch long, & got to go home the same day.

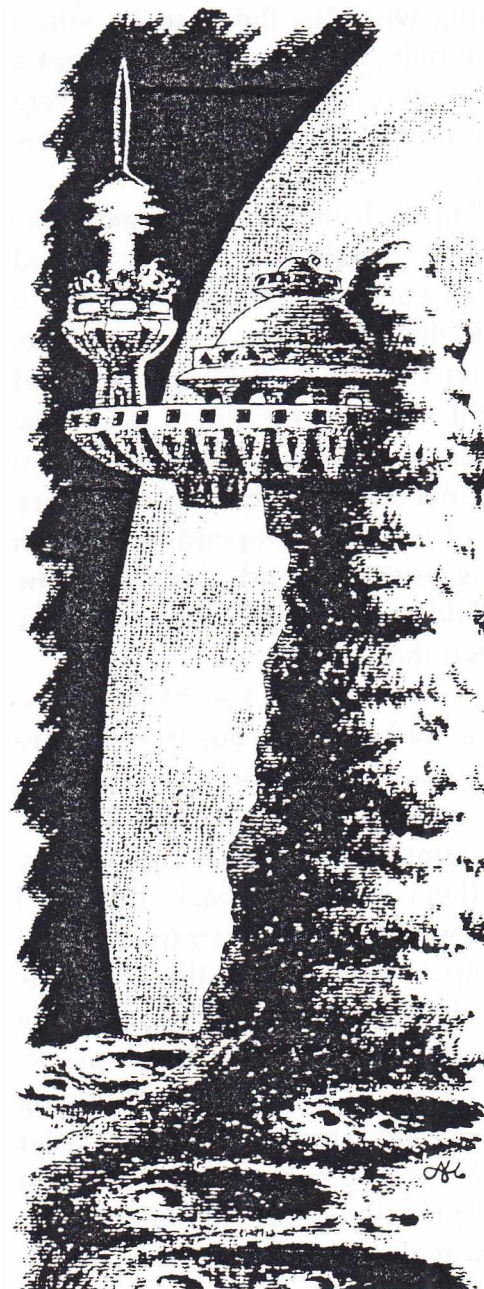
Going home was actually more of a trial than the surgery itself. Home is 75m from the hospital, half of it over tortuous mountain cliffside roads, the infamous CA hiway #1.

Shirley had graciously come along to drive me, but it was after 5 when we finally cleard the red tape & got in the car. We shda stood in Motel 6. It was sunset by the time we shook free of the commute traffic & got to the mouth of the Russian River, where the arduous part begins. It was pitch black bfor we got to Gualala, with the fog rolling in & me not much help watching for deer, bcoz I was still woozy from the anesthetic & pain pills. All I cd think of was getting to bed & sweet oblivion agen. The last 8m from town up to Shirleys place on the rij was a nitemare as the fog got thicker & thicker & it seemd to me like visibility was down to abt ten feet as we crawld along thru the endless dark at abt 10mph.

But we made it, & things lookd a lot briter in the morn. Shirley wdnt hear of me going home for at least 2 days, altho I felt capable. There were a bunch of funny litl bandaids stick-ing to my pot, & I was told that they wd just wear off by themselves & not to pick at them. They didn't even come loose in the shower, but I trimd the curly edges with scissors & they finally fell off after two weeks.

Ct Don: My dreams are pretty much like yrs. Fellow teachers have told me that they have dreams like mine where theyre sposed to b in class, but they cant find out where or what time, & all sorts of goofy obstacles keep cropping up. Ive never had gluey sidewox, tho. Elevators go sideways, doors disappear, etc.

I still have sex dreams, but like you, something always happens bfor I get to the good part.



HUNTER