

14
ROQUAT

from Ruth Berman, no longer of International House Berkeley, but in a few days once more of 5620 Edgewater Boulevard, Minneapolis Minnesota 55417, for Apa-L 67, January 27, 1966

COMMENTS ON 65

Mayhem Annex 33—Felice Rolfe: Re: your description of getting Ed Meskys to the plane on time. Felice, your writing is felicitous.

—Barry Gold: I suppose those in LA know what your job is and what the capabilities 1 and 2 are which you are coding, but from the outside it is inexplicable enough to wake my curiosity: what sort of work is it?

Ipzik 65—compulsive Len Bailes: Many thanks for your kind mention of my Coventry stories. Like you, I enjoy the sword and sorcery or stfnal stories which have been written about Coventry. I have hopes of writing another, a sequel (or maybe a prequel) with the Eastcountry boy Rory as the main figure. It won't be for some time, however, because I want to finish the other two-thirds or so of a non-Coventranian sword-and-sorcery story (20 pages already and the hero still hasn't met the heroine!) rather than try to work on two stories in the same genre at once. Care to join me in badgering Bruce Pelz to write a Reizferren story or two, as he intended to do when he stopped writing about Coventry?

Have you seen the Cugel the Clever stories by Jack Vance in F&SF? Two have appeared so far and more are promised. I can't help suspecting the writer of a cynical attempt to cash in on the popularity of sword-and-sorcery, because the stories are pretty awful (episodic, Cugel the Clever is a Colorless Character and the other characters are just as flat, the menaces don't seem very menacing).

Tyro 1—Jim Schumacher: Why do you feel it appropriate to use archaic grammar in "The Phoenix"? The faintly ridiculous quality of an archaism (say I, who am constantly being told that my poetry is archaic, no matter how modern I try to be) like 'twas or glideth usually gets in the way of enjoying the poem.

It is also difficult to use inversions effectively. For instance, in "So glideth across the/ Dark sky The Phoenix!" the inversion, aided by the slowing down for the long syllables of "dark sky" gives the emphasis to "The Phoenix" which you wanted, but the jerkiness of the lines (made even jerkier by separating "the" from "dark sky") gives an impression which is certainly not like gliding, and I don't think that was what you wanted.

OIUBT AKWATS 94—Dave Van Arnam: The "Lines" seem to me to make two poems, rather than either a bunch of fragments or a complete poem. The first two stanzas on laughter seem complete in themselves. I don't see any referent in them for "these starts and hesitancies," which opens the third stanza (for a moment at first I thought the referent was laughter, which "starts from silence," but I don't think that's what you had in mind). Instead, the line seems to refer to hesitancies in life just before the poem began, which come to represent all the "failure[s] of the will."

