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contents

FAN FICTION:

INTERLUDE	
Jxtn Muir	5
THE FAN WHO WORKED MIRACLES	
Eldrin Fzot	7
SPITE	
Jack Harness	9
THE DEVIL AND CAPTAIN FUTURE	
Larry Stork	22

REAL SQUARE SERIAL:

THE DEATH OF SCIENCE FICTION	32
CHAPTER LXI by Jacob X. Edwards	32
CHAPTER LXII by Teeny Eney	38

DEPARTMENTS:

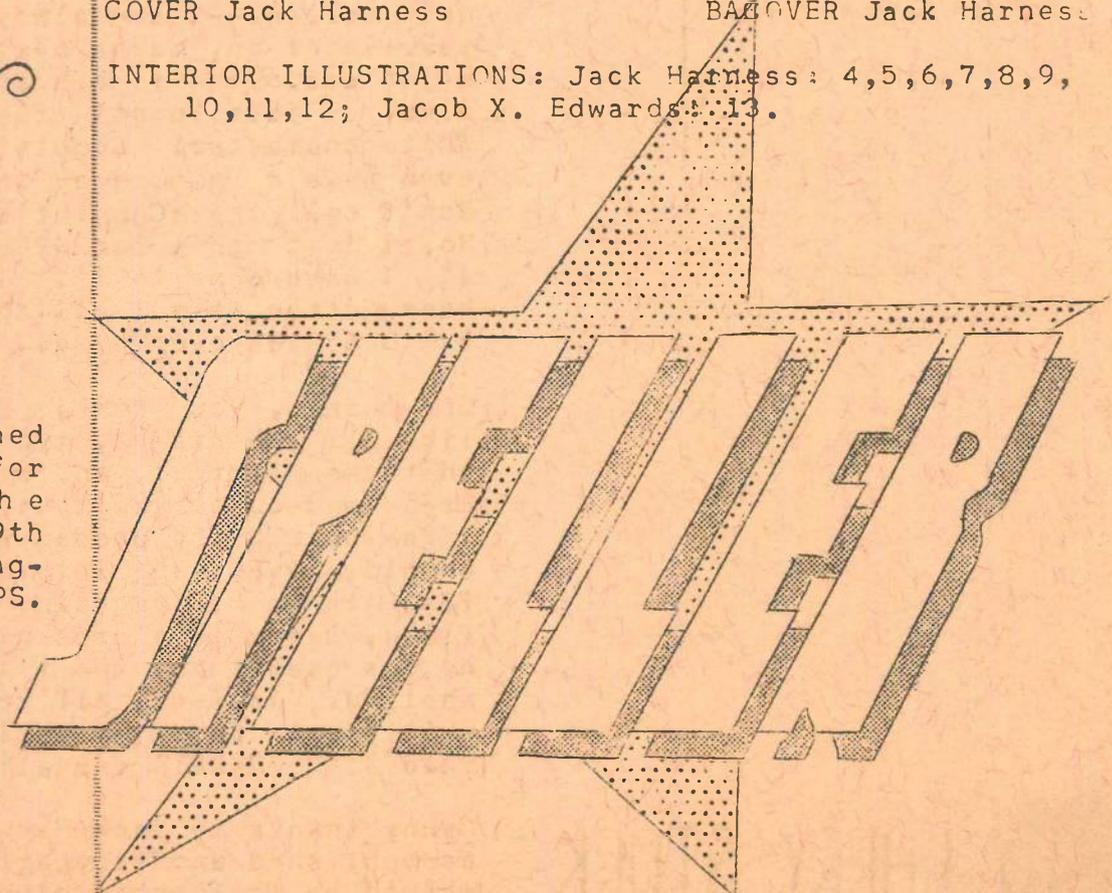
THE VERTIGO PRONOUN	
Larry Stork & Ded White	4
L'ENVOY	12

COVER Jack Harness

BACK COVER Jack Harness

INTERIOR ILLUSTRATIONS: Jack Harness: 4,5,6,7,8,9,
10,11,12; Jacob X. Edwards: 13.

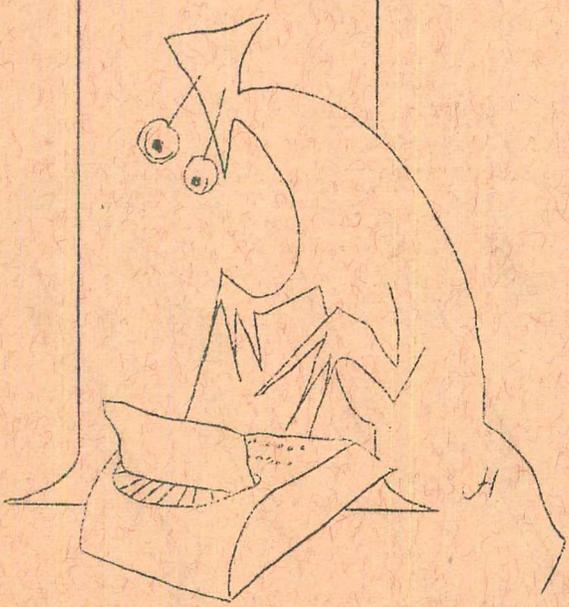
SPPELLER is published
by QWERTYUIOPress for
Jack Harness, The
Elmwood, 1627 19th
St., N.W., Washing-
ton D.C. FAPA & SAPS.



THE
VERTIGO
PRONOUN



editorial



BY LARRY STORK

No, friend editor, this is no longer a review column any more. At least, not while I, Larry Stork, am at the hellish helm of this our magazine. It has been many summers (or maybe it only seems so) since Ded White and I had our first quarrel over the serial, The Death of Science Fiction, the quarrel over who was going to write the next chapter, the quarrel over which school of realism in writing was going to be followed, the quarrel over which outside fan could be trusted to write it OUR way. And the quarrel over which of us would take the responsibility if it backfired.

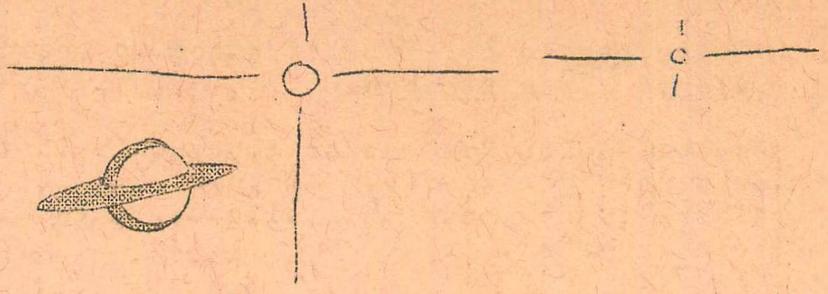
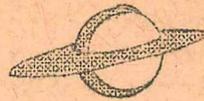
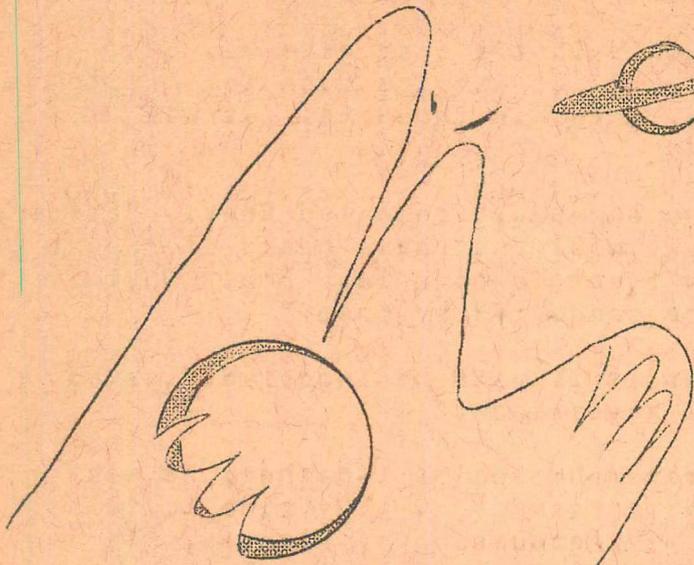
But all that is done now, and I am moving back to New York, with a few smudged fingers and my memories. All that remains to show for the six solid weeks I spent slaving my corpuscles to the bone for good old, great old, SPELLER. I doubt Ded White can do as well.

"LOOK MA -- NO ASTRAL!" ...JH

In fact, now that I think of it, maybe I should just stick around here. I can quit college--I can always take my Senior year later on, maybe next year--and get a job scrubbing floors at WiSFA, or the like. I just don't trust that Ded White character. Completist? He doesn't even have a Hemmingway in the house! I don't call that Completisting, do you? No, I just can't let SPELLER go, after all I have done to it. It--well, it's been George Wetzel all the way. I'll let Ded take over here.

Gee thanks, you crumb. Here I let you likk all the stamps, type the stenciles, editethe material, and write all thee bread-and-butter letters, and you act like you OWN the goddam filhhy rag. I whould nevrer have let yoo phorish yur fingers on MYY magazin. No kidding, Filks, Larry is a gret gie. Evene if he dos quarel all the time about my speling. In fact, all yoo who'v ben writting in about my speling can go read STAR ROKKETS for all I carr.

Manny thanks to Jack Harness for hiz acomplished and funy artoons. SPELLER whould be fhollish to give him up.



interlude

by JXTN MUIR

a prize winning story

Harness

Eney stared at the still-twitching form glumly, feeling now the need to rehash the whole incident, the raw demands of catharsis. Even the pride of the race, the fans, can take only so much. He kicked at the bulky blob smouldering in its own ashes, then descended into an armchair. The caverns of his plms buried his face.

Pavlat was beside him. Behind his black goggles, his spidery features were consoling, almost apologetic. In that whole room, none dared speak. The situation had stretched past endurance, and the imagined sound of nerve snapping was the signal for total exhaustion.

"I wonder," said Harness, "how non-fans would have reacted?" His question was pointless. They would never care, nor, probably, would they know. Nothing mattered anymore. Nothing, except --

"Beer!" sobbed Eney. "Beer, and sex, and arguments on religion, and mimeoing, and --" he would have gone on indefinitely had not Pavlat restrained him.

Men rarely cry. But Eney did, and they let him.

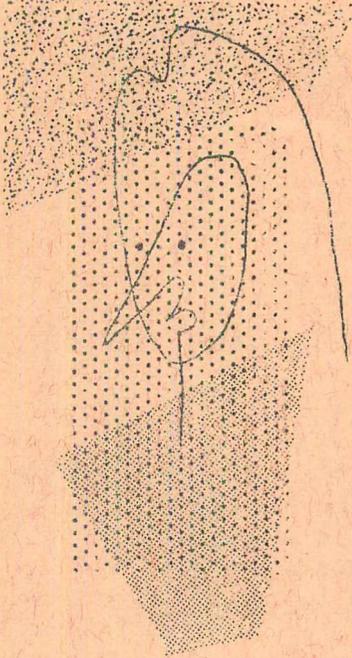
"If -- if we had gotten here a minute later, even fifteen goddam minutes later, we could draw free breaths. For a month, a year, maybe, we could have been happy. Wait -- Jack, was that why you didn't come to WSFA meetings?"

"Yes," Harness replied. He folded his hands. "While you met, I did the important work. I traced down who in fandom was from Outside."

Pavlat turned to him.

"There had to be, Bob; it stood to reason. So much confusion." Jack stopped.

Pavlat spoke, "It was so thorough. That's what gets me. It could pass for anyone. Amoebic...." It was too much for him to solve. He turned back into silence, into his thoughts. It was still in the room.



Harness

"Fifteen seconds," repeated Eney. "Fifteen seconds and we would not have heard it report to the invasion fleet to come in. Bob! What is it like -- to be conquered by them?"

"What is it like to be ingested?" asked Bob. "We'll never know."

Eney ground his palms together; he was not yet ready to stand up. The ride to this city, after the persuasion of Harness, the horrid franticoness of it all.... Then he remembered that he had not slept in three days. Three days!

"Do you suppose," he said at last, "there are others, too?" He searched their expressions, and they agreed with him. For all their effort the trio had found only one of the aliens. Then there could be no victory, after all. No small victory, to hold, until the last. Earth was lost. Man had no shred of valor left.

From the sky, there was motion. Unnatural clouds darted over the landscape, fleets of vessels swept on the winds of Hell itself. There was a rumbling....

And in the room, there was the aftermath of emotion spent out, the attenuation of sleepless days, the shambling of drained energies. They had come to rout a spy; their killing of the monster was a child's kicking at a toy that won't obey. They had heard the invasion message.

This was a time for rehashing, before the end.

Eney asked at length, "Do you think it was because of its tastes, its culture, that it chose this fan?"

Harness and Pavlat were grave. "I think," said Bob, "that it was monster to begin with."

"It is horrible to lose the Earth to a race we could never understand."

Jack interrupted. "From my research, I'd say that we could fathom the motives of any race. Surely, the viewpoints it had were those of itself only. No, I take that back -- but that means--"

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 11)

THE FAN WHO WORKED

MIRACLES

"I still can't believe it!" stammered Redbeard.

Harness turned diffidently to the unshaven Sir Eney and smiled, just so. It was the desired effect. A table of non-fans at Carrigan's Restaurant turned to stare at the noisy faaaaans.

Sean Hitchcoq ventured a remark. "I've never seen anything like it at the seances I've attended." He turned to his fruit cup for fortification and silence thereafter.

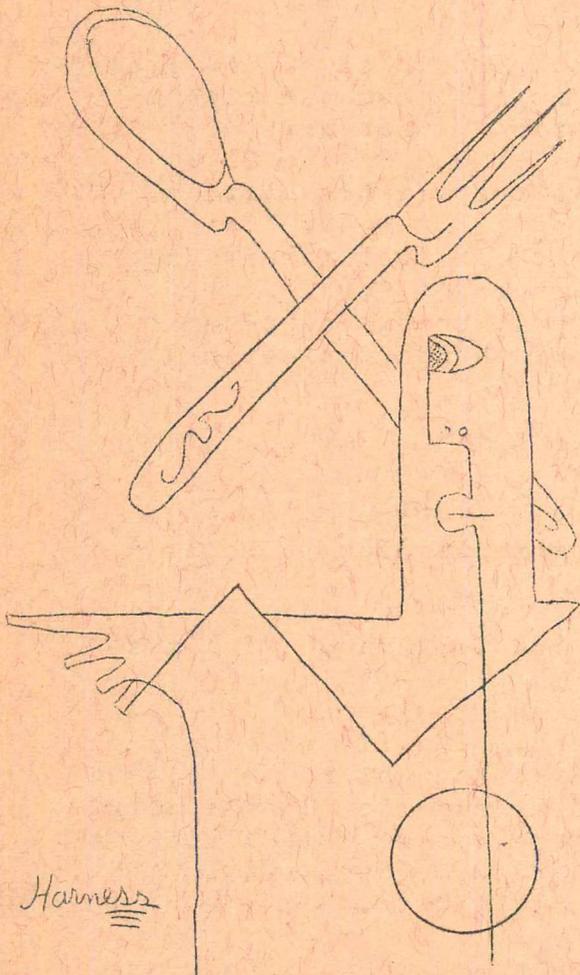
White snarled that he should eat another pumpkin seed (which Stark dutifully took down on his interlineated pad) and stroked his own chin-monstrosity, his horrid thin fingers avoiding the pale skin of his face. "It was witchcraft, Hoðmes, witchcraft!" he said (which Eney fought, over Stark's protests, to take down -- and Redbeard was the stronger of the two.)

Harness just signed his aqua chlora in mindful vengeance, saying nothing.

"Now, look, Jack -- tell me how you did it?"

"Yes -- what was the spell?"

BY ELDORIN FZOT



"I can make an interlineation out of it!" (chorus of two.)

Jack replaced the waterglass on the tablecloth -- deliberately slow. "I'm afraid that I can't tell you the spell -- you should know that. But -- now will you admit that I work miracles?"

Exasperation, defeat, pleading, all three, answered his gaze.

"Very well then. You must admit that it's useful."

"All right, so it's useful," argued Stark, "--it's still witchcraft."

"White (you should excuse the expression) magic, though, said Jack. "It's a very ancient piece of Knowingness, and traffic with the Underworld isn't as repugnant as you might think. But," he added, "of course, you haven't tried it."

Then at last he perceived that he was wearing out his welcome. Ah, well. Idiots, all of them. But at least he wouldn't have to levitate. No, he'd solved that dilemma.

The thought struck him that perhaps he could steer the whole lot and kiboodle into the Rosicrucians, as a wild goose chase. Eventually, he was going to have to get rid of WSFA anyway.

In the meantime, he had four fans to certify his miracle.

"Ted," he said, retrieving his blue chalk from the pentagram he had drawn on the restaurant floor, "You don't have to print this" (knowing that Ted would have to) "but who but a Scientologist could summon a waitress that fast in a Washington Restaurant?"

FONOS

THE DEATH OF SCIENCE FICTION (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 46)

kicked Jacob Edwards in the jaw again before leading him out before the firing squad.

"You fans are all alke," spat the brutal SCAMAN. "I almost hate to see you all get used up. Haw!"

It was, thought Jake, la fin, the end. The finish of all he had fought for in the last year. He had thought to be safe in Mexico, but not after the SCA had signed Extradition papers with Canada, Mexico, and Pan-America. And there was news that even in Canada, there was a Treason Control Authority being formed. And Canada had fierce postal regulations to begin with.

For Jake and the rest, the final names on the Mailing Lists, there would be no Sidney Carton. Fire One! And slugs ripped into his body. It was the Death -- no, the Death of the Death, of Science Fiction!

FONOS

SPITE

Lee began to huddle closer to him in the darkness.

He chanced another look up. God, it was the waiting that was hurting him the most. He didn't expect to survive this, but the squad was taking a hell of a long time out there. But they hadn't changed, hadn't done anything new.

A burst of high-velocity bullets raked the row of china that Lee valued so much. More privacy invaded. Clay fragments showered over them, behind their barricades of furniture.

"Larry?"

He turned to the brunette circled face of his wife.

"I never told you; Dad always wanted me to marry an undertaker."

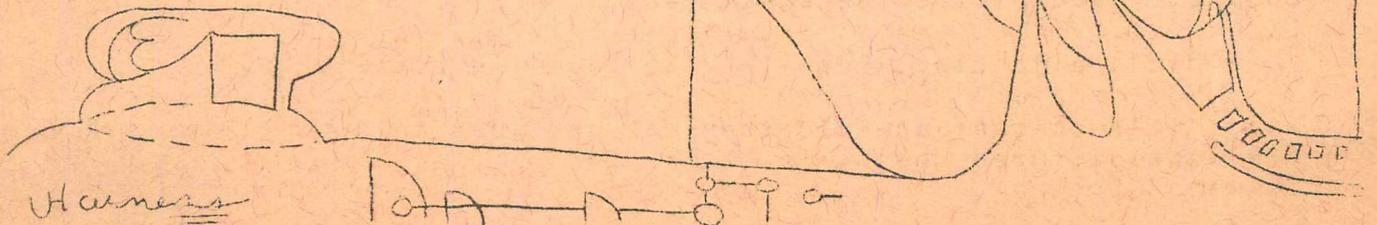
"Uh?"

"So I could follow the medical profession."

He started to say that she would have been better off, it seemed, doing that, when the point struck him. He groaned aloud, drawing a fresh burst of fire.

But he put his arm around her, and kissed her, and they crouched in the bleak predawn together,

BY JACK HARNESS



Harness

DAVID

no longer afraid.

Outside in the chill, the officer in the black uniform snapped an order to the gasthrowers. He relished this job, and he was protracting it, as much for this troop's benefit as for himself. He even had the handwritten Order of Reprisal in his hand; it was comforting. Destroy all the ringleaders in New York (list attached). And this was a house of the ringleaders. No telling how many were inside.

The War of the Steffen was slackening now, drawing toward the final overwhelming. The government had been amazed at the forces the fans gathered, but then the government was amazed at everything these days, having long ago decided to drop out of living and really do nothing for itself.

In England, now -- the paid Political Speakers were haranguing for and against Fandom -- while the Blog Riots ran full blast. It was weeks before the House of Lords found out that Blog didn't actually exist! Such was English government.

Then the pressure groups took sides, and the tinderbox that was America went up. Any strong factionalist was busier than a black powder manufacturer in a pyrotechnocracy. Bookburners found themselves fighting both the NAACP and the Young Trotskyites, to the astonishment of the latter. Fandom just carried on in a private was. But now the factions had died and it was everyone against the fans.

Had they ever really gotten blasters into production, the war would have been won the other way. But the fans were losing on every front. In Dallas, the police depth-bombed Mosher. Old Lynn Hickman ferreted messages across the M-D line, his roving address keeping him from the Mailing-List nets. But in New York the battle was almost over, except for isolated pockets of Defenders and some last roving bands crying "Onward for Roscoe!"

And so the green-board house stood with the rip-marks of bullets, a mute, broken pawn of the war, and the officer wrapped the uniform coat around his thin form and fingered the orders.

The spotlight rolled up with the megaphones. With the object from his pocket on a rack, the officer ordered the spots on. He megaphoned to the couple waiting in the house.

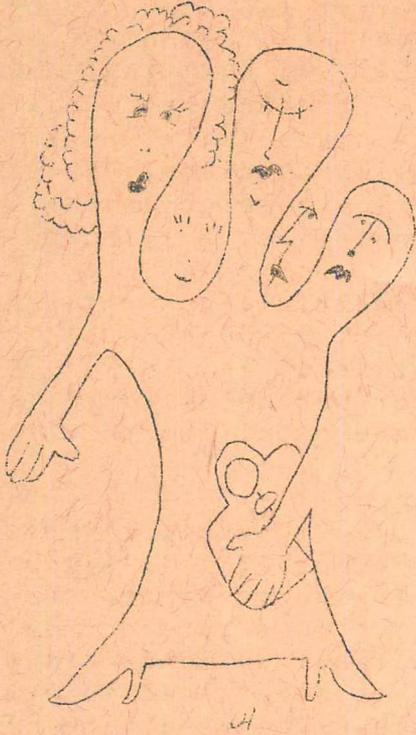
"Look at this, you dogs!"

And Lee and Larry looked. The light made the object glare, but Larry squinted out what it was.

"It's a fanzine, Lee--they're taunting us with it."

"It's so beat up--did they get one just to show it to us?" Her face pictured doubt.

"LEE"



"They're a pretty ornery group," said Larry, pressing her close.

Gas darted into the house; it had a strong nauseous stench in addition to eye-watering chemicals. Larry fired a shot outside wildly from his service revolver. Lee and him wouldn't go out; let them come in. He'd take a lot with him and lee. And the two, their respiratory systems turning over inside them, stayed put. Then there was more activity outside; noiser. Shots that didn't go into the house.

Larry risked a dash to the window through the acid-vapor grayness.

The spotlights were still on, showing the fight between faaaans and militia. The militia, inefficient as the government was, could still fight. They won.

"You there in the house!" It was the sergeant in charge calling to them.

"Oh, yes!"

"Just one thing; do you know where there are other Fans around? Speak up, there!"

Larry moved full into the window. He said, "No, we don't."

"Then you can go have a good night's sleep now." And miraculously, the army group moved on, confiscating weapons from the dead forms of the Hydra Club bodies on the lawn before they left. The battle, the waiting in the house, the bullets, the gas-- all this had happened and it was still chilly wet with predawn.

They opened all the windows, even with the cold and damp, to air out the gas. Lee was thankful that their only loss had been some silly old china and a few holes in the house, and the War was over in their block and now they could get some sleep and wasn't it just too -- and, emotion spent, she leaned heavily on her husband's shoulder and they went back upstairs to bed. (next page..)

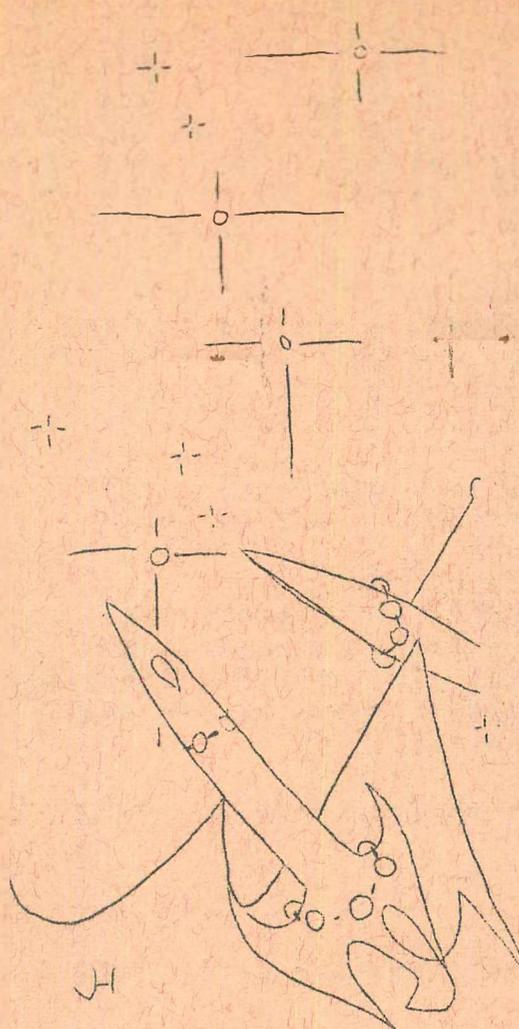
INTERLUDE (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6)

He looked at Pavlat questioningly, and so did Eney.

"Then I think," said Bob Pavlat, swaying slightly as he turned to examine once again the jelly and ashes of what had been Gertrude Carr, "I think they must be mad."

FONDS

00



She couldn't cry very much, thought Larry Green; that was the only trouble. It was all over now, going to be all over. Why the fans had singled him out for special spite because of his profession, he'd never quite know. And he didn't feel like checking. And he wouldn't buy any more occasional Astoundings -- even if they were published.

Still resentful, he went outside, finally, and set his lighter to the battered fanzine on the rack. Star Rockets' humor became brighter than ever before, but the significance was wasted on Larry.

And yet, he thought, the real joke, the complete humor of this situation was yet to be. The hours of crouching in the dark as the Fans raided this section of Jersey in final defiance after some weird grudge or other, and they picked on him and Lee. The breathing of gas-filled air, the breaking of china, the shots -- all this, and for what? So that he could be more dead-tired than usual next morning, as he carried that damn mailbag on its rounds.

It was all too much; shaking his head, he went back inside the house.

FONDS

L'Envoy by the REAL Editor...

Well, here it is, the first package of the DO-IT-YOURSELF Fanzine Club, with the first month's selection, BILD-A-SPELLER. All the material here is yours truly, Jack Harness, but all the stencil typing was done by Redbeard Eney, and most of the stylus-work by Master Ted White. Gloat! The reason here is that I needed the time desperately for TYKE MAGAZINE for FAPA, which will parody TIME. Needless to say, I can't pull the same stunt again. For one thing, Eney's too smart, and Ted's too -- busy.

And can't you just S*E*E the E*X*P*R*E*S*S*I*O*N on Larry Stark's face when he pulls this out of the envelope marked STELLAR?

This should be a working parody of STELLAR style, including one Harness illo carefully smudged o'er with shading plates, and triply underlined SSES on my signature, giant letteringguides and margin-lines.

THE DEATH OF SCIENCE FICTION DEPARTMENT: --

FAAAAANS! So you dare publish a fanzine? Beware! Harness may parody your zine sometime! Paid Advertisement, run free of charge, by EDITOR: JACK HARNESS, 2315 -- 15TH ST. NW, WASHINGTON DC