

# THE 6

\*\*\*\*\*  
\*  
\*  
\* DO NOT WRITE IN THIS SPACE \*  
\*  
\*  
\*\*\*\*\*

And has L ever done an all colophon disty? This is the sixth issue of THE. Typing and composition are by Richard Harter, also known as Dirty Dick, and (lately) as the Master of the Universe. Typos, spelling errors, and mistakes in grammar are by Alphonse who is back off vacation. Mimeography is by courtesy of Bruce Pelz.

\*\*\*\*\*  
In the colophon I mentioned that I have lately acquired the title of Master of the Universe. Lend me your ears (I have visions of sixty pairs of ears arriving through the mails) and hear my sad tale. (Although how you can hear it when I've got your ears is beyond me.)

Recently NESFA has gotten veddy veddy cultural. We have been having a spate of discussion groups, dramatic readings, etc. etc.. In response to this upsurge of culture in the Athens of America Marsha dug out copies of Captain Future meets Gilbert and Sullivan and proposed that we put on a performance. This notion was met with all sorts of enthusiasm on the part of the younger members and the cultureniks.

All of which was alright by me although I had no intention of getting involved. As it happens, however, tryouts were being held at 5 Chauncy. The first three or four times were spent running through the production with everybody trying out for all of the different parts. I watched all of this with interest but carefully avoided getting involved and swore that I didn't want a part in the thing. However I did consent to fill in from time to time as a fillin, which was my original mistake. Bymeby an evening comes in which they decide they have to get around to casting. It so happens that not everybody showed up that evening so that I was being shanghai'd into playing different roles. This did not worry me because, first of all I had no intention of being suckered into taking a part, and because my singing voice is - well its a voice. Well it might be a voice. But then came my downfall. I was asked to fill in for the Master of the Universe. That would have still been OK if I had not yielded to temptation. The thing is, you see, that I played the villain in two melodramas in college and spent one summer playing the villain in a summerstock theater. Consequently I have all of the stage mannerisms, stage techniques, intonations, etc. for that type of role down pat and can play it in my sleep. Faced with the situation of having to actually run through the role I couldn't resist temptation and played the role to the hilt, villainous laughs and all. Shortly after I found myself overwhelmingly elected to take the role of Master of the Universe.

I hadn't meant to - really I hadn't. However I have to confess it was a lot of fun to ham it up. And the reaction of the younger NESFA members was very gratifying. They were very startled. The thing was that although they knew that I had been heavily into acting at one time because they had been told they really didn't believe. After all they had just invented dramatics, etc., and so obviously someone much older couldn't know anything about it. Like I say, it was gratifying. Oh well.



Disty Comments on 337:

Moffatti: I've never tried the first version I mentioned. I have tried the second a couple of times and it's quite playable.

Digby: Actually, yes. If you really understand precession you also understand why gyroscopes don't fall down. The basic thing about a falling object which is supported at one end is that it rotates about the point at which is supported. An object which is not in a gravitational field which is not supported will tend to rotate about its center of mass in response to a force which is off center (every cr. ple has its moment, you know.) In either case you have a small rotation which, when combined with the large rotation of the gyroscope, produces precession. Interestingly enough, nobody in L explained precession. What they did explain was how nutation got started which is a different animal. The point is that precession is a steady state solution. Nutation is also a steady state solution which is a wobble in the precession. What everybody was explaining was the instantaneous response to a transiently applied force which produces both increased nutation and precession. I have been meaning to go into all of this in full detail with force diagrams and everything for a couple of issues now, but I guess I will let it slide for another issue.

And yes, June, inertia has everything to do with why a gyroscope won't fall down.

Tom Collins: Blather. I found the whole UN/China/China bit rather amusing myself. However statements such as "...justice had prevailed; the peoples of the world had made their will known..." are rather silly and leave me cold. The justice involved was minimal. At no time in the whole history of the one, two, many Chinas question has anything like justice, legality, morality, or even rationality been involved. The whole thing has been a power play routine straight down the line. This time the US came out on the losing side. As for the peoples - the blunt fact is that most of them don't give a damn.

Demented Duck: Not bad, but not one of your best.

DREAM RECORDER: Much better title. Although I don't know you it seems to fit what I have observed of your personality through L better than your old title did.

Groggily #11: I await the David's novel with bated breath. It sounds very good. I have been doing some thinking about the predestination version of time travel. It is my contention that nobody has ever properly followed through on this theme. Everybody concentrates on fatalism as a means of resolving the paradoxes and nobody looks seriously at the effects on politics, the social structure, economics, etc. that time travel would have on a culture. Schuyler Miller made the rather obvious point that technology would be static. However there are many, many more angles to consider. For example consider the guy who goes to the bank, deposits a bundle, skips ahead a hundred years and collects the interest, redeposits it all, skips ahead another hundred years, and so on until he is rich and can retire. The trouble with this nice scheme is that there won't be any banks loaning money. The reason is that nobody is going to borrow money - at least not on any scale for the simple reason that if you can repay the loan in the future you will have the money in the future and might just as well go back in time and loan the money to yourself, thus saving interest charges. There wouldn't be any elections since everybody would already know how they came out. Imagine the effect of that on politics. However the real reason that the story has never been done is that in such a society there wouldn't be any authors. (Work it out for yourself.)