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THE THIRD FOUNDATION

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ad astra per cogitationem

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The following story is as yet incomplete.

## THE WAY OUT

by Larry Niven

"Sprechenzie Deutch," asked one of the heads. "?Hable usted Espanol?"

"English," I said.

"I was correct. You speak American English, 1940 A. D. Exactly what year do you come from?"

"December, 1966," I told him, pleased that he should show such interest in me.

"Do not be surprised at your euphoric feeling. It will pass. I have injected you with artificial boosterspice."

"I see." I looked around. "Where's Carol?"

"Your companion is climbing the side of the transfer point.. I presume he intends--"

"She."

"I presume she intends to reach her own time. She cannot do this until the autopilot turns the transfer point on."

I looked up. Carol was a third of the way up the guard rail, climbing too fast for safety. "Well have to stop her," I said.

"Might she not try to hurt me? A frightened sentient often attacks what it fears."

"Are you afraid of Carol?"

"Of course."

I thought about it. And suddenly the euphoria was gone, utterly gone. I was trapped by an alien, and the alien was trying to get Carol too. I strained against the thing that was holding me. It gave like hardened tar, too slowly.

"Please do not move," said the alien.

"You killer!" I moved my hands about an inch toward its throats.

"This was not my fault. I am trying to correct it, but I need your help."

I moved my hands another inch.

The alien turned away. We were in some kind of vehicle, like a toboggan with sides. The alien bent one head to touch a panel in front, and he rose straight up along the side of the phantom turnoff.

2. We hovered beside Carol. She glared at us and continued to climb. "I'm trapped," I called. "I can't help."

The alien said, "You will only harm yourself by doing this. I am not your enemy. Our aims are identical. I wish to end the link between your time and mine. Will you not enter my--" It paused for thought, then fished "flying machine?"

Carol paused on one rung while she carefully examined the toboggan. Then she jumped.

She hit the alien in a full body block which almost carried them both over the side. The alien screamed in two notes, then bit down on her wrists. Carol kned it in its broad chest. The animal went slack.

Carol turned to the panel. "It's blank," she said wonderingly.

"It responds to my voice," said the alien. It did not move to get up.

"Then turn Ed Loose."

The alien staggered to its feet and spoke to the control board in a language of whistles and unpronounceable syllables.

"I've been stupid," Carol said venomously. "Ed, I can't move."

"You had no choice. All right, killer, you win. What now?"

"I told the truth," said the alien. It spoke with no obvious accent, but with very little inflection. "Perhaps I should tell you all of the truth. Then we may consider what to do."

\* \* \*

The toboggan rested at the edge of the mirror trap. The sun was a little higher, a blazing red that blurred into the darker red of sky. My Buick still lay on its back in the middle of the mirror trap, with the robot's tool arm reaching out from underneath. The alien had turned off the binding field long enough for Carol to sit down and me to sit up.

"It wasn't intended to be a time machine," the alien was saying. "We have never tried to build a time machine. Such things are too dangerous."

"What was it then?" asked Carol.

"A transfer point. Rather, we sent a robot here to build two transfer points. The robots always worked perfectly before."

"This is kind of confusing," I said. "Hadn't you better start at the beginning?"

"Which beginning? Shall I start with your own time and work up?"

"Okay."

"Well." The alien paused, started again. "You humans had spread over some volume of space before our species met. At that time we had a considerably larger commercial empire. We made human space a part of it, and we got along quite well. There are things humans can do which we cannot...such as deliberately risking one's life, or subsisting on insufficient oxygen for several minutes."

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"Then we found out that the galaxy had exploded. Your species had been in space for some five hundred years, and--"

Carol giggled. I said, "Hold it. How can galaxies explode?"

The stars in a galactic core are very closely packed, an average of half a light year apart. If several go nova in the same neighborhood, they can set off all the stars in that neighborhood, just because they are so close. Then the neighborhood expands. Surely your astronomers have seen exploding galaxies?"

"I wouldn't know."

"We found that the galaxy had exploded some ten thousand years earlier. That left twenty thousand years for the light to reach known space, with a wave of radiation close behind it. The radiation would destroy all life as it marched through the galaxy."

"And?"

"We left, of course. Humans did not. They seemed to think that twenty thousand years was a long time. Foolish. They waited until the light of the Core was actually shining through the intervening dust clouds before they began to worry. Only two or three billion escaped.

"By then we had been established in the Clouds of Magellan for some considerable time. We found planets for the refugees, human and other. You must understand that I took all of this data from the autopilot. It happened more than three million years ago."

"Three million--! Are you going to--"

"No, I will not bore you with three million years of history. But we recently decided to recolonise the galaxy. It was the development of transfer points which made this possible."

"You must have had ships."

"Naturally, but what use are ships to a colonisation project? My species is naturally cautious. In the days when we fled the radiation we fled in ships. Otherwise, no sane member of my species would so risk his life and well-being."

Carol said, "I think you said you had a commercial empire."

"Maintained by neurotics, of course. Until the transfer points were invented, no human ever saw an entirely sane member of my species. Unfortunately, there are no more neurotics. Selective breeding relieved us of those."

"What's a transfer point?"

"They use, mmm, teletransposition. They move objects from one locus to another in normal space. We had transfer booths long ago, but they could only function for points on the surface of the same world. The transfer points will function for points on discontinuous equipotential surfaces."

Carol turned to me with a lost look. She was genuinely trying to follow what the alien was telling us. So was I, for that matter. Liar or not, our two headed captor had all the information. And was doing a lousy job of passing it along.

It was a point in his favor. Had he been lying, I thought he

would have been more plausible; he'd have invented a story we could understand.

Carol looked bruised and very tired. Perhaps she was at the limit of whatever was driving her. I wondered why I felt so good. Was it the stuff in the alien's pointy instrument? But I didn't want Carol injected with anything until I knew which side we were on.

"We know what they do," I said. "Transfer points move you around. But I don't see why you want one here. From here the planet looks pretty well used up."

"We needed supplementary transfer points for adjustment of equipotentials, to drop an object in transit from one family of gravity equipotential surfaces to another. Nobody and nothing was ever intended to go to Earth. We chose to begin our colony here because we had records dealing with this region of space and with this world. The records were dated, to be sure, but were better than jumping blind. In addition, this world had a breathable atmosphere, and there might be accidents.

"Therefore, we aimed an all-purpose colonisation ship at Earth. We instructed the autopilot to build two step-down transfer points. It was well that we chose a world with such an atmosphere, because as you can see, there was an accident. Prudence always pays."

"There's another transfer point somewhere?"

"It hasnot been built yet. That is our problem, or at least the beginning of it." The alien peered at us from two directions, first at me and then at Carol. Then it spoke softly to the featurless control board, in a voice of whistles and unpronouncable syllables. I felt the concrete evaporate around me. Carol tensed, glanced at me.

I shook my head. The alien had spoken riddles so far. We knew only half of what we needed to know. And he was keeping one eye on us, a green human-looking eye set deep in the bone socket above one triangular mouth. The other head was very close to the control board, ready to freeze us if we tried to jump him.

"So far, so good," said Carol. "Where do you come in?"

"I was to be the first one through to--" and he spoke a quick flurry of rhythmless music. "Our ancient home. The third transfer point should have been there to receive me, and probably is for that matter. But the first two points, the step-down sequence, were to have been built here. Only the first was finished, as you can see."

"Why?"

"The robot was instructed to mine metal from this world to build the first one. I have found slag heaps in that direction, very large slag heaps. This world must have been mined out long ago. The robot must have decided that Earth's resources are insufficient for its needs. It must have deduced that it could produce the second transfer point faster by converting the first transfer point into a time machine and getting the metal from your time.

"And that was our fault. We should not have put so much stress on haste. Haste encourages mistakes. We should have given the robot



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orders against harming a sentient being, as is standard practice with machinery. But who could surmise that the robot would find sentient beings to harm? This galaxy is void of life."

"And you?"

"I was to go through to--" that sound again, "have a look around and report back. My flying machine would have been adequate protection. But I came out here because the step-down was not working. I cannot go back. The robot was about to convert its transfer point into a time machine. While I was flying about, trying to deduce what had gone wrong, the robot went ahead and did it." He arched his neck to point upward. "That flat surface is merely a superstructure designed to--"

"Imitate a freeway turnoff," I finished for him.

"Thank you. The oddly colored hemisphere on the other side is jury rigging to make the transfer point a time machine. I do not know how it is done. I would not even know how to ask the robot. I would not know what kind of expert to go to."

"It sounds fishy," said Carol.

"You do not believe what I say?"

"We do not disbelieve you," I said. Which was true. Otherwise we'd have been fighting instead of talking. "How did you learn English? And why?"

"I recognized the bodies. One of the first cars to fall was open at the top, and the operator fell out. It was obviously human. I went to the robot for information on humans."

"The robot answers questions?"

"It does more. It will hypno-implant information. It carries the sum total of recorded knowledge in its memory. This is a very complex machine."

"Sounds like it. Is it all one machine? An autopilot for the colony ship, a monitor for mining machinery and factories,...."

"All of that and more. A nexus for a colony city. The city library for a world."

"And this is what we're fighting?"

"Yes."

"Go on."

"I found that the car operator's wristwatch was of a sonic type which was not used over more than six decades. The automobile was even easier to date. I watched several more automobiles fall, and they were all, mmm, American. None was later than nineteen sixty-six Earth central time."

"Next question. What have you done to stop the robot?"

"Nothing."

"Nothing?"

"The robot is not programmed against harming a sentient being. Such an instruction is hideously complicated, involving methods of

determining what is and is not a sentient being. You will realise how difficult this is, since you are just discovering that some cetaceans are sentient. There was no room for such instruction."

"But after your colony was set up?"

"Part of the memory would have blanked automatically. There would have been no need for the robot to remember how to build a transfer point."

"Yeah."

"Therefore I have not attacked the robot. It might have harmed me."

Carol's eyes bathed the alien in hate. "So you just waited while cars fell off the tower and got swept up. What were you waiting for? Another tower, so you could get away? You didn't care how many people were dying, did you? All you wanted was that second t-transfer point!"

"I was waiting for you."

I was afraid Carol was about to jump him. He'd just have frozen us again, and we'd have been worse off than before. But those last words stopped her. "Us? Why us?"

"You survived the transfer. You destroyed the maintenance extension. Perhaps you can destroy the robot itself."

"How?"

"I do not know."

There were two cigarettes left. I lit them and handed one to Carol. I whispered, "Do you believe him?"

She nodded, "But he's not going to be any help. He's a coward."

"Yes," said the alien. Whispering wouldn't keep our little secrets. His ears were too good. "Humans have always called us cowards."

"Let's go see that robot," I said.

We rose until the tower was a tiny upright needle with a bent point. Then west, toward the low hills. Stacked in the back of the toboggan were the laundry package, the half-empty gas can, and half a pint of beer.

Carol had lit the gas we'd poured our earlier. Most of it had evaporated. What was left puffed into flame, burned for a few seconds and then went out, leaving smoke marks. The alien had watched our experiment without comment.

There was no way to talk to Carol without the alien listening, so I spoke in a normal voice. "Do we trust him?"

"I think so," said Carol. "He didn't have to tell us anything at all. He had us."

"Okay. He used some stuff that made me feel like an army. You look as though you could use some of the same."

"Boosterspice," said the alien. "Humans developed it through

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biological engineering. It formed a staple of their commerce until we learned to produce it without growing it. It reinforces the pattern of your genes, forcing the body to cure any non-lethal damage, such as scars, calluses, diseases, muscle damage, fatigue, and aging effects."

"Dr. Soandso's Snake Tonic Cure-All." But she decided to try it.

The pointed thing seemed to be a pressure hypo. A moment after the injection, Carol gave me a vacuous smile and spread out on the floor of the toboggan. "I love you," she said.

"I love you too," I told her.

"Oh wonderful!" She smiled at me in dreamy joy. Her bruises had covered half her face, but they were visibly shrinking. She reached up and ran her fingers through the matted hair between the alien's necks. "I love you too," she said, scratching gently. "This is your real head, isn't it?"

"Yes," said the alien. It folded its three legs to lie down. After a moment it dropped its heads on Carol's shoulders. Carol continued to scratch.

"Carol, you're brilliant," I said. "How did you know that?"

"I can feel his skull under the hair. You don't have ears, though, do you baby? Poor baby. No ears to scratch."

"I have tympani behind my eyes."

"Oh, that's nice. What's a tympani? And what's your name?"

The alien said one of his weird words. "You cannot pronounce that. You will have to invent a name for me."

"Then you shall henceforth answer to the name of Boxer. I had a cat named Boxer once. One day he...What am I doing?" She got hastily to her feet, caught a faceful of wind and sat down fast. "Dammit, Ed, you should have warned me."

"Sorry. But it was fun, wasn't it? And your bruises are gone?"

She touched her face, which without the bruises and scrapes was even more beautiful than I had expected. "No pain. Ed, that stuff is wonderful! Um, Boxer, is that the robot down there?"

I looked down.

The land was all hills. Hundreds of regular, low hills, and hundreds of pits to match. Contoured pits, like the pit copper mines of Montana. A hill near the center was flat on top, and on that hill sat a wide, shallow cone which gleamed like aluminum. Smaller machines clustered around it, machines which looked like bugs at this distance. Metal parasites around a metal host.

"Yes," said the alien. "Shall we go down?"

Carol nodded. In some way she seemed to have taken charge. I didn't mind, at least until I came up with some ideas of my own. Or until Carol fainted and made us even. I was very glad she hadn't mentioned that.

It was like standing at the bottom of a hill. A hill of metal, smooth and shiny and regular.

The alien trotted up to the hull, placed his clawed forefeet on the sloping side, and spoke. He sounded like a recorded symphony being played too fast in the middle of a New York traffic jam. I wondered at his ease in speaking English. It was for sure I'd never learn his language.

A circular area of the hull turned dull, like tarnished silver. There was no other change. "I have activated the library," said the alien. "It will not hear you. It will speak only to me. The library is designed to deal only with brains of my species. It cannot acknowledge your existence."

"It took a picture of me."

"Please explain."

I told him.

"It was indeed taking a picture of you for its records. But it was not acting in its capacity as a library. It was recording aspects of the environment. The library knows nothing of you."

"You've got to be kidding," said Carol.

I said, "Our enemy seems to wear a lot of hats. Does it ever get them mixed up?"

"It cannot," said the alien.

"Will that metal burn?"

"No. It cannot be harmed at all. It is a General Products hull, invented by my own species, a single molecule with reinforced molecular bonds."

"Congratulations. Are there sensors we can cover with shirts and things?"

"The robot can sense light through any part of the hull. As for sound, if we muffled the hull in enough material, the mining extensions would only dig it away. Probably the robot has finished investigating the chemical makeup of the atmosphere and surrounding dirt. Have I left anything out?"

"Carol?"

"Can't think of a thing."

"Are you wearing a diamond ring?"

"Yah. It's not Harv's. I bought it for protective coloration. Shall we try it?"

"Might as well."

The alien was right. The hull not only didn't scratch; it was too smooth to leave scratches on Carol's tiny diamond. I thought of smearing it with lipstick and eyebrow pencil, but Carol's purse must have been in the Cadillac.

"We could pour beer on it," said Carol. And then we were fresh out of suggestions.

Three figures stood at the base of a huge, polished metal cone

under a cloudless sky of blue shading to purple. One man, one woman, and--well, that which hung in front of Boxer's hind leg might or might not have been related to reproduction, but it was like nothing I'd ever seen before. It looked not only obscene but terribly exposed. Was that why Boxer's species were such cowards?

The heat was intense. I opened the last beer can, caught most of the foam in my mouth while it stopped sputtering. Carol and I passed it between us. The alien said, "I can ask it questions for you. Is there anything you need to know?"

"Ask it how to make a time machine," I said.

The alien spoke to it. It didn't answer him in sounds, but presently he said, "The library does not have that information. I cannot get information from anything but the library."

"And I gather you can't give it orders."

"No. I cannot put information into it. Orders are information."

Carol said, "You could call for help. Call your people. Can't you?"

"I have done so, of course. They will not include another species in the colony project. If they come themselves, they will not use hyperdrive. They will move at less than lightspeed."

"How far are the Clouds of Magellan from here?"

"Two hundred thousand light years away."

The beer was gone. We trooped dejectedly back to the toboggan and sat down inside. Nobody suggested taking it anywhere.

Presently I said, "How about that invulnerable hull? Does it go under the ship too? Could we tunnel--?"

"It does go under the ship."

"Okay, how about this toboggan? How high will it go?"

"It will reach any world of this system. There is a - there is no word for it, but it keeps air in."

"Well, great! We can take the ship up and drop things."

"The robot will shoot them with its meteor cannon. When it realizes what we are doing, it will shoot us."

"I give up." I thought a moment more and realized I meant it. "Sorry, Boxer. I do. When the transfer point goes on again, you can fly us up through that rainbow. If you want sanctuary, I'm sure any part of the world would be glad to have you as a guest."

"Perhaps you think you can warn your people away from the transfer point. But if you do that, the robot will send mining extensions through to get metal."

"I can't help that, Boxer."

"My name is -" a full symphony delivered in a moment, "and I was not told that humans would surrender so easily."

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When the alien knew he would get no answer to that, he took the toboggan up and flew east.

\* \* \*

The tower was in sight before Carol spoke. "Did I mention that my family used to keep cats?"

"You mentioned Boxer," I said.

"Boxer was one of a multitude. Now, there's one thing about training cats. You can't exactly train 'em. They don't understand reward and punishment. But if you inconvenience them, they learn pretty quick."

"How do you mean?"

"Well, for instance, to housetrain a kitten. If a kitten does something on the rug, you turn it upside down and use it as a mop. Then you throw it outside and don't let it back until it's clean. You know how a kitten cleans itself?"

"Yech! Sounds very inconvenient, all right."

"They usually learn the first time. .Or to stop it stratching, you turn the paw over and press its - rist, I guess - to get the claws out. Then you snip it hard -" she snapped her forefinger away from her thumb to demonstrate - "on the pad of the foot. That's very uncomfortable. And you say a key word like 'Velvet Paws.' It'll remember."

The alien was ignoring us completely.

"What I had in mind was this," said Carol. "You don't want to hurt a kitten when you train it. And we can't hurt the robot. It's the same problem."

"If we inconvenience it enough, it'll stop using the tower?"

"Right. It must know we came through there. Right, Boxer?"

"Yes. That part of its mind which deals with construction must know."

She was making sense. I said, "The inconvenience would have to outweigh the metal it's gained. Boxer, how much metal has it collected so far?"

"I would estimate about three per cent of what it needs to complete the second tower. It cannot use all of the metal in an automobile. It has a drastic need for chromium, for instance, and proportionately little need for aluminum."

"Wrecking mining extensions won't help." Carol had the unseeing look of one who thinks out loud. "It's through with those. If we wrecked the tower, would it build another?"

"It would have to build another transfer point," said Boxer. "It would use the wreckage for raw material."

"But if we wrecked it every time the robot turned it into a time machine, it would give up after a while."

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"But," the alien pointed out, "first it would destroy us."

"Didn't you say Carol and I don't exist for it?"

"You do not exist for the library. The builder knows all about you."

It seemed a silly way to build a robot, but I saw what he meant. Every bit of information in the robot's memory must be tagged for one or another of its functions, so that it could be edited when that function was no longer needed. Some might be tagged for more than one.

"We would teach it," I said. "It has sensors and information inputs. We can teach it that it's doing the wrong thing. But suppose it isn't? If it's already doing what it's been ordered to, we'll never convince it it's wrongdoing."

The alien was having lunch. Lunch was a nest of thick, fleshy grey-green leaves stored behind a hatch in the front panel. The alien chewed slowly and delicately, using only one mouth and throat at a time, breathing through the other.

"Then we lose," said Carol.

The tower was below us. Boxer spoke to the toboggan controls, and we dropped.

I said, "Pull us up alongside that copper hemisphere."

"On the tower itself?"

"Yah."

"You merely want to inspect it?"

"What I want to do," I said, "is pack shirts around it and pour the rest of the gas over them and set them afire. Not that I think it'll do anything, you understand. But we might as well try everything we can think of."

"You must have been the terror of your fraternity," Carol told me.

"I cannot do it," said the alien.

He faced a ringing silence. And in that silence the toboggan came down, a safe distance from the tower.

"You cannot ask me to risk my life," said the alien. He was neither pleading nor demanding. In his inflectionless voice, he seemed to be stating a simple fact.

"Told you so," said Carol. She had the laundry package open and was knotting shirts together, arm to arm. "What shall we try next?"

"This." I turned to the alien. "Boxer, listen.

"We have to attack the tower. The robot is invulnerable, and it's through with the mining extensions, so hurting them wouldn't

help any. That leaves the tower.

"We can't attack anything but the base of the tower without the toboggan. But you're the only one who can fly the toboggan. We can't do anything without you."

"True," said the alien. "But I still cannot risk my life to help you. I cannot."

"Okay. Come on, Carol, let's see what we can do to the mirror trap."

She nodded, and we got out. I took her spike-heeled shoe. She carried the rope of shirts over her arm.

\* \* \* \* \*

at this point the story stops. Underneath are the following handwritten notes:

Further exploration of their personalities.

There isn't much they can do to the trap. Why beat on it with a spike heel, after the way the car smashed down? And the shirts are for climbing.

Let the two figure out together that the puppeteer is neurotic. Then brace him with it.

BUT WHAT'S THE ANSWER? (if any of our readers know, please write.)

\* \* \* \* \*

Eavesdroppings

The following are remarks taken out of context from several Third Foundation meetings collected by Lee Klingstein and Sandy Cohen

"I've met some brilliant feeble-minded people."

"Play Beethoven #5." "What's wrong with the original Beethoven? He was good enough."

"It has to be a way of life. Hobby stores don't carry mimeo stencils"

"I can just sit here and be dumb." - "You don't have much choice in the matter."

\* \* \* \* \*

ANNOUNCEMENT

Lee Klingstein and Barry Gold are engaged. The wedding is set for August 18, 1968.

= & = & = & = &



## Also Sprach Who?

by Mel Gilden

The space ship landed in the monkey cage in the Clary Park Zoo, with "Also Sprach Zarathustra" blaring down from loud speakers built into its hull.

In the cool evening darkness, the monkeys huddled in their cement caves. They had never heard such a noise before.

A panel in the side of the space ship shushed open, and a long metallic plank was extended. Two aliens in white overalls came out carrying a large black thing. They set the thing down in the center of the cage and then returned to the ship.

It accelerated silently into the night sky to the strains of Straussian horns.

Slowly at first and then with great excitement, the monkeys gamboled and danced around the black domino-shaped thing.

But on the ground around the thing there already was a small black puddle.

\* \* \*

The next morning, the ebony puddle that was all that was left of the block was evaporating into non-existence. The monkey cage was quiet again.

Charlie Donaldson had been a keeper at the Clary Park Zoo for two years now. It was a nice life. It wasn't very exciting, but then neither was Charlie. He was the type that was called competent, but no more than that. It's not that he was dumb. He just had no imagination.

Before the zoo opened in the morning was Charlie Donaldson's favorite time of day. There was a certain freshness about it that Charlie liked.

On this morning he went into the monkey cage to see the newly born babies. He had never had a real family of his own, and these little animals had a humanness about them that pleased him.

A chimpanzee was sitting in the doorway to one of the caves. Charlie scratched the chimp's head and began to step around him, when the animal said, "And where do you think you're going?"

Charlie was about to answer him when the absurdity struck him. He was nearly tongue-tied. "Ah, eh...what...what did you say?"

The chimp gave him a piercing look. "I said, you can't go in. A man's got a right to some privacy, you know. Besides, my wife's in there with no clothes on."

Charlie had by now recovered his power of speech. "Say, what is this? What's going on here?"

"We got smart, bud, that's what. Now if you're smart, you'll

leave us alone or we'll rough you up."

On impulse Charlie turned around to see if there was anybody there to see him being threatened by a monkey. The zoo was still clear, but crouching in a half circle around him was a substantial portion of the population of the monkey cage. All male, Charlie noticed.

"I'm smart," Charlie said quickly and left the cage as fast as he gracefully could,

\* \* \*

Dr. Ferguson was not receptive to the idea of intelligent monkeys, but under pressure from Charlie he went to see for himself.

He stood outside of the cage watching the scene inside. All of the males in the cage were sitting on the ground in a circle. In the center, a monkey was exhorting his fellows to action.

"...and so I say, fellow simians, that we have been oppressed by humans long enough. Now, now is the time for us to break away from our former lords and take our place as masters of this world...."

He continued in the same vein until he noticed Charlie and Dr. Ferguson listening outside of the cage. "You," he said, pointing to Charlie, "you go get us something to eat. We're hungry. You," he continued, pointing to Dr. Ferguson, "you come on in here. We want to talk to you."

"Come on," Dr. Ferguson said, "let's find something to drink."

\* \* \*

The zoo did not open that day. Charlie had been throwing the monkeys their usual fruit diet through the bars of the cage. It was somewhat smashed when the soft stuff hit the ground, and at first the monkeys refused to eat it. But as they got hungrier, more and more of them came out of their caves to eat.

By this time the monkeys had been supplied with clothing, so that the inside of the monkey cage looked more like a circus than a zoo.

Dr. Ferguson came around to see how his subjects were doing. "That cage sort of puts a damper on your revolution, doesn't it?" he said.

The leading monkey gripped the bars of his prison and sneered, "Don't you worry, Doc. We're gonna figure out a way to get out of here, and when we do, your whole rotten kind'll be sorry."

"I have the greatest confidence in the skill of the builders of your cage. You'll never get out."

A crowd of angry monkeys had now gathered around their leader. He had to keep up his front of confidence, or their revolt would surely never succeed. He shouted, "Damned Smoothy!" It was an epithet. Now the rest of the cage took up the cry. "Smoothy. Smoothy. Smoothy!"

Dr. Ferguson walked away in sad contemplation.

Night had come again. The monkeys' first day with intelligence was over. Once again the zoo was quiet, but the monkeys sat in their caves discussing plans for a glorious future. No insults were shouted because there was nobody to shout them at. Everyone had gone home.

Out of the star-spattered sky, the space ship came. Silently now, with no fanfare or ceremony. A door shushed open and a long metallic plank was extended. The monkeys watched all of this with anxious eyes.

Two aliens in white overalls came out carrying a white domino-like thing. They set it down and stood looking around. The first said, "It is a good thing that we are able to remedy our error. A mistake like this could have been disastrous. This planet already has a semi-sentient race."

The other agreed.

They stood for a while in silent. It wasn't often that they stood on solid ground. Soon a small bell chimed from inside the space ship and they went back. Silently the ship rose into the air.

\* \* \*

The next morning all that remained of the monkey's intelligence was a small white puddle. By the time Charlie arrive to look in on the monkeys, all that was left were a few shreds of discarded clothing lying on the ground.

\* \* \* \* \*

QUIZ

Identify the source of the following animals in less than fifteen minutes and rank as an honorary member of the Third Foundation.

- 1. Semper Tyrannis--eagle.
- 2. Murgatroyd--tormal
- 3. TT--crest cat
- 4. Chomir--dog
- 5. Baldur--dog
- 6. Willis--bouncer
- 7. Lura--cat
- 8. Ramoth--dragon
- 9. Fuzzy Britches--flat cat
- 10. Johnny--bear

answers to last issue's quizzes

- 1. The Caves of Steel, Asimov
- 2. Time is the Simplest Thing, Simak
- 3. The Man in the High Castle, Dick
- 4. Planet of the Damned, Harrison
- 5. The Vortex Blaster (or Masters of the Vortex), E. E. Smith
- 6. Berserker, Saberhagen
- 7. Code Three,
- 8. The Demolished Man, Bester
- 9. The High Crusade, Anderson
- 10. The Incomplete Enchanter, DeCamp, Pratt.

DOUBLE\*CROSTIC Frank Herbert, DUNE I must not fear. Fear is the mind-killer. Fear is the little-death that brings total obliteration. I will face my fear.

Once again the 3rd Foundation's staff of critical amateurs become amateur critics and comment upon the new books appearing on the s.f. scene. As in the previous Reviewpoint columns, the opinions expressed are those of the individual critics and do not necessarily represent the feelings of the 3rd Foundation.

Smith of Wootton Major & Farmer Giles of Ham, J. R. R. Tolkien, Balantine, March, 1969, 95¢.

With this book, all the published fiction of Tolkien is now in paperback. Smith of Wootton Major is at the same time the slightest and the most delicately written of Tolkien's works. It is, like Farmer Giles, a fantasy for children more than for adults. But, unlike Farmer Giles, the tone is serious, not humorous. Tolkien enthusiasts should find it well worth buying.

LK

The Mezentian Gate, E. R. Eddison, Balantine, April, 1969, 95¢.

This is the fourth and last of the Eddison books. It is, in internal chronology, the first of the Zimianvian trilogy. Though Eddison's death left it unfinished, it did not leave the book incomplete. Instead the first and the last sections of the novel are fully fleshed out--and in the middle are some thirty summarized chapters, "The Argument with Dates" -- so that the entire plot of the book is known, would that most writers of long books would have this much courtesy.

The book itself is more complex in plot and characterization than Ouroboros but far more philosophically simple than Mistress of Mistresses (whose initials ironically (?) are MoM) or A Fish Dinner in Memison. Anyone who enjoyed Ouroboros but can't get started on the other books might well try starting this one. LK

The Anything Box, Zenna Henderson, Avon, Feb, 1969, 75¢.

This is an anthology of Zenna Henderson's non-People stories. My own favorites are "Subcommittee" and "Things" but there's a wide selection here, even a couple of horror stories. Everyone should find something to his taste.

LK

The Lottery, Shirley Jackson, Avon, March, 1969, 75¢.

This is 219 pages of Shirley Jackson stories. Finding myself at a loss for words, I will say no more.

LK

The Illustrated Man (film)  
reviewed by M. B. Tepper

Rod Steiger, greyed and muscular, storms through the grass and plants in the wilderness. Eventually, he takes off one glove, and we see....

We see THE ILLUSTRATED MAN, which opened its run in Los Angeles just yesterday as I write this.

The advertizements referred to this as "Ray Bradbury's classic of the supernatural." I don't know whether to reprimand the film company for this remark or whether to compliment them on the film. It still seems that "science fiction" is a term not to be applied to "serious" films, to be saved, nursed and used for mind-splitting flicks such as 2001: A Space Oddyssey and for such questionable material as is all too often shown on the television screen these days.

CHARLY was not labeled science fiction, though it actually was. And THE ILLUSTRATED MAN was also built from stories of science fiction--stories by Ray Bradbury, whose poetic imagery has already prompted magazines to special issues dealing with his works. Yet why is THE ILLUSTRATED MAN referred to as a movie of the supernatural?

Rod Steiger plays all four of his widely-varying parts with equal facility. His main part is that of Carl, the Illustrated Man, a man decorated from neck to foot with ghastly supernatural markings. A man made a freak. No carnival will touch him--because his illustrations crawl about on his skin and predict the future. No one wants to see his future if it shows how he'll die.

The Illustrated Man is not only an outcast; he has left the world that scorns him. He wanders across the country, searching for the woman who put the Illustrations on him. and when he finds her--he'll kill her.

Robert Drives plays a drifter named Will - a drifter who happens to encounter Carl on the road. The drifter sits quietly (most of the time) while Carl tells his story. Then Will looks into the Illustrations and sees the first of three stories....

The first story was adapted from "The Veldt." The future shown is one of sterile nothingness: a house where the only room not done in flat offwhite is the parents' bedroom. The rebellious children create the veldt in their playroom and eventually sentence their parents to bloody death.

Claire Bloom - late of CHARLY - plays the woman Felicia Rose. She is either cold and knowing - or fragile and terrified.

The second story is adapted from "The Long Rain." Rod Steiger appears as the man who pushes the group on, in their quest to find a Sun Dome on the eternally wet surface of Venus. One by one, his fellows are killed, go insane, commit suicide. Carl reaches the Sun Dome and finds within...

Felicia. Returning to haunt him.

The thirty story, "The Last Night of the World," is given an extra punch by the drastic chance of the story's climax. Rod Steiger is the man who kills his own children so that they will not suffer when the world ends. Rod Steiger as the man who weeps when the world does not end.

In all three stories, futility. Futility in the mechanized future in "The Veldt." Sterile white furnite. Futility keeping the men circling about their crashed vehicle on Venus, when a Sun Dome is in their grasp. Futility in that Carl cannot prevent the end of the world nor can he bring back his children when the end does not come.

Sterile, white drapes throughout the house.

Rod Steiger as Carl, searching for the woman who put the Illustrations on his skin. The futility of the three stories suggests that his quest will be futile.

And somehow when the drifter attempts to escape his death by strangling when he sees it on Carl's back--somehow we know that that is futile too.

The woman comes from the future, we are told. Is this to say that our future can be nothing but futile? Is this to say that our attempts to gain a mechanized society, our voyages to other planets, and the survival of the race are all futile?

Or is life like Carl's quest? Will we search for the woman who left us with our Illustrations only to wander aimlessly and eternally?

I had originally thought that this picture would be terribly disunified as a result of the three widely differing stories that made it.

But somehow the futility holds them together.

The God Machine, Martin Caidin, Bantam, 75¢.

Martin Caidin gave this novel of cybernetic horror a title that sends a chill trickling down your back like ice water. You should not read it before bedtime if you want to sleep free of nightmares.

Caidin has, with his usual meticulous detail, written a tale of a superintelligent computer that mutinies against its creators. The brain, Project 79, starts to program humans by hypnosis with the intent of eventually ruling Earth. The computer is actually a form of artificial life, since its twin breeder reactors can keep it going indefinitely. With his heartstopping and suspenseful style of writing, Caidin tells how 79's chief programmer fights to regain control of the electronic monster.

The moral of the story is that man should always retain the power to pull any computer's plug, no matter how sophisticated it is.

BB

Star Trek 3, adapted by James Blish, Bantam, 50¢.

I snapped up this anthology the minute I saw it, and I am glad I did. It has David Gerrold's "The Trouble with Tribbles" and Norman Spinrad's "The Doomsday Machine" as well as five other good episodes. It pleased me no end to have in my collection at last the two best Star Trek episodes I have seen.

The cover blurbs unfortunately were much too schmaltzy and at times downright inaccurate. But they did do justice to the beauty of Lt. Uhura.

BB

---

Barometer - an ingenious instrument which indicates what kind of weather we are having. Ambrose Bierce, The Devil's Dictionary

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## THE METAPHYSICAL HYENA

### Part Four

a novel reading experience by  
Theobald Arthur

(who, disguised as a mild-mannered reporter for a great metropolitan newspaper, is in reality David Gerrold.)

when we ended last issue

"Now remember, Sylvia," cautioned Sam, "they won't be speaking English. It may take a while to establish communication with them. Rome wasn't built in a day, you know."

The man cleared his throat and said, "Hello Sylvia, Sam, Reverend Beautiful. How are you?"

"I wonder who the contractor was," Sam muttered as he snapped his pencil in two.

...TO BRING YOU THIS MESSAGE

"Allow me to introduce myself," the man continued.

"He'll probably have some weird name like Mxytplk," Sam muttered.

"My name is Fred," said the man.

"Fred?" Sam raised an eyebrow. "Fred? An extraterrestrial named Fred?...He can't be serious!...Fred?!"

"Frederick Jay Cerberus," added the man.

Sam raised his other eyebrow. "Frederick Jay Cerberus??"

"The third," said Fred.

"The third," said Sam. "Hmp. They probably had to throw away the first two."

"I suppose," Fred continued, "that you have no idea of the effect that your message has had on us. You cannot begin to imagine the stir that you have created here on Aragmat."

"Earth II," Sam muttered, but the man ignored him--probably because of the seventeen second time lag between them.

"You cannot imagine the far-reaching consequences of your broadcast," Fred said broadly.

Sam beamed with pride.

"You have completely loused up the regular programming of one of our great television networks, interrupting all of our regularly scheduled programs, creating all kinds of static and ghost images, upsetting our engineers, and driving our program manager crazy for the past three weeks!" Fred appeared to be a little bit distraught.

"To continue," he continued, "our sponsors have been terribly upset and have refused--and justifiably so--to pay for air time. The network is slowly being driven to the edge of bankruptcy by your inconsideration--and product sales have fallen off a good two per cent."

"Well, what's a couple of per cent among friends?" Sam quipped but not too loudly.

"Your message has not only disrupted our economy--it's interfering without summer rerun schedule! You will kindly cease and desist immediately broadcasting on this wavelength!"

He started to turn away from the screen, then caught himself and turned back, "If you must broadcast, use channel 8!" Then the screen went dark.

"Well," said Sam.

"Well, well," said Simp.

"Well, if there was any doubt left in your mind--it should be gone now. They are definitely human," said Sylvia.

#### THE NAMING OF NAMES

Sylvia began adjusting the transmitter to broadcast on channel 8. It didn't take long, and in a few moments the three voyagers were once more in front of their TV camera.

Sam as unofficial spokesman for the group began, "Hello, can you hear me? Hello, Fred? Come in, Fred!...OH, Fred! Come in, Fred! Hello, Fred!...Do you read me, Fred? Hello, Fred....AW, come on, Fred...?!"

The screen remained blank.

"This is the....," he turned to Sylvia. She was looking at something in one of the food lockers. "We never did name the ship."

"Silverfish," prompted Sylvia.

"Silverfish," Sam queried.

"Yeah, we've got them in the pantry."

Sam shrugged and turned back to the camera. "This is the Silverfish calling...Do you read me? Come in, please. Hallo, Fred!...Fred? Oh, Fred....You're playing games, Freddy...Fred?...Anybody?...Hallo there?....Halloooo?!!...."

#### THE MINUTES OF THE MELTING

After several minutes of this nonsense, the screen finally glowed to life. There was a stranger with a Prince Valiant haircut on the screen. "Come in, Silverfish. Come in...Silverfish?"

"Yeah, we've got them in the pantry," confirmed Sam. "Who're you? Where's Fred? What've you done with Fred," Sam demanded suspiciously.



"Fred?" asked the man with the Prince Valiant haircut, after a seventeen second time lag.

"You know. Frederick Jay Cerberus."

Seventeen seconds later...."Oh, that Fred!" the man smiled. "You're on the wrong channel. Fred is on channel 6."

The image faded.

"Wait!" shouted Sam.

After another seventeen seconds the screen glowed back to life. "Now what?" asked the man. "I told you Fred is on channel 6."

"But he told us to broadcast on channel 8."

Seventeen seconds later...."He did, did he? Well, that's Cerberus all right. The old S.O.B." The man turned to someone off-screen and said something that sounded suspiciously like, "I think it's those damned refugees that've been lousing up channel 6." He turned back to face them, "Well, who do you want to talk to?"

Sylvia took the microphone, "We want to talk to Mr. Cerberus, the representative of your government."

Seventeen seconds later...."Freddy Jay with the government?! Not likely! He's just a dumb news reporter. He was just telling you to stop lousing up his airwaves."

"Uh...well, then we would like to talk to someone who does represent your government."

Seventeen seconds later...."Why?"

Sylvia took a deep breath, "We are in a spaceship approaching your planet. In two weeks we will be close enough to attempt a landing. We would like the aid of your government."

Seventeen seconds later...."It figures. You're from Earth." The man paused, "Listen, you don't want the government. The government isn't in that business. Hold on for a bit. I'll see what I can do for you. Don't go away now." The man disappeared offscreen.

"Oh, we wouldn't dream of moving from here," muttered Sam. "Where can you go in a space capsule?"

The man returned almost immediately and said, "Hang on. I'll be in touch with you in a little while." The screen went dark.

"Wait!" shouted Sam. But the screen remained dark. "Oh hell. I wanted to find out what was happening upstairs."

Sylvia wandered to the telescope and stared through it at the strange blue planet. Three tiny moons circled it. "I wonder," she wondered, "What kind of a world is that?"

"A planet full of nuts!" muttered Sam, who was certainly doing a lot more muttering than usual these days.

"Well, at least they're not little green men," commented Sylvia.

"Hmph!" sniffed Simp. "I suspect they're all heathens."

"They speak English..." offered Sam.

Simp looked at him, "Well, that just proves it."

## INTERLOGUE

"Hey, writer! Are you still there?" Sam Kollered.

"YES, I'M STILL HERE," I answered.

"Oh. Good."

"WHY DO YOU ASK?"

"I was just wondering. After re-reading these last couple of pages...."

I rumbled warningly. The sky rumbled warningly.

"--I just wanted to tell you how good I thought they were," Sam finished quickly.

"OH. WELL, THANK YOU," I answered.

"Uh, by the way..." Simp asked, peering over my shoulder at my last sentence, "All capitals???"

"WHY NOT?" I shrugged, "IT'S MY BOOK."

"It strikes me as being a little self-indulgent, but I guess that's your privilege."

"YES IT IS. AFTER ALL, I AM THE WRITER."

## THE MEETING OF THE MINUTES

Three days later, the screen hummed to life again. There was the man with the Prince Valiant haircut. "Hello? Anybody home?"

Sam grabbed the microphone, "Yes! Hello, hello!"

Fourteen seconds later, the man smiled, "I think we've solved your problem."

"You've got someone from the government," Sam asked.

Fourteen seconds later...."No. I said we've solved your problem"

"Huh? What do you mean?"

Fourteen seconds later...."I'll try to explain."

"By the way," interrupted Sylvia, "how do you speak English?"

The man continued, "You see, our government doesn't have a space program. Such things are all handled by private industry. Now if you wanted to, you could negotiate with one of the larger corporations to rendezvous in space with your capsule...such a thing is possible, but the cost--" A sudden look of annoyance crossed his face. "The same way you speak English," he snapped. "I just open my mouth and the words fall out."

"Oh," said Sylvia, although the man wouldn't hear her for seven seconds.

"Now, if I can continue without any further interruptions, one of our major companies would be willing to arrange such a rendezvous with your ship, but the cost would probably exceed the intrinsic value of your vehicle."

Sam mouthed the words, "Intrinsic value...."

"If I understand this correctly, your ship is not really a self-propelled vehicle at all. It's just a capsule, isn't it? No, I'm afraid there really isn't too much demand for space capsules... except of course as curiosities...."

"On the other hand, if you wish to land directly on Pragmat, I think that might be arranged."

"Now we're getting somewhere," said Sam. "Let me talk to someone from the government so we can arrange things with the Navy."

Fourteen seconds later...."You certainly are a strange one. Why do you insist on only doing business with the government? I told you, the government isn't in this business."

"But what about the Navy?"

Fourteen seconds later...."Which one? National Defense Corporation? Public Shipping, Inc.? Ocean Transport Corporation? War Unlimited?" Sam gaped, openmouthed. "The government doesn't run the Navy. It's all free enterprise. However, if you want the official government Navy, then you want NDC. National Defense Corporation, that is. They've just renewed their contract."

"Look," said Sam, "we just want to land our ship. It wasn't designed for landing on the ground, so we have to make an ocean splashdown. We could come down close to land and be picked up by one of your ships."

Fourteen seconds later, the man held up his hand. "I know all about the mechanics of your ship's operation. Vice-Admiral Bailey Schwuntz of NDC is here."

Vice-Admiral Bailey Schwuntz was a florid rugged-looking sort of man--the kind who is always hated by his subordinates because he is always so damned right. (If they made a movie about him, John Wayne would play the lead.) He stepped into the field of vision and spat a string of gibberish at them.

"Come again?" said Sam. "I'm not sure I understood that."

Fourteen seconds later....The man with the Prince Valiant haircut returned to the screen and explained, "I'm sorry. The Vice-Admiral doesn't speak your language. But he said that he can arrange for a tugboat to meet your ship if you can bring it down within the twelve mile limit. You'll be towed to port then, but you'll have to bring it down within the twelve mile limit. Farther out than that and it won't be worth the salvage costs."

"Salvage costs...?" mouthed Sam.

The man forged ahead. "Personally, I think that that's your best bet. Bring it down very close to shore or on an inland lake. Frankly, nobody really wants to foot the bill for your rescue. There's no profit in it."

"What about the government?" protested Sam.

Fourteen seconds later...."Forget it. They like to show a profit too. Of course, there are other countries that might be

interested, but they couldn't afford it."

"You know," muttered Sam, "I'm beginning to doubt that we're speaking the same language...."

"Frankly, I think your best bet is to take Vice-Admiral Schwuntz's offer and try to land within the twelve mile limit."

"And he collects the ship for salvage. Right?"

Fourteen seconds later:... "Right. Unless you have some other method of reimbursing his company."

"Tell him that I'll see him in Hell first!" growled Sam.

Fourteen seconds later.... "That's a possibility too." The man smiled and his image faded.

"That was brilliant," commented Sylvia. Sam resisted the temptation to say anything. "I hope you at least learned something from that experience," Sylvia added.

Sam gave in to temptation. "Only one thing."

"What's that?"

"That it's absolutely impossible to carry on an argument when you have to wait fourteen seconds between insults."

#### QUESTION

"Well, who needs them anyway?! Since when is it impossible for a typical average ordinary everyday run-of-the-mill citizen to land his space capsule without the government's help?! Who needs them?!"

#### ANSWER

"You do, dummy!"

#### A CHAPTER JUST CHOCK FULL OF SMALL DETAILS NECESSARY TO THE PLOT

Sylvia was studying her best photographs of the planet. It was roughly the same size as the Earth, but it had no comparable land masses. The largest continent was no larger than Australia. The planet actually had more land area than the Earth, but it was more liberally distributed in the form of small islands. There were a few large areas of ocean but they were scattered.

"Hmmm," said Sylvia. "It doesn't look as if we'll have too much trouble coming down close to land. It looks like the big problem will be avoiding it."

The computer burped loudly, but excused itself by issuing a more legitimate statement in the form of their landing calculations.

#### INSTRUCTIONS FOR LANDING ON PLANET

(A) FIRST, FIND ONE PLANET...

"Oh, fine! That's all we need! A smart-ass computer!"

--Sam Hero

Eventually they decided to try to land as close to a coast as possible and try to get to shore on their own with the rubber landing raft. They poured over their photos for a long time, and finally came to the conclusion that their best bet would be to aim for an area of water twenty miles to a side. This was a target big enough to hit, yet small enough so that they would not be marooned too far from any coast. The area appeared to be bordered by at least three medium-sized cities and a number of smaller burgs.

About three days before their landing, their TV set hummed to life again. They did not recognize the man on the screen. He wore his hair fairly short, and he was tall, thin, and sort of limp-looking.

"Hallo," he began, "I'm Charon from Product Development Inc."

"From where?" Sam asked.

Three seconds later...."Product Development, Inc. You know, Marketing, motivational research, things like that. I used to be in the Earth Studies branch. Of course, there is no Earth any more, but they haven't reassigned me as yet. You know, that bomb of yours put quite a few of us out of work."

"Sorry about that," said Sam, "I'll watch it next time...."

Three seconds later the man waved it off. "Never mind. What's done is done. We can't cry over spilt milk."

"Okay," said Sam.

"Now then, I'd like to introduce Professor Pilton Packard--"

"Of the Green Bay Packards?" asked Sam.

"--of the Phorque University. He is with the Anthropology Department and--"

"Oh no," said the Professor, suddenly responding to Sam's question three seconds late, "My family's in a different game altogether. We're with the local Meet Packards."

"Oh," said Sam.

Charon continued, "The professor is with the Current Civilizations Department and--"

"Dead Civilizations Department," corrected the Professor. He was a white-haired old man who looked startlingly like Sam Jaffe in Lost Horizon.

"Uh--yes...and he is an expert on Terran societies."

"I'm pleased to meet you," said Sam.

"We're talking to you from the beautiful basement of the Product Development Foundation Building, high atop the lovely Maheelanunga Mountains," said Charon. "This channel is owned and operated by the company and is used for various industrial and public service broadcasts. The company has agreed to temporarily defer all bills for the air time that you have used--in view of your ignorance of the customs of Pragmat."

"How generous of them," muttered Sam, but his sarcasm was lost

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on the man.

"It could have you quite a pretty penny," said Charon. "But the company is well aware of your problems--that is, being displaced persons and all. That's why we have asked the Professor to--uh, well, be your guide until you can adjust to Pragmatic Society."

"I see," said Sam who was beginning to see, "what's the catch?"

Three seconds later...."Uh--the catch, yes..." Charon was momentarily taken aback. "Yes, you are beginning to see, aren't you. Yes, uh...well, naturally the company does have the right to expect a return on its investment, but--uh, we can work something out later. You see, Product Development Inc. has had its eye on you for some time, Sam Hero. (Ever since page one, in fact.) We feel that with your unusual capabilities there just might be a place for you with us...."

"Uh, well, that's very flattering...." Sam said.

Charon didn't even wait the three seconds. He raised his hand. "Oh, don't thank me now. Wait until after you've landed. Now we've worked out some landing calculations for you, and if you can bring your ship down at this spot, we can pick you up easily...." He indicated a map.

"Well," said Sam, "we were sort of planning to land here." Sam indicated his own map made from one of their photos.

Three seconds later...."No, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no!" said Charon firmly. "That's too close to the waters of Industrial Research Corporation. Here, let me show you...."

#### OF COURSE

When Sam mentioned to Sylvia that he wished the change their landing plans, she exploded, "Don't you think I have better things to do than plot new courses for you every time you want?! All day long I work and slave over a hot computer and what thanks do I get?! None! That's what! It's always, 'Sylvia, do this!' and 'Sylvia, do that!' and 'Sylvia, plot me a new landing course!' What's the matter? Wasn't the old one good enough?!"

"Well, now that you mention it...." began Sam.

"If you don't like the way I plot courses," she cried, "why don't you try plotting a few yourself! Just see how easy it is, Mr. Hard-To-Please!" She would have stomped angrily from the cabin, had there been anyplace to stomp to, or some gravity to stomp against.

"I think she's a bit upset," Sam remarked to Simp.

"A very astute observation...." said Simp.

Sylvia looked at them both. "If you two think I'm going to do another thing for you, then you have another think coming. I'll plot that new course when Hell freezes over!"

The temperature in Hellwas thirty below and dropping steadily when the radar started making funny noises.

Sure enough, when Sylvia checked, she found that another ship was approaching them.

Sam turned on the radio and said, "Identify yourself, please."

After a moment, the reply came back, "We're from the Red Cross."

"We already gave," said Sam, and turned the radio off.

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#### ON THE WAGON

Soon they heard the clank of magnetic grapples as the other craft connected with them. "Visitors--at this hour?" asked Simp. They clambered into their spacesuits (which actually deserves a chapter in itself to describe, but we want to advance the plot as quickly as possible.) So, when everything was up tight and out of sight, they depressurized the cabin and Sam opened the hatch.

Two spacesuited figures entered. Sam closed the hatch and filled the capsule with air again. The three Earth people opened their faceplates. The strangers did not. (Which is lucky for them. You don't know how bad a three month space capsule can smell.)

"What can we do for you," Sam asked, trying to make conversation.

"We've come to give you your shots."

"Our shots?" asked Sylvia.

"I've already had the measles," said Sam.

The strangers ignored this. "Bare your arms, please."\*

Sam and Sylvia shrugged and exchanged a glance. They shrugged again. Finally, they shrugged out of their spacesuits and rolled up their sleeves. This wasn't too hard for Sam because he was still in his underwear.\*\*

"Just what are these shots for," asked Sam. "Are you afraid we might pick up some rare disease? That we might be affected by some strange virulent pragmatic germs? That we might--"

"That you might contaminate the planet with germs from earth," said the man, and jammed the needle extra hard into Sam's arm.

"I don't know which hurt more," Sam muttered, "the needle or the fact that he didn't capitalize Earth."

Meanwhile the other man was busy spraying the ship with disinfectant. The disinfectant smelled vaguely like steer manure, except that it wasn't that pleasant.

\*I will resist the temptation to make a pun about the right to bare arms. --The. Arthur.

\*\* What else are you going to wear in a spacesuit--a tuxedo?  
--The. Arthur

Then they suited up again, depressurized the cabin, opened the hatch, let the strangers out, closed the hatch, repressurized the cabin and climbed out of their suits again. Had there been any gravity, Sam would have sagged into his acceleration couch.

Sylvia's only comment was, "Well, it sure wasn't 'Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses...."

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ELLIS ISLAND IN THE SKY

(Actually, there is no Ellis Island in the sky\*, but it makes for a nice chapter title.)

It would be nice to report that the ship came screaming out of space, jets blazing, her hull cherry-red as she cut through the atmosphere. It would be nice to describe the dramatic moment of splashdown, and the triumphant moment when the capsule was hoisted aboard an aircraft carrier, while a hundred-piece band played The Star-Spangled Banner and thousands of sailors stood in formation spelling out "God Bless America." It would be nice to tell of their ticker tape parade through the streets of Pragmat's most important city, and of their tumultous reception by throngs of adulating fans.

It would be nice to tell of all this, but it wouldn't be true.

What actually happened was about as exciting as counting stars or listening to grasses grow.

On a planet where space travel is an everyday occurrence, there is little reason to get very excited over one lousy little space capsule.\*\*

So it was without fanfare that the capsule dropped out of the sky one bright noon. At a certain altitude something clicked and a bright orange parachute opened up. The capsule drifted slowly down to splash gently in the azure sea.

\* Except for the Ellis Island in the sky where all good immigration clerks go when they die.

--The. Arthur

\*\* Yes--lousy. The place was filthy with lice. I don't know how they got aboard, but they did.

--Ibid.

to be probably continued in our next issue

\* \* \* \* \*

Title Typos

- |                                   |                           |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Raingod                           | The Spade Merchants       |
| I Have No Couth and I Must Scream |                           |
| A Sale of Two Clocks              | Donovan's Drain           |
| The Stars Like Rust               | Foundation and Umpire     |
| A Plague of Lemons                | They Shall Have Scars     |
| Fellowship of the Rink            | The Two Bowers            |
| Rogue Queer                       | The Star Lox              |
| The Cosmic Cape                   | The Comic Engineers       |
| Voyage of the Space Eagle         | The Man who Sold the Goon |



29

The Mother Things  
(with apologies to Robert Heinlein)

by Mel Gilden

Time and again, our favorite sf heroes have met up with strangely silent planets, worlds with great sweeping streets and magnificent flying buttresses in the cities, and large expanses of rolling park-like greenery between the cities.

It is inevitable that the reason our hero found for this would be that the sun had suddenly begun producing a strange radiation which reduced all life forms to dust, or that the inhabitants were trying to escape a plague or invasion, now millennia old, by going through time or dimension. Sometimes they even left through space.

I find the conclusions that our heroes have come to, nothing short of incredible. How could they be so wrong? After long years of struggling with this problem, I now have the one true answer:

The universe is full of mothers.

\*           \*

Mothers. Mothers like yours and mine. On the outside they might be six-legged slimy horrors, but on the inside, they are all little old grey-haired ladies.

"Amazing," says you.

"Very much so," says I.

But I continue:

In almost every one of these stories, the same situation is confronted. Here is a great civilization, a parently left in the middle of the day's work for some unknown and definitely alien reason.

That last is where all of the heroes make their big mistake. The reason for the exodus was anything but alien.

Consider your own mother. She would do anything for you: take food out of her mouth for you (disgusting, but admirable), climb the highest mountains for you, or pull you out of any little scrapes you got yourself intangled in. She simply clucks her tongue and proceeds to bail you out.

That's it! Now imagine a million, a billion, a whole species of these Mother Things on a planet revolving around a star we haven't yet named. Imagine them going one at a time, then by teams, then by brigades, to save one little expedition that might have gotten itself in trouble, and in the process deserting the world.

"Ridiculous," says you.

"Of course," says I.

But think, is there anything more ridiculous than a mother wanting to protect a muscle-bound truck driver three times her size?

Mother love is the silliest thing there is.

Yet there they are, the Mother Things, leaping from planet to planet--conquering the Universe with Mother love.

Makes you kind of humble, doesn't it.

Now, about that hero and his lost civilization? His problem is that he's read too much space opera. It's warped his thinking.

But then, his mother probably wanted him to be a dentist anyway.

\* \* \* \* \*

untitled poem

by Tom Digby

The monster at the foot of my bed  
Said  
"You're taking up way too much room."

The glowing glob up over my head  
Said,  
"You're trespassing into our tomb."

They both agreed, "This thing cannot be,  
See,  
It just doesn't make any sense."

Each thought the other crazy to see  
Me.  
Their argument got quite intense.

The monster said, "The bed seems to feel  
Real."  
I told him that I thought so too.

The blob appeared to start to congeal,  
Squeal,  
And turn into purplish goo.

The monster said, "It's time to awake,  
Jake,  
And find it was only a dream."

So they awoke like soap bubbles break,  
Mak-  
Ing me just a dreamerless dream.

\* \* \* \* \*

Human kind cannot bear very much reality.

T. S. Eliot

"Murder in the Cathedral" part two, line 232  
The Four Quartets, "Burnt Norton" section I,

LETTERCOL .

A

(Our lettercol is quite short this issue - because we're coming out within approximately a month of last issue. All letters commenting on the Year-Ish which do not appear here will be printed in issue #89, our Westercon issue.)

Robert Bloch  
2111 Sunset Crest Drive  
Los Angeles, Ca., 90046

Thanks for the Third Foundation which arrived during my absence in Rio de Janeiro at International Fiction Festival and its Science Fiction Symposium. Just returned yesterday, but I did want to tell you I've enjoyed the issue while convalescing from the trip.

Kenneth Scher  
3119 Mott Avenue  
Far Rockaway, Ny  
11691

I just got #'s 86-7 of 3rd F and in the words of one of the less articulate Rothschilds "you make beautiful music." I think that you have, except for your repro, one of the best zines I've seen since I started getting them, and I said so in my fanzine review col. in SPACE & TIMES. Unfortunately that makes you the 11th zine I've done so far in less than a week...and since S&T comes out again in two months you may be trimmed out by the time I get finished. I hope not, but since I'm not the guy who decides I'm writing to let you know in person.

Will the Blurbiles be explained nextish?

Re: the Calendar April 14th, Daniel B. Davis is not in 2001; he's in The Door into Summer.

I have a suggestion for Stef U., Kenneth Robeson (creator of Doc Save) as your Phys ed prof.

Considering the high quality of your material, your repro is surprisingly bad, and the little artwork that you have is rather poor...however that is the only thing that I disliked. Why don't you have a fanzine review?

Once again, congratulations on a great zine!

\* \* \*

The poor repro lastish was because we were printed on the filthy Lasfs Rex. Thisish we will be printed on the just-cleaned Lasfs Rex. We hope it makes a difference.

All quizes are answered in the next issue.

The Daniel B. Davis entry is April 21st and the comment that he woke up in 2001 refers to the year, not to the film. Reread the Door into Summer and see.

The Phys Ed Dept of Stef U consists of Bob Kane (batman creator) as guest Department head. It has two professors, both in extension; Edgar Rice Burroughs and E. E. Smith. I agree that Robeson should also go on the staff. If you want the rest of the Stef U listings, send for the Third Foundation Anthology - "The Average of the Third Foundation."

B  
4-24-59 On second thought, we may have a fairly respectable length lettercol after all. Thank you, Harry Warner, Jr.

Harry Warner, Jr. I am happy to know that the Third Foundation  
423 Summit Avenue has survived its first Seldon crisis. Has it  
Hagerstown, Md. occurred to anyone that all these alarming  
21740 reports about the population explosion could  
actually be a Seldon crisis, too? It would be  
ironic if science fiction writers created fiction which described  
so convincingly the awful things that overpopulation will cause that  
a wave of revulsion sent the Birth rate down to next to nothing and  
Hari didn't even come close to getting born.

The Way Out gives promise of a superb totality. I am uncomfortable on interstate highways, throughways, autobahnen, whatever you want to call them, and maybe I'll never drive on another one after reading the start of this Niven story. Fandom seems to be entering a stage of better relations with the pros, who give some of their incompleated stories and preliminary sketches for artwork to fanzines; could the time be coming when even the most important professional work will get a sort of tryout in fanzines before its final version for its professional appearance, like a Broadway play that opens in New Haven or Philadelphia to gauge audience reaction?

I also enjoyed The Man who Shot Santa Claus. I'm not sure that the final paragraphs were really necessary. It would have been a neat little commentary on today's world if it had stopped with the jury's verdict. But I suppose that those last four paragraphs give a fillip of added originality and they certainly don't harm the total effect.

Your adventure with the cloth salesman was something like the strange moment that occurred a few years back while I was at work. During a slow time in the office, I was leafing through the new issue of Cry, which at that time was about as fanish a fanzine as existed, aside from Busby's prozine commentary. A fellow worker was looking at what I was reading over my shoulder, before I realized what was happening. He couldn't have seen more than half a dozen pages in the course of maybe two minutes. I folded up the fanzine, explained to him that it would take entirely too long to explain what it was all about, and he said: "Oh, I understand. It's an amateur publication put out by people to discuss science fiction and various other things that they want to talk about." I wish now I'd asked him what made Steve Pickering tick, if he was that discerning.

The Third Foundation's calendar caused me to worry suddenly about something. The first landing on the moon is planned for July, as I understand it. I wonder if a Star Trek-type letter campaign to NASA would succeed in changing the schedule? Obviously the people in the space program have considered every conceivable factor involved in the flight that relates to the safety of the men and the fullest documentation of their experiences and the advance of science. But I'll bet they've forgotten something important to the rest of the nation. It's conceivable that the first landing on the moon could become a fairly important new holiday like the landing of Columbus on a North American island and the founding of an independent nation over here. So it really shouldn't occur in July, right after Independence Day and not too far before Labor Day. It would be a perfect excuse for creating a new general holiday in a part of the calendar where a break is more badly needed: there are

nearly three months between Labor Day and Thanksgiving, for instance, and more than three months, most of the time, between New Year's Day and Easter. I'd hate to wait longer for that first manned landing, but the future might be more grateful to those astronauts if they did it when a holiday is most needed.

I hadn't realized the common factor that Stephen Goldin cites in Simak's novels. But it's there, even in older stories which he doesn't mention. It would be interesting to dig through a few hundred novels and collections of short stories in an effort to determine how much relationship there is between heroes who are acted on rather than acting on things and the general personality and habits of the men who wrote those stories. I don't know enough about Simak to guess whether he's the passive type in real life.

You gave me, in the discussion of the ghost in Hamlet, a sudden vision of Will Shakespeare listening to a long complaint by a member of his theatrical company on this very point, and then retorting patiently that it really doesn't matter because the effect of the moment is the important thing in a dramatic work before an audience, rather than any overall unity. "The medium be the message," he might add. When you come to think of it, you realize how kind fate has been to most of the world's supreme literary geniuses, in giving them little or no knowledge of how they would be worshipped and studied by posterity. If Shakespeare could have known during his lifetime that he'd be ranked as the greatest dramatist in the English language, just think what agonies he would have endured as he tinkered and edited and rewrote, trying to get every line into the best possible condition for the posterity that would give it such microscopic attention. You failed to point out one of the oddest things about the ghost's role in the play, incidentally. The most famous thing in Hamlet is his "To be or not to be" soliloquy, and that speech's whole message makes no sense at all since he has just seen and heard proof that there is a life after death.

The cover is splendid. It must be quite difficult to obtain such a delicate effect as the right side of this drawing, with this type of reproduction, and I suspect that the success achieved here might encourage other fan artists to experiment with similar contrasts in offset-destined art.

\* \* \*

Judging by the timing of the last moon shot, NASA is trying to have its main events accompany major holidays (like Christmas and July 4th) rather than supplement them. Why I'm not sure.

At the time of the "to be or not to be" speech, Hamlet is uncertain as to whether the "ghost" was actually his father or merely a demon from hell. He has just called himself "prompted to my revenge by heaven and hell" (II,ii, line 613) and also analyzed the situation in more detail:

The spirit that I have seen  
May be the devil; and the devil hath power  
T'assume a pleasing shape; yea and perhaps  
Out of my weakness and my melancholy  
As he is very potent with such spirits  
Abuses me to damn me. (II,ii, 627-32)

D

Disgusted  
Alamagordo  
New Mexico

If you are going to have the nerve to write incomprehensible, nasty garbage like "The Metaphysical Hyena," I should think you would at least admit it, instead of using a silly, made-up name like "David Gerrold."!!!

P.S. I am sorry I don't have a subscription, because I would like to do the decent, normal, adult American thing, and cancel it!

\* \* \* \* \*

Our next issue will be appearing in time for the Westercon, so try to get your letters in by the third week of June.

\* \* \* \* \*

And if you're coming to the 1969 Westercon....

The Los Angeles Bidding Committee for Westercon XXIII (1970) would appreciate your vote. (The committee is Ted Johnstone, Lee Klingstein, Dave Hulan and Don Simpson.) Come to our party in Room 770 at this year's Westercon in Santa Monica and we'll tell you about our plans for 1970.

Or, if you want one of our Speculative Memberships, send a dollar to our Treasurer:

Dave Hulan, Westercon XXIII  
1005 Mount Olive Drive, #10  
Duarte, California, 91010

Fans who buy Speculative memberships will not only get a special eye-crogling name tag (on either Rollux or gold Day-Glow) but will also get a significant discount on con membership. Buy now. Don't wait 'till after the bidding.

\* \* \* \* \*

Possible Faanish Declensions

nominative singular	fan	fanzine
dative singular	snogger	newszine
genitive singular	Mother Goddess	Victorian Digest
accusative singular	fugghead	crudzine

plural, all cases	convention	apa
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\* \* \* \* \*

After love, book collecting is the most exhilarating sport of all.

--A. S. W. Rosenbach

\* \* \* \* \*

Ambrose Bierce's Devil's Dictionary

heaven - a place where the wicked cease from troubling you with talk of their personal affairs, and the good listen with attention while you expound your own.



