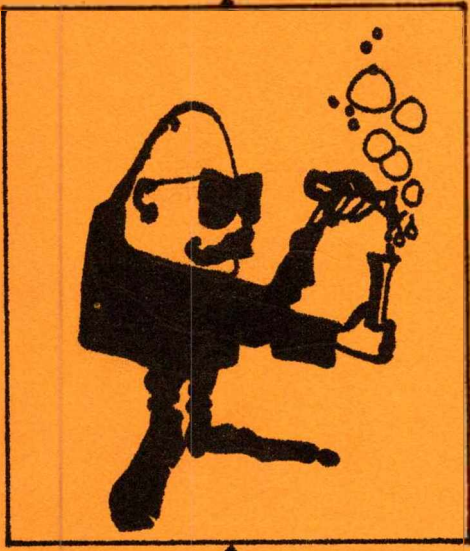


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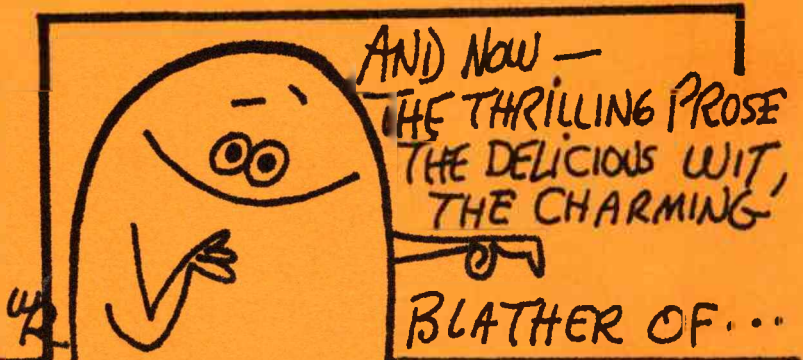
THE WORKS

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Distribution of fifty copies to friends, acquaintances and other potentially amusing people. Extra copies not available.



April 1978



THE WORKS #1, pristine first issue, is brought to you through the auspiciousness of Dave Locke. The expert mimeography is courtesy of Jackie Causgrove, without whom this personalzine would be nothing more than a few notes jotted in my Ideabook (mimeographs and I have this understanding relationship based on hate and mistrust).

This fanzine has a basic, simple policy: I write what I want, and send it to people I want to receive it. I guess that means it's not generally available. My mailing list is composed of fan friends and acquaintances, good letterhacks (I'll have a lettercolumn in the next issue), artists, editors whose zines I appreciate, and a handful of copies are sent out on speculation to those who might possibly be interested in this.

Being a personalzine, the only solicited material not written by myself will be that which appears in the lettercol (don't look; this is a first issue,

remember?). I have one rule regarding letters: don't tell me how much you liked or disliked the zine; tell me something interesting.

Hi, what's been happening with me lately? Glad you asked.

Not much, actually, unless you count a lot of partying. There's been a party here damned near every day. We have a great time. It would make the last days of Rome look like a Brady Bunch family picnic. Luckily we don't have to worry about anyone driving home after all this merriment, because we both live here.

To some of you that last paragraph makes perfect sense; to others I think it would be informative were I to shoehorn-in the missing piece of information that Jackie Causgrave and I are sharing this apartment.

How did this happen, you ask? It's very simple, really. Back in August I flew to Chicago on business, we spent a bit short of two weeks together, became inordinately fond of each other, and she flew out here at the end of August after getting thirty tons of books and fanzines packed up and shipped off (plus a modest amount of clothing which I think she used as packing material to protect the books while they were in transit). We spent the better part of two months at my one-bedroom apartment in Lomita until all her packages gradually arrived and pushed us out the door and into this two-story townhouse. And that's all there is to it, actually. Sometimes I amaze myself at my verbosity. If you're quivering for more details, read Jackie's editorial in RESOLUTION #2. We dislike repeating ourselves. We dislike it, I tell you.

As many of you are aware (conversely, I suspect, there are some among you who haven't been aware in years), 1977 was running a merry course toward becoming one of the most prominent years on my shit list.

Everybody has bad years. Think back. Make a list. Check the sequencing, and see if your bad years occur in cycles. Of course, some years have a lot of good mixed in with the bad, or severe lines of demarcation separating the tolerable from the orgasmic from the unbearable. For me, 1977 was like a tossed salad which had okra and buffalo chips added to it.

1977 was the year of car troubles (as are most years with me -- cars and I just never seem to hit it off -- but this transcended even the usual run of ugly luck), and the year of my "heart attack" (placed in quotes because that wasn't really what I had, and I never did find out for sure what I had, but whatever it was served to place me in an intensive care unit where they tried to kill me through a diligent application of incompetence), and the year of other health problems, and the year of financial embarrassments, and the year I learned that I was working for a company staffed almost entirely by basket-cases (they may go bankrupt yet, but during the interim my job has the plus-factor of not being overly demanding of my time).

It was also the year that I got back into the swing of dating again, as Phoebe and I broke up at the end of 1976. We could have split at any point during the previous two years, or maybe even three years, but instead we held things together with spit, gum, apathy, and laziness. And, being so stretched out a period of 'de-escalation,' we parted on friendly terms and avoided the hate and discontent which often accompanies a sudden move. But with a period of over 11 years since having a "date," I began to get the understandable suspicion that I might be out of practice. I was right: I was out of practice. Never having been much of a dancer (and neither was Phoebe) to begin with, I felt like a bottle of Ripple at a wine-tasting party the

first time I tried to cope with what passes for dancing these days. I think King Kong could have done better. However, people are creatures of intelligence and adaptability, and I quickly developed awkwardness out of incompetence, and an accompanying line of patter which kept me off the dance floors as much as possible. This is called coping with the situation.

1977 was also the year where, bored with my job, I developed a project which took me to New York and to Chicago on business. As it turned out, the trip to Chicago was nothing more than monkey business when seen from the viewpoint of my original objectives. As the result of spending that first weekend together, the Chicago visit wound up being stretched from a few days to over a week, with a bit of sick-leave being tossed in for good measure. I felt so bad about neglecting my management responsibilities that I never even thought about it at the time. This is called tunnel vision, I believe.

And this brings us full circle back to where I started this wordsmithing. There are several nice advantages to holding parties in your own home, obviously, but I think the circumstances here are a bit unusual.

I mean, we seldom invite anybody over. Still, for some reason, we seem to wind up with an adequate crowd and a totally convivial bunch: us. Any additional fillips would seem unnecessary at this time.

So that's what I've been doing lately, just in case you were curious. I've tried to keep this succinct, because deep down inside I really know that you didn't ask.

This all brings to mind the conversational gambit of "hi, what's been happening lately?" which really doesn't work too well at times because some people seem overly obliged to actually tell you. As I recall, the last time I asked this question I was left with full knowledge of the last six months' activity on the stock market. Circumstances such as this sometimes lead one to abandon certain expressions which had formerly served toward fulfilling the needs of your everyday conversation.

Of course, sometimes you don't even have to ask people what they've been up to lately. They volunteer. I think one of the most groan-inspiring moments a person can encounter is when they meet someone new and learn "what's new?" with that person; everything is new, because you've never met them before. You learn their life story. This last happened to me when I was flying back from New York in early September.

Our plane was jammed to the gunwales, and I was jammed in next to a 76-year-old woman who insisted upon telling full details about everything that had transpired in her sex life. That amounted to about sixty years' worth of screwing, as I recall, but fortunately for me she had not incurred an overly full life and I was spared after only ninety minutes of a continuous monolog. As the flight lasted six hours, I'm thankful that she wasn't an aged nymphomaniac.

While flying United in conversation with this old gal, I might mention that the flight was



unusual in another respect as well. At various points along the aisle were pull-down movie screens. The same movie played on all of them. For those of you who have encountered this it's obviously nothing new, but those who haven't will have been deprived of a marvellous time-travelling experience. You see, the screens are close enough together that, depending upon your seating, you might be able to see five or six of them. And the projectors are not synchronized with each other. Want to see an instant rerun of an amusing scene -- look at the third screen down. Curious about how a particular scene is going to turn out -- look at the second screen. Get the idea? Of course, this playtoy might be even more amusing if you got all vapored-up and were waiting for it, but it was amusing enough with only four rum-colas.

What was far from amusing, however, is that the screens were fairly large for the size of the plane. And, like I said, they pulled them down from the ceiling. As a consequence it was necessary to get down on your hands-and-knees and crawl under four or five of the suckers each time you had to make a head call.

Still, none of this was anywhere near as amusing as the flight back from Chicago in August. Having just abandoned Jackie to cope with the problems of *moving* (moving is so much fun that, as a defense mechanism, I run for a bottle every time I even think about moving again), and not anticipating her arrival in sunny Califurnace for a matter of weeks, my mood on that flight was such that the diversions were welcome.

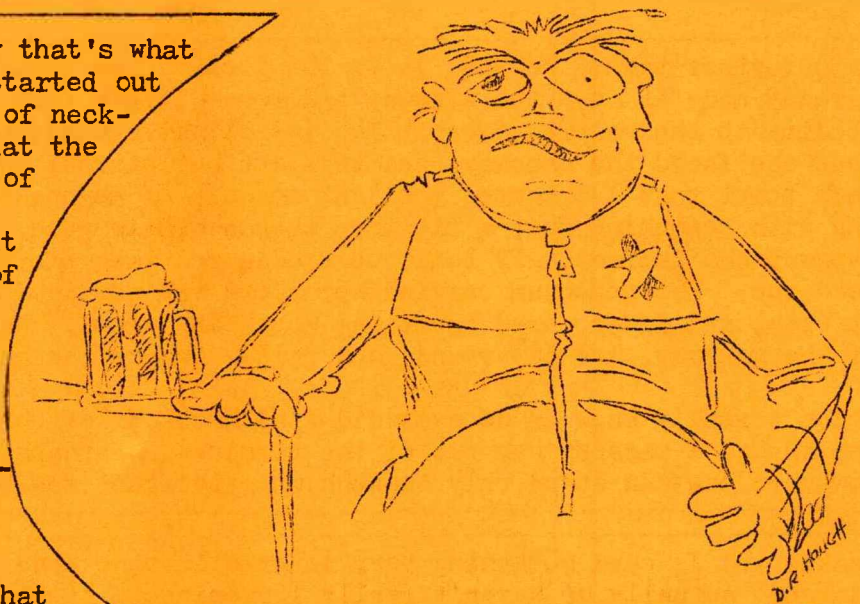
First was the fact that the plane, a TWA 707 jobbie, ran about as well as my Fiat Spyder did just before I traded it in. (Never did find out what was wrong with that mother. Two shops declared it "unfixable," and I decided that trading it in on something else was the equivalent of shooting it.) As we were flying above the bad weather, chugging through peaceful air, I saw no particular reason why we were instructed to keep our seat belts on for two hours of a four-hour flight, other than the fact that we would have been vibrated out of our seats without them. Anyway, it gave everyone something to gripe about. Nothing unites people in conversation quite so well as a common discomfort: "Hi, my name's Dave. Is your ass as sore as mine?"

There was quite a bit of drinking on that flight. Not all of it, I don't believe, was restricted to the passenger section. They had a buffoon co-pilot who, I strongly suspect, was given the job of making announcements for the first time; either that, or the Captain was too smashed to handle the chore himself. Whatever, I think this fellow was trying to cope by sucking up a few drops of liquid courage. He kept contradicting himself, stepping on his words, or otherwise futzing things up to the point where all the passengers would look at each other whenever his voice came over the speakers. I recall one announcement quite clearly: "Hi. This is your co-pilot. The Captain has asked me to inform you that you may now feel free to ... (long pause) ... remain in your seats with the seat belts fastened." Yes, I'm sure of it: they were drinking up in that cabin.

There was a bit of drinking in the passenger section, too. The couple seated ahead of me, who had three seats to share between the two of them, drank more in four hours than I have ever seen anyone drink in four hours. I mean, they piled it in. If a flight attendant wasn't conveniently nearby to fetch a drink order, they would ring for her, and if they got no answer within five seconds then one of them would get up and go back to fetch a couple of bottles. I think their bar bill came close to overshadowing their plane fare.

About three hours into the flight these two were sufficiently well lubricated to try

most anything, and apparently that's what they decided to do. Things started out innocently enough with a bit of necking, but when they learned that the armrests could be lifted out of the way they began to get grandiose ideas. Three flight attendants (poor sports all of them) suddenly showed up and prevented anything interesting from happening. The couple were immensely disappointed, as were the rest of us who had been watching. I mean, what the hell: there wasn't any movie.



I think the hardest part of that flight was in getting off the plane.

At least that was the case for the drunken couple, as well as for anyone who had to line up behind them. I was the asshole who had to stand up and wave them out into the aisle. Sometimes politeness is not bright.

The woman was in the middle seat and crawled out first. I would have thought it much easier for her to stand up and sidle out like everyone else, but crawling over the armrests got the job done even if it did take a while longer. As she was trying to make it over the last armrest, with her ass up in the air and the hem of her skirt up around her shoulderblades, she glanced up at me. Sort of. Her eyes wouldn't focus. She finally made it to the aisle and stood there with a flight bag in one hand and a purse in the other, waiting for the fellow with her to traverse the same course. Curiously enough, he came out the same way. Drunky see, drunky do.

As he crawled over the aisle seat I noted to him that he was forgetting her jacket which still reposed in the middle seat. He looked at me, too, and his eyes wouldn't focus either. Apparently his mind wasn't doing too much better, as I had to repeat myself. "Jacket," I said, pointing.

"Jacket," he repeated. He picked it up and stared at it for a few seconds.

"Jacket," he said again.

After making it to his feet, he thrust the jacket up to her face. And then just held it there. She stood still, her face buried in the jacket, probably trying to figure how she could free a hand. Finally he just let go of it, and it slid down her body and onto the deck.

It took a while, but we got all their possessions rounded up and they started moving toward the front of the plane. He didn't do too badly, but her technique was to bounce off every aisle seat all the way through the plane. At least until she dropped her flight bag and then fell over it.

A couple of flight attendants pulled her to her feet and escorted her the remaining distance to the exit, with her friend trundling along behind them. By this time everyone had exited the plane except for the couple and those who had been seated

even further back. We made it to the doorway and could see the other passengers had already made it down the gangway and were quite a fair distance along the corridor leading to the waiting areas. The two flight attendants positioned the woman so that she faced the gangway, and then got her started in that direction. It was at this point that I detected a slight measure of meanness in them, as they got her going with something just a bit more than a gentle push. As she got further down the gangway she increasingly built up speed, and when she hit bottom she was almost on a dead run. Her momentum carried her along the corridor quite swiftly and she caught up with, and disappeared into, the departing crowd. Her boyfriend got to the bottom of the gangway, looked around, and said: "where the hell did she go?"

I don't really know as he ever did find her. I left him standing there, and didn't see her as I made my way out of the terminal. Perhaps I missed a touching reunion. However, one can stand only so much entertainment sometimes.

Jackie and I heard something very interesting the other day while listening to FM stereo. Actually we weren't really listening to it at all; we were carrying on a vapored conversation and suddenly the background music just up and intruded on us.

It was a song called MY GIRL BILL.

"Imagine that," one of us imagined, "a gay love song."

"It's a good thing we weren't screwing; it might have intruded upon the magic of the moment." I think the other of us said that.

"No more than a commercial for Roto-Rooter," was the response.

How intriguing: a homosexual love song. Well, it was bound to happen. Probably it happened a few thousand years ago, for all we know, but we feel safe in presuming that they weren't playing it on FM stereo at the time.

Being prone to digression, we kicked the subject around at some length. Obviously such a song was long overdue. Perhaps it was the harbinger for a whole flock of homosexual love songs. A breaking of the ice, you might say. We were so thrilled by it that we immediately grabbed pencil and paper and jotted down ten possible titles for other gay love songs.

It took a while, over morning coffee, to figure out what the hell we had been scribbling the night before, but finally we remembered. Here's the list.

LOVE WILL GET YOU IN THE END	I'LL BE WITH YOU IN APPLE BOTTOM TIME
NEVER LEAVE YOUR BUDDIES BEHIND	I DID IT MY WAY
I LOVE THE WAY HE SWISHES	A LITTLE BIT OF ALL RIGHT
THE STATEN ISLAND FAIRY	QUEEN OF THE DRAGSTRIP
OUR HEARTS WERE YOUNG AND GAY	LISP LIKE STRAWBERRY WINE

As I'm not copywriting this publication (unlike SFWA I never look for money on reprints anyway), any potential song writers out there may feel free to put these titles to good use. We consider them a gift to the world.

The following item was written by Beverly Kanter, a LArea fan, and distributed through APA-L and SFWA. Don't consider it as being "outside material"; consider it as being a quote in context. Because, in fact, I've copied the whole one-page zine except for the colophon.

By now most fans are aware that David McDaniel passed away a few months ago. Comments, tributes, and musings concerning the man saw almost immediate publication. One such statement, called A TRIBUTE TO TEDRON, seemed somehow to be a little different than all the others. In fact, it was a lot different. It was so different that I read it seven times, some of them aloud, and then promptly passed it around to most of my local friends who readily agreed, without the slightest peep of dissent, that this was indeed a tad different than your usual fannish tribute.

I enjoyed the hell out of this item, and I pass it along so that you can, too.

A TRIBUTE TO TEDRON

I first met David McDaniel, fannishly known as Tedron or Ted Johnstone, when I was posing nude at Herb Bromberg's movie studio, where Tedron was cameraman. We were making a girlel movie. Hank Stine, the director, criticized Tedron loudly, so I commented, "He knows more about the arcane art of filmmaking--let him do it his way." Everyone was astonished at my educated vocabulary. After I put my shabby clothes back on, Tedron described the LASFS to me and invited me to join. I protested that I was too poor and would feel ashamed. He said that many other Fans were poor. A month later, I moved into Hank Stine's apartment, above Tedron's. Tedron introduced me to grass, which I had previously only heard of, and Pippin lent me Lord of the Rings, and I became a Fan.

Two months later my father came to Los Angeles to persuade me to return home with him. He talked furiously to Tedron and Joyce, saying that I was trash, a whore and a junkie. Tedron told me later that he turned to Joyce and said, "Did you see what I saw? Beverly was telling the truth about being abused by her parents. If she survives a year, we'll help her." I held to life by a thread, first getting a one-room apartment in Santa Monica, then getting work in plastic factories. In January 1970 I explained to my father that Mother had lied to him about my morals and I had left home for good reason. He committed suicide. I went on welfare, since I was now over twenty-one, and collapsed from the pressure I had been under for so many years. And for the next two years, either Tedron or Joyce listened to me and talked to me for an hour per day. I had no other friends--I was totally dependent on them. I grew very close to Tedron in those years. He cast my natal chart and assured me that my plantets were rising into more favorable aspects. We swapped limericks, we discussed Ingmar Bergaman movies (with him explaining their symbolism), he told me what to read and what to watch on TV. My younger sisters visited and he cast their natal charts for them. He took pictures of me, my sister Rochelle and his little son Tommy. He taught me to roll joints.

Tedron was the cleverest conversationalist I ever knew. He could describe a friend in a single trenchant phrase. He defined the late Ed Baker as "an ideological nymphomaniac." Once we were discussing the thirteenth century Icelandic poet Snorri Sturluson. The Britannica article described how he built a hot bath in his homeland and then emigrated to Norway. After reading the article, Tedron said, "I know why Snorri went back to Iceland! He couldn't get a bath in Norway! 'You wash yourself all over, with water? Whatever for?'"

A chapter in my life is gone, and I miss him. I regret even more that we parted on bad terms over some money he owed me, and now we never will be on good terms. He was always saying, "Something will turn up." Now nothing ever will.

I might mention something about our new apartment, now that we're sufficiently past the initial pains of moving in and can talk on the subject without flinching.

As apartments go, it's pretty decent. We're in a good section of Torrance (ie: there are hills and trees behind us and the Mobil Oil Refinery never breaks wind in our direction), and we've got an end-unit in a three-apartment building which means we've only one neighbor adjoining us (a pair of Jesus freaks who like to get high and kick the shit out of their screen door whenever it happens to stick). The walkway parallels the building, and a nice wall of vegetation parallels the walk, which means that being in an end-unit no one walks past our apartment. Total privacy. Quite a change-of-pace from all the other apartment buildings I've lived in.

We moved in here the end of October, with stout-hearted help from Dave and Marcia Hulan, Lon and Kathy Atkins, Anne Cox, John Schofield, and all the children that we could muster from our respective households. That evening, after all the hurly-burly, we dropped Brian and Rachel (my son and Dave's daughter) at a movie and we and the Hulans took in a couple hours of beer guzzling and German cooking at the Black Forest in Lomita.

But we discovered that the apartment had a few bugs in it. Figuratively, that is. We still don't have an overabundance of water pressure, but at least now when we take a shower we get something more than just a cough and a drop of water.

The biggest problem with the new apartment was the electricity. It was a bit unusual. You could send morse code with the oven light by turning the refrigerator on and off. Turn on a table lamp and a recording of Olivia Newton John sounded like Tennessee Ernie Ford.

It took a while, and a lot of hair-pulling, to find out that the electricity hadn't really been turned on. Someone from the power company had come out, marked a reading on the tag, and then split. A really helpful person, and if I knew his name I'd try to remember him at Christmas.

The reason we had any electricity at all was, apparently, a fluke. When the power was shut off, after the previous occupants left, another piece of incompetent workmanship was executed. An electrical leak resulted. Just a trickle of power, but enough to light a couple of lamps. Not enough, however, to provide the daily jolt required by such things as a refrigerator, stove, stereo, and hot water heater (or cold water heater, to be more precise). During the gaping interim before the problem was corrected, all our frozen food and, more importantly, our ice cubes, melted. Even the mixers weren't cold. It was almost enough to make us cry, Lafcadio.

Other than both Johns crapping out at the same time, we've had no major difficulties since. A lot of minor ones, but those are the breaks. As I said, the place is a pretty decent one. We've got a fair-sized bedroom, a humungus farden, and a bath upstairs. Downstairs we've a kitchen, small dining area, good-sized living room, half-a-bath, and storage area. Out back we have a two-postage-stamp-size patio which is half concrete and half plantable. The building also has a pool and sauna, neither of which we've used yet, but we will (I will, anyway).

We also have a planet, about to collide with the earth, to the Southwest of us. Perhaps I'd better explain that. It certainly is a sight to behold. You see, there's this rather roundish hill behind us, and it has a few pockmarks in it which are the result of excavations. At night, it looks altogether different. The shape of the hill makes it look like a much-too-damn-close planet, and the excavations look like clouds swirling across the face of it. Almost fell on my ass the first time I saw

it, as have a number of other people who've stopped by to visit in the evening. Awe some would not be too exaggerated a word to apply to this phenomenon, though on some nights it's more inspiring than on others. Admittedly, some nights we tend to be more inspired, as well. Any time we get sufficiently lubed or stoned it's a fair likelihood that we might crawl out to take another look at it.

We're pretty much settled into this place, anyhow. To the point where everything is unpacked and we're pretty sure we know where most of it is tucked away. The Hulans, Roscoe bless them, donated shelving units to the cause of housing part of Jackie's sci-fi collection (don't creeb at me; I like the term. Read my editorial in the next SHAMBLES and if you've still got something to say then I'll be willing to listen to it...), and that turned the tide on most of our storage problems.

The other main item which requires storage is the fanzines. She has a shitload of the things. We had a lot of storage space in this apartment, but I don't suppose the architect was far-sighted enough to know that sooner or later a fanzine collector might move in. Right at the moment we have adequate space for them, but the damn things keep coming in... I suggested several possibilities to prevent future storage problems from arising, but managed to escape with my life. It was a close call, though, I tell you.

So, we've now got a place that we call home. Despite the intentions of our Orange County friends, who would prefer that we relocate to their territory (and who, by the way, all ran out to stock up on Southern Comfort when they learned that Jackie was out here), we have to say that we're happy where we are and really haven't the ambition to move again even if we wanted to. Since we don't, that makes life easier.

genuine
ARKLE
by me

PAIN AND BACK AGAIN

illustrated by Jackie Causgrove

Tendencies. I have several.

I tend to write more than frequently about my greatest weakness: pain. This might lead one to presume that I have a low tolerance for pain, but you would be led in the wrong direction if you chose to think along those lines. I actually have a very high tolerance, though I do not run around trying to exercise it. Pain just happens sometimes. One can not always avoid it. When encountered, however, there is also a brilliant realization which accompanies it.

Pain hurts.

This is a deep thought which cannot be truly appreciated if you are not firmly trapped within a painful situation; in fact, the encounter with pain must make this thought leap at you as though you had just created it out of whole cloth.

Pain can be considered a weakness in that it has the great capacity to bring you "down" sometimes. One's ultimate defenses are against pain, as its invasion can cause you to lose all control over the mental processes which make you what you are. If you have a fiery personality, pain can be like a bucket of cold water. If you're "cool", you might suddenly find yourself on fire. No matter what you are, pain can

strip you of the ability to be yourself. Sometimes it only chews away at that ability, but sometimes it annihilates it.

As the result of spending a night on the Grennells' daybed, I have learned that pain can be carried to new heights. It occurs to me that I should consider myself extremely fortunate to have had this devastating encounter with their daybed, based on the fact that it has provided me with new fuel to write yet another pain story. How can I be so lucky?

Just lucky, I guess.

As it happened, neither Dean nor I would have to awaken on Friday, November 11th and grundle in to our respective offices; a thought which was pleasingly uppermost in our frontal lobes the day that Dean called here inquiring about the possibility of Jackie and I and Jean and himself getting together sometime so that we might drink ourselves into oblivion while discussing the general nature of the universe. Everyone apparently thought that possibility to be a jolly good one, and a Thursday night get-together was suitably penned-in on our social calendars. And, due to the holiday which was being thrust upon us, we could even make a night of it. No need to round ourselves up and go many long miles home prior to having a good night's sleep.

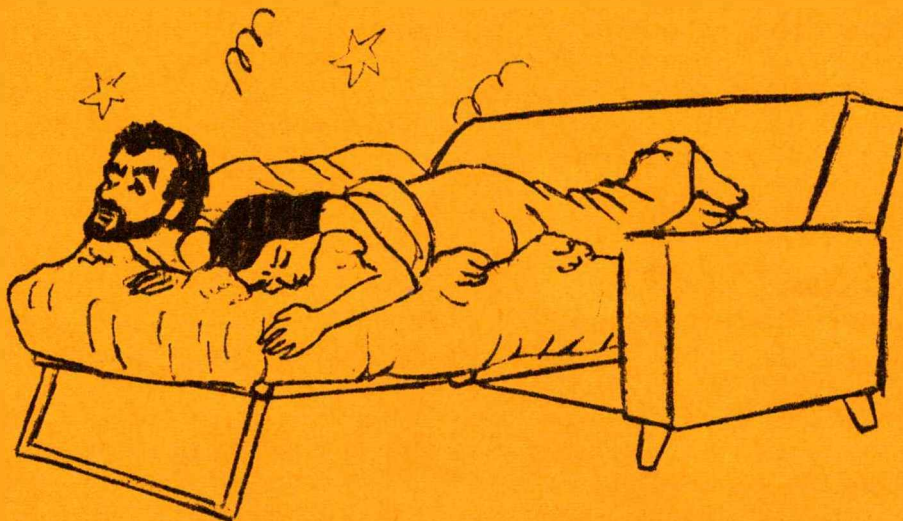
Aha, but there was the catch.

We presumed that we would all get a good night's sleep.

Even the best laid plans of nice fen can go awry.

Following a pleasant evening (except for the three-minute period when Dean got carried away and dropped forty-seven puns in unmerciful succession (which is another pain story all in itself)), the daybed was opened up. We all sleepily watched Jean place a sheet upon it, followed by two small pillows and a blanket. The Grennells then trotted off to their bedroom, and Jackie and I collapsed on the daybed.

It is a most unusual sensation to be rudely jerked into a state of full wakefulness as the result of lying down in bed.



We laid there and stared at each other.

One of us said: "I can feel every single spring in this mattress, and each one is applying a different degree of pressure."

The other said: "I can't live like this."

"I can't sleep like this."

"I can't live like this, let alone sleep."

"I wonder what the Grennells will think when they get up in the morning and find that we're not here?"

In an effort to at all costs avoid offending the hospitality of the Grennells (after all, they are fine people who never beat their children or stock Coors in their refrigerator), we manfully and womanfully tried to adjust to the situation.

"Let's try putting the pillows at the other end of the bed. Maybe it's more comfortable that way." It wasn't.

"Is there anything between us and these springs except this ~~one~~ fitted sheet?" We tried lying on top of the blanket, to see if that was significantly more comfortable. It wasn't.

In hopes of taking our minds off the problem we even considered sex, but couldn't come to an agreement as to which of us would get the desired position of being on top.

Finally, through some fluke of luck, I found myself lying on my stomach with one hand underneath the mattress. This was lucky, you see, because suddenly I realized that it seemed to feel better on the other side of the mattress than it did on the side that we were fighting.

"Stop the presses," I announced (in subdued excitement, to avoid startling the Grennells).

"What?"

I leapt off the bed. "I found it, I found it!"

"Throw it back."

"Quick, get up!"

"We're sleeping on the floor?"

"No. I think the mattress is softer on the other side."

In two seconds we field-stripped the bed and flipped the mattress. It was just a nanosecond to reinstall the sheet and hop back in.

"Wow!" Jackie whispered, loudly.

"What a difference!" I exclaimed.

"Sure is," Jackie said. "It's the difference between pain and discomfort."

We were happy.

The next morning, however, I had to crawl out of bed. Usually I crawl out of bed anyway, because I'm not a morning person and that is my preference, but this time I actually had no choice in the matter. The only way I could get out of bed was to crawl out.

It seems that I had this immense pain under my left shoulderblade.

A small spot of exercise (two pushups, a trot to the bathroom at three miles per hour, and half of a deep knee-bend) was sufficient to whip the pain into submission. A dull ache replaced it. And took up housekeeping all day Friday.

On Saturday the dull ache decided to move around and see how it liked other parts of my body. It kept moving around from my shoulderblade to my armpit to just above my left breast. Sometimes it was just above my left breast and under my left shoulderblade, as though I had an arrow in me. Or a bedspring.

Sunday was more of the same. A travelling pain. At times I had the suspicion that it was working its way inside my shoulder, perhaps on a scholarship. A day of discomfort. But no big deal. Just an irritation.

Monday was another story. The same plot, but the action got a little heavier as soon as I got into the office, and by noontime I wasn't feeling worth a shit. From there it went downhill.

By 4:30 I could no longer concentrate on my work. Not that I really wanted to anyway, but I was getting paid for it and people expected it of me. However, I chucked the whole thing and went home, but not before making an appointment to see the doctor the next afternoon.

Tuesday wasn't too bad. It was more like Saturday, and I idly wondered if I weren't past the crisis point and mending nicely all by myself, thank you. Well, maybe not, so I went to the doctor anyway.

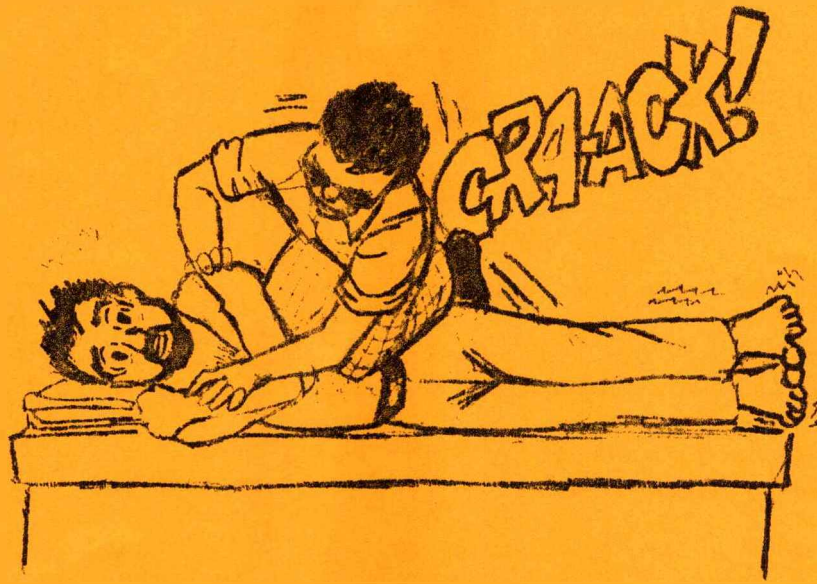
It was a two-hour appointment. Suddenly I found myself under a diathermy machine, and I was flat on my stomach on one of those terrific vinyl couches (the ones that try to form a glue-bond with your skin). I spent fifteen minutes under that damned thing, with nothing better to do than just lie there and listen to my bones melt.

Naturally, when the machine shut off no one came in. I pushed it away and got up, put on my shirt, and stood in the hallway waiting to trip up the doctor as soon as he showed up. However, when he showed (in an amount of time sufficient to prove that he was just slightly faster than the Second Coming of Christ), he promptly ushered me into a different examination room and had me lie on my back. On another vinyl table.

"What's my problem?" I asked, as he had me place my left hand on my right shoulder.

"Hmmmnnn," he responded.

"Any idea at all what's wrong?" I inquired, as he had me put my right hand on my left shoulder.



"Well....."

"Yes?" He pulled me slightly forward and to the right.

"I think...."

"Yes?" He had me push my left elbow into his armpit, then stood over me with his hands on my hands. My hands were on my shoulders.

"I think...."

"What?"

Then the sucker jumped me. He leapt on me while I was lying there on the table. Startled the shit out of me.

And there was this noise. CRACK! I thought it was an earthquake, and the building had split in two.

I laid there while he crawled off my body.

"Aha, we've solved your problem," he told me, smugly.

"You bastard," I said, "you ever jump me again and I'll solve your problem."

"Nonsense, you had a twisted rib is all. It was canted at a slight angle, and that's what caused the pain to travel around the side of your body. It's back in the right position now, and shouldn't cause you any more discomfort after a day or two."

"You bastard," I said.

"Well, look at it this way," he suggested. "If I told you I were going to put you

on that table, pin your hands to your shoulders, and then jump your bones, how cooperative would you have been?"

"Never thought of it like that," I acknowledged.

"Of course not."

"But you're still a bastard."

"That's nothing. Wait until you see my bill."

I haven't gotten his bill yet. It won't particularly bother me to receive it, actually, because I do have insurance and the deductible was met a long time ago.

Writing about pain is just one of my tendencies. Like I said: I have several. Writing embarrassing material about my friends is another one.

Also, I believe that it won't bother me too much if my insurance doesn't cover alterations with a daybed. If that turns out to be the case, you see, I tend to think that I could always send the bill to the Grennells. I'd feel bad about doing it, though, because they really need to save their money for a new daybed.

Though I've always had a basic laziness, procrastination has never been one of my strong points. Within recent months, though, I've managed to make great inroads of accomplishment in this area. I've become something of an expert, Jackie just told me (I'm sitting next to the kitchen table, with my typewriter atop a barstool, and she's working on a painting with the canvas board propped against the table. Once in a while we kibitz each other's efforts).

THE WORKS was begun back in December, though the idea for it was generated well over two years ago, but here it is the middle of March and I've done zippo on this zine since the beginning of January. Surely this is not like me at all. Ask Ed Cagle or Dave Hulan (they'll tell you: "Yeah, the sonuvabitch is always pushing to get out another issue of SHAMBLES/PELF").

As other sections of this zine might lead you to surmise, my free-time attentions have been diverted elsewhere. Still. Yet. I have become a creature of hedonistic pursuits. I always was, to one extent or another, but I've gotten to the point where I'm willing to put off almost anything if it has the faintest scent of work about it. This is absolutely disgusting. Also, it's a great deal of fun.

I might go into a few of the things that of late have been amusing me in what some people refer to as "spare time".

Movies. We've seen a small number of them. We took my son, Brian, to see STAR WARS. It was his first time. It was Jackie's third time. It was my second time, and I groaned all the way to the movie theater. Obviously I'm one of those weirdo minorities who did not wholly appreciate the wonderfulness of this motion picture. I felt it was nice that science fiction in the cinema had finally caught up to where Edmond Hamilton was in about 1940, but other than the bar scene I had no particular use for the movie. The plot was puerile, the dialog was heavy cardboard, and the acting was very close to being adequate. Sitting through this sucker twice (the first time I went to see it for myself) was more of a chore or obligation than an entertainment.

When Jackie's son Brian came out to visit (same name, different son. We have resisted temptation; the names have not been changed to avoid the coincidence), Jackie and I and the two Brians went to see CLOSE ENCOUNTERS. We all enjoyed it, though some of us enjoyed it more than others. True to form, I enjoyed it less. My problem was with the ending. I boggled that they would toss continuity of pacing and story line out the window and concentrate on creating a long mood-piece which obviously was trying very hard to evoke a mass-market sense of wonder. Rather than being awesome, I found it to be silly. And boring. It didn't ruin the whole picture for me, but it came close enough that my overall reaction is to recommend the movie in a very guarded manner. If you're the type of person who can have a good book ruined for them by the last ten pages, approach this movie with caution. You might like the ending to CLOSE ENCOUNTERS (many people do), but if you don't then you might leave the theater with some reasonably hefty resentment over the way they fucked up what could have been a thoroughly superior science fiction movie.

Jackie and I went to see THE CHOIRBOYS, which was based on the Joe Wambaugh novel. Wambaugh is a personal favorite of mine (his THE ONION FIELD just might be the best book I've read; certainly one of the very best, at any rate) and his novel was a marvelously good read with a lot of serious and black-humor depth to it. The movie, from which he divorced his name, was a piece of cardboard which skimmed the excitement from the book but failed to substantiate any of it. As a result the movie is a bad caricature of the real story, and does not stand up well on its own. Amusing, but hardly satisfying, and worth even less than that if you read the novel.

The last movie we've seen, as of this writing, is Neil Simon's THE GOODBYE GIRL. Dreyfuss is excellent, the other acting is good, but the acting and the plot serve only as vehicles to display Simon's witty but unrealistic dialog ("slick" might be a good word). That's the way with most Simon shows, I'm told. Jackie found the characters being portrayed to be realistic, but I found them too caricatured by the Simon dialog. They were as close to being real people as Lassie is to being a real dog. The momentum of the Simon dialog, much of which was adequate to make me occasionally fall off my seat or at least spill my popcorn, is irresistible. The impact of the wit and humor is strong, and the movie well worth seeing on that basis (which, from my view, is the only basis there was to be had).

Chess and cards. We've been playing large amounts of both. Much of the time we get enhanced before beginning a game; a silliness which promotes great involvement in the action and even greater errors as the result of oversight or forgetfulness. Just the same, with both of us so very close to being chess freaks and card freaks (mediocre quality on the former, but no one ever told us we had to be good to be interested), and both of us finding enjoyment in amusing our minds with the partaking of one thing or another, combining the activity with the enhancement seemed to be no more than a natural byproduct. Not totally productive, one must admit, but amusements needn't be so.

Music. We listen to a lot of it. Other times it's background. There's often a problem when two people have to come to some sort of agreement as to the kinds of music which will be played when both are around. In our case the overlap in taste is more encouraging than frustrating, and in those instances where our tastes are different we are more frequently tolerant rather than turned off. We do, however, part company in several areas. For example, I have a liking for honky tonk piano which I indulge to my heart's content on those rare occasions when Jackie isn't within five miles of the apartment. Also, while neither of us would claim to be country music fans, as there's too much of it which neither can stand, I come much closer to being one than she does. We both like much of Olivia and Eddy Arnold, and can

without pain tolerate much more, but if I put on a Statler Brothers album I'd best be prepared to defend myself from bodily harm. On the other hand, she avoids playing Frampton because it's embarrassing to explain to the local service shop that the stereo needs repair because it was drop-kicked.

So what do we listen to? Moody Blues, Ventures, Simon & Garfunkle, Donna Summer, Anne Murray, Neil Diamond, Olivia, Sandy Nelson, Fleetwood Mac, and a mixed bag of miscellaneous other artists. Sometimes one or the other of us laughs at a particular number being played, but there's enough common ground to provide for much mutual enjoyment.

We also do a lot of reading. Mainly at the kitchen table. Each of us is the type to read while eating a meal, which means that fanzines and books and magazines vie for room with salt shakers and sugar bowls and dishes and silverware.

So what have I been reading lately? Well, I was reading Silverberg's STOCHASTIC MAN and Pohl's MAN PLUS, but didn't finish either of them. The former dwelled too long on bad politics and ratty social behavior to hold my interest, and the latter catered too much on explaining the scientific element for the presumed benefit of non-sf readers. Both stories went back on the shelf, probably never to be thought of beyond this writing.

Then there was John D. MacDonald's CONDOMINIUM, an immensely good read. MacDonald works wonders here in building a whole shitload of believable characters, and in doing so very quickly. His strength is in putting believable characters into increasingly more complex situations, building the pace and the tension, then letting the characters fall apart as the outside circumstances force their weaknesses beyond their ability to cope. There isn't anybody in this book that I don't know, or haven't encountered at some point in the past, and it's fascinating to follow their thoughts and actions as they move up to and through a crisis which MacDonald makes believable. A highly recommended novel, as long as you're not squeamish about seeing terrible things happen to people you know...

William Goldman's MAGIC isn't anywhere near the orgasmic high quality of his THE PRINCESS BRIDE (another of my top favorite novels), but it's absorbing. And fun. Sort of a cross between Bloch's PSYCHO and Millar's THE CHILL, with a good deal of wit and humor tossed in to knock the reader off their chair after the suspense and horror has set them up for it by putting them on the edge of their seat.

Vonnegut's SLAPSTICK has to be one of the least interesting items of his total output, but from where I'm at that's sort of like saying that screwing while standing up is one of the less interesting methods of intercourse. I'm fond of Vonnegut and I like his non-fiction better than his fiction, but even his lesser efforts at fiction are more than satisfying to my taste.

CREATIVE INTIMACY is one of those non-fiction items which purport to tell you the philosophy of two people getting along well while living together. Most such works are either a mixed bag or aren't worth propping your door open with. In this instance, however, the author is a real wordsmith who understands people and their motivations and the factors that can cause toxic situations between couples. I thought it was a dynamite book, and bought everything the author had to say. Jackie thought it a worthwhile read until we got to one of the later chapters, at which time she disagreed with the author so strongly I suspect she'd punch him in the face if he encountered her on the street. The only thing that saves me from the same fate, under the circumstance that the author mirrored my already-established

opinions on this particular point, is the fact that she considers me loveable and cuddly and overlooks my backwards nature.

So much for the recountable view of what we do while maintaining the purity of our hermitage. From a social standpoint we get out or have company over just a bit more frequently than you'll see crows turning white. Once a month we trundle off to a meeting of the Petard Society (the LArea's other fan group), from which I finally managed to extricate myself as Secretary after three years of almost-faithful service, but other than that our fan contact is on a catch-as-catch-can basis (and if we understood what that phrase meant, we might be worried about it). The Hulans, in an effort to promote more frequent contact between us, dug out a small pile of early-to-mid-sixties' fanzines containing my material (some of those fanzines being mine) and threatened to use them as blackmail if we ever turned down one of their party invitations... (I latched onto the pile, asked if there was anyone tough enough to keep me from walking out with it, and learned that there was. Her name is Marcia. Don't mess with her. Tough lady.)

On the "mundane" scene, Tuesday nights an old friend of mine either comes over for dinner or takes us out. Following that he and I go to a tennis court and try to beat the shit out of a little fuzzy ball (Jackie feels that this is a rather peculiar quirk on my part. She may be right). If tennis doesn't work out for some reason or other -- recently for the simple one that it's hard to play tennis in the middle of a lake -- we sit around here to play cards and/or shoot the shit.

Jackie also got introduced to "poker night". My poker group is an erstwhile monthly assembly started some eight years ago by people who all worked at Bushnell Optical. Today there are only two players who still work for Bushnell, one of them being the friend I mentioned in the last paragraph. Not everyone was present at the session Jackie sat in on, but most of the usual crew was there. It gave her the opportunity to lose a few bucks and meet some more of the LArea people whom I like.

I was going to mention attending a convention at Ann Arbor in the middle of January, which in fact I just did, but as soon as I wrap up this zine I'm supposed to sit down and bash out a column installment for Glycer and that's the topic he wants me to cover. Maybe that's because he laughed when I told him about it at the last Petard meeting. Or maybe he thinks I'll say something inadvertently interesting. Then, too, Jackie and I discussed the possibility of my writing a humorous version of certain Confusion incidents for Mike, and some in-depth-how-I-felt-about-it material on the same subject for THE WORKS. This is a personalzine, after all... However, each time I soberly contemplate writing a serious convention piece my ass feels like taking a dip of snuff, and I wind up writing something else instead. It isn't that I don't know what I'd say in a revelatory manner concerning my impressions of a convention at Ann Arbor in the middle of January, it's just that when I get right down to the writing I can't think of any reason for doing it. It may interest you to know, therefore, that you have been spared the experience. Cherish it. Besides, I wanted to enjoy constructing a paragraph which merely seems to be telling you something.

There are some upcoming cons on the agenda. Midwestcon maybe. Wilcon maybe. Jackie has plans to hit both, but I have plans to take in only one. Serious inner reflection has about convinced me that I would be subjecting myself to an attack of the shit-blahs if I take in two conventions on succeeding weekends. I can handle just so much exposure to the fan mentality before it drives me bugshyte, and catching both cons would be pushing it to the limit. I might clarify that, too (after all,

this is a personalzine). There are a lot of fans I can associate with for some pretty hefty periods of time; to myself I classify them as friends, acquaintances, and otherwise interesting individuals. However, when I say "a lot of fans" I mean that as a general statement. The number of such fans attending any one convention won't be so significantly large. Putting up with or ignoring all the others for a weekend isn't particularly difficult, and I've always enjoyed myself at a con, but by the end of one I'm also always glad to be moving on. Spending one weekend at a con, spending the following week in the company of fans, and the next weekend at another con, is more exposure to most fans than I really care to involve myself with. Such a viewpoint is no doubt alien to some in the audience, but might be more easily understood if you know that I've always considered myself a "mundane" who likes to dabble around in fandom. I like fandom, and I like a lot of fans, but overindulgence in any hobby activity can have a tendency to turn me off from it for long periods of time. I prefer to pace my hobby involvements, so that I might keep more of a keen edge on my interest in them.

The Worldcon is on the agenda too, of course. Lots of opportunity to meet people I don't see regularly, haven't seen in a long time, or haven't seen at all. Difficult to find them sometimes, of course, but impossible at a convention which doesn't draw them in the first place.

So, two more conventions this year. The Worldcon and either Midwestcon or Wilcon. Haven't made up my mind. Midwestcon is something I've always had an interest in attending, but Wilcon sounds just as interesting in some respects and more so in others (the countryside around Wilmot has to be more attractive than that around Cincinnati, for fairly damn sure, and would provide an additional diversion when the crifanac gets too thick). Whichever. Presuming, understandably, that the budget we've worked up doesn't get blown full of holes. Expenses have a sly way of being unpredictable sometimes.

In February I finally managed to get a court hearing for my divorce. The whole business took ten minutes. My visit to the courthouse resulted in the legal system doing two things for me: granting a divorce, and giving me a parking ticket. The divorce was ok, but the parking ticket had a tendency to bug me. It seems that nearly every motherfrumping parking spot around the Torrance courthouse was reserved for one reason or another. Upon driving around the building I had found that there was no parking, unless you worked there. So I wound up parking one hell of a ways off. After being granted the divorce, though, I mused my huskies back to the car and found that I had also been granted a parking ticket. I looked at the curbing; no reserved or restricted markings. I looked at a couple of empty parking spots to either side of me; no notice that the common herd couldn't make use of the area. I looked all around; no signs telling the peons to buzz off. I looked at my parking ticket; \$5 for parking in a restricted spot. What would I do about this grave injustice, I wondered to myself? I had two options, as I saw it: go for a clock, a calendar, and a camera, or pay the fucking fine. I paid the fucking fine. Sometimes I feel that I don't have enough anger in my soul.

After being granted the divorce, Jackie promptly asked me for a date. I thought this was rather pushy of her, since we'd only been living together for six months.

It occurs to me, in closing, that THE WORKS may moderately surprise a great number of people who had presumed that I was no longer into publishing for general fandom, but beyond that I wonder if eighteen pages of a Dave Locke personalzine isn't more of an appearance than one might easily put up with. It's been fun. Or very close to it... If I get a lot of letters, I'll be less verbose next time. Write.