

This is BUNNIES, ZUCCHINIS & SWEET BASIL 5, a letter-supplement from Allyn Cadogan, 251 Ashbury Street #4, San Francisco, CA 94117. BUNNIES is not available for review, trade or subscription, available on editorial whim only. Contents copyright (c) December, 1978 by Allyn Cadogan.

7 December, 1978

November has, oddly enough, been something of an enchanted month for me; I am feeling good again (mentally and physically, both) and my conscience has begun to bother me about all those unanswered letters sitting in my office. I know that a letter-sub doesn't take the place of a "real letter," but this is the only way I can hope to catch up on the correspondence (some of the letters are over six months old, sigh).

I was not awfully happy for a while after Worldcon. Worldcon itself lived up to my expectations of it. Then I came home and was sick and other terrible things started happening. About the only awful thing that didn't happen was that my apartment didn't catch fire. I was feeling pretty ragged and was spending most of my time alone.

Then, in mid-October, the Pardoes arrived to spend a week with me on their west-coast jaunt. Rosemary and Darrel Pardoe live in Liverpool, and I offered to put them up while here, mostly because Rich Coad talked me into it. I don't normally invite people I don't know to live with me, but this time I'm more than glad I did. They are just super people. We didn't do a whole lot while they were here. During the day while I was at work they explored the city and seemed to find it satisfactory. I skipped work to meet them the day they arrived, and then Rich came over and we wandered around on Haight Street for several hours. The weather was gloriously hot. We spent lazy evenings exploring American television and talking about everything under the sun. They spoiled my cats.

We decided pretty much at the last minute to go up to Santa Rosa for Octocon, since they hadn't had a chance to attend an American convention this trip, and it turned out to be a good convention. Introduced Darrel and Ro to the Ellingtons and they spent a nostalgic afternoon in the bar discovering that they know a lot of people in common. Decided that we'd like to stay over for the second day of the con, had fun trying to find sleeping accommodations, then tottered off to the Magic Cellar party, where I finally got to meet Denise Mattingly (crazy person, loads of fun), rescued Rich from himself, babbled long and late to Alva, giggled inanely with Miriam Rodstein and thus became fast friends. On Sunday morning got up relatively early and went off to an antique barn (a barn housing antiques) with Pat Ellington, and talked myself out of buying a marble-topped wash stand. Late in the afternoon, Ro & Darrel caught the bus back to the City while I hitched a ride with Alva. We also folded Gil Gaier up into a small bundle and put him in the back seat so that I could take him back to my house for a while. There, Gil and I drank tea and showed each other our photographs and then I pointed him at a taxi to the airport. I was extremely pleased at being able to show Gil where I live, and he even sort of promised to come back again sometime.

Since the Pardoes had not yet had a chance to see the Rocky Horror Picture Show, we went off to that. Had a wonderful time, of course, but afterwards, while waiting for a taxi on Market Street, got accosted by a drunken business man. He apparently mistook me for a prostitute and got exceedingly belligerent when I wouldn't cozy up to him. It's sort of funny now, but at the time we thought he was going to mash all three of us. Welcome to the U.S., Ro & Darrel. On the other hand, the taxi driver who finally picked us up knocked a dollar off our fare because he had to take such a circuitous route to get onto Fell Street, then told us he likes working the night shift because when he's finished, he can drive up to the hills and watch the sun rise over the Bay.

This has been a month for people-coming-into-focus.

Miriam came over one night for dinner. We demolished two cornish game hens and a bottle of wine and talked long into the night. The next night, we went out to dinner after I got off work, then rushed up to the Strand to catch two Bergman films. I'd never seen a Bergman film before; am withholding judgement till I've seen more.

At Marta's housewarming party I discovered the Benford twins do not look *exactly* alike, and then spent several hours talking politics and feminism and beatniks and the "now" generation with Pat Ellington. Exhilarating.

There was a surprise birthday party for Grant at my house that he and I almost missed because it took us so long to get into a restaurant for dinner beforehand. However, Grant was really and truly surprised, and everyone there was wonderful. As I pushed him through the open door and flicked on the lights, people jumped out from everywhere, yelling Surprise! and singing a weird version of Happy Birthday (led, I believe, by Andi Shechter), and Marta appeared with the cake, all thirty-three candles glowing brightly.

There was a day spent exploring the City with a friend from out of town. We began the morning at Golden Gate Park, a bright, damp, overcast Sunday. In the Arboretum a child sat in the pine needles under a tree feeding peanuts to the squirrels. When I stopped and held my hand down, one squirrel ran up my leg, sniffed at my fingers and, finding them empty, departed. Ducks swam in an algae-covered pond in a magical Japanese garden. All was still and hushed. The dampness turned to rain and we fled back to the car and on to lunch of chicken curry and ham palacincas at Ghiradelli Square. Then across the Golden Gate Bridge to Look-out Point where we got out and stared back at the City which looked that day like a multi-tiered wedding cake. We drove back to the City, Buddy Holly on the tape deck, and discovered Fort Point. That's on the south side, ocean side of the Bay. We climbed around on what's left of the fort, through the trees and down the bank and looked back at the Bridge. I'd never seen the Bridge or the Bay from that angle before. I felt like an Indian staring through a rip in time at some improbable future.

#

(Sometimes Diana can be a definite intrusion here at work. Today she interrupted to ask if I'd heard about the man who is half Japanese and half Black: Every December 7th, he attacks Pearl Bailey.)

#

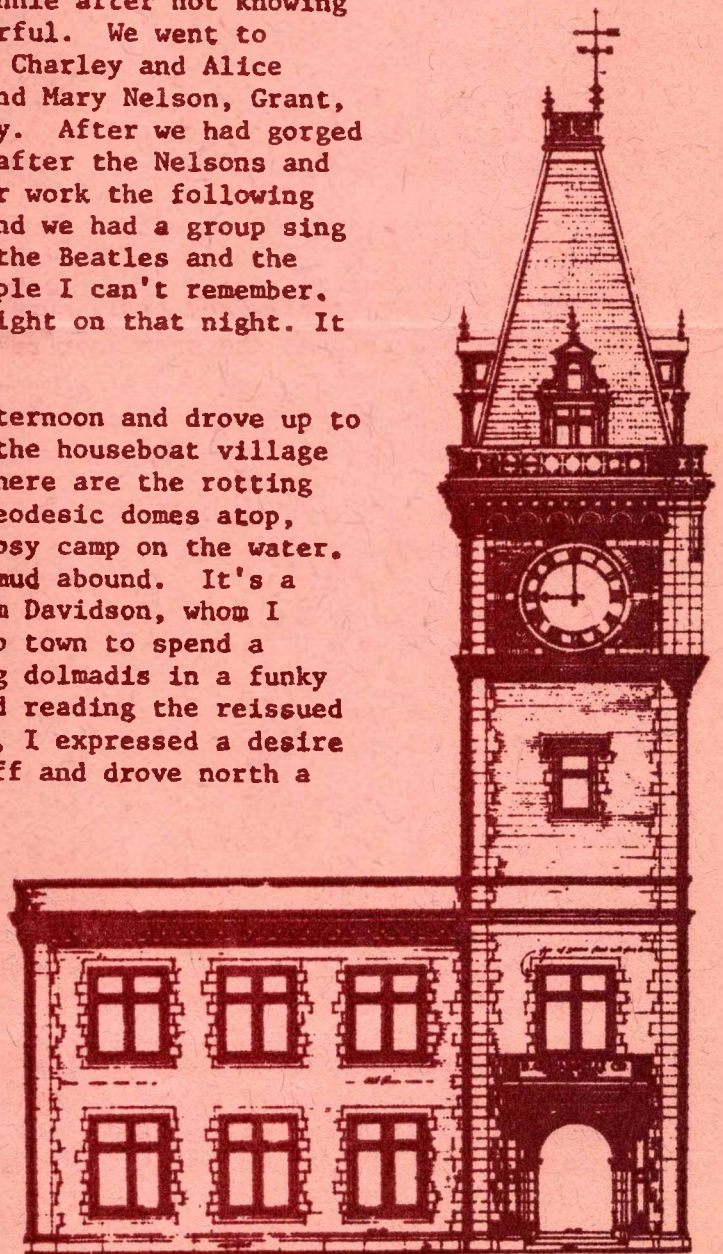
There was the We're-Not-Going-To-Devo party at Rich Coad's where I was accosted by Rich's friend, Carlos. We drank the beer and passed the amyl and Carlos fell hopelessly in love with me on the spot (he told me so). He was devastatingly amusing, and kept assuring me that he'd be 22 in no time. I would slip away to talk with Patty and Denise, and there Carlos would be, telling me again that he really wasn't too young for me. That was also the night we discovered Randy Karamozov's double. When I told Jim Ford (the Karamazov's manager) about him, he immediately asked, "Can he juggle?" "Only words," I replied.

Grant & I went to see Robin Williams (you know, Mork from Ork?) at the Boarding House, and I fell madly in love. The man is just amazing, and I'm not going to say any more about it because if I do, I'll end up repeating his whole show. Suffice to say that I'd move heaven and earth to see him perform anywhere again.

My sister Annie came over from Stockton for the Thanksgiving weekend. I've only recently discovered Annie after not knowing her for 15½ years, and think she is wonderful. We went to Charlie Brown's for Thanksgiving dinner. Charley and Alice Cockey were there, too, along with Paul and Mary Nelson, Grant, and Miriam Rotstein, and a 22-pound turkey. After we had gorged ourselves with dinner and champagne, and after the Nelsons and Grant had left (having to get up early for work the following day), Charley Cockey got out his guitar and we had a group sing till about 2:30 in the morning. We sang the Beatles and the Browns and Stones and a million other people I can't remember. Very nostalgic. The group dynamics was right on that night. It was the best time I've had in months.

Took off early from work one Friday afternoon and drove up to Sausalito with Mike. We went to explore the houseboat village just north of town, a marvelous place. There are the rotting carcasses of old ferrys, and rafts with geodesic domes atop, all latched together to make a sort of gypsy camp on the water. Rabbits and chickens, small children and mud abound. It's a thoroughly charming place. We found Avram Davidson, whom I hadn't met before, and trucked off back to town to spend a couple of hours drinking coffee and eating dolmadis in a funky little delicatessen. Having just finished reading the reissued version of *Invasion of the Body Snatchers*, I expressed a desire to see Mill Valley, so we dropped Avram off and drove north a bit.

I've decided now that if I should ever leave the City, and can't move to London, that I will go live in Mill Valley. It's quaint and charming and nestled in those wonderful Marin County hills. We parked the car and went into a shop selling art prints, and visited with the shop keeper for half an hour. We checked out the bookstores and an antique store (lotsa junk, no gems), and when the sun had set, drove high up in the hills and gaped in wonder at



the most incredible view in the Bay Area. The sky was clear and black and the stars seemed to reflect the lights below. Stupendous. For dinner, we drove to Petaluma.

#

My father and I parted company on very bad terms 16 years ago. I left, wishing never to hear from him or see him again, and that's the way things stayed till my youngest brother got married two years ago. Then, my father came up to Oregon for the wedding and I spoke to him briefly. It was okay, not good, but okay. When I moved down here, I took to phoning him every so often (he and his family live in Stockton), and a couple of months ago went over to spend the weekend with him. We didn't get on exactly famously, but better than I had dared hope.

My father is a brilliant man who has always preferred drinking to any other activity. When I knew him before, he was physically strong, lean, good looking, and utterly charming when he wanted to be. He's still charming (when he feels like it), but the years of drinking and the years of physical ailments have taken their toll. Now he has trouble just getting from his bed to the sofa. He still drinks his beer but, while I'm there at least, he doesn't get drunk. I admit I blackmail him: He wants me there, and I tell him that if he gets drunk I won't stay around; he knows I mean it and stays sober. So on that first visit in 16 years we had several good talks. I went away thinking hard.

Several years ago, while rooting around in one of my mother's trunks, I found a newspaper clipping. It was a letter Dad had written to his parents during the war, when he was stationed in Europe. He was at "the front" and the letter was about his buddies and how he and they felt about what was going on. There was a bit about the fighting, but no details as the mail was censored. I was totally engrossed with the letter, not because my father had written it, but for the way it brought home to me what it was like to really be in the middle of a war. He could write well, he could tell a story, he could take you there.

The next time I went to Stockton, I suggested to Dad that he write down some of his experiences during the war. When he told me he was physically incapable of writing for any length of time, I told him to go buy a tape recorder. He asked if I'd be willing to transcribe and edit the tapes and I agreed. Of course it wasn't all that easy. It took quite a bit of talking to convince him that he had some interesting stories to tell, and there might be a large audience of people waiting to read them, and we talked round and round and round, and the last time I went over, he had 12 hours of tapes for me to transcribe.

Listening to the tapes is a bit like listening to a William Faulkner story; he has that folksy way of talking. The war stories are still fascinating to me, and he can still tell a story. I'm trying to put them into book form. We've been contacting those of Dad's army buddies still living, getting permission to use their names, and they've been very enthusiastic and supportive. One man has even offered to send us his diary for confirmation of stuff on the tapes. I'm not sure just what we'll do with this book once we get it written, but it's exciting just doing it. Working on it is bringing my father and me close together as two human beings, two adults, and that's quite good for both of us. What is most exciting to me though is seeing my father actually doing something constructive again, actually *excited* about doing something. That makes me feel very good. It's quite wonderful to have found a parent I thought I'd lost.

27 December

Over in Stockton, my sisters took me driving so I could see how the town had changed since I was last there 16 years ago. I expect Stockton has always been a rough town; when I was growing up there murders were so common they didn't rate as filler copy in the newspaper. If the police found only one body in the slough instead of three on any given morning, then *that* was news. If you were white and couldn't avoid driving through the skid row section of town, you went with windows rolled up and doors locked, even during the day. Now, though, the skid row section has disappeared, been turned into a freeway system, and there are no longer three bodies in the slough every morning.

When I was 15 I attended Amos Alonzo Stagg Senior High School, which catered mostly to rich Jews and rich Catholics. We were all ever so straight, read Ayn Rand and felt Superior, and it was a mark of social status to make the debating team. Our school band was asked to play in the Rose Parade. Things have changed. When the freeway was put in, the derelicts didn't leave town; they merely diffused throughout it. Last year, Stagg High was closed down for a while because of race riots (there's also a large Mexican element to complement the Blacks and the redneck whites; Stockton is really a powderkeg); my oldest sister had a knife waved in her face one day when she stopped at her locker to pick up some books - it wasn't an isolated incident, and it wasn't a practical joke. Students have now taken to walking to classes in groups for their own protection. I shudder to think that people will one day be nostalgic for the 70's.

But this day we were dredging up my childhood memories of Stockton. I was telling Margie and Annie stories about the old houses we passed, and we eventually came to Victory Park. I spent a lot of time at Victory Park when I was young. It had soft green grass, and a totem pole, a duck pond, tennis courts, trees and a museum. And Victory Park Museum had a Real Egyptian Mummy. For many years the mummy was displayed with the lid on. Then they opened it up and people peered in at the linen wrappings and got upset, so they put the lid back on again. They had the thing sitting out in the open; you could touch it. That was my very favourite display in the entire museum. As I was going on and on about all this, Annie parked the car and we all tramped in to view the mummy (one thing that hasn't changed - you still don't have to pay to visit the museum). Now they've got it in a glass case, and the lid is up again, and we pranced around the thing, delighted, for about half an hour. It was like visiting an old friend. As we were leaving, I found a Maxfield Parrish painting of Jack Frost next to the door. It was a *real* Parrish, too, and finding it made my day. I'm a Maxfield Parrish freak, for those of you who don't know.

* * *

On December 10th, I had a Religious Experience. In San Jose. I had a Religious Experience once before, when I was 15, but got over that: The Mormon church baptizes by total immersion in a pool of water. They have the pools built in their churches. First you scrub up good, and then you go to the church and change into a long white terry robe that they provide, and you have to wear all white underwear and white socks. You step down into the pool of waist-deep water with the person who is baptizing you. He stands to your left and puts his left arm in front of you so you can hang on. He raises his right hand and says, "Having been commissioned of the Lord Jesus Christ, I baptize you in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, Amen," and you go under. Should you not go under, they sort of take it as a sign you're possessed by Satan. But total immersion baptism frees you forever from fear of invasion by Satan. So I went down into the water and came up hearing angelic voices and heavenly harps and feeling ecstatic. Then the congregation sang *The Spirit of God Like a Fire Is Burning*, which is still one of my favourite songs, and their voices merged with those of the angels, and it was quite wonderful. I never did manage to become a good Mormon though, and eventually reverted to complete paganism.



In San Jose we went wandering around in the Rosicrucian Egyptian Museum, which is a super place. We turned a corner and I stopped dead. She was seated on a throne with hands resting on knees. She had a cat's head and, dammit, she was *alive*. Her name is Sekhmet (she's Egyptian; there must be an "h" in there), wife of Ptah, member of the triad of Memphis (Egypt, not Tennessee); she represents the fiery power of the sun. I guess the statue is about 7 feet high from base to crown. Had she decided to stand up, and I wouldn't have been one whit surprised, she would have been maybe 10 feet tall. I approached cautiously, sliding my feet along the floor, till I was off to her left side and could read the card attached to the wall. I

really felt that she knew I knew what she was, not just a lifeless plaster reproduction of something that actually sits in the London museum, but a living being, and I had damned well better regard her with respect. My heart had gone absolutely cold; I wanted very much to touch her, but didn't dare. Michael laughed when I told him not to walk too close and not to touch her. I had a feeling that if she got annoyed at us she would casually lift one of those heavy stone paws and swat us down. Michael merely commented that obviously that long-dead sculptor had accomplished his goal. Well, maybe, but now I've got at least some idea of the effect these gods must have had on the people who lived with them in Egypt. It took about 4 hours for my heart to warm up again.

* * *

29 December

I'm turning into a Josephine Tey freak, too. Went down to Recycle Books in San Jose and discovered a whole herd of her stuff I hadn't read yet, and bought it all up at 30¢ a copy. That's one really nice thing about Recycle, you can afford to go in.

...when man first dreamed of flying he had seen himself rising on his own silver wings into the empyrean, but it hadn't turned out at all like that. First he was trundled to a field, then he was shut in a box, then he was terrified, then he was sick, then he was in Paris.

The spring sunlight faded. The skies grew luminous. The hills went far away and lay down....

--The Singing Sands

I just like the way she puts words together. So far, my favourite Tey is *Brat Farrar*. I've been reading a lot lately. Finally got around to Granis's *Doctor Grass*, and liked it, then read a book by John Simon called *Sign of the Fool*. Simon was a hippy biker in the Haight Ashbury of the late 60's, and he sounds a lot like a biker who put me up for a couple of months in 1967. Many of the incidents he describes sound awfully familiar. Also read *In the Ocean of Night*, enjoyed it very much, tho found it an awfully *big* book, not light reading, and it took me a couple of weeks to finish it. Benford does some marvelous things in there. Have also been wending my way through Martha Saxton's biography of Louisa May Alcott. Very good book for a dissection of Victorian New England attitudes about women. Nathaniel Hawthorne: "...all women as authors are feeble and tiresome. I wish they were forbidden to write on pain of having their faces deeply scarified with an oyster shell." *God!*

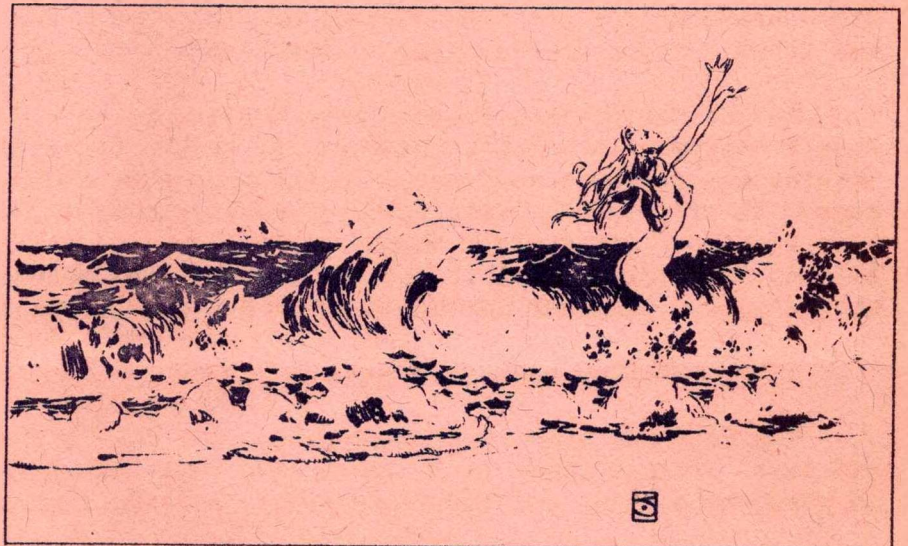
* * *

30 December

"I NEVER KNEW THE MEANING OF FEAR UNTIL I KISSED BECKY": Scarfing down prawns and green pasta after *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* Thursday night, I waxed enthusiastic that Hollywood had actually managed to produce two, not one, but *two*, good science fiction films this year. *Body Snatchers* is good. It's not the same script (thus, the quote above is really out of context; I wish they'd left that in) as the first version, and it's not quite the same story as the book, but it's a good script all the same. The only thing really wrong with it is that there's a bit too much running around in the second half. The special effects are very good; the actors played it straight and thus made it quite believable; it's *scary*. John Wasserman didn't like Leonard Nimoy as the psychiatrist, thought he was just a bit too sinister right from the beginning, but obviously John Wasserman hasn't dealt much with published metropolitan psychiatrists. Their reserved superiority does make them appear sinister, and Nimoy has it down pat. The opening space sequence is visually superb and the final scene nails you to your seat. See it.

"PETER PAN ONLY FLEW WITH CHILDREN, LOIS": Don't believe anything you read to the contrary: Christopher Reeve is not Christopher Reeve, he is really Clark Kent masquerading as Christopher Reeve. That man *is* Superman, and nobody, but nobody, is going to make me believe they did it with a flying harness and mattes. Walking down the street toward Ghirardelli Square afterwards, Becky raises her fist to the sky, arches her back, levitates slightly, and yells at the top of her lungs, "*It's better than Star Wars!*" It is.

It's perfect right from the opening credits (which literally drew oohs and ahs from the audience) to the final mischievous grin Superman flashes at the camera as he flies past. And he's got a soul-shattering smile, not to mention devastating dimples. The casting director is a genius. Margo Kidder's cynacism is the perfect counterpoint to Clark Kent/Superman's naive sincerity. "Not many people feel really comfortable saying 'Swell'," she tells Clark. He gets his jacket caught in the door to the ladies room, and nearly loses his arm trying to shake hands with a man disappearing into a revolving door. When Lois asks Superman why he does it (you know, that stuff that Superman does), he replies, "For Truth, Justice and the American Way," and you *don't* laugh because he means it, and Superman's nobody's fool. Jackie Cooper *is* Perry White. He blusters beautifully. (Aside: I discovered what became of Perry White after he retired from journalism. Until a month ago he had the office next door to ours in the Wells Fargo Building. The sign on the door said, *Perry White and Associates*. They were headhunters. That's the truth. *Executive* headhunters.) Lois Lane crows, "This story's a Pulitzer Prize winner. It's got everything, sex, violence...." Perry White reads over her shoulder. "There's no 'd' in brassiere, Lois," he says. Clark Kent's pants have narrow cuffs and are just an inch too short. There's one wonderful scene where he changes from Clark Kent to Superman and back to Clark Kent again without ever changing his clothes. In another he runs down the street looking for a place to change. He sees a phone booth. The story takes place Today, and of course the phone booth is a modern one



that begins 2½ feet off the ground and is all glass, not even a door to close. The look on his face as he contemplates it is priceless. Marlon Brando as Jor El is perfectly acceptable, or as Becky put it, "Brando as God is Oh.Kay." And Clark Kent gets such a *kick* out of being Superman. There's this pleased little "I know something you don't know" grin that keeps trying to escape the corners of his mouth whenever people start treating him like a wimp, as compared to that Superhero. And Superman smiles, so pleased with himself, whenever he delivers a criminal or rescues a pussycat from a tree. He just has so much fun flying around the city blowing people's minds. It's a comic book with real people. Lois Lane is obviously just dying to find out if he really is a Man of Steel. "Are all your other bodily functions normal, though?" she asks in a private interview. "I mean," she stammers, "do you, uh, *eat*?" Superman laughs and the audience falls apart. It's just as obvious that Superman has the hots for Lois. When he asks if she'd like to go flying with him, she makes some comment about Peter Pan and Wendy. "But Peter Pan only flew with children, Lois," he replies, taking her into his arms and high above the clouds. That's when I realized I had gone white fisted trying to pull the arms off my chair. "Oh, my god," I panted at Becky, "all this, and sexy, too." Becky was trying to shove her fist down her throat; if there'd been a wall nearby, I'm sure she'd have been climbing it. "What a lubricant," I muttered as we staggered weak-kneed up the aisle after it was all over.

Krypton was awe inspiring. The spaceship was literally a gem. The farm sequences looked like Wyeth paintings. The Fortress of Solitude was art and magic combined. To quote the ever-present Wasserman, "The sucker *flies*." It's not the sort of movie you see just once.

* * *

31 December

Raving to Paul the other day about the Wonderfulness of San Francisco. "Oh, yeah, great place," he replied caustically. "You elect public officials who get pissed off and kill your Mayor." There just isn't any easy reply to the accusation there. San Francisco is supposed to be the Golden City, the city with Charisma, the city where *real* democracy works. And in one short week we were confronted with the ugliness of Guyana and the Milk and Moscone assassinations.

Saturday afternoon went down to Chinatown with Annie to do some Christmas shopping. Beginning of season of good will toward all peoples. A drunk on the bus yelling that Jim Jones died for our sins. Press onward. And every time we came out of a store, there was a new edition of the paper on the stands shouting a new, higher, body count.

Assassination just doesn't have a place in the American Ideal. Easy to believe when it happens in another country, but *here*? Diana's mother phoned the office Monday morning to say she'd just heard on the news that somebody had shot the Mayor. We passed it off, just a silly rumour, probably some nut waving a gun around making threats. Assassination *just doesn't happen* in America, and especially not in San Francisco - and besides, who could possibly want to shoot George Mostone? Five minutes later she phoned back. "Moscone and Harvey Milk are dead," Diana said, and the bottom dropped out.

Then something beautiful happened.

The City was quiet for three days. The only sounds outside were those of busses and cars. People spoke in whispers when they talked at all. One thought was uppermost in everyone's mind, and there was simply nothing that could be said about it. So we

said nothing. But there was an intense feeling of pulling together after Monday's news. There was a feeling of This is our City, and we love it, and an inconceivably ugly thing has happened here, but we aren't going to let the ugliness continue. Crowds in the tens of thousands gathered spontaneously all over the City, marching to City Hall in a candle-light parade, to memorial services, paying tribute to the ideas and the City that Moscone and Milk had loved and died for.

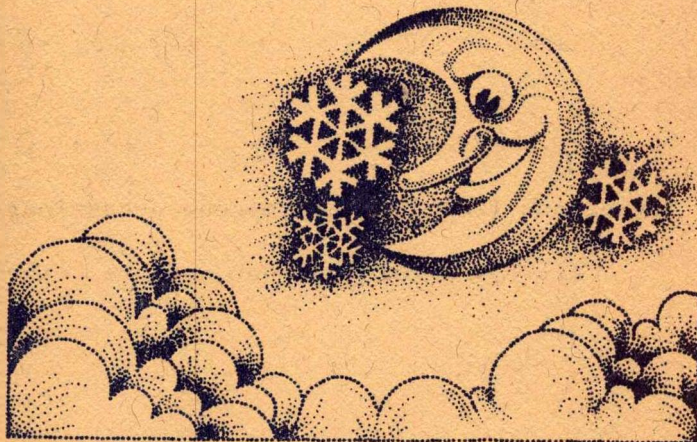
There were no Incidents, as the news media refer to them; no talk of revenge; not even resentment that Diane Feinstein, not a popular public figure, should be the new Mayor. What there was was first disbelieving shock, then sorrow, then a coming to awareness that this City belongs, not to the elected officials we pay to run it, but to us, to the people who live here and love the City. What we were saying in those gatherings, to ourselves and to anyone else who cared to listen, is that this is *our* city; it is a beautiful City and nothing and no one can take its beauty from us. Moscone and Milk were more than mere elected officials; they were one of us.

* * *

All I can say about 1978 is, thank god it's over. 1979 has got to be better. So, have a very happy new year, people.

Love,

Allyn



Allyn Cadogan
251 Ashbury St. #4
San Francisco, CA 94117
U.S.A.



FIRST CLASS MAIL 7

Jan Howard Finder
P.O. Box 428
Latham, NY 12110

