

Boff

FOO TO YOU TOO
(see cover.)

Published every we-don't-know-when by Boff Perry 68 Madbury rd., Durham NHamp in exchange for letters from Rick Sneary of.....oh well, I guess you know the address. We would like to promise that another ish would come out very soon but it isn't that easy. Oh no indeed.

INNARDS OF 'FOO'
- LITERATURE -

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- Cover.....

-ARTWORK-

A cruel mad scientist places the helpless maiden in a leaky sphere which our brave and courageous hero attempts to repair. Unfortunately he has been interrupted by a few denizens of the deep. Our consolations chum.

P.7.....

A "guerilla of space" in an invisible orbit blasts away at a Zamen ship as it passes by. An ambush you might call it.

P.14.....

Boff Perry enters the crashed liner just before discovering the vilainess.

(something's wrong with the ink. It smears so I can't put any detail in.)

P.19...

An experiment in pencil to symbolize something or other. Frankly folks it stinks. We advise you to skip it.

anything else you want to know, this is only the TOC

T O T H E R E A D E R

Rick ole knuckle;

Gad how time passes! Tis now near the end of January and I still haven't finished this letter to you. This makes me over two months late. A deed I should be punished for, no doubt. Procrastination. That's me.

Well the semester is all over now, a thing of the past. I had eight hours of final exams yesterday and more before that. I only hope I passed everything. You see, it's much different from High School where I never spent anytime doing homework. College is far different as you may have guessed.

The old typer is getting battered up. The paper twists as I type so that when I reach the bottom of the page it is very sharply slanted. Besides that I need ~~xxx~~ a new ribbon as this one is getting very faint. I hear you can get new tripers now for about sixty bucks. This would, no doubt, be wonderful, providing I had sixty bucks. Sixty cents is much closer indeed. What with supplies, pool room expenses, CYGNI and public officials to bribe, I have few funds these days. I wonder if they protect the Intersolar Bank much these days; I'd like to make a heavy withdrawal.

A R E V I E W O F G _ E _ E

Cover, Rick my b'y, is one of the best things you have done yet. It shows restraint for one thing, a virtue I lack greatly as notice the thud and blunder decorating the front of this opus. While a lot of your stuff is greatly Flash Gordon (which I have to admit I like; I mean your stuff not Flash Gordon), an occasional painting or drawing like this comes up. Swell color scheme, also. (In case you forget what you drew, it's the pic of a girl in a two-piece outfit colored blue with a red robe. She is ogling at the sky while a number of spaceship trails are evident.

And you didn't even sign it. Tsk. What is this Letter Zine Writer League stuff???? Eh????? (question marks are easy to make.)

Currier tells me you are writing to her. She delayed some letters to me but it certainly isn't her fault. She works all day now and doesn't have much time for fan activity.

I like Speer quite a bit for some of his writings. I know he is egotistical and ~~xxxxx~~ and maintains some rather prejudiced ideas of new fans. His STEFNEWS is the top news zine now

since FANEWS has slowed up publication. Also FANEWS was getting too wordy and printing every piece of crud that came around despite how old it is. He printed the fact that I "had just left Westover Field" two months late. I had nearly forgotten about it myself!! Tucker is putting out a news sheet himself. Well at least the first issue. I don't know what happened to other issues. I don't know much about Raj Rehm except that he spent quite a lot of time trying to convince me and other fans via the mail that we should throw our weight into starting a contest in TWS for aspiring artists. I'll have to write the Sarge about that. No doubt he'd listen.....

I saw McGirr some time ago when he came up here, the day after Christmas. We gabbed as usual. Fans do little else. Action for some strange reason seems to be at a premium.

To answer your question: It is more practical for a rocket to leave the Earth at 14,000 MPH than 700 MPH. Why? Well, the only good reason is that it saves fuel. If a rocket was going at 7 miles a sec. theoretically it would require nothing more to take off from Earth's gravity. Discounting air resistance of course. Now if the rocketship was traveling slower it would require tons of fuel. The faster a rocket travels, the more efficient it becomes.

One G (meaning one gravity) is not a speed; it's an acceleration. Thus G equals 16 ft. per second per second. If you drop a wt. in a vacuum, in the first second it will have traveled 16 feet. In the second second (stuttering?) it will drop 32 feet. In the third second it will drop 48 feet, &c. Thus one G depends on the time to tell how fast something has been falling. If a rocketship is lying on the ground, one gravity is pulling at it. If it is flying to the moon at 16 ft./sec./sec. it is overcoming two gravities or one gravity effective. (That's what is usually meant). Thus a rocketship traveling thru space and not under the effect of any planet is 160/ft./per sec/per sec/ is going at 10 gravs and it would be damned uncomfortable. And of course speed makes no difference to the passengers. It's the acceleration that makes the difference.

The letterzine idea like VOM is extremely interesting. You can count on letters from me for that worthy purpose. In time for the issue too! Sorry to hear that TFRR will fold. You realize that first issues are seldom any good. This seems to be true of practically all mags, some proz. Witness PLANET. (As if it was worth anything now). And note that sterling fmg CYGNI. Even that had a crumby beginning. (10 pages of crud).

My boy, you surprise me. For half a century now, scientists have had a method of landing on other bodies including airless ones without using anti-gravity. And I think they'll use it rather than wait a thousand millenia or so for anti-G. When the ship approaches, say the moon, you simply turn the ship around so that the stern faces the planet and ease it down with the jets. It can be turned around entirely without the aid of jets too. Inside the ship have a bicycle wheel mounted with a weighted rim. If the rim weighs 50 pounds and the ship weighs 5,000, you simply turn the rim around one hundred times (easy with a lever) and the ship turns around once in the opposite direction. Ooops! That would bring the ship all the way around. Well, turn the wheel around 50 times and the ship will go half way around. Simple huh?

P.4

And of course if there is air on the planet, the ship can keep grazing the atmosphere in ellipses around the planet until it slows up enough to glide in without burning up thru friction.

Several people have mentioned "Piper's Son" in conjunction with the atomic bomb. I personally doubt that a next war would create city-states UNLESS both sides were almost perfectly equal and attacked at the same time and were unable to stop until both sides were almost dead. As it is, the ~~the~~ planet is so small that one side will win before the other can hardly begin. This will result in a world-state that will require countless revolutions before real peace begins. As I said before the planet is too small for atomic warfare. There is not room enough for strategy. Would a room full of men with sub-machine guns worry about tactics, strategy and lines of supply? Of course not; they would just bang away until one side was dead. (If not both sides).

True strategy will not appear until man reaches the stars.

Russia might very probably have atomic bombs now. I wonder. Some businessman said we have bombs a thousand times as powerful as 'little boy' which was the bomb used at Hiroshima. This is probably crud. It might be powerful enough to destroy a thousand times as much volume but I doubt if it is 1,000 times as ~~xxxxxx~~ ~~fx~~ efficient. You remember that the Hiroshima bomb was called 1/10 of 1% efficient. That would make this one 100% on the ball. On the other hand, I fear I will have to call Severson a dope for belittling the atomic bomb. He told of how Nagasaki had been heavily bombed the day before and how the bomb missed many districts and left many concrete buildings standing. Maybe the Martians will be able to use concrete buildings after the next war, but the sootspots on the walls that were once people killed from a heat in the hundred billions of degrees of heat and pressure waves over a thousand MPH will be of very little ~~to~~ use to them.

It will be tragically amusing to see the battleship admirals whimper when their precious 'super-dreadnoughts' are regalanized iron under the ocean. It would be even more tragic if the atomic bomb was unable to sink a whole fleet at once. Admirals would be hurrahing about the supremacy of the ~~xxxxxx~~ ~~xxxx~~ battleship not realizing that floating hulks are valueless without live men to run them. I'll go further, all the navies in the world will be worthless in the next war.

We spent twenty years arguing whether the airplane could efficiently kill. Then we spent a trillion dollars, and a hundred million lives to prove it. Now that we are finally bringing the airplane into it's own (free from the Army and Navy), it has become obsolete; the next war will be fought with rockets that travel at twenty Gs. A plane whether it moves with props, jets or rockets carrying a human will not be able to duplicate the feat. (Arnold predicts spaceships in an orbit around the Earth squirting rockets down at the planet. Could be.)

In "A Fan Goes to the LASFS" you said some uncomplimentary things, true, but I doubt if they, being fans, will mind. Some of them have gone to New York City. Why I have not the faintest

((Back again. It seems I had run out of paper and this epistle has been therefore waylaid several days since I was so flat I could crawl under a snake's belt buckle.))

The Latin quote is interesting. I don't know what it means. Do you? Apparently something about time. That reminds me of a project I have had stirring around in my cranium for a long time now. Namely a lengthy thesis on time travel. I learned that Doc Swisher has written one that covers nearly a hundred pages. That must of taken quite ~~of~~ a lot of time and effort.

As you probably don't know I have the Bibliographer's Itch; a strange malady that causes otherwise sane stfans to make indexes, etc. on material allready covered by others. I have almost three-hundred file cards typed out now all carefully crossindexed to cover Stories, mags they appeared in, their authors, their subjects, their illustrators and all letters ever written by letterhacks about them. Yet I have only covered five or six mags. That shows how extensive and thorough it is. Of course Gernsback's mags published lots of stories and had more letters, editorials, contests and features than anyother mags I have ever seen. They are quite a bit larger than ASF's old large format so that I don't expect all mags to require so much elbow grease. So far the mag covers everything from Ackerman, Forrest (J) to Woodward, Irville. Someday I plan to index other stuff besides promags. Thus white cards are being used for proz and different colored cards will be used each for: fmz, books and miscellaneous. Whew!

Dunno whatever happened to the Necon. Hope somebody gets on the ball and does something. Yeh.

Your illos for TERRIBLE MENACE this time were only fair. Guess you didn't spend much time on ~~ix~~ them. (I should talk). I finished section V sometime ago and I have forgotten just what I wrote. I never reread it because it was so corny I was afraid I'd junk it. That would never do. Trouble is, I find I roamed too much and made it too super-super. I detect in the story that I unconsciously have ~~xxxxx~~ written in parts of SLAN!, METHUSELA'S CHILDREN and maybe parts of EESmith. The thing seems to have floated up and away out of reach so that it can't possibly be detected as the original story. Of course that has been evident since the second part. As to your suggestion of showing the story to someone else, I hope I can convince you not to. It's too corny for one thing and since it is only a letter it isn't polished up enough to show someone else. Gad no.....

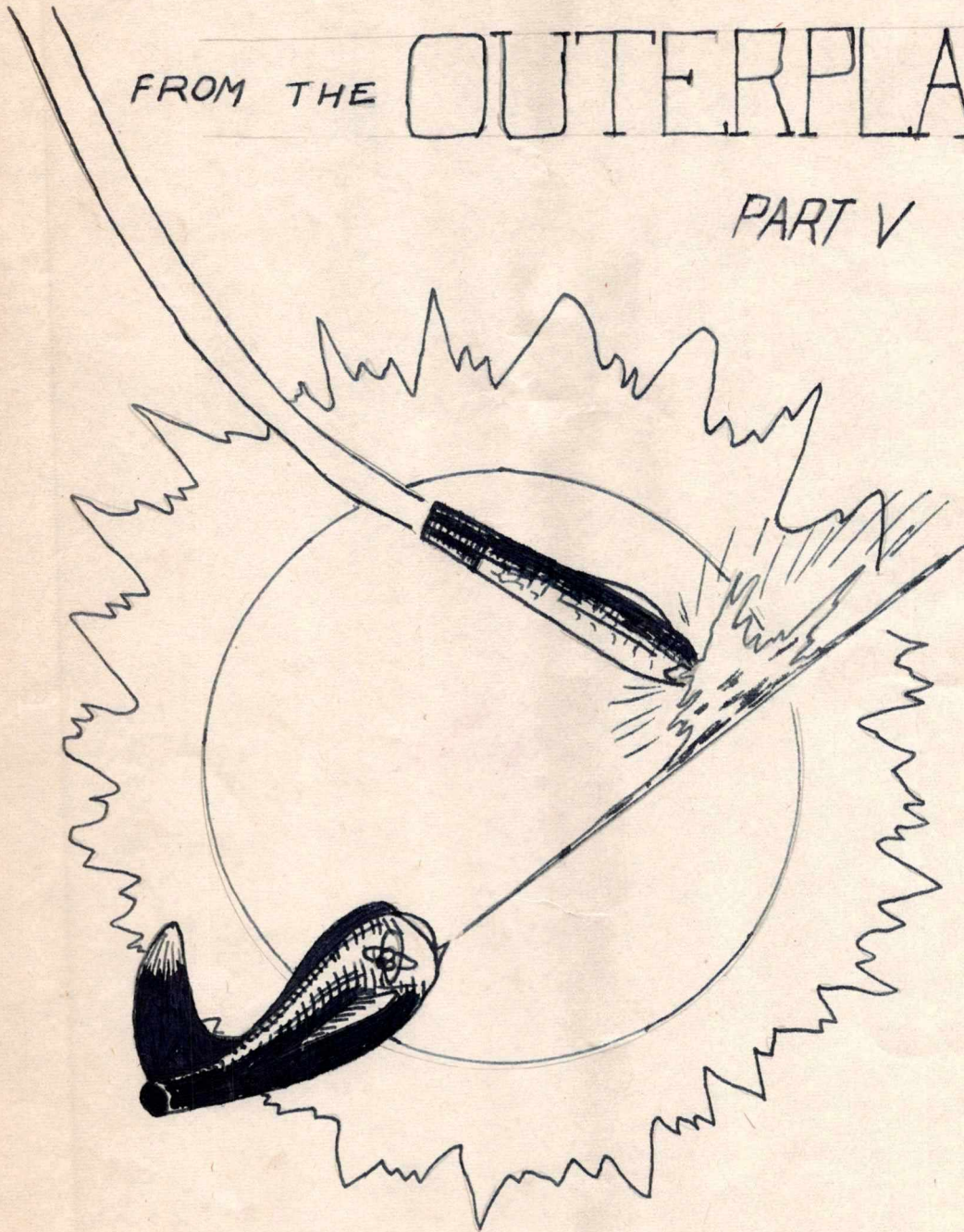
Unoriginallyours,

"The Sage of Science Fiction"
(remember that corny title?????????)

THE TERRIBLE MENACE

FROM THE OUTERPLANETS

PART V



6

THE TERRIBLE MENACE FROM THE OUTERPLANETS

by (PART ~~IV~~)

Boff Perry

Perry leaned back in his chair smiling. Again, he had shaken off his adversaries. Again he had fooled them. Of course, Triplanetary ships were after him and no doubt some of the Zamen as well. Yet it was a short distance to Titania and he concluded that neither fleet would reach him in time. Indeed after McSnifflewhite had given his report, the two fleets would be engaged in a terrible battle with the edge going to the Zamen. This was good because the Zamen did not know of his presence and would not follow him. Of course, he had made another enemy. This Dr. Vee. But he was dead now. And this Scientific Research Bureau; Perry had known very little about it until he had read Nazine's mind. He had learned that she was after some great secret from the bureau but she, and the other Zamen, knew little beside that. Lets see now.....oh, yes; they had captured her so that she wouldn't be able to go to Titania or inform any of the other Zamen of the location of the ~~xxxx~~ place. Once, when she was in her apartment, though, she had used a super length cycle to contact Zamen millions of miles away. Unless those fools, Sneary, McSnifflewhite and others had remembered to cross her tendrils, she would be able to contact Mars. Tendrils.....

Perry made a change of mind and swerved the rocketship around at a 90° angle towards the laboratory, Dr. Vee once owned. The idea of artificial tendrils to increase his mental telepathy obsessed him.

Two miles below, the Earth's surface in a city name Snearyville were a row of huge chambers cut out of the Earth. In the largest one, preparations were being made for the Fifth superlative Interplanetary Convention. In a few weeks it would be New Years Day of 2020. Every twenty years an interplanetary convention was held to renew the rejuvenation treatments of fandom. The first convention was held in 1951 and from then on, these Interplanetary conventions were held on the even numbered decades. And with over a thousand fans expected, it must be ~~xxxx~~ ~~xxxx~~ seen to appreciate the trouble fans went to, to hold a super-con under the eyes of authorities without being discovered. If ~~f~~ the fans were discovered, the maddening wrath of the people could wipe them out at a single blow. For the people of three planets had been denied immortality on the grounds that they did not deserve it. Any fan known to be such was in immediate danger of his life.

And yet, preparations were being made beneath the metropolis of Snearyville for a great occasion without a single suspicion of any laymen.

Nazine relaxed in the room that was her prison. A rather luxurious prison, true, although it couldn't compare with the splendor of the apartment she had held in Presidential Building

nor the greatness of her home on Mars. She reached for a book among a shelf of volumes and then threw it down distastefully. "Bah! I would better be on my way to Mars telling of the location of the Scientific Research Bureau that I learned from McSnifflewhite than to be here." For the twentieth time she went to the door. Instead of an easily overpowered guard, there were two holes in the wall several yards from the floor in which two men looked through carrying disguns. There would be no escape here. At the single barred window were more guards, armored and at a distance. The entire room had been surrounded with an electric field to prevent telepathic messages. It was impossible to overpower a trained fan's mind except at a distance of less than a few feet. She went to the door again.

"Tellurians, how about something to eat?" she called to the guards through the holes.

"Okay. Get back into your room," was the reply. She sighed, turned on her heel and closed the door. There was a metallic click as the door locked. A mechanical whirring outside and her door opened. There lay a tray of food. Suddenly she stared at it. "Argonium metal!" Inside, an hour later, she had made a small duplicate of the mental amplifier that had been in her ship. The metal was practically valueless except to the Martian Zamen race that had known of its value for centuries. Ordinary four element bulbs from the ceiling and walls had served for tubes, the metal had acted as the ~~amplifying~~ agent. The actual sending unit was to be her mind. With the metal band over her forehead, she concentrated; probing she found the minds of both guards and the automatic blocks they had ready. She strained, attempting to break the blocks and bend both of them to her will. Just before the blocks vanished, the two guards died. Not thru necessity but to avoid acting against their will. Quickly, Nazine leaped up at the wall, caught a handhold on one of the small openings and then squeezed thru.

Knowing that an alarm had been spread, she picked up two of the hand-sized dis-guns and started to get away. Two men came running and started shooting. Acting almost instantaneously, she blasted two of them down, and then ducked around the corner. Down the long corridor, she saw more men coming and then she knew she was trapped. Then she ducked into a room, one of many along the hall-way. It turned out to be an elevator car designed however, to carry freight rather than personell. Realizing that she was underground, Nazine acted to move the elevator up to the ground level with the wild hope of getting out of the building and mixing with the crowd. The fans would not follow with their guns openly displayed for fear of being recognized as fans by the police.

Then the elevator stopped moving. Outside of the elevator shaft a voice said, "okay, now that we've played around long enough, open the door and come out without your weapons."

Instead she adjusted the nozzle of the dis-gun so that a thin almost silent cutting beam was made. ~~immediately, she~~

~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ The men outside impatient began to slowly melt down the door. To have exploded it would have meant the unnecessary death of their quarry.

Perry entered the building of Dr. Vice only thru curiosity. He had been intrigued by the idea of a self-operation to provide artificial tendrils but he now realized that it would have been too difficult for even his skilled fingers. An appendectomy perhaps but an operation of the brain was out of the question. Inside the building was a large room filled with various sorts of scientific equipment. The place had definitely not been well-kept. Papers littered the floor and covered the tops of desks and tables. He picked up a notebook and looked thru it idly. They were equations but what equations! Symbols were frequently ~~xxix~~ employed whose meaning could have been clear only to Dr. Vice himself. This thought Perry would be a very nice hideout. Years of scientific research had been put in by a competent scientist. Now, all that he had to do was spend a little time deciphering it and perhaps a new device similar to the hypnosis - mask would be developed. Perry blasted off and headed for Titania. The rocket headed up in a long, slow arc in the cosmos, threading its way among the Asteroids. At last he recognized it on the stellar map. It was a small, metallic ore world with nothing on it that would lead one to suspect its importance. Perry worked the computers and soon found a suitable varying orbit which he put the rocket into. Again and again he swung around that little planetoid and each time he found only more granite ferric ore. No where were large buildings or a super city locked in by a glass building that would show the presence of the bureau.

Puzzled, Perry dropped the rocket until it was only a few hundred feet above the world. Photographs had shown nothing. Perhaps McSnifflewhite had lied to him. But that was impossible. Perhaps the entire Bureau was underground even tho that seemed far too expensive to be practical. Suddenly a glint of metal caught his eye. Improbable yet..... With a blast of energy from the stern tubes, he went flashing back over the spot with the photoduplicators going. They developed instantly and then flashed onto the screen. It was a cracked-up spaceliner. One of the Terran-Venus ships and one that had never been designed for landing on an airless world such as Titania.

"Strange", Perry said, "who else could have a reason for coming to Titania." No one except the Zamen! Yet this wasn't a Zamen ship. It had been stolen. He dropped a limited cone-signal down to the ship in all wave lengths. There was no response; the only possible course of action was to land and explore it.

He knocked on a bulk-head. There was no response.

"Guess there isn't any air in the Lock then", Perry thot, "I'll have to cut it open with my gun." The airlock opened into the control cabin of the space-liner. On the floor lay apparently the flight engineer, several assistants and a feminine stewardess.....all dead. There had been a struggle between them and an unknown assailant. They were not pleasant sights being unprepared for the sudden drop in airpressure which he had caused

by cutting open the airlock. The internal pressure in their bodies had caused them to swell and then bleed thru the pores. In the pilot's seat safely clad in a space-suit was the person who had apparently captured the ship. He was unconscious, probably knocked out by the sudden forceful landing. He was lying over the steering gear. The faceplate of the spacesuit had fogged up concealing the identity of the person. Perry looked thru a window into the main chamber of the ship to see how the passengers had fared. There were none! Perry carried the single survivor over to his ship where the inside pressure was normal. He took off the spacesuit and then stared in amazement. The person was Nazine!

In the huge underground chamber where the interplanetary convention was taking place, Halmond McSnifflewhite and Rick Sneary were talking. Jek lay in a chair disinterested.

"Look Rick, it's serious! I've been playing a complicated game and I'm afraid I've messed up everything. The Zamen have declared war on the Triplanetary government, Perry knows where the Scientific Research Bureau is and I'm afraid that the Zamen will ~~xxxx~~ tell Triplanetary where Fandom is located so that there will be a civil war going making it easy for the Zamen to win."

"Aw well", replied Rick, "Perry is a fan so what if he does know the location of the Bureau. Fandom wants that secret."

"But Perry is a traitor. We can't tell whose side he's on except that he's probably playing for himself. And Nazine got away a little while ago. We thought we had her under guard perfectly but she's ~~xxx~~ more slippery than an eel. She's probably spilled the beans already."

Sneary frowned. "How did she get away?"

McSnifflewhite sighed, "she made up some sort of a contraption that blasted the mind right out of a couple of our best guards. We chased her into an elevator and then immobilized it. While, the guards cut down the door, she went thru the roof of the elevator car and crawled up to the street level. They tried to follow her and she cut the cable and welded the lighting system into a short circuit with her dis-gun. Authorities say she hijacked a transport going to Venus but that is too much to believe."

"Whew! Is that all", said Rick, "things sure are popping."

"Look Rick, lets go up to my office, I'm probably getting a lot of bulletins that I should be answering. Come on."

Up in the Presidential Building, the two men and the robot walked into McSnifflewhite's office. The President's desk was covered with telegrams and documents, most of them marked Secret and Urgent. Hurriedly he opened ~~xxxx~~, and scanned them.

"HMMMMMM. Zamen have most of Mars in hand now. Deimos and Phobos, where the Patrol is are still holding out.....unusual weapons.....I'll call a state of emergency at once, alert all Military Posts and....." There was a buzz on the phone.

"Who is it?~~he~~", he snarled into the transmitter.

The secretary replied, " I'm sorry it is several Spacemen and officials. They...."

"I don't care who they are! I'm busy, theres and emergency on....."

"I'm very sorry sir. It is the Vicepresident with a warrant for your arrest. You've been impeached by a combined meeting of Congress."

"Okay Sleepyhead; wake up before I snap off your cranium, " Perry growled shaking The Zamen Princess by the shoulder.

"Oh. Where...what ship is this?" She opened her eyes and propped herself up on one arm, "what are you doing here?"

"Thats exactly what I might ask you", returned Perry, " except that I know. You're here for the same reason I am, to find out what the word is on the Scientific Research Bureau. You're going to live just long enough to tell me what you know."

"Really" was her cold reply; it was more of a statement than a question, " I have an aversion to being told of my mortality probabilities...."

Perry waved the gun at her, " I don't care what you have an aversion for. Question one: How did you get away from McSnifflewhite and Sneary?"

"Nothing wrong about answering that or in fact any question you may have in mind. I made a little Mind Amplifier and then blasted my way out. As you notice, I was fortunate enough to be able to take a spceliner."

"Yeh. I saw. What happened to the passengers?"

"Oh that." She waved her hand airily, " On a pretext I got into the control cabin. The pilot wouldn't cooperate so I killed them all. I told the passengers when I was out near Mars' orbit that the ship was out of control and they would have to use the life rockets."

"Uhuh. And they probably crashed into the asteroids, the Sun, used up their power and drifted out of the system or a lucky few got into an orbit. Practically none of them could know how to maneuver a rocket."

"Correct Terran. 100% as you would say. Now I imagine you are anxious to find out the location of the Bureau."

"A mindreader", sneered Perry, "and snap it up, my time is limited."

"You seem angry", she said quite tonelessly, "perhaps after that session on Venus you thot I would cooperate with

you. I confess, I had the same idea of making you work for the Zamen."

"So you don't really know where the Bureau is located...." Perry sighted the weapon.

"Oh but I do. On Venus I had the opportunity of reading McSnifflewhite's mind when his block was down under the stress of battle. I assume you forced him to tell ~~xxxxx kxx~~ that the Bureau is here on Titania. I am happy to say that my mind is no where as weak as yours, I found out a few things that you overlooked. The Scientific Research Bureau is not a group of doddering, old men as you probably think."

"Really?"

"Oh yes, I learned all of the available details of the Bureau from McSnifflewhite. Even he knows very little about them. They seem to be super-geniuses, probably not of human form that occasionally release great inventions to the Triplanetary government. No one in the Solar System has ever seen one of them. Only seven or eight men have ever been present when they gave one of their inventions to the System," and she repeated, "you have about twelve minutes to find them."

Perry jumped up. "What do you mean twelve minutes? Are the Zamen attacking? They won't dare shoot with you here!"

"No? Telepathically I have given my government everything I have learned from you Terrans. They know you must die because you are the only Terran and a Fan at that who knows too much. My life is now worth nothing.....twelve minutes."

Perry looked around wildly. Nowhere on this planetoid could he find a clue; nowhere, and now he was about to be blown off the face of the planetoid.

Halmond McSnifflewhite looked up from the cot he was sitting on. He spoke to Rick Sneary, "well Sneary, this is finis I guess. Matters are so messed up now, it doesn't matter much what happens next."

"Oh I dunno", replied Rick, "things have been pretty bad for Fandom before. And Triplanetary has too, even tho that is unimportant. Now if we could get out of here...."

They couldn't. It was a small barred room with two cots and small immobile pieces of furniture. With guards always present, escape was out of the question. The possibility of rescue seemed very remote indeed with both Zamen and Triplanetary Spacemen hunting down the ~~xxxx~~minority known as Fandom.

"Well", said McSnifflewhite, "heres how we stand. Fandom has been trying to take over the Triplanetary government by peaceful means for economical reasons of life in the system as a whole."

"Yeah", said Sneary, "with the Triplanetary government and it's constituents hating us because we are so much greater and because our nukbers are so small, war would be out of the question ordinarily."

"Correct. And ~~now we know exactly what~~ ~~XXXX~~ ~~XXXX~~ ~~XXXX~~ ~~XXXX~~ part of that peaceful change was putting Fan officials into the Government without the people's realizing they were fans. Notably myself as President. We tried to convert the Triplanetary Government slowly into the socialistic ways of fans. Then Bang! we find a race of Martians who not only are telepathic giants but want to take over the Triplanetary government and Fandom as well. That's bad enough but to have Triplanetary learn the presence of Fans, now, and to attempt to exterminate us makes things pretty near hopeless."

"You're not kidding. Fandom, the greatest institution in the system is also the weakest. Triplanetary which we could at least get along with if they didn't know about us, is also knocking under. That leaves us being bossed around by a bunch of pin headed Zamen,"

The here-to-fore silent Jek spoke up, "you dopes sound like a bunch of sob sisters. Don't you think we've got any chance at all?"

Halmond said thotfully, "I just thot of something. There is the Scientific Research Bureau. Perhaps they will enter a helping hand."

"The Scientific Research Bureau? But thats just another part of Triplanetary isn't it? That will fall with the rest of the government."

"Hmm. I guess I never spoke of the Bureau. Well heres the complete dope as far as I know....."

Perry paced back and forth for a short time then jumped into the seat of the spaceship and buckled himself into place. "This ship may not have much of a chance but I'm not going to be caught sleeping on the ground. If you don't want your neck snapped off you better get into a safety-seat", Perry said. She got into the seat but with the air of a person who knew it didn't matter what was done. She was positive of the coming events, it appeared.

"Something else? I don't suppose you'll be satisfied until my people finally kill you."

The ship tore off the surface of Titania with eight G's and a sharp angle of turn. Perry said thru clenched teeth, "if those birds want me that badly, they'll have to run it out."

Already he could see streaks of light that looked like meteors appearing against the Void. He advanced the feed gradually and watched grimly as Nazine fought to keep her pride

and consciousness. Her breathing was painfully erratic. Again he turned the little valve and heard the rush of pure energy roaring out of the rocket tubes. He felt as if a colossus was slowly pressing his breath out. He halfclosed his eyes to avoid the pain of his seemingly-protruding eyeballs. He winced as something internal gave way. Probably a cracked rib. Nazine had long slumped back, a thin streamer of blood curling out of her mouth. Out of the corner of his eye he perceived a thin line of light passing his craft. It curved which he knew meant the other ship was preparing to hurl disintegrating rays against him. He guessed rather than visualized the fifteen-odd companions of the Zamen vessel. As a pall of grey swept over his eyes, he heard the thoughts of the Zamen commander. His mind was en rapport with the unconscious mind of Nazine who was picking up the thots.

"By the Gods of Mars! Fifteen Martian gravities and still he doesn't decrease the acceleration! Fortunately we've been building up speed for hours or he would have long since left us behind but for our quanta-tubes. He hasn't started decelerating yet. Probably unconscious ----- dead. And the Councilman's daughter with him." He meditated for a second. "Well, can't allow any chances....."

Aloud he said, "all gunners: Commence firing!"

A hundred gunners had their hairlines focused on the speck of light. When the order came thru they reached for the firing switch and ----- the Terran spaceship had utterly disappeared and altho they traced the area and the surface of all Titania, they never found the Terran ship.

"Ghad!" exclaimed Sneary, "that Bureau must be powerful medicine."

"Yep", meditated McSnifflewhite, "but entirely unknown."

"You mean no one ever saw one of the members", said Jag, "how do you know that they ~~xxx~~ even exist?"

"Heck", said the erudite Rick, "you should know that they have contributed some very important technological advancements to the world."

"The first practical method of harnessing atomic energy for example", said McSnifflewhite, "until it was turned into dis-guns."

The talk was suddenly interrupted by the sound of two men running up to the cell. They were guards apparently out of breath.

One of them took out a ring of keys from his pocket and opened the primary lock. With a few turns of the magnetic-combinations, the heavy door swung open. "Okay you guys, you're temporarily free tho technically under a state of arrest. Come on out."

"Yeah but how. I...."

The Zamen have broken all of Triplanetary's defenses on Mars, Venus and probably the outerplanets. They've just started to take over the Earth and Luna."

"Atomic bombs?"

"Some. But mostly micron-sonic waves and some new ray we haven't caught onto yet. But this is no time to make conversation. Step on it."

Without protest the three prisoners and all guards in the vicinity raced along the corridors. They went up the stairs four at a time. Each one knew that if Plutonium bombs were being used, they would never have reached the surface. When they did reach the surface, however, the city was not in too perfect a state of preservation. Buildings had crumbled and burned down all around them. Even to the uninitiated eye, tho, it was obvious that the Zamen were intent on capture rather than destruction of the city. In a few minutes, they were in a rocket-ship designed for capacity ~~xxx~~ rather than speed.

"Whats the story?" inquired Jek.

"I'm afraid I know", answered the ~~xxxx~~ ex-chief executive, "we and hundreds of others are to fall into an orbit around the Earth and possibly the sun for guerrilla activity. It will be a job of shooting away at whatever passes us and hoping that we don't get picking off doing it. Right Captain?"

"Thats right Sir. Practically everybody fit for duty on Terra is being assigned to the job. Looks like suicide to me but thats orders."

Sneary looked up from a telescope he had been peering thru, "maybe the Martian Zamen didn't want to destroy Earth but I guess they figured the Moon wasn't worth much. Luna City is a big crater with a little fuzzy area over it where its atmosphere is going off into space." Everyone looked out of a port. Altho they couldn't see the scene of devastation, they knew implicitly it was there. Suddenly off to one side of the sphere where a winking starlike speck had been was now a blinding flash.

"One of the suicide stations like us", commented a member of the crew, "only he didn't make it."

"Yeh. Wonder how many of us will be able to get into orbits before being blown up".

"Oh I dunno. I heard one of the technicians guess about fifty six percent. Thats not too good."

The deceleration stopped with a jerk. Not a jerk exactly but it was easy to notice the cessation of strain against the safety-belt.

"Everyone meet in the forward compartment", came the Captain's orders thru the intercom. After everyone had half floated and half walked into the meeting, the Captain addressed the group.

"All of you know exactly why we are doing what we are. Terra has been invaded and we are making this dangerous venture. There are thousands of other ships like us and most of them won't even get too first base. This is ship number pr-101 and we have been assigned to an orbit of very eccentric inclinations, X to avoid detection after we fire projectiles. We will go around the Sun once every three months and will pass as close as Venus' orbit at times and as far away as the Asteroids at others. There is a five degree inclination to the elliptic plane to avoid entering the worst parts of the Asteroid belt. Our job is to harass the enemy in any way possible. The crew is made up of seven men some experts and some otherwise at space tactics. Now listen, please, while I tell you of your duties....."

Boff Perry slowly awoke. The terrible soundless din of pain and anxiety had disappeared from him as he found himself lying in a large bed of fantastic proportions. Indeed the whole room seemed to be created out of a sudden realization of some incredibly fantastic dream. The room seemed to be very low-posted and it was in comparison to its size. Furniture that was----- furniture? No, it seemed to have no practical purpose for the most part but rather had been designed by an insane surrealist.

He threw back the covers and jumped out of the bed. And now he was more puzzled than ever. In his life at times he had felt well but never the state of perfection he was in now. What was the meaning? The last he had known was bone crushing acceleration of his spaceship and now he was in this incredibly fantastic room with absolutely no sense of orientation. The walls were colored pastels of changing colors and motifs. There was an unexplainable feeling of changing shapes and blurring objects that seemed to drift and eddy away from their original patterns. Xx

He found food lying in a tray on the floor and was surprised to see that it was familiar, tangible food without a trace of alienity. He ate.

After finishing his meal, he walked to a nearby entrance. But was it? A rectangular outline against the wall, which did not respond at a push nor did it have any protuberances with which to pull it open. He wished that it might open automatically. It did.

Aghast, Boff walked out into a huge and quite long hallway. He found himself drifting down the hall some few feet above the floor. In midair, he felt himself turned and aimed at an expanse



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of wall which opened into a little room. He was gently laid down before a large overstuffed chair. In front of the chair was a panel of complicated figures with apparently no meaning. Beside of the chair was a low table with refreshments on its surface. He glanced at them and then looked back at the panel before him. There was extended a pair of earphones that with inhuman complexity contained a small board that fell over his chest. On it was a small switch.

Perry cautiously pulled the earphones over his head but pondered on whether or not to turn the switch. Before his amazed eyes, the switch swelled like a balloon to perhaps twice its original size. He hesitated. It swelled up further. The hint was unmistakable; he pulled the switch. The room faded away.

He found himself in space, with neither light or tangibility present. Nor darkness or void. It was simply nothing.

"You are ready Boff Perry? Time is important. We Protectors will ~~not~~ wait a galactic aeon if neccessary but hesitate to waste a micro-second." Perry did not attempt to speak. He had his thoughts alone and they seemed trivial before this. "We Protectors or beings of the "Scientific Research Bureau" as the ignorant have called us, are interested in your affairs just as you have apparently been interested in us. The developement of a galaxy consists ~~of~~ the welfare of its components. There are only three types of government in your system. The Zamen now in charge represents the Autocratic form, they believe in effeciency at the expense of individuals of creeds other than themselves. The next most powerful is the Capitalistic form as represented by Triplanetary. They believe in individual welfare through the efforts of the individual himself. If he is powerless, he need expect no help but through charity. Triplanetary was a mass of corruption unable to hold its own in combat. Fandom represents Socialism. They are the weakest of all and might fade from existence by a slightly unfavorable turn of events. They are weak because of their intröversion, failure to face facts of other peoples. They are an ineffecient people.

"We the Galactic Protectors have chosen one from each race to represent its interests. You have been chosen as being representative of Fandom. Two others have been chosen for Triplanetary and the Zamen race. Before you even ~~xxxx~~ have the chance to assist your race, you must win back the friendship of your own people, otherwise you will certainly fail. And always the others will be working against you led by the other two leaders we have chosen." If Fandom is right, why help the others? thought Perry. "You are not neccessarrily right. It depends on the need as to which government is best. The one who wins will have a chance to try for position in the Galactic Federation. That would be no mean accomplishment." The Galactic Protectors, their federation? quite meaningless. Why the disguise as a bureau of Triplanetary?

"Every 20 years we presented a new Principle or Machine to the System. It was always misused. Halmond McSnifflewhite, the only person who knew of our presence really knows little now. The year is 2020. We present all three of you with a new Principle. The first to discover its use may win. You will find it waiting....."

Boff Perry awoke to find the earphones still on. They were automatically switched off. He got up and was carried into a room that contained a mass of unknown machinery and equipment. The room was huge, so huge that the space craft inside appeared dwarfed. He walked inside the craft and discovered a little cube ~~xxxx~~ made of an unknown surface. It was of densest black except for totally unknown figures written on the surface. He picked it up and noted that it was quite weightless. Totally so. It was also unbreakable. Perry laid it back with a shrug. He noted with a start that he was in space. Strange; he hadn't blasted off. In the control seat he headed for the Inner Planets, and the Zamen, Triplanetary and Fandom all of who wanted to kill him. It was quite confusing.

TO BE CONTINUED