

*Fabulous Seattle Fandom*

presents

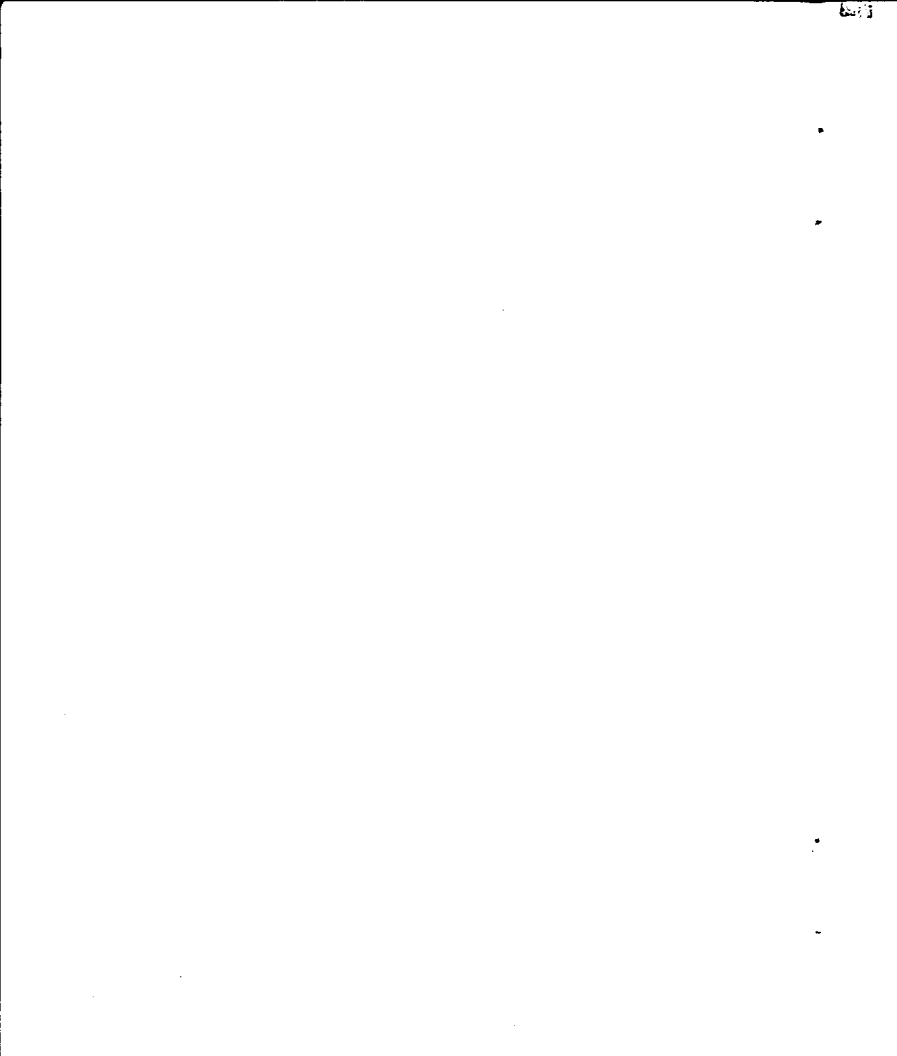
**M**

**A  
S  
T  
E  
R**

of the

**M**

**O  
N  
S  
T  
E  
R  
S**



# MASTER OF THE MONSTERS

*An allegory*  
*by*  
**Waddagobble de Gook**

**A Fenden Publication**

NOTE: Any resemblance between the characters in this story and the members of *Fabulous Seattle Fandom* and/or their printing machinery is certainly to be expected.

Lawly Bewer sat enraptured in the seat of his convertible space roadster as the rockets idled. A happy smile was on his face, and contentment was in his heart. At last, after searching the Galaxy for five long years, he had found the object of his quest, At last he had found the legendary *Place of the Monsters*.

To Lawly it mattered but little that the place seemed inaccessible now that he had arrived. The *Place of the Monsters* was completely enclosed by walls of titanite, a metal impervious to any known ray. The only visible entrance was a door, suitably barricaded, above which hung the simple sign: "PLACE OF THE MONSTERS". On both sides of the door, however, there were signs which stated "NO ADMITTANCE" in most of the significant languages of the Galaxy.

But Lawly was unconcerned. Lightly

he leaped from his space flivver and confronted the great door. He knocked. But the door also was made of titanite, so his knocking produced no sound. Lawly lowered his hand, not noticing his bleeding knuckles, and walted happily, expectantly. The smile on his face grew broader and broader.

And wonder of wonders! The door opened.

Unhesitatingly, Lawly entered. Behind him the door swung shut. He found himself in a narrow aisle formed by iron fences. Weird foliage abounded on the other sides of these fences, and at intervals were small signs stating: "Beware of Monsters". Lawly looked down the aisle at the approaching figure of a man dressed in a long cloak.

As the figure drew closer, Lawly noticed a small bird-like animal riding on his shoulder.

Lawly went forward. "Hi there," he called. "I am Lawly Bewer, and I would like to see the Monsters."

"Kst," said the bird-thing.

"Oh keep quiet, Byemm," admonished the man. To Lawly he said, "I am Trunbet Kestyo. I've been expecting you. Come." He smiled as they shook hands.

As they walked down the pathway Lawly's smile broadened more than ever, for the dream of his lifetime was coming true. They had not gone far when a soft bleating sound reached them.

Kestyo stopped and pointed to a small clearing where a strange sight met their eyes. There, standing on a single human-like foot, was a monster issuing the bleating sounds from the cavernous mouth. From it protruded a single large tooth. Frantically it waved a tiny eye at the end of its stalk.

"What in the world is that?" asked Lawly.

"Just a Corange monster. Watch," said Kestyo.

A slight rustling was heard in the bushes near the creature, and suddenly a large shaft sailed through the air. The creature was impaled. Green fluid spurted from the dying monster as its brilliant coloring faded. Out of the bushes stepped a thin, emaciated man. Behind the man trotted a woman who was pretty in a rather starved fashion.

"Such cruelty," wailed Lawly. "The poor critter didn't have a chance. Who are those awful people?"

Kestyo shook his head. "They are M. F. Yubbs and his wife, Lorein --- a very unfortunate case. It is their fate to seek out the helpless monsters in this jungle and kill them in order to provide food for their masters."

“You mean they are slaves?”

“Yes. Slaves of two monstrous, vicious, ravenous schuddans known as Bobyn and Sali.”

Lawly shuddered. But he soon began smiling again as they continued onward. Soon he would meet the most fearsome monsters in all the Galaxy face to face. He would be safe, of course, for the monsters were securely locked in cages.

An irregular thumping began to shake the ground violently. Sudden fear shown on Kestyo's face as he backed against the fence. “Don't move!” he hissed.

Not knowing what to expect at this moment, Lawly did as he was advised. The thumping grew in volume to almost unbearable proportions. Suddenly the thumping stopped as trees on one side were swept aside amid a deafening clash of cracking timbers and the monster itself hove into view. Lawly couldn't



decide whether it looked more like a tyrranosaurus or more like an octopus. It was covered with huge scaly warts of all colors, and the thumping had obviously been made by its three elephant-type feet as it walked. Its many fleshy tentacles uprooted huge trees effortlessly and stuffed them into its huge beak which, when it opened, revealed several rows of jagged teeth. Its five independently moving eyes seemed not to see them.

Kestyo relaxed. "Come on, it's safe, It's only a harmless vegetarian."

Lawly was still incredulous. "Does it have a name?" he asked.

Kestyo shrugged. "Just another Corange monster. This jungle is full of them."

They walked down the narrow passageway through some of the weirdest landscape imaginable, meeting monsters

of every description. But after the first scare Lawly became disinterested in the various varieties of Corange monsters. The smile on his face broadened as he noticed a long low building. At last, he thought, he would see the Grethapoch, the <sup>Heckp</sup> Pathidgrot, the <sup>Hinggo</sup> Hammiproge, the <sup>Grethapoch</sup> Rettsnege, the <sup>Heckp</sup> Tharpilogh, the Shoard-presadge, and, most important of all, the nameless monster known only as Master of the Monsters.

But they did not enter the building. "It is the workshop of Neclore Corange, Maker of Monsters, upon whom no man may look," explained Kestyo.

"Then where ---?" began Lawly.

A wolfish grin spread over Kestyo's face as he opened a door which was set in the ground and beckoned, "Come." They descended into a dimly lit haphazardly constructed stairway.

For many hours they descended.

As they progressed Lawly noticed a gradual increase in the vegetation, all of which seemed to be a single vine-like plant. At one point the foliage was so thick that passage was impossible. Kestyo withdrew a large sword from within his cloak and sliced a passageway through.

Finally they came to the cell of the first monster.

"The Grethapoch!" squealed Lawly in delight.

The Grethapoch quivered in its cage, its swirling streaming coloration arranging itself into a pair of balefully glaring eyes. The eyes fixed themselves on Lawly. But Lawly was unafraid. He laughed. He chortled with glee. He remembered his many encounters with this monster in the wilder regions of the Galaxy. He had once ripped its gelatinous mass into a million pieces --- his only reward had been an irremovable green stain on his

hand. The monster was absolutely indestructible. It was one of the most fiendish monsters in existence. But a man could always escape, for the monster never killed nor injured --- it used methods more subtle than killing, more fiendish than torture. Its effect on Lawly had been indescribable, yet indisputable. Here before his eyes was the Grethapoch, helpless! Lawly danced, he raved, he leaped, he cheered.

Lawly lay on the floor exhausted from his exuberant demonstration. After a time Kestyo touched his shoulder and said, "Come."

Lawly recovered finally and followed Kestyo down more of the descending passageways.

They entered the cell of the second monster, the dreaded Hammiproge.

Lawly smiled down at the black little monster. Its protruding black

veins pulsed as its sluggish black life fluid was forced through. A pair of vile tentacles waved menacingly toward the watching men, but Lawly was unafraid. This monster was less subtle than the Grethapoch. He recalled his many chance encounters with the Hammiproge, recalled his months spent recovering from Hammi-progitis, the black infection. A man sometimes can escape with his life, but the black infection is inescapable. Here it was in front of him now, cowering in a corner of a cage. Lawly laughed as he grabbed the bars of the cage. It could not harm him now! He shook with laughter.

Suddenly the Hammiproge moved. One of its tentacles lashed out and grabbed Lawly's fingers. Shrieking with alarm, Lawly jerked his hand away, but too late! The black infection had set in! Lawly groaned in mental anguish as he

held up his hand and saw the veins in his arm turning black as the viscous black life fluid of the Hammiproge replaced the blood in his body. He did not see the sadistic grin on Kestyo's face.

"Come!" cried Kestyo. "We must hurry."

Hardly understang what the hurry was now, Lawly stumbled after Kestyo, knowing that within a few minuutes the black ooze would be in every artery, vein, and capillary in his body.

Lawly hardly knew how how he was able to keep up with his guide. His legs were weakened from the strenuous trip and by the infection; he could hardly keep his balance on the irregularly spaced stairs leading ever downward into the deepest recesses of the planet. He was hardly aware of any sensation when they reached the cell of the third monster.

Lawly lay on the floor near the cage of the Pathidgrot, breathing heavily. Kestyo, a fiendish grin on his face, stood far back in a corner.

The silvery Pathidgrot quivered in the corner of its cage, as if awakening to life. It glided toward the prone form of Lawly. A pair of beady silvery eyes looked fondly at its victim, and a pair of silvery tentacles rubbed each other in anticipation. A cloud of translucent vapor was emitted through its small red nostril; its cylindrical body began a weird gyrating dance. The vapors thinned to invisibility, and the drafts of air caused by the movements of the monster's body blew a stream of vapor down onto Lawly's face. Lawly drew the vapor into his lungs.

Lawly sat up, feeling as though he had just fallen down an elevator shaft. Weakly he glanced at his hand. Miracu-

lously his veins were no longer black. His eyes met those of the silvery monster.

“The Pathidgrot!” he exclaimed. And the sudden cure of the Hammiprogitis could only mean -- that he had breathed the vapors of the Pathidgrot!

Lawly screamed. He jumped to his feet and ran to a wall. Kestyo had withdrawn a gas mask from under his cloak and was wearing it for protection against the onslaught of the Pathidgrot. Lawly screamed and ran for clear air spaces, but the vapors had already closed off both entrances to the room. Lawly screamed and ran to a corner; the vapor closed in and descended. Lawly relaxed; his senses swam. He staggered to the center of the room; the wall leaned at a crazy angle; the floor tilted, then fell up and hit his face; he rolled. The ceiling was making slow revolutions; he closed



his eyes. He felt as if he were riding on a storm cloud, unaware that at that moment Kestyo was dragging him out of the room and, as a result, away from the influence of the Pathidgrot.

Lawly opened his eyes groggily to find himself staggering down through more of the stairway. Gradually the fresh air drove away the effects of the vapor he had inhaled, and except for a headache he was feeling almost normal by the time they had arrived at the cell of the next monster.

They entered the cell of the Tharpilogh. Lawly stared at the huge monster, and the monster stared back at him with many eyes. Tentacles of every description writhed and its greyish body convulsed grotesquely. Lawly was awestruck; he'd had only one previous encounter with this monster, and that one encounter had nearly robbed him of his sanity.

At that moment a loud roaring filled the room. The floor of the Tharpilogh's cage began to crumble. A shiny blue tentacle snaked into view and entwined itself around an iron bar. A huge monstrous shiny blue monster hauled itself up through the floor. For the first time Kestyo's face showed true terror.

"The Rettsnege has broken loose!" he exclaimed wildly.

"Kst, Kest," said the bird-thing calmly.

Kestyo calmed down and said, "Wait! Look."

Lawly looked. The Rettsnege was now fully inside the cage of the Tharpilogh; the two titans were locked in mortal combat. The Rettsnege was somewhat the smaller of the two, but what it lacked in brawn it more than made up for in brain-power. Lawly's eyes bugged from their sockets. He had

never been this close to a Rettsnege before. He had seen them on two previous occasions, but only at great distances --- which was lucky, for otherwise the mental influence of the monster would have been too strong, and he would have entered that ravenous mouth which even now was in the process of swallowing several of his opponent's tentacles.

One of the roving eyes of the Rettsnege looked directly at Lawly. Lawly felt himself go stiff; he became paralyzed in every joint and muscle. He was not aware that the Rettsnege had forgotten its fight with the Tharpilogh and was concentrating on Lawly.

"Come!" came the mental command from the Rettsnege.

Lawly took a step toward the cage. He didn't even know that he was doomed, for the mental power of the monster blanketed out all other thoughts.

"Come!" commanded the Rettsnege. Lawly took another step toward the cage, and then a third.

Suddenly the trance broke. The Tharpilogh, siezing its opportunity, had just raised a ponderous tentacle and struck a weak spot in the Rettsnege's armor. The Rettsnege released its hold on Lawly and again devoted full attention to its battle with the Tharpilogh. Gasping with relief Lawly made a dash for the exit where Kestyo was waiting,

"What are you going to do? What if one of them gets killed?" Lawly asked.

"Never fear," smiled Kestyo. "The Master of the Monsters will handle the situation,"

The Master of the Monsters! His one final objective, thought Lawly. He had never seen the Master of the Monsters, and only knew of it through hearsay. It was rumored to be indestructible

and all-powerful; but this last could not be true, for it was here in captivity.

He had no further time for thought, for at that instant they came upon one of the most unusual sights of the whole journey --- thh Shoardpresadge.

It was the smallest of the monsters, consisting mainly of a small drably colored lump, in the middle of which was a single large eye. A single tentacle was waving slowly. But most unusual of all was a second occupant of the cell, a *man!* Or, at least, what was left of a man. The man was busily engaged in various odd occupations which appeared purposeless. Obviously he was being commanded by the Shoardpresadge.

“What is that man doing in there?” asked Lawly.

“Oh, that’s just old Toot Reeffip,” said Kestyo. “He’s a slave.”

“Slave? Of that little monster?”

"Oh, he seems to enjoy it," said Kestyo. "Old Toot feels he has a purpose in life now. He wandered in here one day, just like you did, and that's what happened." He paused and then said, "I wouldn't worry about him. He's just an old space dog anyway. Nobody ever pays any attention to him. Come, I will take you to the Master of the Monsters."

At mention of the Master of the Monsters, Lawly forgot all about the Shoardpresadge and its slave, Toot Reeffip. He quivered with anxiety. Soon he would behold the most fearsome monster in all the Galaxy. He followed Kestyo through a vine-enshrouded passageway.

They stopped in front of a great door, upon which which was inscribed: *Master of the Monsters.*

Lawly grinned from ear to ear. His dream had now reached the supreme

climax of its fulfillment. The door swung open and the two men walked in. The door closed softly.

In the center of the large room sat a Thing. And the instant he saw it, Lawly knew that it was the Master of the Monsters. Lawly was enthralled, speechless. The monster before him was the Grethapoch, the Hammiproge, the Pathidgrot, the Tharpilogh, and the Rettsnege, all rolled into one single soul-shattering entity. In addition, the Master of the Monsters had unique aspects all of its own.

Kestyo went up to the monster, knelt reverently, and said, "Another slave, O Master."

Lawly felt a gentle hand caress his mind. Immediately he knew he was a slave. But he was happy in this knowledge. What use had he for Galactic affairs? Here was his destiny! He would

live only to serve the Master, and bask in Its reflected glory.

Slowly, humbly, Lawly approached the Master of the Monsters at its mental command, and Lawly knew that he was about to learn a great secret. When he was close to the monster he noticed a large plate set in its armor and bearing an ancient inscription.

Lawly bent down to read the sacred words. Immediately a full understanding of his position was revealed to him, and he sighed.

The inscription was simple:

**The American Multigraph Co.**

*THE END*





