

January

1954

15¢

MAGAZINE

DON
HOWARD
DONNELL

BOB
WARNER

AL
STAUDERMAN

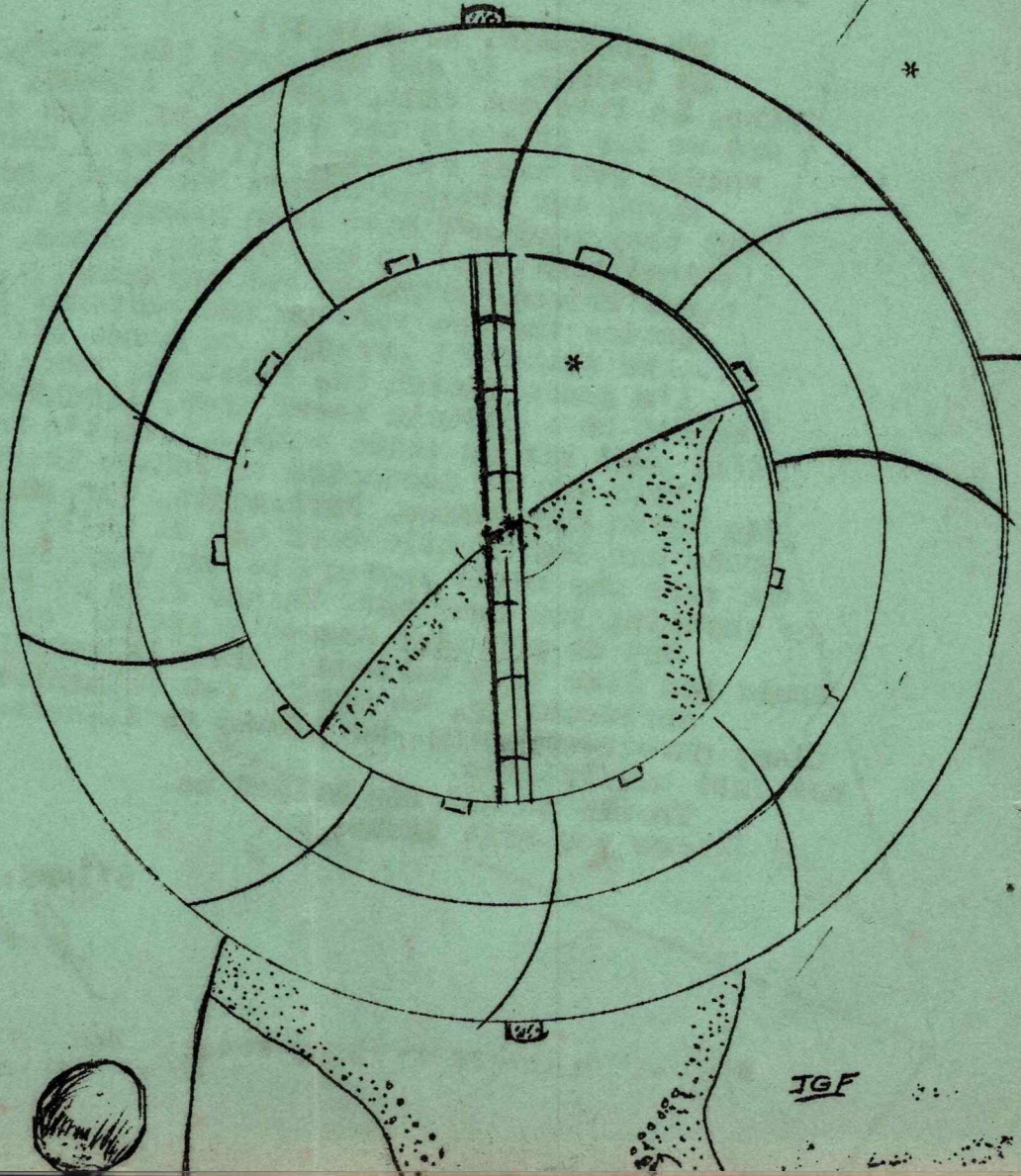
WARREN
F.
LINK

DOROTHY
TOWLE

RANDY
SHORES

All
New
Stories

First
Issue



)) PROBABILITY ((



TGF

Letter From The Editor

OGontz 7794-M

HENCE
John G. Fletcher
347 Oak Road
Glenside
Pennsylvania

January 31, 1954

Dear Reader;

My goodness, we made it!
By George, it may not look like much, but it IS a fan-
zine. So it's not VEGA, FANTASTIC WORLDS, or A LA SPACE....
did we say it would be? ((Come to think of it.....)) So,
whadda you want for 15¢? ((I know, I know.....))

Maybe our stories aren't the best American literature,
but they wouldn't have been submitted to us if they were.
((submitted...Ha! We had to beg, crook, scrounge and get
a few friends drunk to get anything.....))

Notice the new word on the contents page...novellina
.....we coined it awreddy, so hands off Thompson.....
I'm gonna punish the first guy who asks if I'm the
rabbit on a certain teevy show. ((Punish is right...))
I'll send him an extra copy.....that'd kill anybody!))

This ish is dedicated to Jennie Twardzicki of
644 North Elm Avenue, Portsmouth, Virginia. Jennie
broke her leg a while back and is still laid up. We-
're sure she would appreciate any magazines, letters
or anything you send her. Thanks from us for Jennie.

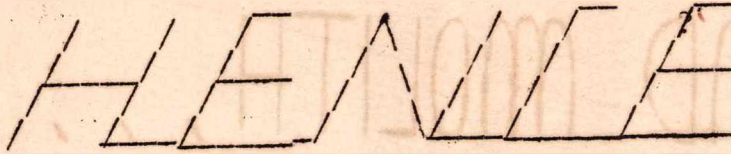
How do you like Shores' cartoons and artwork?
Would you like more cartoons? More illustrations?
Incidentally, we need a few columnists, more fic-
tion, more everything--We intend to illustrate our stories,
not just use fillers.

Thanks to all who helped us.
See you next issue,

S'long,

John G. Fletcher

PS WE APOLOGIZE TO REDD BOGGS FOR OUR FORMAT -
NEXT ISH WE'LL CHANGE



Editor:

John G. Fletcher

Associate Editor

Randall Shores

NOVELLINA

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Drawing
Illus.

cover by:

John G. Fletcher

Earth's

Space
Station

A))

probability

First issue

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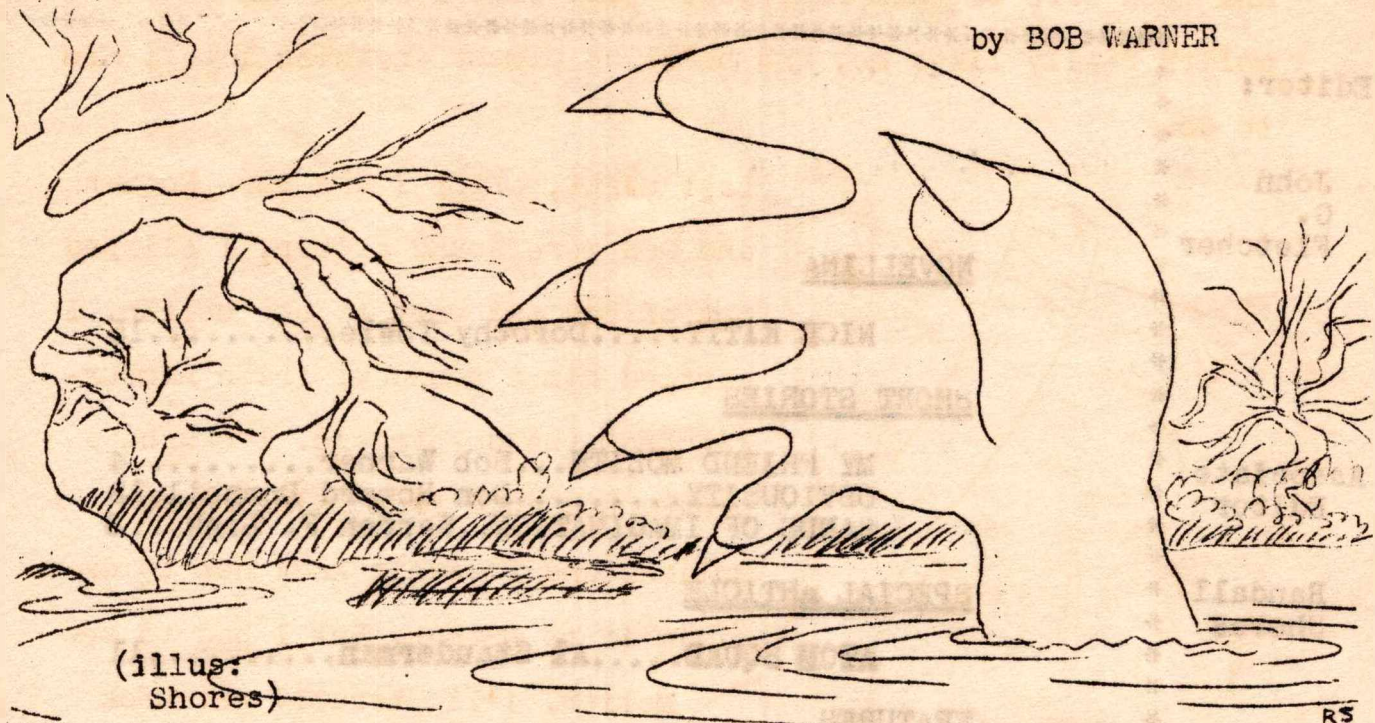
Free lance work accepted

magazine

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MY FRIEND MOLITH

by BOB WARNER



(illus:
Shores)

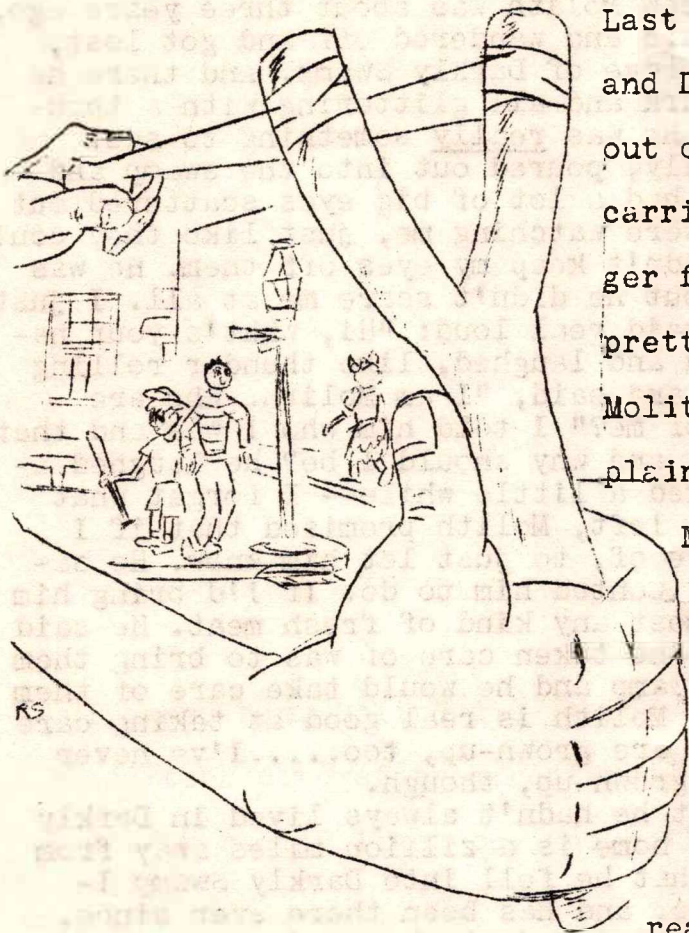
RS

DOES ANYONE ELSE KNOW MOLITH?.....

Jimmy Anderson lives right next door to us, and I really hate him. I hate him so much that I'm going to have him done away with.

Molith will do away with Jimmy Anderson for me. Molith will do almost anything I want him to do, because Molith is my best friend. And, besides, it won't be the first time I've asked Molith to get rid of someone for me. He's taken care of five kids, in all, for me--Tom Benson, who used to spit at me from behind when I wasn't looking; Mary Ann Simpson, who poured a whole bottle of black ink over my head; that snot-faced Willis kid, who thought he was the toughest guy around here and used to twist my arm just to prove it; and then Freddy Danials, the kid who used to shoot me with a sling-shot until I was covered with blue spots. Every time

I asked him, Molith did it for me--reached out and grabbed them and took care of them real good--just like I asked him to do. Molith really likes me, and he'll do almost anything I tell him to do.



Last night, after I was sure Mother and Dad were sound asleep, I slipped out of bed and went to see Molith. I carried him a pound of fresh hamburger from the deepfreeze. I caught a pretty bad cold from going to see Molith, and I didn't know how to explain it to Mother. But I had to see Molith. I'll probably get heck from Mother and Dad both when they find out the hamburger is missing, but it'll be worth it. To have Molith take care of that crummy Jimmy Anderson. Boy, I really hate that kid!

The reason, mainly, that I hate him so much is that he keeps taking my marbles. Every time he catches me out with a few marbles in my pockets, he takes every one away from me. He's a little bigger than me, an' five years older, too, and it does me no good to fight back; I tried that once. He just smacked me hard--as hard as he could--across the mouth and laughed and said, so the other kids would be sure to hear him:

"Now run along home, you little sissy-pants! And let Mamma wash the dirt off your face!" The other kids all laughed at me

for a long time after that.

And now Molith will show him who's a sissy-pants! Molith will show him real good--just like he showed all the others. Molith always takes care of kids that I don't like.

Molith, he's a funny sort of creature. He told me once that he gets pretty lonely. He lives in the edge of Darkly Swamp, and I don't guess anyone knows about him except me. He said once that if anyone gets close enough to see him that they never get back to tell anyone else about it. Nobody ever has--except me.

The first time I ever saw Molith was about three years ago, when I was playing in the yard and wandered off and got lost, and finally ended up at the edge of Darkly Swamp. And there he was. He was awful big and dark and all glittering with a thousand color-points of light. He was really something to see! Like a big gob of velvet jelly, poured out into the swamp and suddenly come alive. And he had a lot of big eyes scattered out in all of him; all of them were watching me, just like they could see down into me, and I couldn't keep my eyes off them. He was like a fairy-tale monster, but he didn't scare me at all. I just walked right up to him and said real loud: "Hi, what's your name?" He just sort of grunted and laughed, like thunder rolling lazily across a summer sky, and said, "I am Molith. Who are you? And aren't you afraid of me?" I told him who I was and that I wasn't abit afraid of him, and why should I be? He laughed again. And after that we talked a little while-- I forget what about, exactly--and before I left, Molith promised that if I ever wanted anyone taken care of, to just let him know. He said he'd do almost anything I wanted him to do. If I'd bring him some hamburger or steak or ~~most~~ any kind of fresh meat. He said all I had to do to have someone taken care of was to bring them down to the edge of Darkly Swamp and he would take care of them --good. He always does, too. Molith is real good at taking care of kids. Probably people who are grown-up, too.....I've never asked him to take care of a grown-up, though.

Molith told me once that he hadn't always lived in Darkly Swamp. He said that his real home is a zillion miles away from here, up in space. He said that he fell into Darkly Swamp I-don't-know-how-many-years-ago, and has been there ever since. Molith said that his only pleasure, just about, is when an animal, or a person, happens to come near enough to the edge of the swamp for him to reach out and capture it. He said that I'm different from the rest; and he said that I'm the only one who hasn't been afraid of him. That's the only reason he didn't reach out and capture me, three years ago, like he's done to all the rest.

Right now I'm waiting for Jimmy Anderson to come out of his house. He usually comes out about this time of day and goes down to play softball with a bunch of other boys his own age in the empty lot next to Williamson's house. When he comes out today, I'm going to let him get in front of our house, then I'm going to run out suddenly, and call him a damned old snot-face. That will really get him! And while that's soaking in, I'll dare him to go down to the edge of Darkly Swamp and fight me. I'll add that he's a dirty, yellow coward if he doesn't go. Oh, he'll accept my dare, all right. He'll be glad for the chance

of getting me down there at the edge of Darkly Swamp where he can beat at my head off without anybody seeing him do it--then, if anybody asks him about it, he'll be able to say that I'm a scheming little liar, that it wasn't him at all. Only, of course, he won't beat my head off at all. Molith will take care of him before he has a chance, even, of doing that. Molith will take care of him real good. Molith always does.

Just last night, when I went to carry Molith the hamburger and tell him about Jimmy Anderson, he said that he had just been hoping that I would soon be wanting to bring him someone to take care of. He said he hoped it would be a kid. He said that he likes grown-ups pretty good, but children he really likes best of all. Well--he can have Jimmy Anderson and all the kids like him!

I think I see Jimmy Anderson coming out of his house now. Yes! That is him! Boy, is he ever a hateful looking fellow. Boy!

I have all my pockets filled with bulging with marbles, so it won't be any trouble carrying my plan out; Jimmy Anderson likes to take my marbles more than he likes to beat me up, I think.

There he goes, down the steps, trying to float, silly as always, across the lawn. Here he comes up the sidewalk, and I guess I'd better be going.

Boy, won't his face be a sight when he sees Molith, reaching up out of old Darkly swamp for him!.....
---Bob Warner

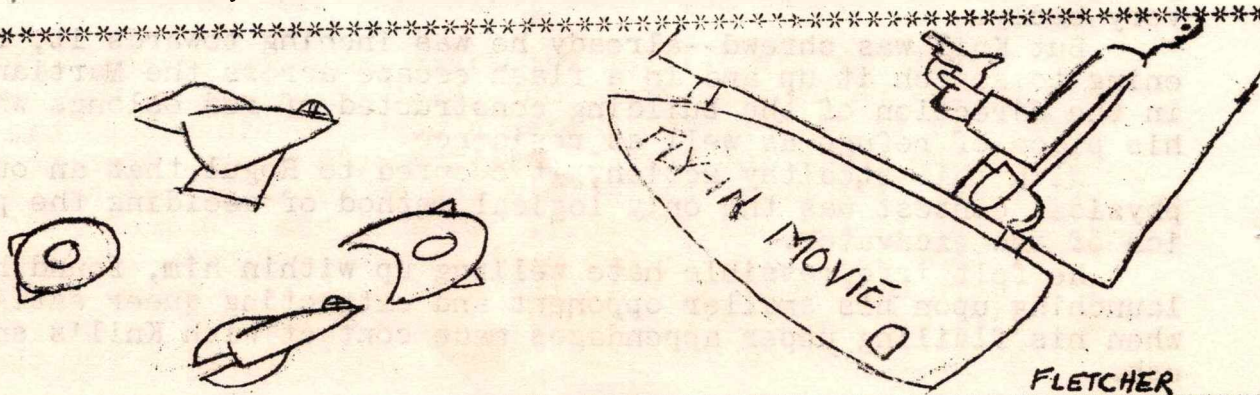
FANZINE, ANYONE?

If so, try BREVIZINE ADVENTURE, 5369 West 89th Street, Oak Lawn, Illinois.

HOW ABOUT A POEMZINE?

Here are two good ones for you--- STARLANES, Orma McCormick, 1558 West Hazelhurst Street, Ferndale 20, Michigan-----and ARION, 813 Eastern Avenue, Connersville, Indiana

Ask Gil Menicucci about INKY and his INKBOTTLE....675 Delano Avenue, San Francisco, 12, California.....

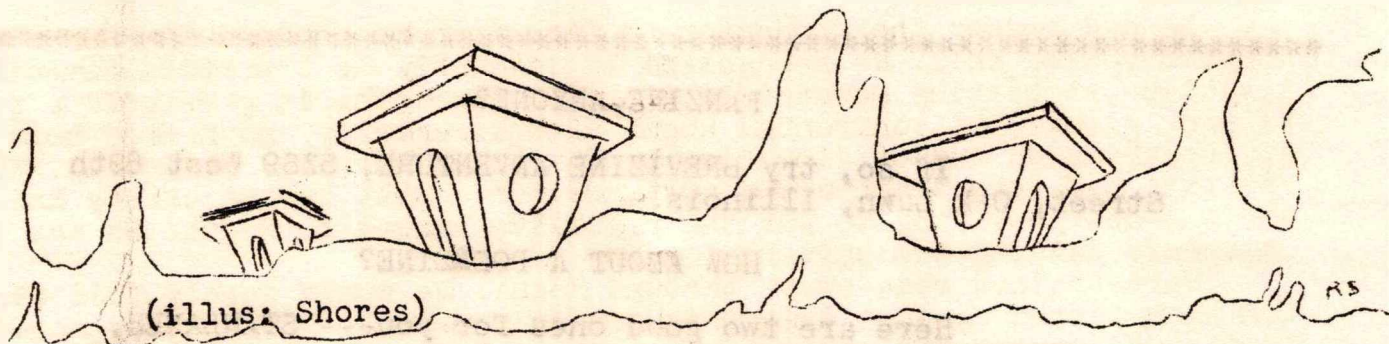


FLETCHER

THE SANDS OF IMAGINATION!

by WARREN F. LINK

THEY FOUGHT THEIR DEADLY
BATTLE BENEATH THE MARTI-
AN SKIES.....



(illus: Shores)

Rogul well realized the importance of the excavating apparatus. Were he not to secure it, the contract, through lack of facilities would almost surely fall to Knil--the other ruddy Martian who was regarding the piece of equipment with mercenary eyes. He, too, was contemplating its procurement, but Rogul vowed he would not allow his younger competitor to gain it so easily. He needed the contract badly, very badly.

But Knil was shrewd--already he was inching towards it, threatening to snatch it up and in a flash escape across the Martian plains in the direction of the building constructed of red oblongs which was his place of refuge as well as residence.

With this stealthy action, it occurred to Rogul that an outright physical contest was the only logical method of deciding the possession of the excavator.

He felt irrepressible hate welling up within him, found himself launching upon his smaller opponent and extracting queer satisfaction when his flailing upper appendages made contact with Knil's smudgy flesh.

Knil sank stricken and wounded to the hard ground, exuding a salty secretion of pain which quickly mixed with the reddish soil, his grit-ringed communication orifice fully opened so as to emit the most terrifying scream of sheer agony.

Rogul's attack subsided for he knew if the Martian elders were to observe this crude conflict they would abolish both contract and excavator for an indefinite period and he would be confined to his own red blockhouse, truly a horrible torture.

He realized he would have to stop the noise immediately, but Knil was annoyingly implacable. His small grappling pseudopod groped in the short clipped vegetation to grasp the resilient sphere that lay there.

Rogul gaped with fear as the brightly colored but deadly missile rushed forwards, directly towards him. A glint of hopeful revenge was to be detected on Knil.

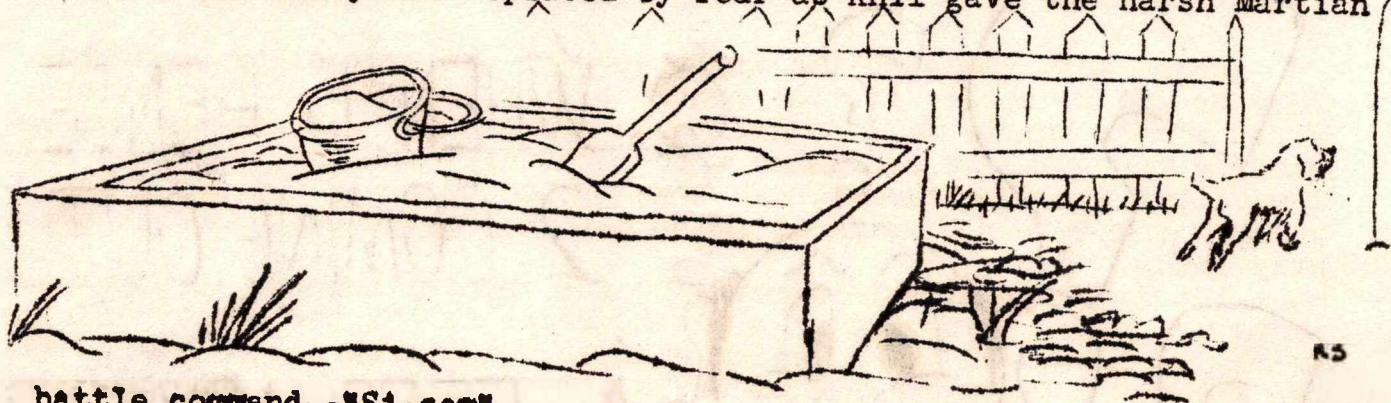
Breaking his horrified paralysis, Rogul swiftly maneuvered so the weapon shot swiftly over him to smash into the ferns beyond. Fortunately, it did not detonate.

Knil was again on the defensive, fearing the consequences of Rogul's retaliation. The grimey sneak now cowered behind another device of destruction--large and square with an over-head sun protector.

Rogul acted swiftly this time, withdrawing the small energy projector from his utility pouch. Despite its size, he knew it was tremendously potent, capable of projecting its ray of immobilization many tergas. Powerful enough to shatter Knil's weapon to useless bits and splatter him with the deadly silicon compound within if the ray did not subdue directly.

He had raised the projector to fire when he noticed the menacing monster beside Knil. He recognized it instantly as a Martian congola, a vicious, slobbering monster of gigantic strength. It gave Knil a questioning glance but confronted Rogul with a ferocity and hatred born of apprehension and of direction by the other Martian. Obviously, the creature had been trained and nurtured for combat by the crafty Knil who was now preparing to put the repulsive animal to Rogul. He was thus openly defying the universal rules of war.

Unrestrained rage swept through Rogul. He would surely fall victim when pitted against this frightening creature. His intense concentration of enmity was replaced by fear as Knil gave the harsh Martian



battle command--"Si-geem".

The greedy mass of fur charged forward to Knil's great glee, the prominent snout thrust outward, shining teeth bared for the impending struggle, while immune to Rogul's projector.

Unable to halt the onslaught of the tearing beast, Rogul removed another weapon from his pouch--a solv pistol--which he determinedly trained on Knil's joyful features and activated.

A stream of crystal clear liquid whined through the air and caught Knil below his fleshy red mandibles. Every droplet of the liquid cut a deep hole into him, literally corroded and dissolved him. Knil dropped to the ground, a damp, squirming, howling mess.

The monster, observing the fate of its master, reluctantly drifted off with a parting roar, probably in search of some fellow horrors. Rogul, the invincible, shivered as it tramped stolidly away.

And then from Knil's blockhouse--came the shrill call of remand voiced by a Martian Elder. Detection was close at hand and Rogul was fearful, but Knil leaped instantly from the dirt, unmindful of any previous inflictions. Starting to protest, he was quickly silenced by the second call, still louder and more harsh. Both Martians recognized the common enemy.

Knil gathered his things and trudged dejectedly off. There was reason for this, Rogul knew--all conflicts would be forbidden and the contract would be discontinued for a while. And then he realized it was his own time for retirement, and with a lingering obstinacy, approached his own blockhouse without retrieving the excavator.

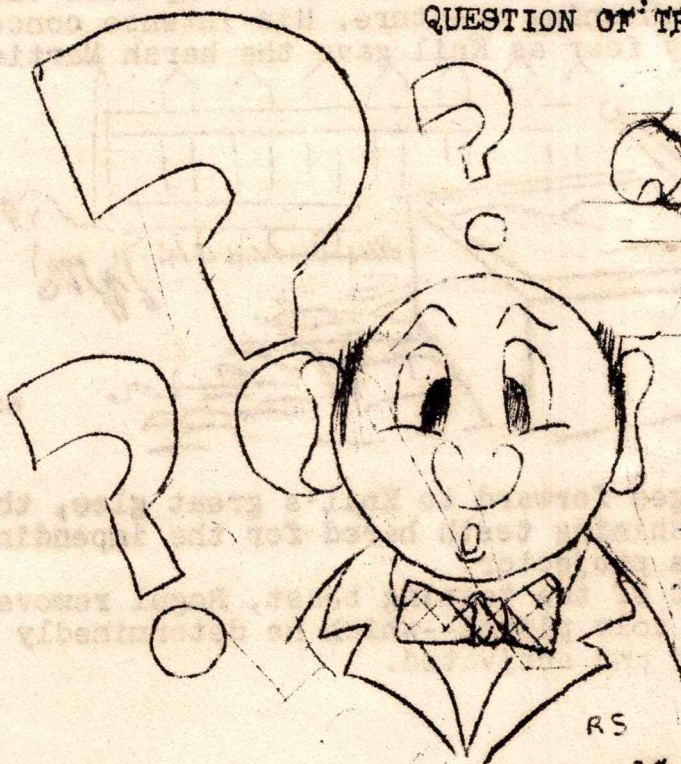
But even before he was inside, the Martian battlefield was dissolving and reforming, being gradually replaced with not entirely different or unrelated, until it completely collapsed with the final slam of the door.

It resembled a backyard to an extent. An ordinary, toy-strewn, trench-ridden backyard. A ball, some guns, a well-beaten sandbox to one side with its tell-tale ring of sand, a small red shovel--the source of so many hard feelings--half buried in it.

It was truly a scene of silenced activity, a little world frozen and desolate for the coming night, to spring alive again with the early dawn and the rising sun--and the only point of inconsistency therein, was a furry little cocker spaniel cavorting unconcernedly over the fields.

---Warren F. Link

QUESTION OF THE YEAR



Q. WHEN IS HENCE
2 COMING OUT?

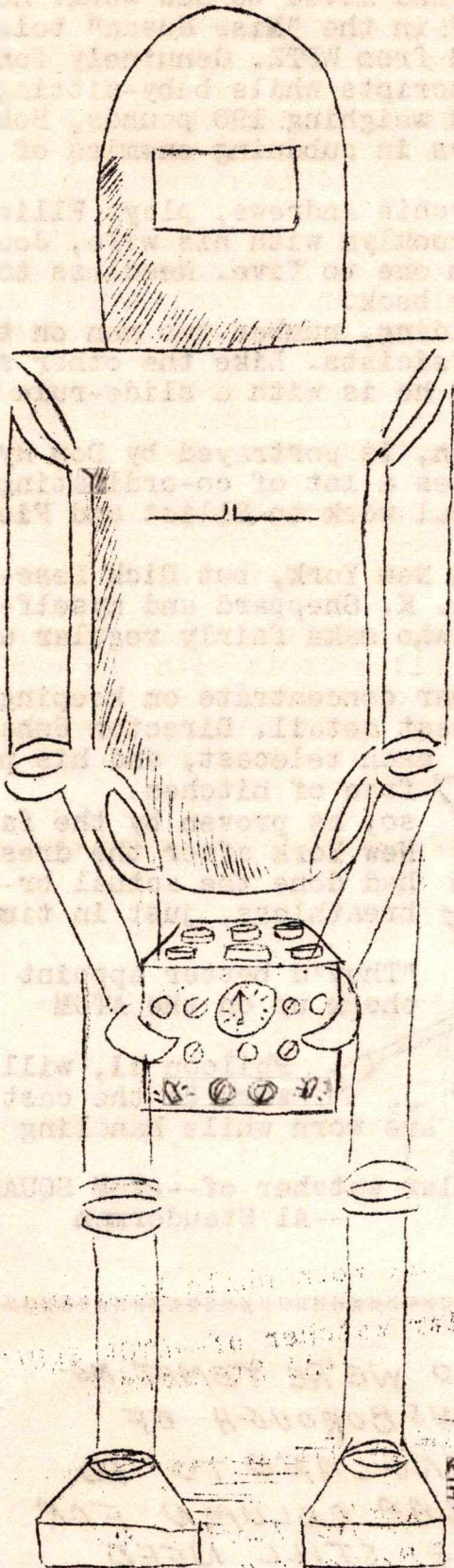
A. FEBRUARY 28

(IF WE'RE LUCKY!)

RS

by AL STAUDERMAN

(illus: Shores and Fletcher)



THE INSIDE DOPE ON A POPULAR TV SHOW

ATCM SQUAD (NBC-TV, 5:00 to 5:15 PM., E.S.T.) is a new approach to the time-tested weekday serial. Dealing with a fictitious branch of the government assigned to track down A-spies and saboteurs, ATOM SQUAD has true-to-life characters appearing in believable situations.

Atom squadmen wear no special uniforms, and ordinarily carry no concealed weapons or secret instruments. They must rely on their keen scientific minds, and not infrequently, upon their well-trained brawn to subdue the enemies they meet each week.

It isn't accidental that A-squad scripts ring with authenticity, either. Physicist Howard Schoefeld has been retained to check the program's scripts for inaccuracies and to suggest likely situations for the squadmen to appear in.

Director Joseph Behar originally slanted ATOM SQUAD toward the many kids who regularly twist TV dials during the afternoon. He has found however, that his attention to small details and grown-up approach has made ATOM SQUAD a favorite with many adults, some of whom are quite scientifically minded--like the Army Major who approached some members of the show's cast traveling by train from Philadelphia, where ATCM SQUAD originates, to New York.....

"Say," said the Major, "when are you

guys going to call on the Army to help you out?"

Although ATOM SQUAD originates in Philadelphia, WPTZ studios, New York actors are used on the program.

Handsome Bob Courleigh stars as Steve Elliot, chief squadman of the A-sleuths. An Army Air Force veteran, Bob had been an announcer at WPTZ, but decided that acting was his line, and moved to New York. He played the husband of the late Susan Peters' in the "Miss Susan" tele-serial, which, coincidentally, also emanated from WPTZ. Genuinely fond of children, Bob manages to learn a week's scripts while baby-sitting over weekends for friends. Six-foot-tall and weighing 190 pounds, Bob is becoming an expert at the judo he displays in subduing enemies of the squad.

Bob Hastings, for seven years radios Archie Andrews, plays Elliot's companion, Dave Fielding. Bob lives in Brooklyn with his wife, Joan, and his three children who range in age from one to five. Needless to say, Bob is a Brooklyn Dodgers fan from 'way back.

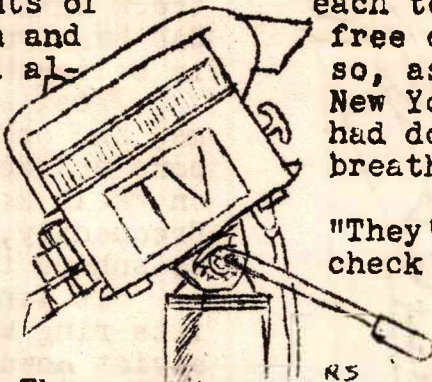
In spite of his flamboyant nature, Fielding, number two man on the squad, is one of Uncle Sam's top nuclear physicists. Like the other squadmen, he is as effective with his fists as he is with a slide-rule or geiger-counter.

The Chief of the ATOM SQUAD, Nels Larsen, is portrayed by Don Hylan. As leader of the group, Chief Larsen does a lot of co-ordinating and planning, but he leaves most of the actual work to Elliot and Fielding.

Other actors are generally recruited in New York, but Dick Leserole, Phil Foster K. Smith, and teen-agers A. K. Sheppard and myself--Al Stauderman--are several of the localites who make fairly regular appearances on the show.

Writer Paul Monash and director Joe Behar concentrate on keeping shows logical and accurate down to the smallest detail. Director Behar keeps tabs on the finest points of each telecast, and his programs are remarkably smooth and free of hitches.

Rehearsals come off well also, as proven by the fact that one actor left for New York after the dress rehearsal, thinking that he had done the actual broadcast. He was brought back, to perform on the air, breathless, just in time



Remarked Director Behar: "They'd better appoint a Congressional committee to check up on the ATOM SQUAD!"

"They'd better appoint check up on the ATOM

The fen who attended the Philcon II, will probably remember the outfits worn by the cast and shown to all at the ball. These costumes are worn while handling radioactive material on the show.

Tune in some time--You'll become a regular watcher of--ATOM SQUAD!
--Al Stauderman

QP **HELP!** 99



JGF

EVEN THO WE'RE TEMATING
NORM WANSBOROUGH OF
WILTS, ENGLAND TO DO
A REGULAR COLUMN FOR
US -- WE STILL NEED
YOUR HELP!!

DAVIDOUSITY

by

DON
HOWARD
DONNELL

WHAT IS THE NEXT STEP
IN EVOLUTION?
HERE DON HOWARD DON-
NELL TELLS HIS OPINION

It was a subtle transformation. Minor in its implications--at first. Dr. Harvey J. Terrington noticed it, though. He really didn't believe it possible until further exhaustive investigation removed all doubt from his mind.

"Man is going through an evolutionary cycle that is evidently speeded up so greatly that its effects are noticed at this early date."

The sentence burst upon an audience that received it with first open astonishment, then shamefully apparent disbelief. Terrington looked over the doubting faces that swam in the sea of closely packed scientific brains and assorted entities of great esteem. He felt like laughing and the word fools was on the tip of his tongue. Idiots! Faced with the greatest development in scientific history and they sit back and bray mournfully like frustrated jackasses! Fools!

(illus: Shores and Fletcher)

"Surely, Terrington," came a voice from the ocean of sound and smell, you don't expect us to swallow that nonsense?"

"Nonsense, is it?" retorted Terrington, "I have proof to back up my statements!"

"Let us see it then!" boomed a multitude from the audience.

"See it you will! Look at each other and you will see the evidence! It is already apparent with you of the older genre." There was an excited hum as each examined his neighbor. Amid catcalls and hissing, Terrington heard someone call out:

"Madman! There is nothing unusual about us! We are the same." The audience rose, as was possible, and demanded that Terrington leave the clearing. When he hesitated, they pressed forward, as if to forcefully eject him from the area. He made one final comment as he prepared to leave.

"Listen to me! Nothing is stable! The fickle Earth allows nothing to remain as it is! There is constant change! Evolution moves on! We never are same. Don't you understand?" Eyes gleamed in the masses pressing around him. Long, broad foreheads wrinkled, then returned to normal. Man had rejected the thesis of Terrington. He turned and left.

Terrington walked. Bitterness and defeat stirred and mixed within him. So this is the way humanity reacts to change, he thought. Men were nothing but fools! Not able to face the fact that their bodily structure was swiftly becoming more erect and his bone structure lighter and taller. He could not face the fact that he would lose his tail within another hundred years, and his coarse hair another hundred or so years after that. Within five hundreds of years, he would walk on

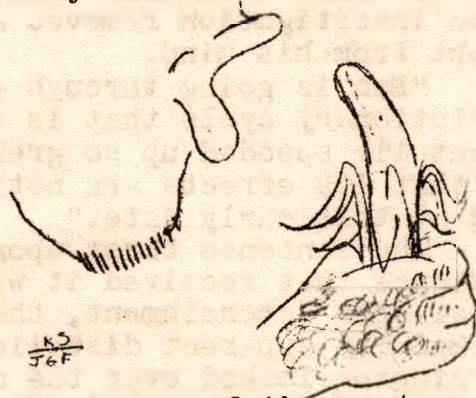
two feet. But no, the fact of this was too big a pill to swallow, so they rejected the truth. And now I am an outcast, Terrington thought.

Tiring of loping along on his four feet Terrington swung up into the trees, his thick muscles rippling with a primal appreciation of the fine but out-dated body nature had bestowed him.

He grunted in deep thought as he swung hand over hand through the trees in the deep of the jungle night.

The cries of the nocturnal creatures filled the heavy, stagnant air, awakening it to life.

--Don Howard Donnell



NS
JGF

IF :



YOU CAN'T UNDERSTAND WHY,
YOU RECEIVED A COPY OF HENCE
WITH A PINK COVER, AND A
FRIEND A GREEN COVER - DON'T
WORRY - THAT'S THE WAY
IT WAS PLANNED -

JGF

NICE KITTY

by

DOROTHY TOWLE

(illus: Shores & Fletcher)



DOES ANYBODY WANT TO
BUY A KITTEN?.....

"The fear caused by the increasing power of the Asian Alliance, which, since its formation in 1978, has been a source of consternation to the Europo-American League, was somewhat allayed today.

"Western Chancellor Pierre Clark's statement of policy today-- "Millions for weapons, but not a cent for Asia"-- the reason behind the lessening uncertainty, although it has many good points, is however in my opinion....."

Snapping the telescreen off, Rod Smythson surveyed the usual war scare headlines with dis-

taste and tossed the newspaper aside. After debating whether it was worth the effort or not, he rose and dialed for a bottle of Cola at his vending machine. He returned with it to his favorite armchair and began to read the latest issue of LIFE. The phone rang three short times before he had a chance to read the second page.

"Smythson speaking," he said, switching on the screen. As the image flickered into life he recognized the features of his division chief. "Oh, hello, Bronson. What's the matter? You

look worried."

"I can't tell you now. Can you come down to the office right away?"

"Chief, it's my day off. Can't it wait?"

"No. Get down here fast!"

Sighing mournfully, Rod replied, "All right, I'll be right there. See you." He switched off the screen and sighed again.

As he left his apartment, the door closed and locked behind him. He took the elevator down to the second floor below street level; there he stepped onto the north-bound slidewalk. Five minutes later he transferred to the east-bound walk and let it carry him to the underground entrance of "The Building". Stepping off the slidewalk, Rod entered the single door. The self-service elevator carried him down to the twenty-third level. He walked through long corridors with the confidence of one who had been there often. At a door marked "S-23-164" he stopped and waited for the electric eye to activate the mechanism which slowly swung the door open. He walked in and found himself in a large, tastefully furnished office.

"Here I am," he greeted the tall, thin, balding man who sat behind a large plastic desk.

"So I see, but what took you so long?" asked Bronson.

"I came as quickly as I could. What's wrong? Didn't that Greer case work out as planned?"

"No, it's not that." Peter Bronson, City Division Chief of the Europo-American Security Police regarded the man in front of him and wondered if Smythson could handle the assignment. He saw a good-looking, blond man of average size, whose only distinguishing feature was a pair of remarkably keen blue eyes.

Bronson spoke again. "We have been receiving certain disturbing reports, or perhaps I should say that E-A Intelligence has been receiving disturbing reports from their operatives in Asia. They con-

cern a new secret weapon that the Asians have developed."

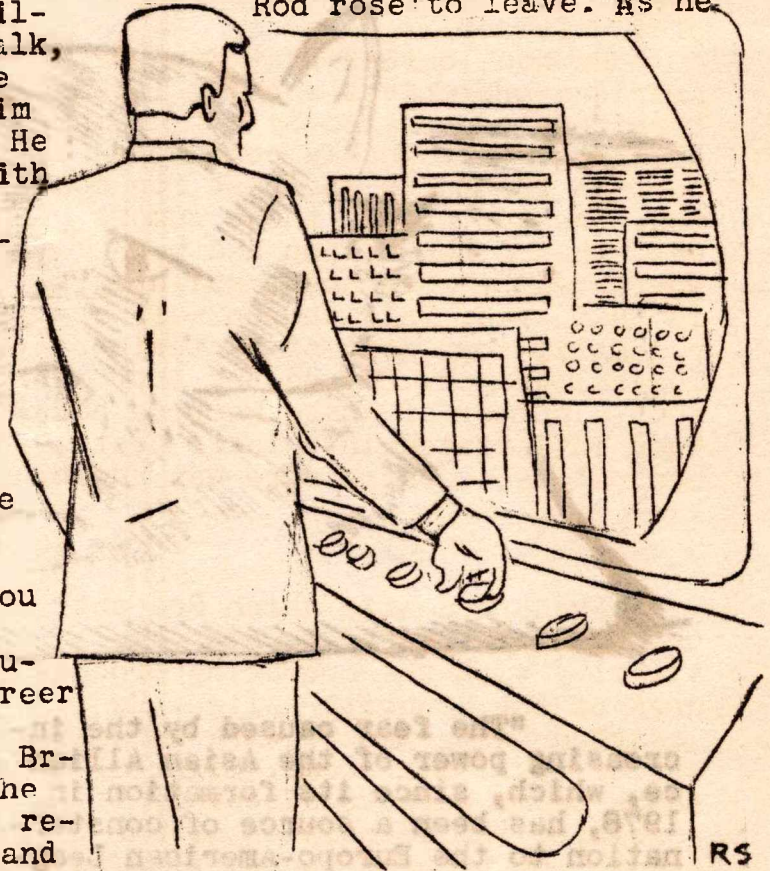
"Hold on," Rod interrupted. "Secret weapons are Intelligence's concern. Where do we fit in on this?"

"The reports say that the weapons have already been planted in certain Western nations."

"Oh, I see. Then our job is to find them---right?"

"Right. I'll give you as much information as we have on it. Here's the "info" folder. Read it over, and if you have any questions, hesitate to ask me. Because I don't know either. You'll have to find out for yourself the answers."

Rod rose to leave. As he



started to open the door, Bronson cleared his throat. "Oh, uh, Rod, there's one more thing."

"Yes, sir."

"These weapons are capable of destroying Western civilization."

"Need I say it is our job to see that they don't?"

"No, sir."

Bronson smiled. "Good luck."

The door closed softly behind Rod as he left Bronson's office.

An advertisement shimmered into life before his eyes. He noted that it was an ad for the burlesque house somewhere around Waterfront Street. It faded when he walked away from it.

He walked down the corridor swiftly. Opening the door to his own office, he walked in and sat down, not behind the desk but in an armchair. He removed the information from the folder and began to read it.

Several hours later, he made a mental summary of the contents of the folder.

He had learned that European-American operatives working in the territory controlled by the Asian Alliance had repeatedly come upon certain rumors in the past few months. The context of these rumors was that a new weapon had been perfected by government scientists in that area. This weapon was, apparently, some sort of bacteriological weapon. Beyond the fact that a number of these weapons had been infiltrated into large Western cities, nothing more was known.

The speed with which Rod set the wheels, attested to his familiarity with the operating procedures of the Security Police. He assigned sixty men to work as leaders of eight-man teams. Eight of these teams were to discover, if possible, the identities of the agents who brought the weapons into the League countries. Ten more teams were parachuted into Asian Alliance territory to work with the E-A Intelligence agents who had first reported the weapons existence. Rod and the rest of the teams were to correlate data and investigate suspicious activities in the major cities. Theirs was the job, too, of tracking down pertinent ru-

mors which might concern the weapon. Rod also enlisted the aid of the League Germ Warfare Division and the Public Health Commission. He asked these organizations to report any epidemics which might arise.

One morning several weeks later the phone in Rod's office rang. He switched on the screen and saw the pale frightened face of Simmons, head of Rome division.

"Good heavens, man, what's the matter with you?"

"They've got Rome," Simmons answered. "It just happened this morning. An epidemic is sweeping the city. It's horrible! You'll see a normal, healthy-looking person walking down the street; then suddenly he'll turn a ghastly pale. Then he'll turn his head to the side, his skin all broken out with bright red splotches. Within five minutes, he's dead. The hospitals are full of the dying and the dead. Doctors and nurses are dying at their posts. Everyone is fleeing the city! The roads are kept jammed with bodies. And the cause of the disease hasn't even been found yet! No one can stay alive long enough to investigate! We're all dead men here!"

Horrified, Rod watched Simmons hysteria grow. Before the screen went blank, he saw bright red spots appear on Simmons' face. Desperately he tried to resume contact with Rome, but to no avail.

Thinking furiously, he placed all Western news agencies under close censorship, lest word of the disaster leak out and cause panic. He ordered air-line companies to cancel all flights to Rome, giving as an excuse, the statement that war maneuvers were being held there. After informing Bronson of the situation, he saw to it that the territory sur-

rounding Rome was placed under martial law and ordered that the entire city be placed under strict quarantine. Hoping to learn more of the epidemic, he arranged for special bacteriological investigators to enter the area and make a report on the conditions in the city. He hoped that they would be able to discover both cause and cure for the disease. He also sent one of his own teams into the area to hunt for clues.

"Dead----every one of them. They went into the city as you ordered. Every conceivable precaution was taken to prevent contraction of the disease. Ultraviolet rays, sterile equipment, special clothing----we thought of everything, but they died anyway. We kept in touch with them by radio and television. We also took some films of what we saw on the TV screen; you can see them if you like, sir. The men hadn't been in the zone of contamination more than fifteen minutes before they began to die. That is all I can tell you, sir."

"Your troops, Colonel Vandeer, were stationed around the city at a five mile radius, and the investigators took a helicopter into the city from your headquarters. Is that correct?"

"Yes, sir. Do you wish to see the films now?"

"Yes, please."

The scene projected upon the wall of the darkened room was one of utter desolation and indescribable horror. The jerking of the picture due to the motion of the cameraman did not interfere with a clear view of the havoc the epidemic had wrought. The streets were littered with red-blotched bodies lying in grotesque positions. Not a single, living soul, with the exception of the investigators, was visible. Cars were found which, when their owners died at the wheel had crashed into buildings. Documented in this film was the swift death of the expedition's members.

The picture ended suddenly when the cameraman, dying, dropped his camera.

Rod switched on the lights and buried his face in his hands. A minute or so later, he asked the colonel if anyone outside the quarantine area had contracted the disease.

"No, sir. Was there anything else you wanted, sir?"

"No, colonel. You may go now and continue to carry out your orders."

Two weeks passed, and Bonn, Madrid, and Cairo had fallen prey to the mysterious epidemic. So far a strict quarantine had prevented the disease's spread, to some extent.

A knock at the door interrupted Rod's contemplation of the latest aspects of the case. "Come in." he called.

A man whom he recognized as a member of the Europeo-American Intelligence staff walked in. "Mr. Smythson?" he queried.

"Yes, that's right. Won't you sit down?"

"No, thanks, sir. I just wanted to deliver these reports to you. We received them from some of our men who have been working in Asia with some of your men." Having said this, he placed a gray folder on Rod's desk, turned on his heel and left.

Eagerly Rod grabbed the folder and removed the contents. Reading through the reports he learned that the operatives had ascertained that the weapon was a bacteriological bomb that, when exploded, hurtled germs through the air. "That figures," he thought. "We've learned that a small explosion was heard in Bonn and Cairo just before the epidemic broke out." Apparently a radio receiver of some sort was attached to the bomb. This receiver was attuned to a certain pattern of sound waves....a "trigger phrase". When this trigger phrase

was spoken in the vicinity of the bomb, the bomb was detonated. The whole apparatus was remarkably small. Nothing more concerning the nature or method of concealment of the bomb was known.

Rod groaned. This information had definitely not helped to clarify the situation. In fact, it rendered it even more hopeless. It meant that anyone could, by merely uttering a seemingly innocent phrase, unconsciously set off the explosion which would send a rain of death throughout the city.

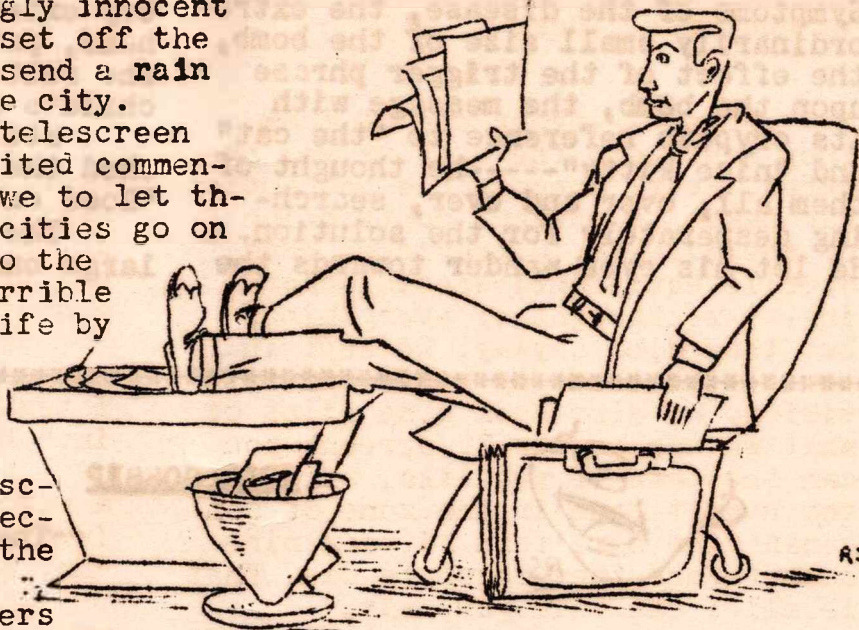
He turned on the telescreen in time to hear an excited commentator scream, "And are we to let this devastation of our cities go on unhindered? I appeal to the League to halt this terrible destruction of human life by sending all available medical personnel into the affected areas and thereby....!"

Shutting off the screen wearily, Rod reflected for a moment upon the impossibility of keeping news of the disasters from the Western people. "If it weren't for the fact that all our soldiers would probably die of the disease," he mused, "the League would declare war, but as it is.."

Another week passed, a week filled with daily accounts of dead and dying in one Western city or another. More and more security police, besides local police and civil defense forces, had been assigned to the heart-breaking task of trying to locate the weapon before it annihilated another city. It seemed to be all in vain, but careful searches of all buildings in the cities were made. Nothing suspicious was found.

Bacteriological warfare had completely disrupted the League. The few national governments that still functioned had been forced to

prevent all mass exoduses from the cities, because the wheels of industry had to continue turning. The government at Washington, D. C., had retreated to underground caverns in the Rocky Mountains. San Francisco, Los Angeles, Denver, Philadelphia, and many other large U.S. cities were pestholes of infection. Chaos reigned. Miraculously New York



the city in which "The Building" stood, had not yet been ravaged by the "spotted Death".

Rod was once again in his office. He had just received a report from his Asian operatives.

"We intercepted a letter (the report read) from one Asian 'V.I.P.' to another. The man who sent it wrote that he guessed the people of the Western world didn't think that 'The cat' was such a 'Nice kitty' now. Apparently 'The cat' is their code name for the weapon. Is that any help?"

"No, that isn't any help," Rod thought bitterly.

An hour later Rod decided to take a walk to clear his thoughts. He took the elevator up to the ground floor. Stepping out onto the street, he looked around at the taut, frightened faces of the crowd. Tension pervaded the air.

He walked on and on, not noticing where his path led him. As he trudged on, he mentally reviewed all the clues which had been uncovered. Minutes wore into hours, and still he plodded on.

All at once he came out of his reverie and discovered himself in the heart of the slums. Leaning against a lamp post, he absently watched a small boy playing with his blocks. Again Rod reiterated all the pertinent facts. Symptoms of the disease, the extraordinarily small size of the bomb, the effect of the trigger phrase upon the bomb, the message with its cryptic reference to "the cat" and "nice kitty"-----he thought of them all, over and over, searching desperately for the solution. He let his eyes wander towards the

little boy whom he had previously noticed. As he watched, a large, abnormally rotund cat softly approached the child.

Suddenly a frightening suspicion began to form in his mind. The mystifying reference to "the cat" and to the phrase "nice kitty"-----was it possible that...?

Fascinated as though by a cobra, Rod watched numbly as the boy extended one thin little hand, patted and stroked the cat, who rubbed softly against the child's short, stubby legs.

Still fascinated, Rod watched the boy, who was speaking: "Good cat, you're a nice kitty..."

The explosion was a rather large one.....---Dorothy Towle



IDLE GOSSIP

--The Editor



There are many people--fen--whom we would like to thank for their gracious help.

Naturally, the contributors, who gave of their time to help us get out the first issue. Without them there wouldn't have been any HENCE. (No cracks, please.)

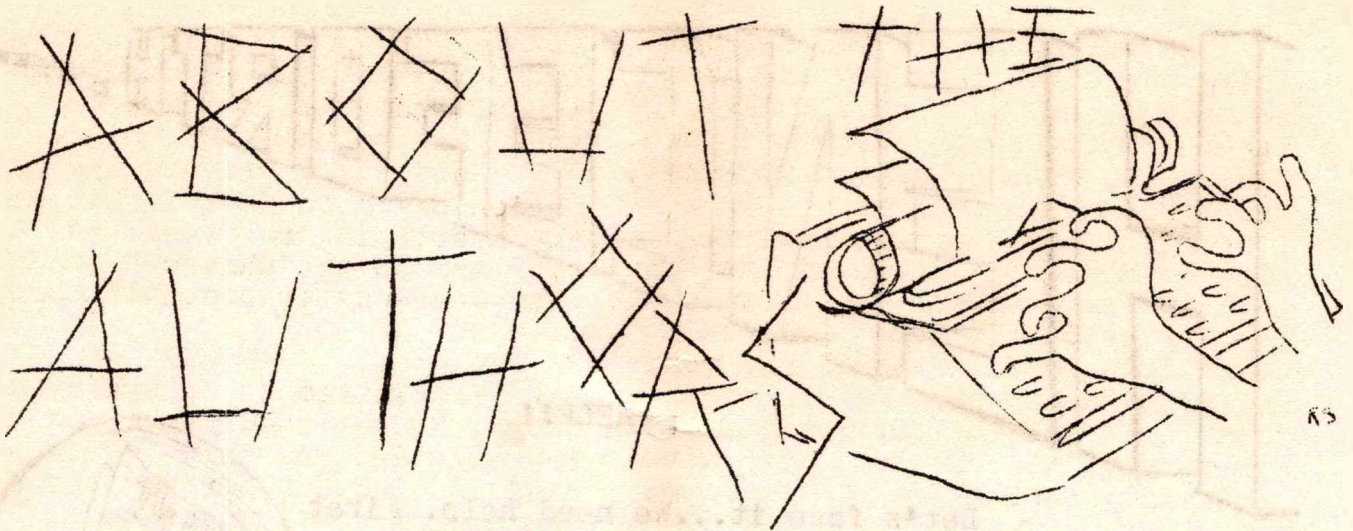
Now, here is a good spot for us to give several fanzines some plugs.....

Ray Thompson, 410 South 4th Street, Norfolk, Nebraska, turns out a good zine.....ECLIPSE. Inside the pages of this here EEK! (nickname) Ray features many columnists.....Dick Clarkson, Texfan Stewart, Bob Warner.....Fiction, too.

PEGASUS, 675 Delano Avenue, San Francisco 12, California, is Gil Menicucci's new printed zine. The first ish, out soon, contains an article by Mari Wolf, fiction by Don Howard Donnell, and Fred Malz, who did the cover drawing, has a yarn in there.

There are many other mags I want to plug..... so I'll just give a short bit about each.

STARLIGHT, Don Howard Donnell, 5425 Santa Monica Blvd., Los Angeles 29, Calif. (Apt. 203)...FAN WARP, Lyle Kessler, 2450 76th Avenue, Philadelphia 38, Pa... FIENDETTA, Charles Wells, 405 East 62nd Street, Savannah, Ga....The rest:you'll find the plugs scattered in the mag...



DON HOWARD DONNELL

Don, the editor of a successful new semi-prozine, is sixteen, lives in Los Angeles. He's quite a writer, having his work appear in such zines as QUIS CUSTODIET, now defunct, PEGASUS, and even in INSIDE! He also walks dogs.....

BOB WARNER

BREVIZINE states on their back cover that Bob is proud to appear in their pages, but we bet BREVIZINE is more proud to feature him. Bob is eighteen, lives in Bessmay, Texas, and writes for many zinesECLIPSE, TERRA, and now HENCE.....

AL STAUDERMAN

Maybe you haven't heard of Al....But he's a veteran actor at the high school age, already! He appears quite regularly on the show he tells about in his article.....ATOM SQUAD.

DOROTHY TOWLE

This is Dorothy's first appearance in any zine. She's sixteen, lives in the outskirts of Philadelphia. We hope this isn't the last story she writes for us.

WARREN F. LINK

At the time this is being written, Warren and I are both biting our fingernails, waiting to be voted in ((we hope)) to the Philadelphia Science Fiction Society. Warren is not a very active fan, except for letters to various promags.

RANDY SHORES

Randy is not a very active fan, but he can draw! Randy is a bonified, dyed-in-the-wool train fan, and has had articles published in various professional mags about models. We hope he hangs around.

HENCEFORTH

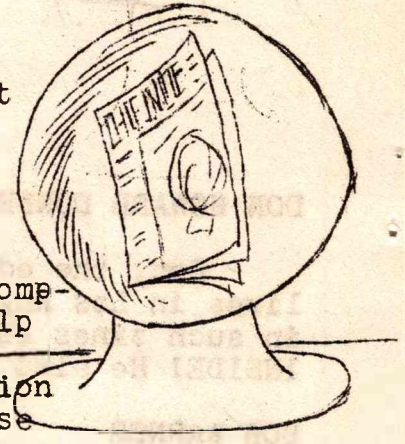
HELP!!

Let's face it...We need help. First off we need columnists, articles, letters, humor.....We need EVERYTHING!!

Right now we're trying to get Lyle Kessler to do an article or a regular column for us.....We're hounding the letter-carrier every day to see if anything came from Ray Thompson....I repeat...HELP!! This is a genuine yelp and plea from us.....

We realize we've got too much fiction and not enough of the good stuff, but puh-lease don't write and tell us that--Instead write us an article, or a letter for a letter-column o' sumpin'.....

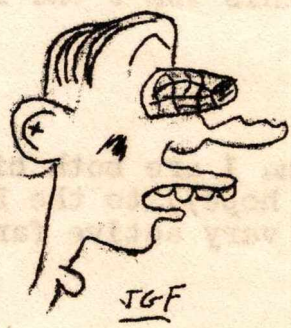
Many thanks if you help us, and many thanks if you just smile a little while reading HENCE.....Pretty please?



SNIDE

CP INSIDE IS ONE OF THE BEST, BELIEVE US 9/9

REMARKS



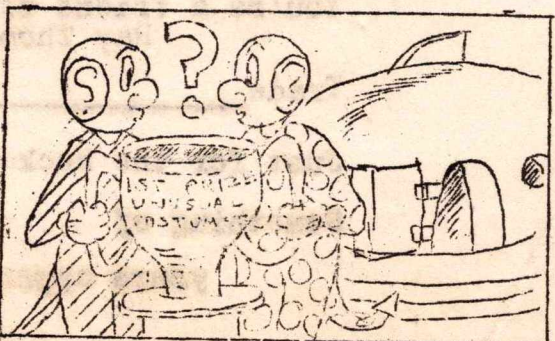
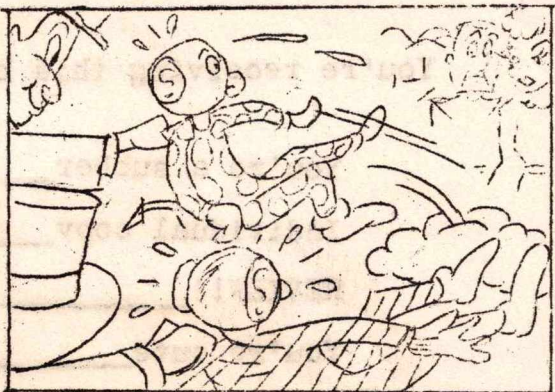
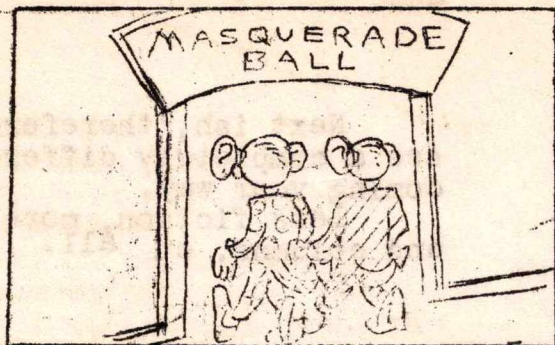
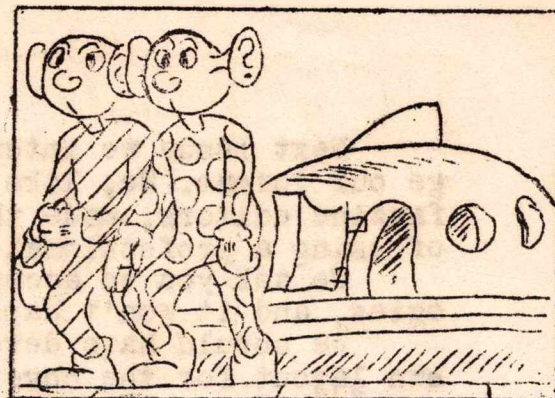
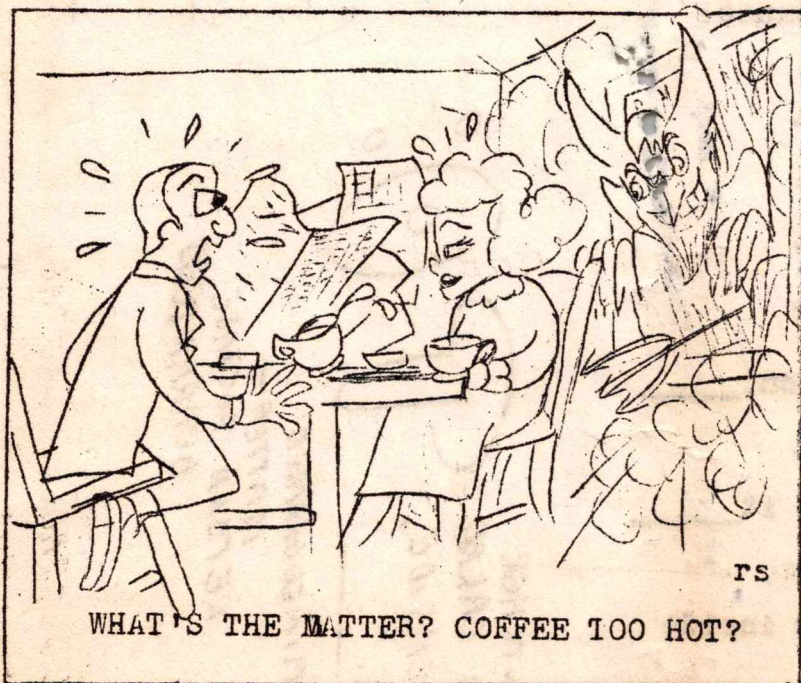
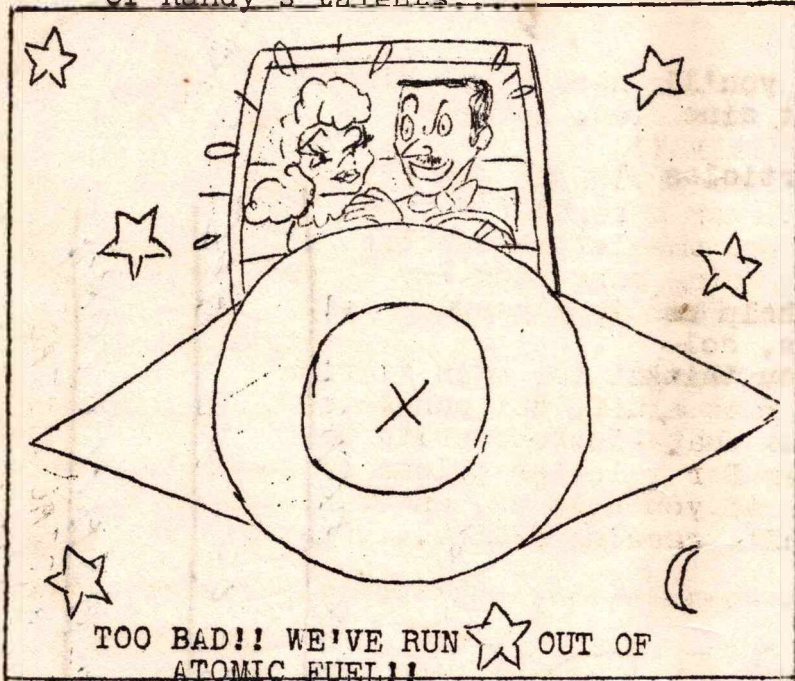
CP IT HAS BEEN SAID, THAT WITH ISSUES NUMBER 3 AND 4, INSIDE HAS PULLED FAR AHEAD OF THE FIELD— WE'RE WAITING FOR STARLIGHT #2. 99

CP STARMAG, GEORGE J. VIKSNINS, 4152 PARKSIDE AVE., PHILA. 4, PA., IS OUR IDEA OF GOOD, CLEAN FUN 99-22- EDITOR

RANDY AT RANDOM

Here are two one-shot cartoons and a five-panel strip by Randall Shores, a new-comer to STF.

We hope you have as much fun reading them as we have had unearthing them from the cavernous depths of Randy's talents.



Next issue we intend to change our format. We, like many other fanzine editors, made the mistake of using a professional style.

We ask you to accept our apologies, and it won't happen again.

We should have developed our own layout for the cover, contents and all

Next ish, therefore, you'll see a completely different zine coming your way.

Less fiction, more articles and columns, et all.

So, we trust you'll help us out with letters, articles, columns, and anything that you think will help.

Thanks a lot,

John

You're receiving this because:

You're a subber _____

Individual copy _____

REVIEW!! _____

You're cute _____

You're a friend of
Ray Thompson! _____

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Just for the heck of it ✓ _____

Something of _____
yours appears inside



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5503 28 AVE S.E.
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T.O.O.

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