



A WILD SUSPICION —
HATCHING AN
UNFOUNDED RUMOR

ORIENTBREEZE

No 4

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NO

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E D I T O R I A L

As you already know, this is ORIENTBREEZE # 4. It did not make the 28th mailing, since I got the 27th on the deadline day. I also had, and still have, much work to do, and not fannish work. So, from now on, my mailing comments will be one mailing late. There is not much I want to comment regarding this. Now I already know how N'APA functions. Really, it is all quite easy: I do my best to write the zine, then Fred Patten does his very best to pub it, and finally you read it and tear me to pieces. I am particularly grateful to those who do this last thing, since it would be very difficult indeed for me to do it myself! So, there is nothing more to say about it, I did already my part, if you are reading the zine it means that Fred has also done his, now go ahead and do yours. Enjoy your own criticisms!

A. L.

B R A H M I N ' S C A V E

PROBABILITY OF THE IMPROBABLE

Probability is certainly the most abused word of the present times. Fashions come and go constantly, and different periods of mankind's history can be determined by the predominating fashions in each of them. Some years ago, there was the fashion to wear straw hats and to have mustaches, which did no harm to anybody. The present period, with the great scientific progress, has developed another fashion, which unfortunately does harm to human intelligence. I mean the fashion of using scientific words without knowing their true meaning. And one of the words used with the greatest frequency, and also less understood, is probability.

Since our science has recognized the fact that absolute certainty cannot be achieved with our present research media, probability has come to constitute a sort of measuring stick for our knowledge. This is quite correct, since this viewpoint is perfectly applicable in most ways of life. A thing that has a high probability of being used, is worth manufacturing. On the other hand, something that has a low probability of being purchased by people, and a low probability of functioning as it is supposed to, is not worth wasting time and effort on it.

So far, there is no need of special understanding of probability. The most elemental understanding of this term is sufficient to see that it is used correctly in the foregoing examples. Problems really arise when people start using the term

probability instead of the word possibility, of which it is by no means an equivalent. There is a very subtle relationship between these two concepts. I have personally heard many people using the word improbable when they wished to prove, to themselves at least, that something they did not want to happen would never happen. Though the use of the term was quite correct, the way they interpreted it was not. Improbability does not mean impossibility.

Probability indicates vaguely the number of certain characteristic events that can happen for a determined series of other events of a more general nature. If it is probable for a certain characteristic to appear, it is also possible for it to appear. This is quite obvious. Yet, many people fail to realize that if something has little probability of happening, this still does not mean that it cannot happen. As long as there is some probability, no matter how low, if it is not completely zero, for something to happen, you may be quite sure that, sooner or later, it will inevitably happen.

If you are on a battlefield, for example, and select for yourself a place where there is only one probability in a million of a bullet hitting you, this does not mean that you are safer than anybody in another place with a high probability of being hit. If the enemy fires several millions of bullets during the battle, you have an excellent chance of being hit by several slugs, no matter how low the probability is for such an event. On the other hand, neither can another man, standing in a place with a high probability of being hit, be absolutely sure that this is going to happen, unless this probability is 100%, which never happens in actual events. Neither does probability indicate when a thing is going to happen, or to whom. In the assumed battle, you may get the very first three bullets the enemy fires, and then other three millions will not touch the place where you were standing, which is not going to make things easier for you. If there is an estimate that the battle will produce a certain percentage of casualties, it is impossible to tell whether any individual fighter is going to be among them or not.

But the point I want to make here is that low probabilities are still a confirmation and not a denial of the possibility. Just repeat the same action sufficient times, and you may be sure that the least probable thing will happen, though you will never know when!

I N C E N S E D R E A M

CRIME PREVENTION

After several weeks of unendurable suspense, jumping each time the phone rang, we finally relaxed at Headquarters when, at last, the nearly hysterical film producer's voice announced that his most famous movie star disappeared, together with some unidentified friend, on her way to the studios. The Chief Inspector was beaming when he gave us the great news. A patrol car with heavily armed men was immediately sent to the studios, in order to prevent the producer from paying the ransom which "Big Boy" Charlie would request. The film was almost ready, and the expenses had already been so great that it was unthinkable to start it again from the beginning with another star, and Charlie knew this. For several weeks he had been threatening the producer to abduct his star if he did not pay him what amounted to a whole capital. We told the producer to disregard the threats, and now finally "Big Boy" made the mistake that would either ruin all our reputation or end the gangleader's career. We were trying not to think about the first possibility.

In case my guess about your thoughts is correct, I should probably explain that the friend who disappeared together with the star was actually our man Jim Thorn, who

had just returned home after spending well over a year in India and Japan, studying the most advanced crime prevention methods, which, so far, had been kept secret from the West. He was accepted as a student only after swearing that he would never reveal the secrets he would learn. When he finally returned, he asked to give him the next assignment against "Big Boy" Charlie, and not to disturb him. In order not to create a diplomatic conflict with the countries where he had been studying, we had to agree.

When Jim, who was driving the star's little sportscar, saw Charlie's limousine blocking his road, he had to suppress a devilish smile. Four men with guns stepped from behind the car and ordered Jim to drive behind them and not to think about escaping. Since he had no gun, they could not take it away from him.

Their destination turned out to be Charlie's nightclub, completely deserted during the day. Both prisoners were conducted to one of the round tables, where the boss and his four bodyguards joined them. "Big Boy" Charlie was really big, with grey hair and cold, hard eyes which must have been brown some day, but now were in a state of discoloration that made them completely yellow. He grinned from ear to ear, baring his strong, white teeth, while he explained the situation to his prisoners. Jim looked at him with what seemed to be a great attention towards his words; but actually Thorn was trying to recall something he had seen during his permanence in the East. The gangster reminded him of something or somebody he had seen in India, but he could not locate it in his memory, which disturbed him. Where had he seen such cold and inexpressive eyes, and a mouth full of terrible teeth that seemed to smile, but actually were threatening? But the memory, though it seemed to be close at hand, kept eluding his efforts to bring it into a sharper focus.

Finally, "Big Boy" probably decided that he had explained everything that needed to be explained, though the whole situation was quite clear to everybody from the first moment, and kept silence in order to enjoy the effect his words would produce on his victims. Very slowly, Jim stretched his muscles and put his hands on the table. Paying no attention to their boss, he addressed the four gunmen at their table:

"Gentlemen, now I have something to say. As you have assured yourselves, I have no gun, but you probably also know that karate blows are quite deadly. So, please, don't try to interrupt me, since I can reach any of you before your hands will have time to reach your guns! And you," he turned to Charlie: "are going to fall asleep!"

This was too much and too unexpected for the powerful gangleader. His eyes blazed like molten gold, blood shot to his head, he stood up and roared at his baffled bodyguards, who did not know whether to shoot Jim or to laugh at what appeared to be a joke:

"Take this fool and ..."

The end of his orders was completely lost in the rolling thunder of Thorn's voice:

"You are falling asleep! You cannot keep your eyes open! ..."

For several seconds they were both talking simultaneously, "Big Boy" trying desperately to get some action from the petrified gangsters, and Jim rising slowly from the chair, pointing a finger at him and persisting in a voice that submerged all other sounds and rolled inexorably over the whole place, like huge tidal waves of sound that had nothing in common with his usual voice:

"You are falling asleep right on your feet! Your eyelids are heavy as lead! You can keep your eyes no longer open! Your feet refuse to hold you! ..."

The glow in Charlie's eyes faded, his voice lost its loudness and drifted off into silence, his feet bent, and he fell heavily on the chair, his lips moved as if to keep speaking, but no sound came from them. He gathered all his remaining, and rapidly vanishing, will power and bared his teeth in a fierce snarl. And all of a sudden, Thorn remembered where he had seen something similar, and also almost as close to himself as now. It happened several months ago, when he decided to take a bath in the great river Ganges... His hand made a sign in the air.

- "You are becoming a crocodile!" he proceeded: "A very sleepy crocodile! ..."

And something very strange began to happen to Charlie. His skin darkened and his features changed. These changes extended themselves to his whole body, his face extended itself forwards incredibly, scales formed on his skin...he was slowly becoming a crocodile. Only his eyes remained the same as before, but now they looked more at home in their new body than on a human face. He slumped heavily from his chair, while Jim gave him his final instructions:

- "Now sleep for a while and meditate in your dreams about your pleasant Saurian past!"

Before he could finish his words, there were loud crashes all around, as Charlie's bodyguards stumbled over chairs and tables while running away in all directions.

On their way back to the studios, Jim was explaining to the surprised movie star:

- "He is going to regain his human consciousness before his shape..."

This was the end of the famous gangleader "Big Boy" Charlie. Right now he is a very respected and law abiding citizen, busy organizing what he calls Foundation for Kindness towards Reptiles, and everybody wonders where he got such an idea.

LOTHUS FROM GANGES

FLOWER OF HOPE

I have a flower in my garden,
Neither a daisy, nor a rose;
And though I don't know how to name it,
With every day I like it more.

It moves from East to West its blossoms,
Day in, day out, and all day long,
And when the sky is gray and clouded,
It points towards the hidden Sun.

KALI'S VEIL

MYTHOLOGY - HYPNOSIS

SENA: I keep liking this zine! I found the mythology very interesting, and shall be looking forward to the article about "orenda" in nextish. It has been interesting to find out that the American Indian mythology also speaks about parthenogenetic pregnancy, which is in no way monopolized by Christians. Hindu mythology also deals with the same phenomenon. For a thing to be stated in so many different parts of the world, there

should be something to it. Another interesting item: in the Indian mythology, animals change into men in order to seduce a girl, while in Greek myths anthropomorphic Gods adopt animal appearances with the same purpose.

KAYMAR # 12: I enjoyed THE MAN FROM THE TIME MACHINE particularly. In your editorial you say: "much of the old will never come back again". Just have a little patience. After WW-III even the Stone Age will be back!

NIEKAS # 14: I am with you regarding self-hypnosis. It is far more dangerous than any amateur can imagine. Besides, a hypnotized person sees what he is told to see; ergo, a self-hypnotized person probably sees what he expects to see. So much about that dream-world. Did any of you ever hear about spontaneous abreaction in hypnosis? It can be extremely dangerous if it happens in self-hypnosis, and for that matter, it is also dangerous in any trance induced by an amateur!

RASTY # 4: A really good article! It makes a foreigner see that not all Americans are blind, both physically and mentally! Congratulations!

THE POPPY SEED # 2: I may not like particularly the contents; but it's a zine, and therefore deserves to be in this column, since this is a rarity in N'APA.

THE PAT ANSWER: A good zine! Like any wunderkind, it may become a genius. Please, don't let the self-appointed N'APA advisors ruin it!

ROMANN # 7: Desperate effort to be a zine! Keep it that way, and you will reach your goal!

FEMWLORT # 4: I like the poems! Good artwork by Bjo Trimble, Bill Reynolds, Johnny Chambers and Don Simpson.

COBRA'S BITE

RESPECT - ZINES

TRANSITRON # 3: No matter what he did, and still less what was done in his name and without his knowledge, you must respect you-know-whom for being a real man, which is a quality you have shown to be unable to recognize when you meet it.

Regarding many other zines, though not all, I did my best, and wasted a precious time, to find the thing that made their authors think that they were writing zines; but could not find it!

If your zine was not mentioned in Kali's Veil, this still does not mean that my last remark was aimed at you!

MOUNTAIN AIR

VODKA - REALITY - SERIOUSNESS

DAVID K. PATRICK, I don't know whether you belong here with your comment. Vodka can be exported to other planets, Earth has no law against this, yet. Drinking vodka without getting drunk does not mean being non-human. I can do it myself quite well, and I assure you that I am very human, at least in the worst sense of the word. I have also met many humans, in the same sense, who also could. Anyway, I liked your comments, what else?

FELICE ROLFE, well, you finally did it. Comment on my zine, I mean, not the horror you probably imagined. Thank you for your indication regarding the word "incense". As you can see, in this I wrote it the way you like to see it, which proves once more the already known truth that there is nothing a man would not do to please a beautiful woman! Though, both ways are correct, you know. I don't want to repeat what I told you in my personal letter, and to which I have seen no answer, yet. You seem to have a very good scientific background. You scored one point for yourself in remembering the organic macromolecules, which I did not think about when writing that article. "Believing" does not imply that the matter is not open to question, it implies accepting something we realize that we don't know. If I say that I believe in your sincerity, I just want to say that I accept the postulate that you are sincere, since I cannot know it for sure, but it still remains open to question and even to complete change, whenever facts would allow me to know that the contrary is true, and this is nothing personal, just an example. I have also seen diffraction patterns made by who-knows-how-many electrons, but I still have not seen just one, single, isolated electron, if it exists at all. If we, or our scientists, were sufficiently scientifically minded, the first thing they should prove is that the images our brain composes of the impulses coming from the sense organs agree with the reality of the world around us, since if this is not so, we can as well forget all about the so-called facts or evidence our science offers. Before you blow your top, suppose I hypnotize you and tell you that you are eating an ice-cream. You will do all the movements pertinent to this act, and experience all the correct sensations, though they will be produced from within your brain and not by means of the sense organs. Now, the point is: when you wake up, you say that you have eaten an ice-cream, because you have perceived doing it, while I shall say that you have not, just because I did not see the ice-cream while you were eating it. Why should my statement originating from only one sense, and being negative (you know there is no such thing as negative perception), be accepted as truth, and yours, coming from several senses simultaneously, be rejected as hallucination?

TOM DUPREE, by the time you read this, you will already have received the story. I was not aware that the first one had good acceptance. Thank you for your kind comments.

PAT McDONNELL, I am very grateful for your opinion, and hope that it will not change.

DONALD L. MILLER has made some comments for which I can only be grateful. Also started a very interesting discussion about force, energy, motion, etc., and managed to interrupt himself before writing a whole volume.

K. MARTIN CARLSON says that I am too serious about things. It's the best joke I heard so far..., I'm still laughing! I agree with you about the neofen, and do hope that they improve.

CAROL MURRAY, I am grateful for your liking anything at all in my zine. This is something worth mentioning, in view of some other kind of comments. I am sorry to say, that I never managed to learn to write free verse, or to consider it as a verse at all!

S W A M P R O T

RATIONALIZING

JIM SANDERS asks: "Dr. (of what, please?)." I answer: "None of your business, thank you!" Your comments are just what had to be expected from a marijuana advocate. Discuss your case with your local police!

LON ATKINS, I am not sure that you belong here, but since you disagree with me, I'll better leave you in this column, just in case. The savage's "test of experience" of

his explanation is as valid for him as is our scientist's for you. The savage rationalizes several occurrences, and so does the scientist. Both explanations are completely valid and general for their respective surroundings. The only difference is that the scientist has a somewhat wider scope of his surroundings.

ART HAYES, I did not say that Mathematics is irrational, I just said it was artificial, which does not prevent it from being logical and all the rest. What I tried to imply, and most of you failed to understand, was that in order to understand Nature, we should use natural means and not artificial ones.

ALAN MANN, your feelings toward my zine are fully understood and returned for yours, of which I like the cover, but nothing else!

- THE END -