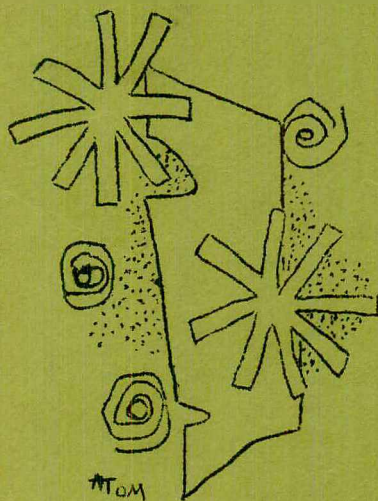


TEN YEARS IN LIMBO

I will run off these stencils now. I have just been looking them over, and have no difficulty in realizing, merely by considering their condition, that a long time has passed since they were cut. Many of them are somewhat wrinkled and all of them are bleached a little from the light of the tomorrow that has overtaken them. The corflu sprinkled over them here and there seems to have collapsed in places. Some of the stencils -- not entirely in sequence, for some reason -- have been sunstruck along the right side from lying naked on my desk beside the window, back on Prince street in summer 1966, when I earlier intended to print them. When they were first cut, the events described in the words embedded in stencil wax were recent history. It was a very different world from that of 1974. In those days, when I glimpsed a man with long hair and beard on the campus or the streets of Berkeley I knew with perfect certainty he was (see p. iii)



AUTUMN 1964

EBE'TE NOE'ERE
NUMBER 10

(Continued from front cover)

Walter Breen. Now there are at least five hundred men in town with heads as shaggy, and indeed every man (except me) has longish hair and/or whiskers. (Certainly I'm a nonconformist. What are you, chum?)

Fads and fashions are not important in themselves. Whether hair is worn long or short is of little significance. The next crop of rebels will wear short hair. But the fuzzy appearance at present of American males symbolizes a major social upheaval that has taken place in the ten years since the following document was written. The changes that have shivered the world have also trembled through the microcosm. In fact, fandom's features have become so distorted that we can hardly recognize the old face, as revealed in these stencils. The events described here

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could no longer manage to happen in today's fandom, though this is no improvement. They couldn't happen, but worse things might.

The outward aspect of things has changed in these ten years, and these changes are striking enough. Some of the people mentioned here have gotten divorced. Some are married to someone else. Many are living far from the city or street where they lived in 1964. In at least two instances, people mentioned here have died. The youngsters who cavort on these pages have grown up in the intervening years.

But the underlying changes are even more striking than those things altered by the mere passage of time. They are not altogether welcome changes, either, as one example will attest. An attendee at the July 1973 Westercon told me of meeting there two or three fans or ex-fans who are now considered "mentally disabled" by the San Francisco welfare department, presumably because of the effect of pot, LSD, or heroin, one deleterious result of the supposed "youth revolution." With many fans, it would be difficult to note any loss of mental powers, but two of these fans were once among our most promising.

Since this account deals with a convention of ten years ago, it is instructive to contrast that con with present ones. The number of cons held each year has proliferated incredibly in the interval. Cons have

gotten bigger, and incomparably more commercialized, with the people who masterminded them afterwards squabbling over sums amounting to many thousands of dollars. Since they are now big business, cons have become more authoritarian, with greater power at the top and harsher police tactics below, to protect their investment and assure large profits. After reading Milton Stevens' "Convention Pig" (The Passing Parade #2, November 1972), I can see that the Burns cops mentioned in the following pages were a very mild and innocuous manifestation indeed.

Ten years have passed since the document below was written. The times have changed -- for the worse, for the most part -- and we find that we have changed too.

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THIS REPORT on my unofficial participation in Pacificon II, held in Oakland, California, during the Labor day weekend of 1964, was written in September and October of the same year, immediately after the event. Having missed the FAPA mailing for which it was intended (#109), for reasons I no longer remember, this report was further revised and then dummied in Albuquerque in December 1964. Most of it went on stencil after I arrived in the Bay area in January 1965, and thus most of these pages are run from stencils at least nine years old. As I say, they are beginning to look a little venerable.

My report, written and stenciled so long ago, is being published in unexpurgated form despite any second thoughts I may have after all these years. From looking over the original dummy, however, I note that a few passages were prudently omitted between dummy and stencil. The only deletion of this sort that requires notice is one that clarifies the passage on page 21 describing Al Halevy "standing behind his nose, blinking his bruised eyes." This refers to an injury suffered by Al at the con which damaged the referred-to parts of his physiognomy. The incident was mentioned in the dummy, but was removed during the stenciling presumably because I decided that the passage was (a) gratuitous insult, and (b) an account based entirely on hearsay.

I wrote this con report from notes I had scribbled in Oakland and San Francisco during the Pacificon itself, which I had gone to great pains to make as complete and accurate as possible. Later I compared impressions and verified facts with other Pacificon attendees and/or observers, particularly Kevin Langdon, Bob Lichtman, and Avram Davidson, although none of these people is responsible for any inaccuracies that may have crept into this account despite all my efforts.

I also checked my impressions of the convention against those of Gretchen Schwenn, and with her permission made free use of her own account of the convention, written as a letter to John Boardman, dated 24 September 1964. Her account was published, in part, in Sagana/Pillycock/Dagon as "Ten Seconds That Shook the Pacificon." A few passages in "The Fan on the Mezzanine" are taken almost verbatim from the carbon copy of her original letter.

Despite any minor errors that may be detected, I certify that this account is as accurate as I can make it, and in particular the descrip-

tion of "the battle of the mezzanine" is (aside from Gretchen's) the most authentic that has ever appeared in print. In this connection I must reject Dick Lupoff's ill-conceived theory (stated in 1964) that participants in such an event cannot attain accuracy in telling about it simply because they are participants. Deliberate falsehood is another matter, but it is bystanders, mere witnesses, who are inaccurate observers because they are bewildered by sudden action and are not certain of what is happening. This is part of the point of demonstrations in psychology classes in which one man "shoots" another with a banana and the startled eyewitnesses are asked to write a report on the occurrence. The participants are perfectly able to say what happened; not so the witnesses. I was a participant in the "battle," though not as active a one as Gretchen. To double-check my own impressions, I have drawn upon Gretchen's account for that part of my description where I was not immediately present and was only a witness myself.

I have often heard of irresponsible and inaccurate reporting, but till I began to hear and read stories purporting to describe the so-called battle of the mezzanine I scarcely realized the extent of such stuff and nonsense in the fan press.

Take Elinor Busby's account of the event in Salud #10, in the November 1964 FAPA mailing:

...One report has it that Bob Buechley tried to pin a badge on Gretchen, another report, that he tried to push Kevin away and his hand fell on Gretchen instead. She cried, "He touched my breast!" and clawed his face. Then she grabbed him by the leg and threw him on his back, all the while yelling, "Help! He's killing me!" while Buechley asserted, "Look, I'm not even touching her!" and Redd Boggs demanded, "Kill him! Kill him!" As I say, I wasn't an eyewitness, and it's probably just as well. As reported, it was quite an exciting scene; the actual facts are very likely drabber.

Most accounts have Gretchen "clawing," "scratching," or "throttling" Buechley, probably because everybody assumes that's the way all women fight or defend themselves. Here is Ed Meskys' account, in Niekas #9, page 74:

Gretchen Schwenn, a member, refused to pick up her con badge at the registration desk and so the Sergeant at Arms tried to get her to leave the con area. The rule was that only people with badges would be allowed to remain on the Mezzanine. Boggs and Langdon were there too, and a scuffle developed between them and the SaA, for they were not members and refused to leave. The way I heard it, Gretchen then pounced on Buechley, the SaA, knocked him over, and started to scratch and strangle him before she could be pulled off.

It is completely untrue that Gretchen either scratched or tried to "strangle" Buechley. While she did not pick up her con badge, she later consented to carry it in her pocket, only refusing to wear it on her sweater. The alleged scuffle between Buechley and myself is fantasy; no such thing took place.

George Scithers, in a Pacificon report published by Richard Eney in Avanc #8, pulled out all the stops on the scratching theme:

Boggs, Langdon, and Gretchen Schwenn appeared on the convention's floor...and refused either to join the con, display a membership badge, or leave. After a long argument...Bob Buechley moved in and invited the trio to leave....Reaching out to put a hand on Langdon's shoulder, he brushed the Schwenn woman and she went for him with fingernails bared. Drew blood, too. In what has been inaccurately described as a fistfight but was actually a shoving, wrestling, and (on the Schwenn woman's part) clawing match, Bob grabbed her wrists to keep her from scratching him any more....It says something about Boggs' and Langdon's competence that Bob was able to fend off both of them even with his hands immobilized.

Despite the tone of absolute certainty in Scithers' account he is obviously imagining most of the details. It says a good deal about Scithers' competence as a reporter that he can transform the whole fight into a "clawing match" on Gretchen's part by totally ignoring the fact that she singlehandedly threw a big man down on his back. Or was it less incompetence than malice that caused such fantastic inaccuracy?

Similar errors, though less malicious in their telling, appeared in two brief mentions of the "battle" in John Boardman's fanzines. In Dagon #10 Boardman reports: "Gretchen Schwenn has sent me an account of what happened when she and her friends dropped in at the CopCon. The trouble began when Buechley tried to pin a Con badge on her and let his hand wander...." In Knowable #8, he added: "Buechley, acting at Halevy's instigation, apparently tried to mix business with pleasure by grabbing hold of Gretchen at a point where most women do not care to be grabbed by men they haven't been introduced to. Gretchen hung one on Buechley and was about to follow up her counterattack when several other fans broke up the struggle." These inaccuracies were corrected in Gretchen's "Ten Seconds That Shook the Pacificon," published by Boardman. Buechley did not "let his hand wander." And Gretchen no more "hung one on" him than she clawed, scratched, or tried to throttle him.

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3 DESPITE FIERCE COMPETITION from George Scithers (quoted above) Dick Lupoff won the brass goboon for writing the most inaccurate account of the battle of the mezzanine ever to hit the fan press. It appeared in Sam #12, January-February 1965, as part of an article called "A Con Report for Steve Stiles." Editor Stiles said he had "ripped the guts out of Dick Lupoff's con report," and one wonders how many more inaccuracies, distortions, misstatements, exaggerations, and deceptions may have appeared in the original passage concerning the "battle." A complete version of the con report appeared in Lupoff's Opo #11 through #17 in distributions of APA F, but I have not read this. The edited version of the description of the "battle" is sufficiently inaccurate and irresponsible, in any case. So determinedly inaccurate is it, indeed, that again one begins to suspect malice: otherwise, one would think Lupoff would strike a solid, ringing fact every once in a while, just by sheer chance.

In Spirochete #6, 22 April 1965, in the twenty-seventh APA L distribution, I reprinted Lupoff's account of the battle of the mezzanine, passage by passage, together with my own comments and corrections. For the record, here in the lefthand column is Lupoff's account (taken from Sam #12), along with my own annotations (here somewhat revised from Spirochete) in the righthand column:

"One night -- Pat said it was Friday, and I believe her -- "

"several boycotters decided that they would enter the mezzanine area and attend the open party in the con suite."

"Bob Lichtman came, saw a plain-clothes Burns man's badge, and left quietly."

"Gretchen Schwenn and Redd Boggs arrived en couple"

"and were met at the door by Bob Buechley, the (feh!) sergeant-at-arms."

"The precise details of what took place between Gretchen and Bob are unfortunately denied to history, for each participant and/or witness to the incident seems to have a startlingly different story to tell,"

"ranging all the way from a violent and unprovoked attack of Bob upon Gretchen, to a violent and unprovoked attack of Gretchen upon Bob."

"As nearly as I can piece it together from descriptions by Dick Ellington and Al haLevy,"

Pat Lupoff contributes one of the few facts in the whole account!

Perhaps some boycotters decided to enter the mezzanine and attend the open party. Gretchen, Kevin, and I had no intention of attending the party, and I object to the implication that attendance at the party automatically followed entrance onto the mezzanine, which was a public area.

Lichtman told me later that this was not quite the case.

Wrong. There were three of us together: Kevin Langdon, Gretchen, and myself. We entered and left together.

Wrong. The mezzanine had no door. Presumably the con suite did, but we did not try to enter that. We did not see Bob Buechley till perhaps half an hour after we first entered the mezzanine.

In all fairness, then, since Dick Lupoff did not himself witness the "battle," it would seem proper to print some of the versions favorable to Gretchen, Kevin, and myself. It seems odd that Lupoff decided arbitrarily to print a version that made the con committee appear in a favorable light.

If the facts were as Lupoff presents them, how could there have been an "unprovoked" attack either way?

Lupoff's account is widely at variance with the descriptions given Gretchen and me by Ellington and Halevy verbally at a later date.

"Buechley barred Gretchen and Redd from the con suite."

"They insisted on entering, at least on temporary passes. Buechley agreed, and offered temporary badges."

"Now, here is where the story gets very unclear."

"Either Gretchen or Redd standing behind her, refused to pin the badge on her dress / his shirt. Buechley either attempted to pin a badge on Gretchen's dress or to reach across her shoulder and pin one on Redd's shirt."

"In either case, Gretchen took exception to what she regarded as an unwelcome familiarity ("How dare you TOUCH MY BREAST!")"

"and flew at Buechley's throat, knocking him to the floor, kneeling over his chest and throttling him."

"Redd attempted to race to Gretchen's (!) rescue but was held back by Halevy and/or other bystanders."

At the time, I confess, I was not even aware that there was such a suite, or that it was somewhere nearby. Nor did I ever learn just where it was located. Neither Gretchen nor I entered any suite at all, then or at any time during the whole con. In any event, we were standing near the middle of the mezzanine, nowhere near the entrance to any suite.

As the con committee well knew, Gretchen was a paid-up Pacificon member (membership #10), and thus had a perfect right to enter the con suite, wherever it was, had she wished. She did not wish. Had Buechley or any of the committeemen tried to give me a "temporary badge," I would have thrown it in his face. Nobody tried.

Only here, huh? Everything so far is pure crystal, of course.

Buechley offered no badges to us. However, Al Halevy did attempt to pin Gretchen's duly-paid-for badge on her without touching her. He was unsuccessful. Of course Al did not try to pin badges on Kevin or me, since we were determined non-members of the Pacificon.

Can anyone who knows Gretchen even imagine her protesting in such a shocked and decorous manner?

Buechley, attempting to eject Gretchen, even though she was a bona fide member of the Pacificon, grappled with her and tried to drag her toward the stairway. She threw him down, and they fell in a heap, but Gretchen did not kneel over his chest. She did not try to throttle him.

I won't swear that someone didn't try to stop me, but if so he was unsuccessful. Nobody held me back, and I ended up with my face only inches from Buechley's.

"After Gretchen had been pulled from Buechley's quivering body,"

Nobody pulled them apart. Both Gretchen and Buechley got up separately and without assistance.

"she and Redd either stalked off in a huff, or were thrown out, or left in their leisure and with full dignity, depending on whom you believe."

We were thrown out, but not bodily. We hardly left "with full dignity"; we had been ejected from a public part of the hotel for no other reason than that we were on Walter Breen's side and against the con committee.

Lupoff implies that we were trying to force our way into the convention and that we had to be prevented from entering the con suite -- since presumably we were burning with thirst that could be quenched only by the free drinks being dispensed there. Nothing could be further from the truth, as I attempt to make plain in my own account. When the con committee sicced sergeant-at-arms Buechley onto us, we were peacefully chatting with friends and harming no one.

Let me summarize by stating three unequivocal facts about the battle of the mezzanine:

1. It was not an attempt to remove non-members from the convention area, since Gretchen -- the first person the sergeant-at-arms attacked -- was a paid-up Pacificon member. None of us attempted to stray from the public part of the hotel.

2. It was not an attempt to prevent us from entering the convention suite, since none of us ever made any attempt to enter the suite.

3. It was not a drunken brawl. None of us, Gretchen, Kevin, myself, had quaffed so much as a thimbleful of beer or any other alcoholic beverage -- the convention's free drinks, or any other. We drank none of their free drinks at any time during the whole convention.

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NEITHER FRIEND NOR FOE will be pleased to see this account in print at this late date, and I apologize for any hurt feelings on anybody's part. I know that it is fashionable to gloss over the Boondoggle affair, and not to mention it, if possible, as one tries to avoid embarrassing subjects of any sort. It is even viewed as Correct to minimize the importance of the event in fandom, and to minimize the character of the opposition to the Pacificon committee.

Greg Shaw, writing about a party at Bill Donaho's house on Ganges avenue in El Cerrito over Labor day weekend 1970 -- the sixth anniversary of Pacificon II -- remarked gleefully on the presence there of various people who had been at sharp odds with Donaho in 1964. Party attendees included Bill Blackbeard, Miriam and Jerry Knight, Greg and Jim Benford, Pat and Dick Ellington, and others who fit into that category, including Gretchen and myself. I have visited Donaho's place on several occasions; he has been here a few times, and I have seen him at various other times during these many years. I have briefly met Rogers

and Stark of the con com at other times, and at the party Greg mentions Gretchen and I chatted amicably with -- of all people -- Al Halevy.

However, Greg did not allude, as he should have, to the people in the Bay area who, after all these years, do not speak to the one-time con committeemen. In fact, the burden of bitterness from the Boondoggle affair is still not entirely lifted from the part of fandom I am able to see (if dimly). Part of the reason I have been inactive in fandom since 1964 traces directly to the Boondoggle. (I even avoided the 1968 world-con held in Berkeley at the Claremont, only a few minutes' drive from my home, which was headed by some of the former Pacificon committeemen.)

Given the supposed divinity of forgiveness, I should think that the people who have resumed friendship with Bill Donaho should be praised rather than laughed at. I only wish that there would have been more of a growth of tolerance on the other side. Jack Speer's gratuitous and malicious Full Length Articles #6, postmailed in FAPA a year after the Boondoggle affair, was unfortunately a rather typical example of how some of the anti-Breen people hold animosity. Another, more recent, example is a postcard I received in July 1973 from Richard Eney.

Bill Donaho, to do him justice, has at least made some gestures toward apologizing and making amends (see the appended bibliography) -- gestures which are said to have infuriated a number of people on "his" side. He remarked in conversation that the Boondoggle affair was "not in character" for him, and I agree that it was not. That was one of the reasons why some of us found it so shocking. It is a little late for fandom in general to forgive Donaho -- presuming that it hasn't -- because he is no longer active, and his giant Gestetner is silent.

While having friendly feelings toward Donaho in light of his post-Pacificon statements in print and in person, I have no intention of forgetting the whole thing, if forgetting implies a readiness to give in and say, either, "The con com was right," or "Who cares whether they were or not?" The issues involved in the Boondoggle affair are still important.

I am under no illusion that publication of this document will change anybody's opinion now. Probably it wouldn't have, even if it had been printed in the autumn 1964 mailing, as intended. There really isn't much one can say to people like Mike Deckinger, who after reading George Scithers' Pacificon report, wrote in Godot (again, see bibliography): "I didn't witness it [the "battle"], of course, but from various accounts I've read...I'm convinced that Miss Schwenn was very much in the wrong, and if Buechley belted her after this nonsense, then good for him, say I." Such people are hardly worth bothering about. In any case, I am not publishing "The Fan on the Mezzanine" and this long introduction with any intent or hope of convincing anybody about anything. I am just publishing it for the record.

-- BOGGS

Berkeley, California

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THE MAGAZINE OF LITERATURE, SCIENCE, ART, AND POLITICS

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Redd Boggs, editor

Autumn 1964

"Improve every opportunity to express yourself in writing, as if it were your last." -- Thoreau, Journal, 17 December 1851.

The Story of the Renaissance Popes, Told for Young Children.

THE FAN ON THE MEZZANINE

or, How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Con

1: Prolog to a Report

"Haw haw haw!" Bruce Pelz yelled at me as I walked into the Hotel Leamington coffeeshop accompanied by Gretchen Schwenn and Kevin Langdon. "Look who's attending the convention after swearing up and down that he wasn't coming!"

"I'm not attending the convention," I said. I was not attending the convention. I did not attend the convention. I have not attended a convention since the Cinvention in 1949.

Prior to February 1964 my plans and attitudes concerning the convention had vacillated wildly. I turned down Dick Lupoff's offer to participate in the fan editors' panel at the Pacificon on grounds that I might not attend the con. Being slightly broke and owning a car that limped badly when driven even as far as Garden Grove, I wasn't very optimistic that I could attend even if I wanted to. However, I was still desirous of attending, and I hoped some means could be found so that I could attend my first convention in 15 years.

After February 1964 and my perusal of Bill Donaho's The Great Breen Boondoggle or All Berkeley is Plunged into War -- I never received my own copy of this "Do Not Print, Do Not Quote and Most Especially Do Not Blab My Name When You Mention This Letter Substitute" fanzine and the copy I first read was handed me by Walter Breen himself, who held it gingerly at arm's length, between his thumb and forefinger -- I resolutely put away any lingering hopes I still had about going to the Paci-

ficon unless the convention committee apologized and allowed Walter to attend the convention. I had not joined the convention; when Al Halevy was accepting memberships at the Noncon at the Turners' on Labor day weekend 1963, I was far too broke to buy one. (The publisher of a sex novel co-authored by Jim Harmon and myself, one Ed Schnepf, had just reneged on his promise to pay an advance on the book. Subsequently, he published the book, Passion Strip, without ever bothering to pay us a jitney, then or later.)

I made no secret of my anger and distress at Boondoggle, though for some reason, probably my display of cynical acceptance of the inevitable, Jessie Clinton told me afterward that she was still uncertain whether I was for or against the con committee even after we discussed the matter at the Fourth of July Noncon at the Turners' last summer. Strangely enough, I had been uncertain about the Clintons, too, up till the Fourth of July Noncon. At the Noncon, however, they turned out to be the most eloquent critics of Bill Donaho and the convention committee I had heard.

"Al," Ed Clinton said to Halevy as some of us were discussing Boondoggle in the Turners' kitchen, "it doesn't matter whether Walter did or did not do the things he's accused of. Boondoggle is indefensible. You simply don't do that to a man."

As Pacificon time approached, I was invited by various Los Angeles fans to ride up to the Bay area with them. I turned down every offer, although my decision to avoid the con did not prevent me from urging Edith Ogutsch to attend. She read the Progress Reports I had borrowed from Bill Blackbeard, and decided at the last minute to go.

Gretchen Schwenn arrived in Los Angeles on 28 August, only a few days after I had been paid for my half of Sex Burns Like Fire, another sex novel I had co-authored with Jim Harmon. Gretchen was heading north, intending to start work for her PhD, at Berkeley, and planned to arrive in the Bay area just before the convention. She urged me to accompany her on the trip, and offered the best terms yet: a free ride, since she had room in her car and was going up in any event, and lodging at Kevin Langdon's apartment in San Francisco, where she had arranged to stay during the convention weekend. The check from the sex novel publisher would pay for incidental expenses.

Like me, Gretchen was distressed about Boondoggle. Donaho's Apologia -- which she had not seen till she read my copy: her copy had arrived in Albuquerque just after she left -- did not change her opinion. She did not intend to go to the Pacificon, even though she possessed a paid-up membership, number 10, which was one of the low-numbered memberships bestowed by committeemen on particular friends and deserving people. (Gretchen had known Bill Donaho since the summer of 1963, when she had stayed at the communal household in El Cerrito, along with Bill, Danny Curran, Marcia Frendel and her son Glen, Terry Burns, Gail Colman, and occasional visitors.) "But they can't keep you out of the Leamington hotel," she said. "It's a public place where we can meet friends. Come along with me, and meet Grania Davidson, Judy Merrill, and Chris Moskowitz." At last I decided to accompany her to the Bay area, but not to attend the Pacificon.

2: The Road There

We planned to take off for San Francisco soon after dawn on Thursday, 3 September, but the scheme a-gleyed sufficiently so that we didn't get started till about 0900 o'clock. Bill Blackbeard showed up just in time to help carry suitcases, serapes, and sketchpads out to Gretchen's car. He had arranged to ride up to Oakland with Bill Rotsler, along with The Ogutsch and Jody Lynn (who was to become the celebrated Naked Lady of the Pacificon masquerade). They were to leave in the afternoon and travel the high road (route #101), while Gretchen and I intended to take the low road (highway #1)—and they intended to be in Oakland afore us. We bade Bill farewell and Foospeed, and headed out of town on the heavily traveled Hollywood freeway.

Not long afterward we passed through historic Camarillo, where Bill Rotsler once raised nuts, and paused in Ventura for breakfast: a coffee-shop called the Red Balloon, which served us a very good meal for a total of \$2.43. Gretchen was driving her 1955 Ford tudor, in which I had not been checked out. Somewhere north of Santa Barbara, she decided to let me drive. We stopped and attempted to move the front seat back a few notches to give me more legroom, but we couldn't budge it. There was a service station a stone's throw away, and we trundled into it and asked the attendant to lend a hand. He struggled with it unsuccessfully and Gretchen decided she had better drive a while longer. The summer sun was blazing into the car, and she sent me into the station washroom to dampen a towel to lay over her legs as protection against sunburn. I soaked the towel as full of cold water as I could and shambled forth, proffering a double-handful of dripping towel.

Gretchen and the station man goggled at me in amazement. "You IDIOT!" said Gretchen, cringing back. "Wring it out!"

"Lady," the station attendant confided to her later, shaking his head pityingly, "he wouldn't be of any use to you at the laundromat."

Gretchen drove a few miles more, then convinced me that I ought to relieve her at the wheel even though the seat was shoved up to within ten inches of the dashboard. She steered off the highway onto the paralleling frontage road and let me climb behind the wheel. I decided to get the feel of the car before venturing onto the superhighway, by driving along the frontage road to the next access, but we had zoomed along only a short distance before the frontage road ended abruptly in somebody's farmyard. I turned the car around and started back, but in performing this maneuver the car aerial, which was in the extended position, became entangled in the peachtree branches overhanging the road. The aerial ripped off and twelve bushels of ripe peaches came pelting down. Alas, none of the fruit fell through the open car windows.

At San Luis Obispo we stopped to buy picture postcards at the Greyhound bus station. Each of us sent a fistful; one of mine went to John and Bjo Trimble, I remember, and another to Nan Gerding. At Morro Bay we bought a couple of cans of Busch Bavarian, which we quaffed shortly afterward, while reclining on a serape under a eucalyptus tree that stood by the entrance to a ranch.

The road, now highway #1, began to skirt the coastline, and we saw miles and miles of white sandy beach being washed by gentle green comb-ers. The sight became so alluring after a while that we turned into a convenient pull-off, climbed through a barbwire fence -- ignoring a "No Trespassing" sign -- and followed a dim trail through the buckbrush to the edge of a rocky cliff. Here we discovered a rope anchored to some thick bushes at the top of the incline. The rope looped downward amid the rocks and brush, and clinging to it when our feet slipped, we descended to the beach. The rope was thick and stout enough to moor a fishing smack and might have been left by fishermen, smugglers, or lovers, but probably not by surfers, because the sea at this point was studded with black rocks against which the Pacific crashed lazily. The sand was warm but not very soft, and the tide was coming in, sloshing green seawater higher and higher up the sloping beach. We felt as lazy and lonely as the ocean itself, but decided to escape before we were floated away.

Gretchen insisted that I don a jorongo (a Mexican garment which is a blanket with a slit in the middle) against the freshening breeze. I took off my glasses to thrust my head through the slit, and held them in my hand as Gretchen reached up to straighten the blanket over my shoulders. Somehow her hand flicked the glasses out of my grasp and they fell to the sand. As we reached down simultaneously to make the retrieve, I saw that one lens had fallen out of the frame, and as I picked up the glasses I noted that either the light blow or the fall to the sand had split the frame near the nosepiece on the right side. I was going to be unspectacled till we found an optometrist. Luckily, I am in no sense blind without my glasses; I take them off frequently; but it would be prudent not to drive without them, if only because my driver's license specifies "with corrective lenses."

Gretchen and I climbed up the cliff, clinging to the rope, and trudged back to the car. It was already late afternoon. At blue dusk, we entered Monterey county, and the scenery, already beautiful, grew ever more rugged and lovely. Remote and unspoiled, even though it is on the shore of our most populous state, Big Sur is one of the loveliest and most spectacular regions on the face of the planet, an unsurpassed scene where mountain grandeur confronts the surging ocean. Highway #1 had become a narrow, two-lane road, looping along the magnificent cliffs with the sea to our left and far below, full of shifting colors and moods. Gretchen was driving because of my broken glasses, but my distance vision is good even without glasses, and I missed little of this land of twilight and mist.

By 1945 hours it was almost dark, and only a few lights glimmered in the quiet wilderness. We seemed to be on an unsettled planet except for a few cars on the road. Once we stopped at a turnout and traced the constellations pricked out in the velvet darkness overhead. But a glowing light on the dashboard of the car told a more disquieting story than the sparks of the exploding universe: The needle of the fuel gauge, we belatedly noticed, was trembling close to "empty" -- and we had just passed a sign, warning us about the lack of "services" in the Big Sur region. We began to feel concerned when we stopped at the next gas station and found it deserted. A cafe nearby was still open for business, however, and Gretchen walked over and knocked at a side entrance where

she saw someone moving inside. A woman peered out into the thickening night. She replied with a shrug to Gretchen's "Can't we buy some gas? Where is the station attendant?," remarking indifferently, "He's gone over the hill." We weren't sure whether she spoke literally or figuratively. There were lots of big hills thereabouts.

We drove on, eyeing the fuel gauge fearfully. At 2020 hours and 14 miles further on, we passed through Lucia, a tiny settlement clinging -- though it was hard to discern it in the dark -- to the cliff above the shadowy sea. Again, there were still lights in the cafe but none in the service station in front. Gretchen said, "We'd better try to get gas here. It's a long 20 miles yet to River Village." (Actually we were probably 56 miles from the nearest open gas station ahead: We discovered later that no station in the Village sells gas after 2000 hours.) We turned around and drove into the service station. We asked a boy where the attendant was, and explained to him the urgency of our plight. He harangued an old man inside, and we heard the latter say sarcastically, "I'll bet!" when the boy told him we were out of gas. He emerged at length and upon learning that we weren't exaggerating he became gracious and accommodating. He reopened his pumps for us, working by flashlight, as if all electric power were off. The Ford drank up \$4.80 worth of gas and \$1.16 of oil, and we proceeded on our way.

About 2100 hours we reached Deetjen's Big Sur Inn and walked stiffly into the coffeeshop. Though it was still early by civilized standards, the time in Big Sur Inn seemed to be 0300. A few bohemian types wandered to and fro, and a bearded young man conversed quietly with a pretty young woman at the counter. The atmosphere was somnolent, and over a cup of coffee I sleepily scanned a copy of Proceedings of the College of Universal Wisdom, volume 7, number 6, September-October 1964. In an article titled "Saucers and Sorcerers" I learned that "...The true space ships do not have landing struts that make depressions in the ground or drip hydraulic fluid." I was pleased to possess this information, and gladly pass it along to you.

A list of the rooms available in Deetjen's Big Sur Inn adorned one wall. Each room had a name like Occidental room, Honeymoon room, Fireplace room, Friendship room, Pavilion room, and Florentine room, each with appropriate prices. But upon inquiry we learned that all the rooms had been rented for the night.

Up the road about four miles, however, was Redwood Lodge where we found that a cabin, number 8, was still unoccupied. The manager, lounging on the patio outside a bar or coffeeshop in the Lodge building, suggested we go look at it. Following his directions we drove a winding and rutted singletrack road downgrade through a grove of redwoods. It was dark as a Boondoggle accusation in this forest and we had trouble finding the cabin. Next day we found out how densely the lordly redwoods roofed us in: The sun slanted through the interlacing branches a remote distance above us; below was the glowing morning twilight. The Coast redwoods (*Sequoia sempervirens*) were beautiful but a little disdainful of our admiration. One tall redwood near the car-path had suffered the indignity of having a reflector and an electric-light standard attached to it near its base. It bore the indignity quietly, not even bothering to notice or protest: It seemed to know that it would be

standing there centuries after Redwood Lodge had gone out of business and even after our civilization had passed from the earth.

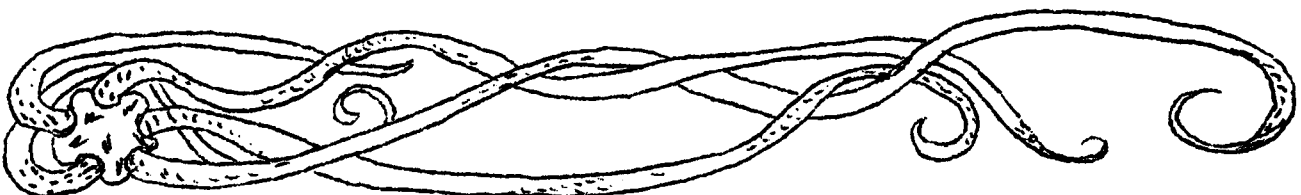
We ate breakfast on Friday morning, 4 September, at Glen Oaks, a small pleasant coffeeshop where the waitress seemed to be new at her job — she was being coached by an amiable man behind the counter — and had not yet grown tired and bitter at serving the tourists who stopped at the place. Some original oil paintings and silverpoint sketches by Cyril M. Brown and others hung on the walls; some were quite good. A few were for sale; others were the property of Mr Rageneau, the owner. Gretchen studied the artwork while I considered the pretty blue knee-length bloomers on the waitress; she showed froths of lace each time she moved while bustling about, serving our breakfast.

The morning was bright, but fog drifted like smoke across the mountain slopes above us and occasionally obscured the road. We were anxious to reach San Francisco, but every turn of that road with many turns brought us views that compelled admiration and awe, and we found ourselves stopping at turnouts every mile or two along the highway. We stopped at Bixby bridge and Garrapata creek bridge, and at a spot that gave us a panoramic view of Point Sur lighthouse and the white curving beach that led out to the big black rock and the castle-like structure on top. (En route home after the con we visited the lighthouse itself, parking at the foot of the rock and climbing up the road around the cliff in order to view the light that has served faithfully ever since it was installed in 1889. They don't make lights like that anymore.)

Having dawdled all day, we didn't reach Monterey till midafternoon. I wanted to have my glasses repaired here, and we consulted the Yellow Pages for a handy optometrist. I was fascinated by the discovery of one optometrist with the same name but not middle initial of an oldtime Bay area fan: Joe P. Fortier. We searched him out, but found Joe couldn't help me immediately. He suggested we look around historic old Monterey and come back later. We left the car parked across the street from his office and wandered around awhile, ending our brief walking tour at the Golden Skillet, where we ate. Monterey peninsula, which we explored a little more thoroughly on the return trip, is very attractive, but much more combed and civilized than the Big Sur country. It struck me as a nearly ideal place to live, though, like Gretchen, I'd really prefer to live in the wilder regions south along the coast from the peninsula.

Joe Fortier fitted me with a pair of dark frames that I fancied made me look like Barry Goldwater. I spent a lot of time posing before the mirror, holding my arms upraised and crying "Fellow Republicans!" although I am not a Republican and although Gretchen denied that I resembled our then-current presidential candidate.

We left Monterey in the middle of the Friday-before-Labor-day traffic jam, and sped on to Santa Cruz, where we made a phone call to Kevin



Langdon in San Francisco. Kevin had expected us to arrive the evening before and had been worried. We estimated it would take us two hours to drive in from Santa Cruz, and it was exactly one hour fifty minutes later when we pulled up in front of 649 Tenth avenue, where Kevin lived.

Gretchen had warned me that it was much cooler in the Bay area than in God's country, but I hadn't believed her. After all, Frisco was in California, sunny California, wasn't it? I found out differently when I opened the car door and stepped out into three feet of snow and the teeth of a 17°-below-zero gale. I hadn't been so chilled since I left Minnesota in 1962. Shivering, I turned up my shirt collar against the cold, and we rushed up to Kevin's doorstep -- or the doorstep we supposed was his. We rang the doorbell in vain, then ran back to the car to consider what to do. We were about to look for a telephone to call Kevin, on the off-chance that he had been at home but asleep when we assaulted his front door when I glanced around and spotted Kevin peering out at the street from a nearby doorway. It turned out that in the darkness we had knocked at the wrong door, not at 649 at all.

Kevin led us inside, and while we were thawing out we discussed the Pacificon. Like us, Kevin was boycotting the con, but was eager to scout the Leamington and to meet old friends who might be attending. We moved some of our baggage into Kevin's apartment and cleaned up a little. Gretchen phoned Leland Sapiro at the number he had given us before he left Los Angeles; he wasn't there just then, but was expected, and he phoned 15 minutes later. Lee told me that he hadn't attended the con, refusing to enter the hotel, but that he had had lunch with Ed Wood that day. He said he was leaving for Saskatoon next morning -- he is working for his doctorate at the University of Saskatchewan -- so Gretchen and I bade him a sad farewell.

Outside, we paused to don extra clothing against the cold. Gretchen was standing in the street behind the car, struggling into a pair of black tights when a sightseeing bus passed. She thus became part of the grand tour of the Bay area, along with the Golden Gate bridge, Alcatraz island, and Nob hill. She lent me a black sweatshirt, which felt so comfortable in that frigid climate that I wore it throughout the convention. In combination with my new black-frame glasses, the sweatshirt made me look like a prematurely old, slightly seedy intellectual. I was disappointed when waiters didn't address me as "Professor" or "Doctor."

We drove across the Bay bridge and arrived at the Leamington in Oakland less than two hours after we had reached San Francisco.

3: Across the Mezzanine and Into the Soup

The first fan we spotted, as Gretchen, Kevin, and I walked warily into the hotel lobby, was Bill Rotsler talking earnestly on the house phone. At the sight of us, he hung up -- he was only talking with some female, no doubt -- and came over to converse. We marveled at his Hollywood style grey dress suit with a red vest, and inquired whether Edith Ogutsch, Bill Blackbeard, and Jody Lynn had arrived intact (or as intact as they had been when they left Los Angeles). After a brief conversation Rotsler excused himself and made for the elevators, saying, "I can talk with you anytime. I'm going to find me some east coast faans."

As we looked after him, watching his familiar face merge into the shifting throng of strangers, we heard a feminine voice call out behind us in a friendly manner, "Gretchen, you're a fink!" I turned around and saw a tall, striking blonde sweep out of the hotel coffeeshop and embrace Gretchen heartily. Gretchen introduced us, and I found that I was confronted by Sidonie Rogers. She shook hands with me, then said loudly, "And you're a fink, too!"

Gretchen and I stared at her puzzledly, wondering what she meant by calling us "finks." We deduced later that this was the term she -- and presumably the convention committee -- was using to refer to people who intended to boycott the convention, but for some reason had shown up after all.

Bob Lichtman came up and greeted us. Like Andy Main, he was boycotting the convention, haunting the hotel lobby, but holding aloof from the con itself. Gretchen said, "Hey, Bob, Sid just called me a fink!" Sid said amiably, "I didn't mean it, Gretchen. You're not a fink." Gretchen asked her if she had received the birthday card she had sent Sid early in August. Sid said she had, and thanked her. A moment later she said with more conviction and the same vigorous amiability, "Gretchen, you're a fink!"

But Sid wasn't at all rancorous, and seemed eager to be friends. She said, "We're all in the coffeeshop. Come along." She herded us into the coffeeshop, where we found a group of eight or ten fans sitting on the curving bench behind a large table. Most of them were strangers to me, and none of them could or did get up to shake hands. Sid's introductions passed by, all unnoticed, and it was only later that I learned that two of these people were George Scithers and Alva Rogers. Gretchen told me afterward that she had identified Scithers by reading the nametag pinned to his tartan sports jacket. "I thought the nasty bastard¹ was in Germany," she remarked.

Bruce and Dian Pelz, sitting at the far end of the table, were the only persons in the group who showed any animation. Everybody else was staring at us unblinkingly, like a jury that had made up its mind. "Haw haw haw!" Bruce yelled at me. "Look who's attending the convention after swearing up and down that he wasn't coming!"

"I'm not attending the convention," I said. Hardly anybody else said anything at all.

About this moment Gretchen dropped the bloodstone pendant on her key-ring which she had been fingering meditatively, and Tom Hall -- whom I recognized just then (he had been sitting on a chair, facing the other fans at the table) from the 1963 Noncon in Long Beach, helpfully got down on hands and knees to hunt for the little jump-ring that had connected the stone to the key-ring. I helped him hunt, too, feeling uncomfortable under the frozen gaze of these uncommunicative strangers.

We decided to retreat to the lobby. There we found a number of fans congregated, some of whom we know, including various LASFS members, who were ubiquitous throughout the convention. "Go on up to the mezzanine," somebody suggested. "Everybody's up there, drinking free beer."

We must have looked dubious, and other people added encouragingly, "Go on up -- it's open, it doesn't matter. Everybody's there."

Finally we decided a visit to the mezzanine would be enjoyable, but as we started up the stairs Bob Lichtman said banteringly, "Hey, Gretchen, better look out. I hear they're throwing people out of the mezzanine."

We climbed the stairs to the mezzanine. The area around the top of the stairs was so crammed with fans that we had difficulty forcing our way more than a few feet into the crowd. The fans were clustered about in little groups, chattering at high volume, and drinking the beer provided by the convention committee (and) dispensed from a room opening off the mezzanine. The mezzanine itself was a large, irregularly shaped area which offered egress not only to the rooms rented by the convention but to the stairways and elevators to the upper floors. The con committee had mentioned in the program booklet that the convention was lucky no other conventions, with which the fans would have been forced to share the mezzanine, had been scheduled in the Leamington for the weekend. The mezzanine was certainly to be considered a public part of the hotel, and we presumed that anyone could enter the mezzanine without encroaching upon the affair we were boycotting.

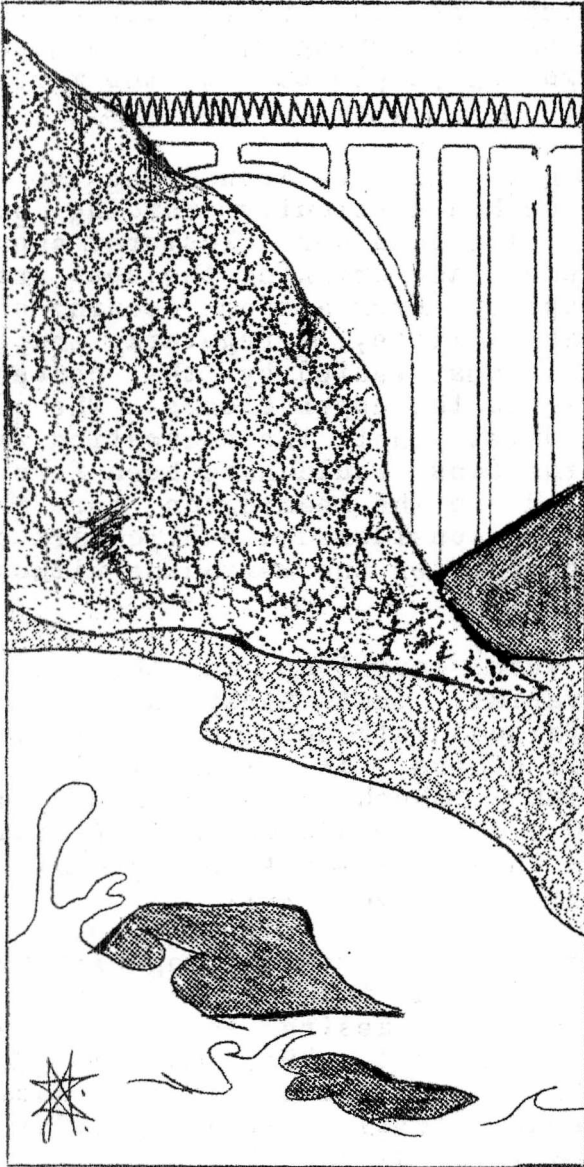
Immediately Gretchen, Kevin, and I were caught up in the whirl, meeting old friends and new friends so rapidly that their names and faces hardly had time to register. Old friends introduced us to friends of theirs, and they introduced us to still others. It is difficult to remember whom I met at this time. I think I shook hands with Bob and Barbara Silverberg then; this culminated a correspondence and a friendship of long standing. Such meetings as this made the trip worthwhile; this was why we had come, why we had entered the con hotel.

I spotted Edith Ogutsch across the room. She was sitting with her back to me, holding a paper cup in her hand and talking with several people. I made my way over and, suppressing a desire to startle her with a sudden kiss, bent over her and said, instead, "Hi, doll!" She looked gratifyingly pleased to see me. She introduced me to the woman on her left, who turned out to be Mrs Irene Scortia. Irene carefully explained to me that she was once known as Irene Baron; of course I remembered Irene from her SAPS contributions of the early 1950s.

I asked Edith about her trip up as part of the Rotsler expedition, and she stood up to talk to me. I could (in theory, at least) talk with the lovely Ogutsch almost any day I chose, but even though I had traveled 412 miles north from Los Angeles, I was still happy to converse with her. People kept interrupting us, however, with introductions of people they knew we wanted to meet. Gretchen pulled me around in order to introduce me to a vague but friendly Frank M. Busby, who shifted a can of beer to his left hand to shake hands with me.

Gretchen remarked afterward that she wasn't sure Buz knew who I was -- or, indeed, even who she was. It was the only time Gretchen or I saw him during the whole weekend, although a month before she and Buz had made an agreement to meet and "discuss the hell out of everything" on Tuesday morning after the con. The Busbys left the convention early, on

Monday afternoon, and seem not to have enjoyed the con very much.² It is significant that these characters who vehemently supported the con committee didn't manage to enjoy the con as much as some of us who boycotted the convention.



I tried to return to conversation with Edith and other pretty girls who were in sight, and Gretchen and I became separated as the tides of people shoved us apart. Kevin was to one side, talking with friends. Al Halevy came along while I was some distance away and, spotting Gretchen, embraced her and kissed her heartily. "I'm glad to see you, Gretchen!" he said enthusiastically. A moment later he sought me out and pumped my hand cordially. I said, smiling, "I've got a pocketful of cherry bombs with me, Al," a reference he may or may not have understood. (At the Fourth of July Noncon he had urged me to attend the con although I was angry about the Walter Breen matter, and I had told him kiddingly, "I'll show up with a pocketful of cherry bombs and you'll be sorry I came." I was referring to an incident at the Noncon involving Dik Daniels and a cherry bomb. Al had replied, banteringly, "OK, bring all you want, but come yourself.")

Al introduced me to a vacantly smiling J. Ben Stark, another of the famous con committeemen. Stark said he was mighty glad to meet me at last, even though he had met me before, only a month previously, at the Trimble's in Garden Grove.

I returned to conversation with Edith who, as usual, was full of interesting talk conveyed in her shy but eager tones. Meanwhile Al Halevy held Gretchen with his glittering eye and informed her that the con committee had bought gallons of free beer for convention members and by god, it wasn't going to be wasted on people who had not paid for a membership. Gretchen, Kevin, and I were not drinking. We did not touch a drop of the con's precious free liquor during the entire weekend. Kevin, as Halevy well knows, is a teetotaler. I drink sparingly, and often enjoy entire evenings at parties while quaffing only one or two beers. Gretchen likes beer, although she was not then drinking, but as she remarked to Halevy, if she were, why not? She was a fully paid up convention member, membership #10, she reminded him. Why was he bugging her about the free beer? Halevy said he objected, not to her, but to Kevin and me, who were not members. She replied, "And they're not drinking."³

Halevy disappeared and when he returned a few minutes later he was carrying a cardboard box filled with the membership badges that had not yet been passed out. He delved into the box and brought forth Gretchen's badge, which he said he wanted her to wear so that there would be no confusion. He opened the pin and lunged toward her. She cringed back, objecting, "No, wait, Al! What confusion?" She went on to point out that everybody on the committee knew very well that she was a member, so how could there be any "confusion"? Al continued to insist. He reached out gingerly and tried to take hold of her sweater without touching her breasts, in order to pin the nametag through the fabric. She was wearing a thin black sweater that clung tightly to her size 40 bustline, so his attempted separation of garment from flesh was rather difficult. Her breasts are as sensitive as such things usually are, and she was somewhat unwilling to have them pierced by a pin. She continued to draw back, suggesting if she had to accept a badge, she would keep it in her pocket, to be produced if necessary. Halevy said querulously, "But you've got to wear it!" -- and continued to press at her with the pin. Gretchen put up her hands before her front, and Al finally went away.

I was still conversing with friends nearby, and only vaguely aware of the discussion between Gretchen and Halevy. About this time a smiling, bespectacled stranger came up to me and slipped a membership card into my hand, whispering in a conspiratorial tone, "Listen, they're going to throw you out, but when they try, show them this membership card, understand?" I didn't understand. I was puzzled and confused. I did not know this man nor did I comprehend his ploy. I presumed in my confusion that he was trying to bestow a convention membership on me -- a kindly but sadly misplaced gesture. I said loudly, "I don't want to be a member of this damn convention!" -- and ostentatiously ripped the card to shreds. The man yelped, "Hey, that's my membership card!" and an amused bystander said, "This is Dick Ellington, Redd." I realized then that this was a friend, trying to be helpful. I apologized, flushing with embarrassment.

While all this was going on, Gretchen was tugging at me and saying insistently, "Redd! Redd! They're going to throw us out, Redd!" Deep in conversation with Ellington, and then with others in the shifting throng, I paid little attention. "Ha!" I said. It seemed to me unlikely that the convention committee would try to toss anybody out of the public section of the Leamington, and in the event that they tried such a foolish thing, I knew very well that the best tactic of avoiding being victimized was to ignore their attempts. An officious person usually bumbles around in helpless circles if the person he is ordering out blithely ignores him and drifts away when the person in authority tries to confront him. I eased away from Halevy's vicinity and continued to converse with friends. The milling crowds hemmed me in.

Meanwhile Al Halevy had returned to Gretchen once more, and this time he said, "All right, Gretchen, you can stay." She considered this a generous concession, since after all she was a paid-up member. "But," Halevy added grimly, "your friends are going to have to go!" He pointed angrily at Kevin, who was nearby at the moment, and then in my general direction.

"My friends are here as my guests, Al," Gretchen said quietly.

"He's leaving, that's all!" Halevy replied, grabbing at Kevin, who drew back in surprise and dawning alarm.

"Now, Al," Gretchen said hurriedly, "take it easy." But Al was already too angry to see or hear. He furiously ordered Kevin to leave the "convention" (!) and, as he noticed me through a rift in the crowd conversing with a pretty girl, he yelled at me, "And you're going too!"

I glanced back at the source of the disturbance, and found Halevy stomping up, waving his finger under my nose, and saying threateningly, "You're going! You're going! You've got to go!"

"Ha!" I said, and drifted away in the tide of people. I still did not realize the seriousness of the situation.

Al Halevy disappeared again, and when he returned a moment later, he was not alone. Gretchen looked up and saw that he was accompanied by one Bob Buechley, a Bay area fringe fan she had seen around on her previous stay on the west coast but I had never met nor even heard of. Bob Buechley, a fellow as tall as Bill Donaho but not as bulky, weighing only about 215 pounds, turned out to be the sergeant at arms. I glanced around and saw this musclebound man who wore glasses and a foolish half-frozen smile, but I was too far away and too immersed in conversation to realize what was going on.

Halevy was saying, "I'm sorry, Gretchen, but YOU'RE GOING!" The last half of the sentence was seemingly directed not at Gretchen, but at Kevin, the youngest and least ferocious of the three of us. Gretchen realized instantly that the strategy was to deal with us one by one, peeling off the least aggressive and thus the most vulnerable person first. This was the usual convention committee tactic, of course: Who in fandom could be more pacific, and thus more vulnerable than Walter Breen?

Gretchen reached out again and tugged at me, saying, "Redd! Redd! They're throwing us out!" Again I glanced around and said, "Ha!" I was still not taking the whole thing seriously. It was too hard to believe. We were surrounded by happy, chattering fans; there was no disturbance, and everyone was friendly and eager to talk with everybody else. A far cry from F. M. Busby's picture of fans who had "set out to try to sabotage a WorldCon"!⁴

4: The Battle of the Mezzanine

Al Halevy turned to Buechley and said something in a sharp and pre-emptory tone. Buechley responded by lunging suddenly at Kevin, who was nearest. Kevin naturally drew back, wary of such tactics after Halevy had tried to grab him a few moments before, and Buechley couldn't quite reach him without knocking down a dozen innocent bystanders. Buechley hardly paused, but turned upon Gretchen, who was standing nearby. I was still a short distance away, and my back was partly turned, and I did not see what happened till an instant later when sounds of battle hit my eardrums.

I swung around and saw Buechley grappling with Gretchen, his hands on her arm and shoulder, trying to drag her toward the stairway. She was trying to twist around to confront him, trying to get a hold on him, trying to take a fighting stance. Buechley continued to clutch at her as she got her feet under her and regained her balance. Since he was much bigger and much taller than she, Gretchen pulled herself at his middle, and tried to free herself from his grasp. She couldn't reach up to grab his shoulders, so instead she tried an old and simple wrestling hold: She bent down, grasped his left leg just above the knee, straightened up, and threw him onto his back.

The hotel rocked with the impact of Buechley crashing to the floor with Gretchen atop him. In fact, the seismograph at Palo Alto was knocked off its pin. The struggle had surged around a big pillar and I was trying vainly to butt through the crowd to reach the scene of action. I arrived there just an instant after Buechley struggled away from under Gretchen and stumbled to his feet. Suddenly Gretchen's glasses went flying, and landed almost at my feet. She yelled, "Get my glasses!" -- not knowing whether there was anyone to hear. I scooped them up an instant before they could be crushed beneath somebody's tromping feet, and jumped into the center of the fight.

Buechley was on his feet, breathing heavily, and Gretchen started to come off the floor too, still battling like a basketful of wildcats. Buechley was getting the better of it at the moment, but he wore a very bewildered expression -- exactly the expression of somebody who has uncovered a bushel of wildcats by mistake. I hurled myself between them, pushed Gretchen firmly away, and then turned to confront Buechley. A mob of people were rushing around us, trying to see what was happening or attempting to separate the battlers, but if anyone was touching me, I couldn't feel it. I shoved myself close to Buechley, who took one look at my angry expression and cringed back three feet. "You do that again," I yelled at him, "and I'll kill you!" The way I felt just then, if he had looked at me crosseyed, or even directly, I would have tweaked his balls off, and done it with the most cheerful and tranquil satisfaction you can imagine.⁵

Al Halevy shouldered through the crowd, and tried to placate us with hasty, soothing words. "I'm sorry this happened, but you'll have to leave -- all of you. You aren't wearing badges." We stared at him hostilely, although Gretchen couldn't see very well through her glasses, which had been bent slightly out of shape. Instead of blowing up at Halevy, I merely smiled at him angrily and stalked away. As we walked to the stairs, Halevy trailed us, still apologizing for causing the battle, but still explaining in a hurt voice that all non-members and non-badge-wearing members had to leave the mezzanine. As Al talked, wringing his hands and abasing himself, Bob Buechley stomped up and, standing prudently just out of reach, called shakily, "Al, you get rid of that woman or I'll resign!" Halevy held up his hands. "Take it easy, Bob, they're going! They're going!"

We went. There didn't seem to be anything else we could do. We pushed our way through clusters of fans who were asking, "What was it? What happened? Who are they?" There was no way to make people realize what was happening. As we started down the stairs, Sam Moskowitz ap-

proached us. I knew Sam, of course, having met him on previous occasions, but Gretchen stared wonderingly at his nametag as he beamed at her and held out his hand. She took it and they shook hands heartily. I don't know why, and neither does she.

We jogged down the stairs and made directly for the exit, emerging onto the dark streets of Oakland. Panting a bit and a great deal more weary than we had been when we arrived, we straggled back to the car. All this had happened within three hours of our arrival from Big Sur; we found it all confusing and mind-numbing.

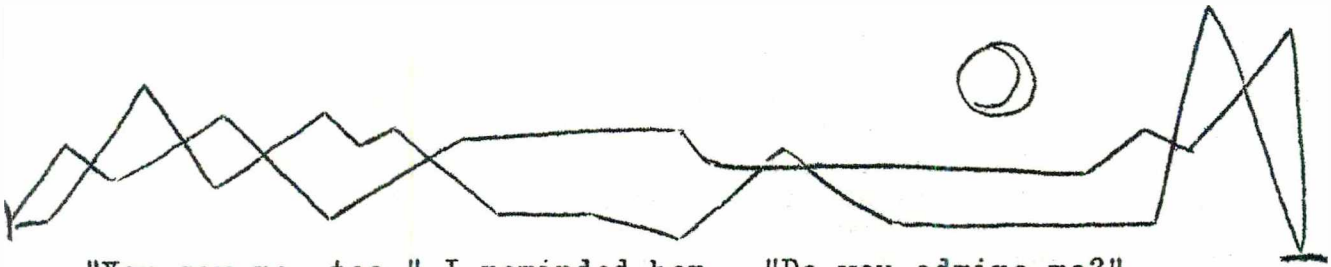
Standing irresolutely beside the car, we fought to regain our perspective. We had been summarily ejected from the Leamington mezzanine, and we weren't sure why. What had we done? What harm was caused by our presence on the mezzanine? We realized that we had suffered an ignominious defeat, and we didn't know how to recoup the loss. Gretchen suggested phoning the hotel from a nearby phone booth and paging some of the people there, to tell them what had happened. She tried to reach Bob Lichtman and Prentiss Choate and other people on our side. Prentiss had not seen the fight, but immediately afterward he had hovered behind Gretchen as if protecting her from sudden action from behind. (George Scithers was also hovering about, perhaps to protect anxious committee members.) There was no response to the phone calls, which was not surprising, since both the lobby and the mezzanine were so noisy.

Kevin suggested returning to the hotel and waiting to be thrown out again. This was probably the way to handle it, but we were not at all sure what might happen if we attempted this maneuver. We were too tired by then to have the courage and strength to chance a possible night in jail, and we had no doubt that we could end up there. We had been told that the convention committee had hired a Burns cop or two, stationing him/them in or around the mezzanine. Bill Donaho admitted to Kevin later that they were paying the Burns cops three dollars an hour!

We probably should have gone back to the mezzanine, but the probability that we would be jailed with no one to notice or raise bail was too great to ignore.

We finally decided to return to the Leamington hotel lobby to see if any fans were there. We found Andy Main, Bob Lichtman, and Margo Newkom sitting on sofas in the middle of the lobby, where we went to explain what had happened upstairs. They had already heard garbled reports of what occurred, and we had to tell the story over and over, in a vain attempt to set the record straight. Dick and Pat Ellington came into the lobby, and greeted us again. I felt the need to apologize once more for tearing up Dick's membership card, and they felt the need to explain at great length their stand regarding the Boondoggle affair and the FAPA blackball and the petition to overrule the blackball. I liked Dick and Pat very much, but I was still mystified by their ambiguous attitude toward these matters after all the explanations were over.

Edith Ogutsch came down to the lobby in the company of Elmer Perdue. God had offered to escort her home to the Town House, a nearby hotel where she had taken a room. "I saw the fight," Edith told Gretchen, "and I admire you very much."



"You saw me, too," I reminded her. "Do you admire me?"

She looked at me enigmatically. "I don't know," she admitted. "I never saw you look that way before. You -- you scared me."

As I was talking with The Ogutsch, I felt a huge shadow fall over us, and I looked around to behold Bill Donaho lumbering up. I had not seen him since the Labor day 1963 Noncon, and from a distance he startled me. He had sprouted a large shaggy reddish beard since I saw him last, and now he resembled amazingly a bloated, or inflated, Walter Breen. He stood beside Gretchen a long while, hardly saying anything and nothing very important. He radiated pathos -- but I studiously ignored him except for a loud and rude remark about something rotten in the city of Oakland, California. It is easy to ignore a Donaho in the presence of an Ogutsch, anyway, and I turned my back on him, despite Gretchen's friendly advice not to do so.

Donaho told Gretchen that he was sorry we had to be ejected, and he looked so crestfallen that she was embarrassed.⁶ He said hopefully that she could come back upstairs if she came alone. Kevin Langdon and I were not welcome. No, of course Walter Breen couldn't come with her, either. She just didn't understand, he insisted; there was some failure of communication. He would explain later, he said, someday when she had time to talk. Gretchen told him she would like to pick up the household wares she had left at his house a year ago, and he suggested she call him at home the day after the convention.

Elinor Busby passed through the lobby with a mild smile, and paused a moment while Gretchen introduced us. It is hard to remember what she looked like, as if she were a chameleon, making herself inconspicuous. I think Elinor has brown hair, wore a pink dress, and seemed to be a little nearsighted. Elinor said little. After Edith Ogutsch went off, I glanced around the lobby and spied Ted White entering. Since Ted is always worth conversing with, I went over and renewed acquaintance with him. Ted introduced me to Alexei Panshin, and then to a bearded, bespectacled gentleman who turned out to be Philip K. Dick.

Phil's science fiction, of course, is one of my particular enthusiasms in the field, and Phil himself immediately endeared himself to me by not only recognizing my name, but by impressing himself onto my consciousness as a distinctive, complex, and fascinating person unique even in the world of science fiction people.

Ted revealed that he was already at work on his Pacificon report, although the con was hardly begun. He pulled the manuscript out of his pocket, and read us some diverting libel about various people who had aroused his wrath or contempt, then remarked to Phil Dick that Phil was mentioned elsewhere in the report. He suggested that Phil read this

passage, verify its accuracy, and OK its eventual publication. Phil said he didn't have time to read it now -- like the White Rabbit, he was late for a party -- but he would scrutinize it later. He impressed upon Ted very strongly that he should not show that passage to anyone till he had examined it, and Ted promised solemnly. Phil waved goodbye and strode hurriedly away. He was about 20 feet away when I said casually, in a normal tone of voice, "Hey, Ted, let me read that passage, will you?" Phil jerked around and came part way back. "I heard that!" he hollered. "I have very keen hearing."

Ted went to a house phone, chatted briefly, and returned with word of a private party in Terry Carr's room. Terry wanted to meet me, and I certainly wanted to meet him, so Ted suggested that Gretchen and I come with him upstairs. He impressed upon me that it was a small party in a small room and there wasn't sufficient floor-space for a whole flock of people. Let's keep it quiet, he said, and let's just drift away from the crowd and take the elevator.

I explained to Ted that Kevin was an integral part of our group and that Gretchen and I could not leave him behind. I remembered that Kevin and Ted had not gotten along very well on occasion, but I was unwilling to ditch Kevin. Ted ruminated, then remarked that he thought Kevin could come along; one more person could be squeezed into the room. He treated Kevin cordially, thus ruining the image of Nasty Old Ted White.

We rode up on the elevator, and managed to jam into Terry Carr's tiny little hotel room, which was already thickly clotted by conversing fans and pros with fists full of beer and highballs. Terry himself was standing near the door, and I shook hands with him, much impressed. He was even better than his towering reputation: a tall, friendly, highly intelligent young man I liked at first sight. Back in the room I spotted Poul Anderson in his stocking feet, sitting on the floor beside Felice Rolfe. Grania Davidson was lying on the bed, smiling contentedly like a big beautiful cat. Philip K. Dick was hunkered down in a chair, talking to the floor in a rather bemused fashion. I am told that Tony Boucher was there, but never having met him, I didn't realize it.

Most of the animated conversation was taking place just then in the entryway, and I became involved in talking with such people as Bob and Barbara Silverberg, Karen Anderson, Ted White, and of course Terry and Carol Carr, mostly concerning Terry's chances in the TAFF race.

We didn't stay long at the party; we were too tired to scintillate, and the closeness of the room dulled any remaining sharpness of wit that any of us possessed. After half an hour or so, we squeezed out of the door and emerged into the comparative coolth of the corridor. We decided to walk down the stairs instead of wait for the elevator; it was only a few flights. Belatedly, however, we remembered that the stairs led into the mezzanine, and as luck would have it, just as we entered the mezzanine at almost the exact place we were ejected a few hours before, we beheld Al Halevy lounging on the bannister, chatting with Sid Rogers. Aside from them, the mezzanine by now was nearly deserted.

Halevy stared at us with croggling eyes, showing more than a tinge of apprehension. "What are you people doing here again?" he demanded

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Kevin Langdon. By special permission of Kevin Langdon
and Ray Nelson.

Ray Nelson's Lullaby

by Ray Nelson

Ray composed this song for his
four-year-old son, Walter T.,
one day when he couldn't think
of any other lullabies.

C

Sun-rise in the morn-ing; Moon-rise in the even-ing;
G7

Star-rise while my ba-by's a-sleep. Pa-pa Sun is
sleeping, Ma-ma Moon is keeping watch so the baby stars won't
C C7 F C

weep. Brother Frog will sing, Grannie Clock Bell will
G7 C C7

ring, Sis-ter Cat will see all is well. Friend
F C

Ted-dy Bear is here, and Puppy Dog is near; and the
G7 C

Wind has a story to tell.

plonkingly. We regarded him thoughtfully, and passed on, firmly resisting the temptation that grew suddenly in all of us, to give our gracious host the gentle tap that would have toppled him over the rail to meet the hard marble of the stairs with his head. We walked on down the stairs, pushed out the nearest exit, and walked back to the car.

5: Saturday in El Cerrito and Frisco

The next day we didn't go near the Leamington, fighting the impulse to bug the convention committee further. Late in the morning Kevin made several phone calls to pick up what gossip and information he could, and announced after he had hung up the phone after one long conversation that we were invited to visit the Ray Nelsons in El Cerrito that afternoon.

The Sage of Ramona street was sitting at ease over a cup of coffee when we arrived. He greeted us warmly, introducing his lovely wife, Kirsten, whom I had never met before. I remembered Ray himself from the Cinvention of 1949, a mere 15 years before; he looked slightly older and rounder than he did then, but he still looked relatively young and spruce. Kirsten brewed numerous pots of coffee while the five of us sat in the livingroom and chatted. There was a feeling of relaxation and undemanding human companionship here that we had not experienced at the Leamington under the baleful influence of the con committee.

Ray brought out his guitar, and he and Kevin sang a number of folk songs, some of them originals. Together they sang "Ray Nelson's Lullaby," which Ray composed some years ago for Walter T., his son, then four years old. Walter T., now a robust six-year-old, was rushing in and out of the house all afternoon, conveying to his parents all the news from the yard and street. With him was a pretty little girl who was spending the day at the Nelsons'. I was amazed to discover that this child with blue eyes and long straight blond hair was none other than Poopsie Ellington, and I realized that being a Poopsie Ellington satellite was a noble state indeed. Poopsie, no doubt corrupted by some evil genius, burst into the room, jumped onto Kevin's lap, threw her arms around him, and hugged him tight. I looked on enviously.

We phoned Walter Breen during the afternoon, and all of us talked with him briefly. He didn't have much to say, but seemed in a cheerful mood. Gretchen's conversation with him was cut short by a voice in the background, which admonished Walter several times to finish up as fast as possible. The last time it called, "Walter, I said it's four o'clock and we've got to get that washing machine before the store closes." Walter said hastily, "Yes, dear," and told Gretchen apologetically, "I can't talk any more right now. I've got to go. Goodbye!" And hung up. "This is not the Walter Breen I remember," Gretchen said ruefully, "the Walter Breen of long, lazy, erudite telephone chats for hours on end."

The Ellingtons had mentioned to Gretchen that they were holding a few letters for her that had been mailed in their care. Late in the afternoon Gretchen and I decided to drive over to 1941 Oregon to retrieve them, leaving Kevin at the Nelsons'. We discovered that the Ellingtons were not home; presumably they were at the convention.

Gretchen and I ate dinner at the Fuji Inn, a Japanese restaurant at 2505 Telegraph avenue in Berkeley. Then we picked up Kevin at the Nelsons', and drove across the Bay bridge to San Francisco. We had learned that Lou and Cynthia Goldstone were holding a small party that evening for hardcore anti-committee fans, and we decided to attend. Kevin directed us there. As we ascended the stairs to the Goldstones' apartment, we heard the ferocious bay of Lou and Cynthia's prize spaniels, who saw us coming. At the top of the stair we were met by a miniature reception line: the two spaniels, Cynthia, Lou, and Ed and Jessie Clinton.

Ed and Jessie, whom I had met at the Fourth of July Noncon in Long Beach, were already some of my favorite people, and the hospitable Goldstones turned out to be equally pleasant and interesting. The Clintons had brought along a bottle of champagne ("domestic but good" -- delicious, in fact), and we toasted the damnation of the convention committee. It was a very good, small party. Gretchen croggled to find out, at last, that the Clintons were really and truly on our side -- so staunchly anti-committee that they refused, like Ray Nelson, even to set foot in the Leamington hotel.

The Clintons were similarly surprised to learn that Gretchen was anti-committee. We discussed the machinations of the committee, notably those of Donaho and Halevy, which were intended to give the impression that nearly everybody -- even people strongly opposed to them, such as Ed and Jessie -- was supporting the committee. Gretchen was to learn later that many of the people in Berkeley who knew her well had swallowed Donaho's large insinuation that she was on his side and against Breen.⁷ The Clintons described just how the Donaho bunch had confused and confounded matters, misled and misinformed the Clintons and others until no one in Berkeley knew what was happening or what would happen. When the fog lifted, one could see that the committee stood almost alone on their home ground, and so they remained, abetted only by such stalwart, upright, and moral creatures as Joe and Roberta Gibson, Norm Metcalf, Danny Curran,⁸ and Terry Burns.

We discussed the future, wondering what might happen after the convention was over. Somebody commented that Bill Donaho apparently expected that everybody would forgive and forget, and Jessie said she certainly could not do so. I said, "But, Jessie, what if you picked up the phone some morning next month and heard a friendly voice say, 'Hello, this is Al Halevy.' What would you say to him?" Jessie said, "I'd say, 'Oh, puke, puke!' That's what I'd say, I would. 'Oh, puke, puke!'"

We savored the exclamation and repeated it gleefully. Donaho, Halevy, Rogers, Stark? Oh, puke, puke!

6: Sunday in Oakland

In the morning Kevin placed some more telephone calls and discovered from Bob Lichtman that there had been another incident at the hotel on Saturday in which Jerry Knight had been thrown out of the convention. I never heard a complete and unbiased account of this event and after reading accounts of our own ejection from the mezzanine I will prudently refrain from describing this event about which I learned only

second or third hand. However, this time there seemed to be repercussions. According to what we heard, the resulting uproar had caused the con committee to meet in solemn conclave and overrule Al Halevy, to whom they had given the dirty job of ejecting "finks" in the first place. They decided to allow nonmembers and non-badge-wearing members onto the mezzanine henceforth.

Gretchen and I went to the Leamington in mid-afternoon -- Kevin had gone to San Rafael to visit his parents -- stopping at Spenger's Grotto en route for a seafood dinner. At the hotel we were met by groups of friends who told us joyfully, "Did you hear what happened? Now you can attend the convention! The con committee has given in!"

"Fine," we said. "Do you mean that now Walter Breen can attend the convention?" Too often this reply was met by looks of blank befuddlement, and we had to do a lot of explaining. Most fans were not aware that we were boycotting the convention as a matter of principle -- not because we had been ejected from the convention. Also, too many people were unaware that we were boycotting the convention. But this was a problem all boycotters had to face. The Nelsons, the Goldstones, and the Clintons, as well as Leland Sapiro for the brief time he was in the Bay area, refused to set foot in the Leamington at all. Others, such as Avram Davidson, Bob Lichtman, and Andy Main -- who spent all the con sitting, like Bernard Baruch, on a bench -- were "at the hotel but not at the convention."⁹ There were some fans, including Gretchen, Kevin, and myself, who went as far as the mezzanine, but carefully refrained from entering the convention meeting-halls or taking part in any of the convention activities.

One of the first persons we met as we entered the hotel was Ted White, who asked me to come along to the art show room "as my guest," as he expressed it. He said he knew I was boycotting the convention, but, he added, "the art show is not part of the convention." I weakened momentarily, not only because I faunched to see the paintings but because the art show is Bjo Trimble's brainchild, and I'd do most anything for the love of Bjo Trimble. In the end, however, I thanked Ted for his kind thought but refused to enter the art show even as his guest.

Gretchen, though a convention member, similarly refused to attend the con aside from two exceptions -- or only one, if you accept the theory that the art show is not part of the convention. Jack Harness lured her in to see the art show in order to view his paintings which were on display. She admired Jack and his paintings for a while, then flogged herself away from the art show room. She also attended the business meeting, held late Sunday afternoon, because she still nursed a wan hope that somebody would bring up a vote of censure or at least a question regarding the Boondoggle affair.

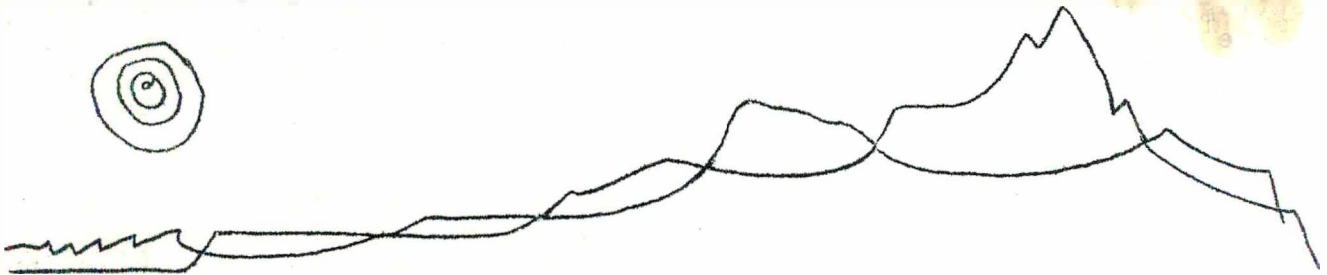
While she was in the business meeting, Wrai Ballard and I found a couple of chairs in the mezzanine and chatted pleasantly about the joys of farming in North Dakota -- a vocation Wrai followed far too long -- and about his recent transformation into a sophisticated city dweller.

People were drifting out of the business session. From them, we learned that London had been voted the 1965 worldcon and that Long Beach

had won the 1965 Westercon. Owen Hannifen sauntered by, hand in hand with Ruth Berman. Owen carried a nightstick in his belt labeled "Al Halevy Fan Club." Ruth told me she was attending graduate school at the University of California and gave me her address, complete with a mnemonic for remembering it. We talked of Minneapolis, our old home town, and she confided that she was a little homesick; I tried to cheer her up, and she went off, sniffing happily (or disdainfully).

Another old Minnesotan came by while I was talking with Ruth: Sam Russell, who was pushing his wife in a wheelchair. Florence had had an operation on her feet not many days previously and still wasn't able to walk. She wore special wooden-soled shoes, and insisted that she could get around a little bit, although she told me she looked like Frankenstein's monster lurching along. I expressed interest in seeing this transformation, and she obliged by getting up and walking a few painful steps. She didn't look at all like Frankenstein's monster, but I didn't really suppose that Florence could look like a monster.

Gretchen emerged at last from the business meeting and described the session with indignation and amusement. She said disgustedly that the meeting had been miserably chaired by Al Halevy, who seemed to know nothing of parliamentary procedure. He would call for the vote on a motion after the question had been called, without calling for a vote on



the question, or the amendments, or even reading off the motion. At stage right, ensconced behind a bottle of beer, sat Tony Boucher, the convention parliamentarian, gazing wearily off into space and answering patiently when Halevy addressed him. Aside from Halevy, Tony was the only person up front; the rest of the committee was ranged around the door, alert to prevent an invasion of Elinor Busby's "creepy" boycotters, no doubt. According to the rules the committee had set up, every motion had to be submitted in writing, "with written seconds," and had to be approved by the committee before they could be presented to the convention at the business meeting. Strangely enough, the Boondoggle matter was not brought up.

She also described the debate on revision of the Hugo setup, which was a reform ably championed by Harlan Ellison and vehemently criticized by Ed Wood and Major Scithers in particular. Scithers advanced all sorts of parliamentary objections to the Hugo discussion, while Fred Lerner, bedecked in a little Coney Island hat, and sporting a small black beard, leaped up on a chair and hurled objections at Scithers. Finally, in exasperation, Scithers called a "point of personal privilege," and, phrasing his words very solemnly, spoke of his honor and dignity, and seemed to be challenging the somewhat intimidated Lerner to a duel! Mingled cheers and jeers drowned him out.

We circulated among the crowd that had emerged from the business meeting and was clustered in the mezzanine. Ted White was still working on his convention report, and he showed Gretchen and me his account of the battle of the mezzanine, asking us to correct it, if required. It was a mostly accurate account, but we offered a few corrections which he said he would incorporate in the final draft.¹⁰ David Kyle introduced me to his young son; Gretchen and Tom Seidman discussed theology; Danny Curran recommended life in Canyon, California; and much conversation involving such people as Prentiss Choate, Greg and Jim Benford, Don Simpson, Wally Weber, and Dick and Pat Lupoff was going on around us. One cluster of fans included Harlan Ellison, Bill Rotsler, Bob Silverberg, Ted White, Fred Lerner, Gretchen and myself, among others. Harlan was full of admiration for Gretchen's showing on Friday night, but said she shouldn't fight for nothing. He appointed himself as her manager, and told her when he wanted her to take care of somebody, he would cry, "Kill, Gretchen, kill, kill!" He demonstrated by pointing a finger at Ted White and shouting, "Kill, Gretchen, kill, kill!" She began to grow ten feet tall, sprouting hair all over, when suddenly she refused to cooperate. "Christ, Harlan," she said, shrinking back to normal, "what's the profit in killing Ted White?"

While this repartee was going on, Al Halevy limped up and stood behind his nose, blinking his bruised eyes. Nobody paid him much heed, even after I got down on hands and knees behind him and hunched for somebody to come along and give him a shove. The only person who even noticed was Bill Blackbeard, who was too kind to carry through.

Phil Dick moved through the clusters of fans, trailed by a couple of anonymous acolytes. He remarked that he was a little tired, and someone said, "I'll bet you haven't slept for two nights, Phil." "I haven't slept," Phil said solemnly, "since the convention started. The convention of 1954." He began discussing the difficulties of keeping awake, and Gretchen suggested the use of a stimulant. Phil looked at her over the tops of his glasses. "That's a good idea, madam, but not when you're driving. No, not when you're driving -- or you will certainly end up in San Leandro. You don't want to end up in San Leandro. I'm telling you that you don't." I was overwhelmed, not only by the firm conviction that San Leandro must be at the far end of the galaxy from home, but by the sudden realization that Phil Dick had assuredly ended up there some dark night when he was driving home. I shivered.

Phil's monologs were marvels of improvisation. He started out with a mildly ridiculous observation, topped it with something twice as ridiculous, and built from there, each remark inspiring him to greater and greater heights. He delivered his meandering remarks in a dry, conversational tone, as if discussing nothing more interesting than the weather. Never did he seem to grope for words or concepts, no matter how outlandish the subject or the observations.

He told us about Rotsler's naked lady at the masquerade Saturday night, and how he had actually embraced her and peppered his clothes with golden flakes. "She was completely nude under those flakes," he insisted. "She was the nudest woman I've ever seen. She was wearing nothing but a belt." Somebody protested that the girl was obviously wearing tights, and Phil threw up his hands in protest. "I firmly be-

lieve that she was completely nude, and if anybody has any evidence to the contrary, I refuse to listen. I didn't dare look at the lady below the waist, but I'm absolutely convinced she was completely nude!"

7: Expedition to Berkeley

It was getting late, and Gretchen and I hadn't had dinner yet. Neither had Bill Blackbeard, who came over to suggest that we drive somewhere to eat. We mentioned the Fuji in Berkeley as the place we would like to go, and he was agreeable. We cautioned him that since the car was full of stuff, we wouldn't be able to take anyone else along on the expedition. We didn't get started immediately, and of course -- as was inevitable -- other people soon attached themselves to us, desiring to accompany us to dinner. For a while it seemed that half the convention was congregated around us. Fred Whitledge took pity on us, and offered us the use of his little Rambler American to accommodate the mob of hungry fans.

So off we went -- as many of us as could cram into a compact car: Gretchen, Bill Blackbeard, Dennis Smith, Fred Whitledge's redheaded teenage son, and myself. Down in the parking lot, I discovered that nobody but me could or would drive the car, so I slid behind the wheel, and we chugged out onto the dark streets of Oakland. The car was very similar to my old 1954 Rambler, the famed Honeybee, but it was newer and in better mechanical shape. My only difficulty in driving the contraption was that the car's brakes grabbed so powerfully -- Wham!!! -- whenever I nudged the pedal that everybody in back slid suddenly off the seat and onto the floor.

None of us was too familiar with Oakland, and we experienced difficulty in finding the freeway to Berkeley. Following the somewhat conflicting directions shouted at me by my passengers, I found the car merrily zooming through -- of all places -- the Alameda Tube, instead of the freeway. We retraced our course, got back in Oakland for a fresh start, and found ourselves zooming madly through the Alameda Tube again. Back in Oakland, we stopped to reconsider, and orient ourselves, but we missed a third trip through the Alameda Tube only because I ignored the directions shouted from the back seat. Gretchen and I looked at each other. "Do you think we'll end up in San Leandro?" I asked.

We reached Berkeley too late to have dinner at the Fuji after all. And besides, Bill Blackbeard and Dennis Smith proved to be more interested in visiting bookstores than in finding an eating-place. Smith disappeared into a bookstore, and Bill could hardly be restrained. At last, in sheer desperation, we decided to eat at Si's Char-Broiler a few blocks from the Fuji. The food was nearly inedible; no wonder they cannily required that customers pay in advance for meals. It was like traveling all the way from Los Angeles to Long Beach in order to eat dinner at the Dog House.

We left Si's Char-Broiler in a foul temper, all of us. Even the usually cheerful Blackbeard was slightly grumpy when we sent him off to search for Dennis Smith. Everything had turned out so miserably that I fully expected to lose track of Blackbeard, too, but he eventually came

back with Smith in tow. I envisioned a misnavigated return trip, too, but we reached Oakland without getting diverted to the Alameda Tube, and reentered the Leamington.

By now it was getting late. The banquet was over, and people were disappearing to attend room parties or to stagger upstairs to bed. As we discussed the just-announced Hugo winners with Ted and Lin Johnstone and other people who had attended the banquet, Edith Ogutsch came by. She said she was sleepy and was headed for bed. She added that she was flying home Monday afternoon and would probably not see us again till we returned to God's country. "In that case," I said gallantly, "I'd better kiss you goodnight." I did so before she could protest. She was a little alarmed. "Nobody ever kissed me before in public," she said.

Gretchen and I had promised to attend a folk sing -- having nothing to do with the convention or fandom -- at Faith Petric's in San Francisco, and we were anxious to leave. We pushed toward the stairs, but were easily diverted by the clusters of people who were still around, busily chattering. Numerous LASFS members milled around, and I found myself talking with the likes of Rick Sneary, Len Moffatt, Katya Hulan, and Roy Squires. "Geez, it's just like a LASFS meeting," I said.

Much time had passed when I noticed that Edith was still present, down at the other end of the mezzanine, talking with a couple of personable strangers. I went over and kissed her goodnight a second time. She wasn't quite so alarmed this time. She didn't protest at all, so I attempted still another kiss. She pushed me away. "This is getting out of hand," she insisted.

When we reached San Francisco at last, Gretchen and I found Kevin Langdon at the folk sing, which was going on still, though with diminished vigor, despite the lateness of the hour. Quite a long time afterward, we drove back to Kevin's apartment.

8: The Last Day

Labor day Gretchen and I didn't arrive at the convention hotel till late afternoon. We had promised to meet Kevin there, and as soon as we walked into the lobby we found him conversing with Bob Lichtman and Andy Main. Kevin was hungry, and so were we. Nothing seemed to be going on at the moment, so we decided to go to dinner before doing anything else. Driving up and down the streets of Oakland, we located the Lantern, a Chinese restaurant we had seen as we passed by on another occasion.

We were studying the menu when we glanced up to see a small group of fans just leaving the restaurant. Ted White, Owen Hannifen, the Benfords, and others were full of gossip about a spectacular squabble that had lately taken place at the convention -- this time not involving X Act II -- and Ted gave us some recommendations concerning the menu at the Lantern. He said the meat wasn't much good; neither was the fish. Even the rice was bad. "How about the soy sauce?" I asked. "Passable," he said, relenting a bit.

Kevin told us that things at the con were relatively dull. People who had to be at work on Tuesday were already checking out and going

home. Edith Ogutsch, he said, had relayed farewells to us as she went down to the airport limousine. But we were hardly prepared for the emptiness of the mezzanine when we returned to the hotel. Hardly anybody was in sight except for Bruce Pelz. He was sitting with saturnine countenance behind the convention desk, doing some private paper work. We learned from him that everybody was in the convention hall, watching the Czech film in color, "Baron Munchausen."

A few other fans drifted into the mezzanine as we were talking with Bruce, and we sat down on the sofa to converse with Stan Woolston. Norm Metcalf sauntered out of the film showing as we sat there, and thoughtfully regarded Bruce at work behind the desk. "Hey, Bruce," he said, "do you want me to vote for you as SAPS OE again next year?" Bruce looked up and tugged his beard dourly. "Well, yes, Norm, I would like to have your vote," he said, "but I'm afraid I don't have \$25."

Finally the movie showing ended, and fans streamed out into the mezzanine. We passed among them, handing out "TERRY CARR FOR TAFF" flyers, made by Gretchen, to everybody. A few people passed them right back: "But I've already voted for Terry!" Spotting Jock Root sitting on the sofa nearby, Gretchen went over and innocently handed him a flyer. Jock grinned a satyr-like grin, turned the sheet over, and remarked, "Thanks, I needed a piece of paper for my own flyer." Gretchen sat down and watched him as he rapidly sketched a mysterious pattern which turned out to say "JOCK ROOT FOR TAFF" in distinctive square letters.

I was standing near the elevators talking with Lin Johnstone, Ron Parker, and others when I vaguely noticed a woman pass by. I'm usually aware of such things. I automatically recorded her nametag, but the name didn't quite register till she was some distance away. I glanced up startled, and just then the woman turned around to say something to someone, and for an instant I saw Margaret Gemignani plain.

Meanwhile Gretchen was talking with Bill Donaho. "If you're interested," he said confidentially, "I'm throwing a private party in room #322, and you're welcome to come."

Gretchen said thoughtfully, "Could I bring some friends with me?" Donaho looked dubious, probably thinking of Kevin Langdon and me. "Walter Breen, for instance," Gretchen added ingenuously.

"Oh, hell!" Donaho said, and stalked off.

The mezzanine was already half-deserted. About the only sight that was worth marking was that of Joe Gibson astraddle a chair, with his arms folded across the back, glowering at the remaining fans like an apprentice Burns cop. Firmly resisting a strong desire to boot his exposed rump, I escorted Gretchen down the stairs from the Leamington mezzanine for the last time, Kevin tagging after us. Sam and Christine Moskowitz were standing at the foot of the stairs, dressed in their coats and hats, about to leave for Newark. Sam, still exhibiting his old beaming ebullience after four days of convention, greeted us warmly, and talked animatedly about their automobile trip from Los Angeles to the Bay area, via Yosemite. Though I often disagree with Sam, I always enjoy talking with him, and I was glad to have this belated chat.

We left the hotel very early, perhaps 2200 hours, and drove back to San Francisco. The Pacificon was over.

9: Tuesday in Berkeley

Gretchen had business to transact in Berkeley; besides, we wanted to attend a big party at Pat and Dick Ellington's on Tuesday evening. Therefore we stayed over in the Bay area till Wednesday noon.

We made several phone calls Tuesday morning and were invited over to Jerry and Miriam Knight's. We arrived in the midafternoon, discovering Miri busily feeding a sleepy Jennifer. She urged us to admire the baby before she was put to bed for a nap, and we did so before sitting down to quaff beer, eat salted nuts from a bowl, and chat with Miri at the dining room table.

Andy Main and Don Fitch arrived while we were talking. They had been shopping for Miriam, and came in laden with pabulum, strained pears, and gallons of milk -- but no cigarets for Miri. They went out again to buy cigarets and returned shortly, still without cigarets. Andy explained that they had had a flat down the street, and (for some reason I have forgotten) couldn't change the tire. Jerry Knight, who had arrived home from work by this time, winced, muttered that there was always something wrong with Miri's car, and said he would take care of the matter later.

Gretchen and I wanted to pick up some household goods of hers that had been stored at Bill Donaho's since August 1963. We drove over to Manila street, arriving just about dusk, and I sat in the parked car across the street from 5008 while Gretchen went up and knocked. In a moment she disappeared inside. When she emerged 15 or 20 minutes later she was laden with several cartons full of pots and pans and silverware, which I helped stow in the car.

I asked her what had transpired inside. She told me Donaho was there alone, sitting in the dark kitchen drinking a beer, attended only by his cats, one of whom was the weak and very ill Habbakuk. Donaho was lonesome and eager to talk, and when he offered her a beer she couldn't refuse. He began to say again that she didn't understand what had happened, that there was some failure of communication between them; he was anxious to explain matters. "We'll have some long talks, now that you are back," he said. Gretchen, surprised, revealed that her plans had changed and she would not be in Berkeley till January, and added, "I think I understand very well what happened. I don't see how you can explain it away. Are you going to apologize to Walter?"

Donaho shook his head emphatically. "No, no. That's not what I mean. You don't understand."

She finished her beer. "I'd better get going, Bill. Redd is waiting for me in the car."

Donaho picked up a carton of household gear and remarked, "I'll help you carry this down. Redd won't mind, will he?"

"Well, I don't know, Bill," Gretchen said doubtfully. "Redd's in a pretty grim mood."

Donaho put down the carton. "In that case, I'd better not." He bade her goodbye from the front door. From the car I could see his looming shape in the doorway as Gretchen came down the steps to the street.

Gretchen and I ate at the Fuji Inn, then were lured into Cody's bookstore to browse a while for books and magazines. We bought a few art reproduction postcards and paused down the street at the nearest mailbox to address and post them. I mailed one to the Trimbles: "I'm unable to find a Perlou's in Berkeley and will be coming home soon."

The Ellingtons' big old house was well crammed with fans by the time we arrived, but for a change we could spot very few LASFS members -- at least currently attending members -- as we began to circulate around. Most Los Angeles fans had already gone home, and most of the partying fans were Bay area types, with a sprinkling of out-of-towners. I did spot Rick Sneary and Len Moffatt over in the corner of the living room, drinking rum, and when I went over to greet them I saw Ruth Berman sitting in the same corner, next to Poul Anderson on the sofa. She smiled at me and patted the arm of the sofa. "Have an arm," she invited. I misunderstood, and chewed her juicy young arm, werewolf fashion, to her astonishment and consternation.

In between listening to Poul describe something or other, beaming intently through his glasses and making his characteristic lemur-like gestures, Ruth confided to me that she was already getting over her homesickness and was enjoying Berkeley tremendously. Ruth wanted to leave the party early, and pretty soon I drove her back to International House at Piedmont and Bancroft, then returned to the party.

Gretchen had been besieged by George and Lu Ann Price. George was explaining to her, over and over, that he was the George W. Price who writes long letters to Ted Pauls' Kipple explaining the arch-conservative viewpoint, meanwhile pinching her ribs and bottom every now and then, as if testing them for the market.

Astrid Anderson, blossoming into an attractive and well-formed young lady on the model of her mother, moved here and there among the guests. She came up to me and said, "I'll bet I can lift you off the floor." I said, "I'll bet you can't." So she grabbed me around the waist and lifted me a few inches off the floor. Her mother Karen, inspired by this, remarked, "I'll bet I can lift Bill Donaho off the floor!" She walked over to Donaho, who was standing in a group of fans nearby, linked elbows with him while standing back to back, and bending forward, heaved his 363-pound bulk onto her back. Donaho, presumably a subject for such an exhibition on previous occasions, didn't blink an eye. As soon as he was set back on his feet, he continued his conversation with Chuck Freudenthal and others.

Astrid was cavorting, I noticed, with a husky youngster who looked about 11 or 12 years old. The boy displayed his strength by carrying her upstairs in his arms, and then got her to engage in a mock wrestling match with him on the landing. Later Gretchen brought him over and in-

troduced him to me. My name, of course, meant nothing to him, but nevertheless he grinned and shook hands politely. He was a burly, handsome kid, bursting with youthful energy, and he did not seem to be particularly corrupted. He was Glen Frendel.

Gretchen went to the kitchen to replenish her supply of beer from the refrigerator. Phil Dick and Ted White were standing nearby, and she fell into small talk with them about editors and publishers. Finally she said with great feeling, "The hell with editors!" -- she glared at Ted White, grinning behind his beard -- "and the hell with publishers! They should all be castrated."

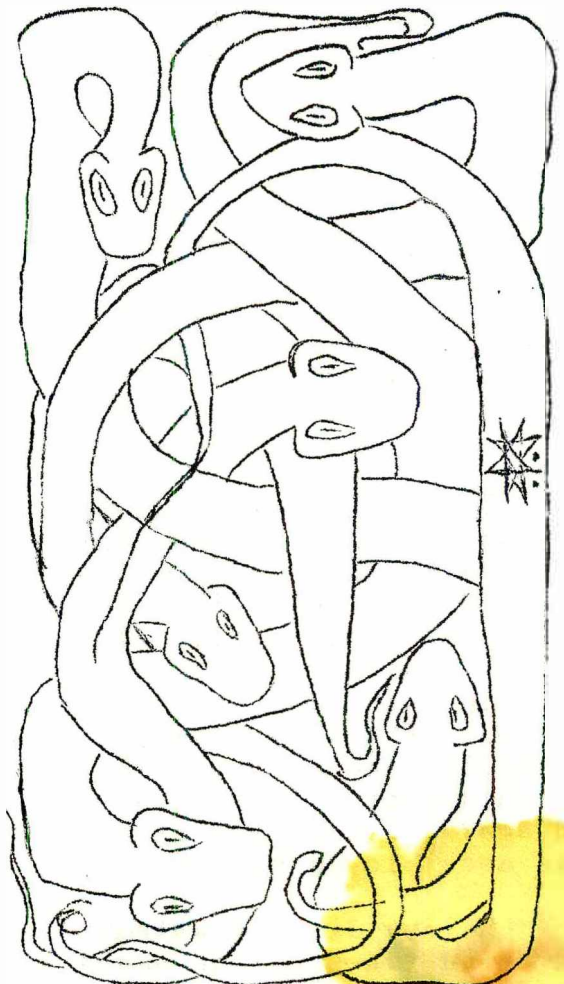
Phil stared at her slaunchwise over his glasses and waved his beer mug in admonition. "But madam, there's something you don't understand. You're making a great mistake. If you cut it off, it's of no use at all. It doesn't work that way. Don't do it, madam! You'll be sorry if you do!" Ted White grinned.

Back in the living room I was talking with Avram Davidson, a friendly and affable editor (or ex-editor), who shouldn't be castrated. Avram told me about his recent sojourn in Mexico, which was evidently a fascinating if difficult era of his life. I remarked that I might be escaping to Guadalajara in November if Barry Goldwater was elected, and Avram suggested, "Go to Canada. It's just as cheap, and you can speak the language."

Jessie Clinton and Len Moffatt (I'm his bastard son) came along. Jessie crouched at my feet, perched an ashtray on my knee, and required me to strike matches for her each time she fumbled out a fresh cigaret. Karen Anderson came over and curled at my feet on the other side, and then a third woman, wearing a colorful silk shirt and close-fitting blue slacks, suddenly loomed over me, saying intensely, "So you're Redd Boggs! Redd Boggs, I've hated you for ten years!" She added, "If you knew who I was, you would know why I've hated you for so long."

I knew very well who she was -- although I had never met her before: she had been pointed out to me -- but I gallantly guessed, "Are you Karen Anderson? Mildred Clingerman? Margaret St Clair? Ayn Rand? Marion Zimmer Bradley?"

She finally told me she was Judith Merrill, but that didn't solve why she had hated me for ten years. It turned out that I had reviewed one



of her books back then in a way she considered unfair. I couldn't remember the review, but I mentioned that I had given a favorable review to The Tomorrow People in Discord and asked her if she remembered it. She admitted she hadn't read it, and gave me her address so I could send her a copy. She grew more amiable as we discussed the matter of the second "d" in "Redd" and the lack of a second "l" in "Merril," and soon she was patting me gently on the belly and hardly resembled at all a woman who hated me.

While I was surrounded by these women, Grania Davidson padded by, barefoot, a big graceful cat with long swaying pigtails, garbed in a beautiful black mu-mu. "How does one join the harem?" she said. I confessed that I had only two arms, but I held my lips out to her and she came over and gave me a soft warm kiss. Gretchen hovered in the distance, and finally went off upstairs where Ray Nelson, Tom Hall, and others were lazily strumming guitars.

Some people were conspicuous by their absence from the party. I did not see Hyde nor Jekyll of such people as J. Ben Stark, Alva and Sid Rogers, Joe and Roberta Gibson, and several others. Of course Marion and Walter Breen were not there (though presumably welcome). Bill Donaho and Al Halevy were almost the only important figures in the Boondoggle affair who showed up. Donaho absorbed vast amounts of home brew donated by Danny Curran, but never looked very cheerful during the evening. While Jessie Clinton and I were conversing in the kitchen, standing in the door to the pantry, Donaho came lumbering up and said, "Pardon me, Jessie." She moved aside, fastidiously drawing back her skirt, and Donaho barged through. "What do you say, Jessie?" I asked. "Oh, puke, puke!" she said feelingly.

Al Halevy meandered uncomfortably here and there, making himself affable. Like Donaho, Halevy cut a pathetic figure by the end of the Pacificon. He tried to be as amiable as a shaggy dog, but seemed to feel baffled and rejected. A long time before the party ended, he began to say his farewells. I saw him begin in the far end of the kitchen, shaking hands with everyone who would shake hands with him, and working his way toward the front of the house, progressing as methodically as a candidate for dog-catcher in No-people, Nevada, at a Rotary meeting. I escaped to the living room before he reached me.

Fifteen minutes later I noted with apprehension that Halevy had worked his way around into the dining room and was heading my way. I debated whether to move again, but I decided not to. Halevy came into the living room, still shaking hands. He approached Gretchen, shook hands, and said sadly, "I'll probably never see you again, Gretchen, and I want you to know I'm sorry for what happened. But I wouldn't have done anything any differently." Gretchen ignored the familiar ambiguous strains of this apology, strains which had been struck even before the convention began by Donaho's curious Apologia, and gazed at Halevy with astonishment. What did the fellow mean? Was he going on a long sea voyage? Was he migrating to Israel? It sounded almost as if poor Al was about to do himself in.

Halevy did not attempt to shake hands with Andy Main, who sat next to me on the sofa; he waved at him absently. Then he hunkered down be-

side me, and said: "I won't try to shake hands with you, Redd, because I know you won't, but I want you to know I'm sorry about what happened. Buechley got 'way out of line, and I didn't mean that thing to happen. I'm not apologizing, you understand, but I'm sorry, and I hope you'll forgive me. I know you haven't yet, but I hope you will. I like you, Redd, and I hope you'll think it over seriously and write me a couple months from now and tell me what you've decided."

I said, "I like you, too, Al, but I can't forgive and forget. I don't wish you any ill luck, but one can't just wipe the slate clean when a thing is done like the thing the con committee did to Walter."

Halevy nodded vaguely, still seeming not to comprehend the nature of the opposition to the committee's actions, and repeated, "I'm sorry for what happened, I'm really sorry."

10: Epilog to a Report

Al Halevy took his departure from the Ellingtons' party, and we watched him go. His exit seemed to signal the end of an act, though not the end of the Boondoggle affair. The Pacificon was over, and the post-convention party was drawing to a close. We were brimming with mixed feelings as we took our own leave from the Ellingtons'. For Gretchen it was her first worldcon (she had attended the Westercon of 1963, but only briefly, because she was ill with bronchitis), and it was my first convention of any sort since 1949. Of course we had not really attended the convention at all: We had not gone to any of the events on the con program, and had not visited any of the room parties aside from a brief visit to Terry Carr's party Friday night. Nevertheless, both of us had enjoyed ourselves -- perhaps more than some of the convention-goers who had supported the committee, judging from the Busbys' con reports.

Yet somehow the Pacificon struck us in retrospect as a rather unhappy affair. It lacked the air of tension we had expected; one did not really expect violence to break out, even though battlelines had been drawn for months before the con, and when the fight on the mezzanine exploded, it was a stunning surprise. We did not observe any "sabotage" on the part of the boycotters, about which the Busbys "mourn" in their con reports. Bob Lichtman and Andy Main, whom Elinor is supposed to have squelched with one flash of her rapier wit for spoiling the con, were always pleasant, well-behaved, and nonaggressive whenever I saw them. Nevertheless, there was an undercurrent of unfriendliness and isolation surging through the whole affair which was not characteristic, I am sure, of most conventions in the past.

We met numerous people we wanted to meet -- for me, the Pacificon was particularly gratifying for providing the occasion for meeting at last such old and valued friends and correspondents as Bob Silverberg, Avram Davidson, Wrai Ballard, Terry Carr, and others. But we did not meet everybody we wanted to meet, partly because we had to refrain from entering the convention meeting-halls or room parties, partly because the Boondoggle affair had caused a wide gap to separate many fans who had been, or might be, good friends. That I was prevented, one way or another, from establishing or re-establishing contact with a good number

of people is cause for deep regret. But I am not sorry that I boycotted the Pacificon and opposed the con com's misguided actions.

The convention committee's exclusion of Walter Breen from the Pacificon II, and their attempt in the Boondoggle¹² to besmear his name and reputation, cannot easily be condoned or forgiven. As I think back to the convention, I remember again Ed Clinton's eloquent defense of Walter, in which he said, "You simply don't do that to a man." And when I think of the pitiful, discredited con committeemen, I remember again Jessie Clinton's contemptuous dismissal of them: "Oh, puke, puke!"

1964-1974

You remember the old frontiersman who wrote bad verse: Boone doggerel.

NOTES

1. Id est, Cult member.
2. Vide, Elinor's remark about "what a sad convention this was, and how much better it would have been without all these creepy people wandering around the hotel boycotting the convention," in Salud #10, p 6, and F. M. Busby's reference to a "few spoilsports (who) set their stamp on this recent Labor Day weekend one way and another," in Sercon's Bane #22, p 12.
3. Cf F. M. Busby's definition of "Boycott" in Sercon's Bane #22: "To hang around bitching and occasionally trying to sneak in for the free drinks."
4. Sercon's Bane #22, p 12.
5. Much later I happened to be browsing through an issue (#35, March 1951) of the MFS Bulletin, official organ of the Minneapolis Fantasy society, edited by Richard Elsberry, and discovered Bob Buechley listed as one of 37 sf fans living in or around the Twin Cities at that time. I hadn't remembered it, but Buechley -- like me -- hails from Minnesota!
6. "I cannot quite fight down my feelings of pity for my fellow human beings even when, as in this case, I find some of their deeds to be utterly evil." (Note by Gretchen Schwenn)
7. "There is no question that Donaho could have mistaken my position after the long letters I wrote him on the subject. I still have the carbons of those letters." (Note by Gretchen Schwenn)
8. For a description of Danny Curran's attitude toward Breen, see Boondoggle, p 1.

9. Avram writes: "I was at the hotel but not at the convention. As soon as I resigned as F&SF editor I resigned the ex officio membership traditionally given pro editors. Any lists of members drawn up after the con which show my name, lie."

10. I do not remember ever seeing Ted White's Pacificon report in print. I believe that it has never been published.

11. "On Monday, 'boycotters' Lichtman&Main told Elinor that Fan R was leaving because 'it's a crappy Con'. She replied 'You two certainly did your best to try to make it one'. I am always proud of Elinor but sometimes as now I am inordinately proud; I wouldn't have thought of that exquisite and apposite retort until much too late." -- F. M. Busby, Sercon's Bane #22, p 12.

12. One of the unsolved mysteries of the whole affair is why Donaho chose to call his original attack on Walter Breen ...Boondoggle... None of the usual definitions of the term really fits the circumstances in which he used it: (1) a handicraft article of leather or wicker; (2) a gadget or thingamajig; (3) useless, trivial, or wasteful activity at public expense. However, the latter is the most probable meaning in the present case. Was Boondoggle published at convention expense?

"Tout, au monde, existe pour aboutir à un livre..." -- Mallarmé.

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about 20 copies were originally sent out, and the accused, Walter Breen, was not one of the recipients. The purpose of this fanzine is summed up in a statement on the last page: "I want to perform a surgical operation, separating Walter and fandom."

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