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DARKSIDE DATA

--Loubel Wood--

"Well, boys, you've got a job of work to do," the Senator explained with great gravity. "My job is done. It's up to you now." The man was obviously ill at ease. He shifted his redundant girth while his bullet eyes jerked around the interior of the rocket ship as if he half-expected something to 'go off' prematurely. Crit Johnson, ship builder, smiled and said nothing as usual. The quick look he gave the interior of the place though was full of assurance and satisfaction.

Senator Shafter cleared his throat and continued. "I'm betting on you Fellows, you know." That's probably true, thought Commander Tom Crenshaw. There is plenty of betting on this trip. We all know that.

"Just don't get too close. Don't take too many chances this time. This trip we want assurance--assurance that we can get to the moon. We've lost too many men already in this effort, too many men and too many ships. We're still way ahead of any other efforts being made. That is, We hope we are. So, circle the orb and return to port. That's the orders. Officially," he added as an afterthought. Then he paused, coughed slightly and went on again. "Of course if you decide it is safe enough ----- I mean, if you can land there----- Well, of course, it would put the U.S.A. away out in front."

"We'll do what we think is best," said Crenshaw, knowing the score. His jaws knotted firmly on the last word. His big, bony frame stiffened slightly.

"Of course. Of course, I know you will." The Senator felt too cramped in the tight inner space, and, when Johnson checked the time obviously enough, he quickly shook hands with the men and turned to hurry out. He could not resist a parting word, however, as he and Johnson retired through the airlock. "Remember, boys, the army, the navy, the marines, and air corps are all behind you."

"But so velly, velly far behind," quipped Clark. Clark was twenty-five. A smallish fellow whose pale hair was very lightly tinged with red. He was a mechanical genius--out of this world on any job that needed fixing. Officially he was Communications.

Senator Shafter's pet project was this sleek atom smashing Cricket, superconstructed rocket ship, bound for the moon. She was a government job, built by Johnson & Crenshaw Flight Ships, Inc.

When she was nearly completed a special delegation had called on Crenshaw. "Will you fly this ship to the moon, Crenshaw? We want the best crew we can get together, and we feel that your experience--"

Crenshaw was not surprised at being sought out. Seventeen years ago he and his brother, Pete, backed by private enterprise, had attempted a flight into space. Pete was killed in the crackup which was the end of that. A few years later he was nearly burned to death in the first atomic powered flight which actually did conquer the force of gravity but fouled up with the effort. After his long convalescence, he quit flying and had gone into ship building with Crit Johnson.

He was not surprised however when asked if he would take the

ship on its maiden flight. His answer was prepared. "Gentlemen, there is nothing I would like better than to take this ship to the moon."

"Then it's a deal. The sound screens have been thoroughly tested," said Senator Shafter, who was a member of the delegation. "We can absolutely depend on them. There will be no 'space craziness' in your crew. That hazard has been taken care of for all time."

The delegation then shook hands with Crenshaw and he promptly selected Madison Chestne for pilot. Chestne was a former army Major who had taken part in the audial tests for the supersonic ear screens.

All the effort of getting through gravitation had been nothing as compared to the puzzle and delay caused by space madness. Flights came back from deep space and ended in deadly crashes or else they staggered into awkward landings with all on board so mentally unbalanced no explanation was to be had from them. It began to look as if space travel was impossible. Steps were made to stop attempts.

Then, Hise Singleton, a man who wanted to be a musician, a pianist, but whose hands were injured so badly in an accident, he turned to physics instead, became so intrigued by the puzzlement of space he went out alone and brought back the answer. "Space," he said, "is full of sound. Sound that staggers you."

"It is a sort of musical rhapsody that comes right inside of your head and drives out everything else. When I first heard it, it seemed already to have control of me. My whole body vibrated to the sound. I lost consciousness. For hours I sat there unaware of anything but this prolonged exultation. After a time, however, I realized where I was again and that I had to fight it off. I pressed my fingers in my ears. I yelled and screamed. Once back in the earth's atmosphere, the spell wore off."

Ship builders promptly began to increase insulation against this thing. When it was finally determined that they could not shut the sounds out this way, the army turned to individual ear screens which filtered out above-normal sounds. With the perfection of these gadgets, which protected the inner ear from the vibrations of space sound without blocking normal sound, science was very certain that travel to the moon was reasonably safe.

Although robot rockets had reached the moon and certain data recorded from their instruments, these projects were disappointing. Without exception these robot controlled planes had unaccountably ricocheted through the ghastly forests of flinty steeples and gargoyles to speedy destruction somewhere in the fathomless crevices below. The government renewed its efforts after each disappointment because other nations were breathing down its neck in this super project of earth to reach the moon.

"Just don't get too close, he says," Clark mimicked Shafter when the inner door had closed behind the two men. Then ad-libbed, "But do be sure to bring back that little old moon, boys. You will, won't you? Huh! You will, won't you?"

Then: "Cricket to Port. Three minutes, Sir. Yes, Sir. (Pause) Check. Thank you, Sir." He turned to Crenshaw. "All clear."

"Cigarettes out," said Tom, mashing a half-smoked one of his own. "Check the grav. Air pressure." A pause in which he looked at each man in turn, and then, "Here she goes," he turned the needle to red, and the great vibration began. "Into the boots."

Clark spoke once more into the microphone. "Cricket to Port. Zero." Then, as the four men climbed between the halves of the pres-

sure bunks which they called 'boots', "All Senator Shafter wants is the moon--in his brief case."

Somebody answered, "We'll give him the moon." just as the rockets started blazing away.

Once the awful stress of initial projection was over, the trip became quite pleasant. Control was automatic, comfort automatic, service automatic. There was little to do as long as all went well. Science had conquered the fact of movement through space, and the fact of intelligence moving through space.

Tom Crenshaw's long-time visions grew larger as he watched the earth grow smaller in the visa screen. He was thirty-eight, had never married, and, since Pete's death, he had been quite a lonely man. This time we'll make it, he thought, looking around him at the men who made up his crew.

At his right hand sat Madison Chestne, often called 'Mad' but seldom ever lost his temper. He was twenty-seven. A stocky man; good looking and as steady a pilot as they ever come. He caught Tom's glance and flashed back a smile. Everything is great, it said.

Behind him to his left was Nilo Acton, and further back at the radio console was Ned Clark, radio man and mechanic extraordinary. Clark he had known for a long time. He wanted never to be without Clark in a pinch. Nilo was Johnson's man. A physicist and a mathematical wizard. One of the real ones. He had already amazed the experts.. "A whizz of a navigator too," recommended Chestne, who had been as eager as Johnson to have him go along.

Tom, who expected a mathematical genius to be the all work and no play type, thought Acton a bit shocking to say the least. His coal black hair and jutting face bones gave an appearance of possible Indian origin. But neither his ancestors nor his profession made of Nilo Acton a staid and stereotyped citizen.

Nilo was not as stocky and solidly built as Chestne, nor nearly as handsome. At the moment he was frankly almost asleep. Tom mistook his stance there among his navigator's instruments for deep concentration, and didn't know he was simply dreaming about his girl as any normal young man of twenty-four is apt to do.

Tom Crenshaw was making an announcement. "The army recommends that all space personnel experiment, under supervision, for space sound effects without screens."

"What is that for?"

"On this trip it is to keep certain half-baked curiosity seekers from experimenting alone. So, for a period of five minutes, each of you, in turn, will listen without screens."

"The army allows ten minutes as a limit," said Madison grinning.

"Very well, but five is the limit here. I'm not going to have any supersonic jitters on this flight. Jot down what you hear, if you hear anything, which you probably won't. Then forget about it. You are first, Clark. Go ahead."

"You're making a mistake, Professor. I'm as jittery as the man in the moon with the first rocket ship backing down."

The experiment did not work out quite as Tom expected and desired, for Acton could hear the sound. "I heard it. Sure, I did," as Crenshaw signalled time was up. "For a minute all was quiet. I didn't hear a thing. Suddenly, it was there. Then, I had the strangest feeling that I had been hearing it all the time, without knowing."

"Funny how some people can hear that and others can't," said Madison.

"Not many can hear anything at all. But it jars you. I have seen it myself jar a man out of his senses."

"I think if I had just five minutes more -----"

"The army gives ten minutes."

"That's for actual testing. We have a different mission."

"I think if I had just five minutes more -----"

"Nothing doing," Crenshaw was emphatic.

"Oh, come on, Crenshaw. Be a sport. Give me another five minutes.. I personally think it said something to me."

"Not a chance."

"What language was it speaking?" Clark asked innocently.

"I think it was Maltese. I once had a black tom cat that had a Maltese friend. They didn't speak the same language but I think they understood each other. Well that Maltese had a crescendo that this audibility reminds me of."

"Hostile! Huh?"

"I don't think so. It said, 'I am the lotus and the lily. Out of great darkness comes great wisdom!!'"

"Cats don't sound like that to me."

"That's because you don't hear the overtones. All you get is the stress."

"Here we go!" Chuckled Madison with a sidelong glance at Tom.

Grenshaw looked up from his notes in the log to the man who was pacing the small inner space in excitement. "Somebody make the man a cup of coffee. Please!"

"I'll make the coffee myself," said Nilo. He turned the coffee mechanism to 'hot', and got out cups. "But before I drink the coffee, which won't change my opinion a bit, let me repeat, I think it said something pertinent to me."

"O. Kay. So it spoke of Lotus blossoms and wisdom extraordinary. So extraordinary in fact, you'd go stark raving crazy if you listened to it."

"Ten makes you twenty, I wouldn't." Nilo poured the coffee and handed a cup to each man. He had no intention of experimenting with the agencies of space. He was merely biding time by baiting Tom whom he was beginning to like very much.

"You see," he went on now in a manner of erudite profundity. "Space isn't space at all, except to bodies that are not space."

"What does that explain?" said Mad, rising from the heavily cushioned seat and setting down his coffee cup. "You're opposite to space, aren't you? Or do you have a blank space in your cranium akin to our present surroundings?" The others laughed.

"Ah! Blank space! Now you touch the root of the matter." He stopped prancing and his face sparkled with incredible enthusiasm. He pointed with his finger to stress his point. "Our bodies are opposites to space. We can touch our bodies with our senses. But the mind! Is it opposite to space? Because we can't see it, or touch it, is it not there? Is it nothing because of its dissimilarity to physical matter? Or is it, maybe, the common denominator of the Universe?"

"Bless me, ding! I knew he'd get it down to mathematics."

"Then you think that just--just mind, without any body, might be out there making that noise." Mad started working over his already immaculate finger nails with a penknife.

"Can you think of any noise that doesn't have mind back of it?"

"yeh, thunder."

"Can you prove there's no mind back of that?"

"Hell, no. And you can't prove there is. It just happens."

"Happens!" Nilo flung his hands wide in disgust. "Just like this space ship, I suppose. With twenty-four years of experimentation back of it! A doggone wild goose might think it just happened."

Mad chuckled. "Then you think everything that isn't physical matter, is mind stuff? All this space is just mind?"

"Not necessarily. I said, it could be. I said that because there is

nothing here--no physical matter, does not mean that it is space, or no other matter. And, the fact that there is sound here, substantiates my theory."

"Tell me, Nilo," said Clark painstakingly. "What would be the coordinates of a space kitty whose overtones reach from here to there?"

Nineteen hours and twenty-three minutes after the blast off at the Nevada Port, the space ship, Cricket, was easing herself down toward the bleak contours of the moon's surface. There was no more time for parrying and jollity among her crew. They were very close to uncharted territory--to unknown and dangerous terrain. It did not take a great deal of imagination to see those devilish peaks below as spiny fingers reaching up to grab them.

But the space men were on the offensive. They moved closer to the hazards that beckoned. They let their ship drift gently down until it floated about one-half mile above the highest peaks. From here, the contours stood out in bold relief. The tops and sides of the upreaching fingers glistened where the sunlight hit them. The pits between yawned black and fathomless.

"Well," said Crenshaw huskily as he revolved the great visa screen slowly, "we are here. The first men who have ever been here." And down the deep rifts of his face great tears rolled slowly. The others closed around the screen and stood in rapt silence and all of them wept a little as they gazed on the unveiled bosom of this magic world, so known, and so unknown. This paradox, whose face--so familiar, even chummy, to the very kids of earth--has, nevertheless, kept herself chillingly remote and anti-social through the long millenniums of earth's history.

"Bless me, ding!" Clark hung an arm over Mad's broad shoulder and peered closer. "Bless me, ding!"

"There sure couldn't be anything alive down there."

"She sure looks cold."

"Cold and dead."

"I don't see any landing fields," said Madison, looking at Tom significantly.

"Be patient. Take a check on this pit, Nilo, as we go over, both for depth and possible atmosphere. We will test and record for earth instruments from this height, and, if all goes well, we may try to get closer."

"Think we might land?" Madison wanted to know.

"I don't see any conceivable landing place yet. The orders were, get data first, then kill our fool selves if we want to." Tom

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chuckled. "Oh yes, we had better drop the signal bombs which they hope to pick up in the telescopes. Three should do it."

Out went the little helicopters with their hydrometers, their barometers, their gieger counters, their audio meters, for checking both sonic and supersonic sounds, and their duo-lensed cameras, capable of capturing both spectroscopic and topographic features. All worked on controlled beams in their own ellipses. All were set to record and return.

None of the little helicopters came back. Before they had completed half their circuits, their base was out of control.

Madison Chestne was the first to notice. "Look! See that spray? One of the copters must have hit something. Dust or water." The others looked.

There seemed, for sure, to be a mist rising from the surface below them. It didn't settle back either as it should have done if one of the copters had floated out of control and dashed into it. It rose steadily toward the ship.

"Looks like smoke," said Acton.

"It might look like smoke if it hadn't completely detached itself from where it started."

"It's headed this way," said Mad, a deep furrow creasing his brow. He turned questioningly to Crenshaw.

"Shift position." And, after a pause, "It changed with us."

"The radio went dead," Clark shouted, checking controls madly.

"Radar's stopped too," announced Acton. Hope the lights don't go."

"Thunderation! We're falling." Tom spun 'full speed' to the rockets. But it was too late. There was no reaction from the rear.

"Get the space suits. The rocket mechanism has jammed."

The space suits were a cinch to get into. They opened automatically and shut like steel traps. But in those frenzied final seconds, each man had a job of work to do as well as dress himself for disaster. It was a wrestle. The grav and gyroscopic units failed. The ship spun. The men reeled.

Tom hung on and kept dickering with the power controls, hoping against hope that they had just jammed momentarily and would right themselves, in spite of the fact he knew it wasn't so. Mad kept trying to find a half decent place to glide into until the screen went blank, then, seeing Clark preparing to crawl into the propulsion chamber, he called him back. "It's too late. We're going to crash. In the boots, everybody."

But nobody got into the boots. The ship struck. The first impact was fortunate. Going with the slope of a pinnacle, the structure slid more or less, which eased its speed. It bounced once at the base, skipped across a chasm and struck again. The light gravity, together with the super-cushioned hull, prevented the men from being injured.

The lights went out during the giddy final glide. The sharp pinnacles on which the ship struck took their toll on the super-construction. A great slab of the outer casing came off. Then media walls parted, and a thin crack appeared as the pressure door gave.

Acton saw light and watched the crack widen. It had been a matter of only seconds he knew, but what long seconds. He felt as if he had hung there on the end of a bunk all his life waiting for the worst to happen. The crack grew and grew.

While Acton was watching the crack at the door slowly spread, the others were listening in the direction of the rear compartment. Their audiomites were on. Acton's wasn't. They had just heard a muffed explosion back there. They waited the next explosion. The crack won. A final bump and the door split wide. They wasted no time.

The four men hit the surface of the moon running. The ground was rough and crusty. Coming off the earth-tuned grav plates, the light gravity of the moon confused them. It was hazardous. With practice they might have made excellent speed but they had no practice and the way was tough.

Acton, not knowing the others were running from a possible explosion, slowed down after clearing the ship and looked back. It was then he saw the swirl of green mist. It was looped in nebulous coils--an uncanny, purposeful alien form, hovering over the broken ship. Its very presence debilitated him. He suddenly felt weak as water to see that shimmering, wispy entity in evident control over all that was left of familiar security. He sensed its power, its possible reach. If only it had eyes, legs, or a head!

He began to run again, adjusting his audiomite, which he now realized was off. Soon he overtook the others who had rounded a spur of the moon mountain and stopped. "Better not stop here," he said to them breathlessly.

"This should be safe enough," said Tom.

What gall the man has, thought Acton. "What makes you think this place is safe from-----that?" He asked.

They all turned to look at him then, and he knew that they had not seen that strange mist hovering over the wreck.

Tom spoke again. His dry, dead tones coming through the instrument without inflection. "The rocket jammed. Impossible! Yet it jammed."

Mad's mechanism was not well adjusted either. His ordinarily husky

voice came out squeaky and far away. "Could that spray we saw back there have caused it?"

"That's when the trouble started. But that spray stuff wasn't close enough then to do the damage. Or, didn't seem to be."

"What went with that mist thing anyway? That's what I want to know."

"I've been trying to tell you what went with the mist," Acton was looking ahead at the lay of the land. "It is back there right over the ship, or probably on its way over here by this time. You can stay here if you want to but I am leaving--now."

"In that case, let's go," said Tom.

As the earth men turned to fight their way awkwardly across the rifts, the cloud of green mist, floating with ease and sureness, rounded the shoulder of the ridge behind them. It might have been the first time, the moon mountain echoed the sound of hurrying human feet. Across the gullied terrain the explorers literally flew, hugging close to the spiny ridge that seemed to be diminishing in the distance. What lay ahead they could not guess. They only sought to escape the immediate danger closing in behind them.

How far they ran they did not know. Crenshaw, who dropped behind a little, guessed they had come perhaps a half mile or more. He knew he, at least, could not run much further either. These space suits were too bulky for running even in this gravity. Breathing soon became difficult and the horrible fact that breath was now limited beyond any possible recourse, turned his mind to static thinking. Even if the mist thing went away-----. Even if the flames had gone out without further explosion in the propulsion chamber, Their situation stank to high Heaven. It was indeed hopeless.

He stumbled then and fell in a heap. Why not wait here? Fight it out with the thing? He reached for the automatic at his belt. As his fingers touched it, he looked back and saw the mist calmly undulating toward him, lightly avoiding the discomforts of the trail as he and his companions never could. They were the aliens.. This thing, a standard citizen of the world upon which they were trespassing. Only a fool would shoot under the circumstances.

Tom Crenshaw was no fool. He picked himself up and ran on. Lifting one foot and then the other. Straddling crevices. Jumping others. Overstepping. Tippling. Flying. Sliding.

At the moment he felt himself ready to collapse and let this thing have him, the voice of Madison Chestne came gasping through his intercom, "Into that cave." Indeed, he could see an opening ahead. It might be a trap. Very likely was. But further running was out of the question. If he could only have time to think, to plan.

The others raced into the low opening. Mad turned back and saw that Tom was making it. The two went in together. It was coal black inside, but the floor was smooth and cushioned with sand. Well in from the opening, the four men sank down exhausted. Tom had just

breath enough to tell the others to quiet their automites since the sound units gave out constant short wave signals devised to keep the men in touch with each other and with the ship's radio. He hoped the mist would go away if all were quiet.

In deep silence the four lay and recovered themselves a little. They watched the round glow that was the opening to the cave. Seconds passed. Acton thought he saw the mist go by, return, and pause. Tom's hand touched his shoulder and he knew that Tom saw it too. All remained quiet, waiting.

Acton had been thinking much the same as Tom during their mad dash. In the desperation of the moment when disaster had wrenched their zone of safety from them, his thoughts had been stalemated. From here, where? Without the ship, what? Now, his breathing eased some what, his mind calmed itself. It occurred to him that there really wasn't much decision for them to make. It's your move, he thought, meaning this thing at the cave's mouth which was the local gentry, or yokel, whichever way it turned out. The tunnel was not apt to offer much in the way of accommodation. And, from what he had seen of the surface outside, it was not a place to set up house-keeping. At least, not in any manner to which they had been accustomed.

The silence and not being able to do anything depressed him. A man must do something! But there was nothing to do. For once in his life, Nilo Acton knew no answer. If he could talk with the others. Discuss the matter, man to man. Time was running out. Time, and air! What sort of intelligence was this Green Mist anyway? The sound? Why hadn't he thought of that before? Perhaps this thing out there made the sounds, or some of them.

If he listened now -----. It wouldn't hurt to try. They were trapped anyway. He had as soon die crazy, or in ecstasy. Under cover of the darkness, he maneuvered the supersonic screen from one ear.

For a few seconds he heard nothing. Then, as before, he was suddenly sure the sound had been there eternally. He listened to it in utter rapture while time stood still. How long he did not know before he became conscious again of himself and his predicament--that he was a man from earth, inside a tunnel on the moon with a green mist hovering at the opening. He was not even sure that it was the mist that made the sound, though he thought it must be the mist. Then he was aware that a single slow tone stood out from a background of contriving rhapsody, like a violin solo with a muted accompaniment.

He remembered everything that had happened. The trip out from earth. The thrill of being in space, the fall of the ship and the flight over the rough surface of the moon. The slow tone beat on and was fascinating but not distracting any more. It was just a beautiful note in a strange background.

"Hey, Fellows!" He started to tell the others, twisting at his sound release gadget a second too late to make speech with them. In that second he realized something else. There was a repeated cadence in the notes of the Green Mist.

There were two tones, a pause, two more, pause, and then a chord of them all. Two and two are four, thought Acton, and the symphony blarred joyously. It might have been applause!

That's what it has been repeating for minutes, hours, thought the man, stretching himself out in comparative comfort and relaxation for the first time since entering the cave, for even during his first ecstasy at the spell of super tones, he had been tense.

He reached out to touch Tom, and again the Green Mist, for now he knew it was the Green Mist, sang. Three and three, and six. Four and four, and eight. How perfectly amazing! It did not need to repeat again for the mathematical mind of Nilo Acton rose with it in ascending factual disclosures far more beautiful than the figures that represented them.

From simple math it went into geometric combinations. A triangle was not merely a figure with three sides but a cause with three purposes. A fourth could be added and the cause changed. A circle covered all cause and was mellowed according to the length of its radius. The notes wrought patterns and by and by they took on depth. Plane geometry became solid and the equations grew but the clear mind of Acton took them up with alacrity and translated them into figures he had handled so aptly in the past.

He reached out his hand a third time to touch his companions. He was still a man lost on the moon with how few hours of oxygen left he couldn't even guess, although he might turn on his electro beam and read the gauge. He wondered if the light would disturb the sounds. Then he realized the cadence had changed. A new property was added. He had to concentrate now to follow.

The mist was patient. It repeated for him. It paused for his thought to register, and repeated again. It seemed to be reading his mind infallibly. It knew when to urge and when to give him time. It seemed to have perfect confidence that he would follow and the truth slowly registered that this wizard of musical mathematics, having taken him casually through the intricacies of three-dimensional concepts, was now beckoning him toward another dimension about which he had no very clear perceptions.

Its manner was clear, none the less. A clarion tone, a repetition, a third, then a stirring crescendo which he could never quite follow. As he fumbled for coherence, a new song burst forth. A truly mad melody to one who had not followed through the simpler steps of its repertoire. It stirred the subtler qualities of the listening man whose brain force, following its beauty, still missed much of its significance. It was as though, through a door half-ajar, he glimpsed entrancing shapes beyond.

The spell held him for a moment. Then, a pause, and the three identical notes and their crescendo began repeating. Back to page one, thought Acton, straining to comprehend. But after a few repetitions of that, it went again to simple figures. One, eight; six and a pattern of grace notes. One, eight, six, tra la. Why, that might be the velocity of light. Light! Of course. It wants me to use

the electro beam.

The cube was actually there, in the back of the cave. It gleamed softly in the light of his torch and it was translucent enough for the lines of its tangents to be seen--at least for a way. Visibility wavered off toward the center and the lines seemed to multiply and over extend.

Nilo Acton wasted no time. He had been wanting Action. He stepped into the cube. The way was up, apparently on a forty-five degree angle. It led toward the center of the cube. A few difficult steps and he had arrived. He was in another world. A world of color and iridescence that stretched indefinitely in all directions, with a life and rhythm all its own. "It is just as it should be," Nilo told himself. "The way the music of the Green Mist said it would be. The gate that was ajar is now wide open."

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"Wake up, Fellows. I've found the fourth dimension." He was back in the moon cave shaking the others awake. "Come and see."

Clark stood up swiftly ready to deny he had been asleep at all, for it seemed only minutes since the four men had dashed into the cave to seek safety of a sort.

Tom and Mad moved more slowly as men, long asleep in a cramped position, are apt to do. Tom, seeing the light, was on the point of ordering it put out at once, then the preposterous statement struck him. "Are you crazy?"

"Quit kidding," was Mad's retort. "What went with that mist?"

"Turn-out-that-light!"

Nilo turned out the light as ordered. He even showed them that the Green Mist was still hovering over the cave entrance. Then he told them as gently as possible what lay beyond the door.

The four men walked in a garden with murmuring fountains and singing brooklets. There was a profusion of blossoms and fruits. And both blossoms and fruits were resonant as well as unearthly beautiful and luscious. The water was iridescent. It did not wet the ground on which it flowed, nor did it flow in one direction, or on the same course. The four men from earth found it energizing and refreshing. When they had drunk their fill, they ate the fruits and found them tasty and satisfying.

At Acton's suggestion, they had taken off their ear screens along with space suits, which they left by the doorway. The sounds here, while strange, were kind to the ear, pleasing and cheerful. They saw rare and gorgeous birds on the wing and in the trees but these did not make all the sounds that came to them. The landscape itself sang and perhaps the air sang too, though all was muted. A backdrop to their own constant flow of words.

"Bless me, ding!" "Thunderation!" "Has this been here all my life?" "Look at those vines, will you. They come and go. Keep rechanging themselves."

Fragments of the Green Mist's song came back to Acton. "The elements! They think!" His eyes widened with remembrance. "Sure, it is intelligent. All this stuff, the water even. It thinks!"

"Impossible!" Said Tom, rejecting the idea with a shrug.

As they looked, they saw things changing. Activity was everywhere: "See. The trees and plants here work under a system. They change, intensify, vanish in places and reform elsewhere."

On closer scrutiny the plants were found to be made up of other bodies, infinitesimal units that worked under some system of control not evidenced.

"They do think. Why not?" Nilo argued. "Trees and plants have intelligence in the third dimension."

"But they only follow an order, a plan. They don't think."

"This is order. Different though it is from ours. Look at the rhythm these things have."

"Gosh! Where are the people?"

"That, I'd like to know," said Tom.

"Yes, the owner of this place, for instance." Mad indicated the surrounding landscape. "I'd like to see the man who owns this water that runs uphill."

"Maybe he won't like us walking on his thinking grass." Tom quipped, but Nilo never got to answer that one.

"Look, Fellows," yelled Clark, who was doing some personal experimentation of his own. "You don't have to walk on the grass. You can walk on the air here."

The others turned to stare at Clark's pinkish head bobbing over the tops of the shrubs where it couldn't possibly be. Their mouths came open indeed when he rounded the bushes and stepped along on nothing at all, three feet in the air.

"See?" He said, beaming. "You have to get the hang of it. It is like stepping on a soft rubber ball at first. It gives down some and then you step firmer and there you are."

It was ridiculous but it was the most amazing thing any of them had ever tried. Mad forgot to look for the land owner. Acton forgot the little intelligences. Like small boys they took instructions from the one who knew, and, by and by the four earth men, who had come to the moon to pick up a few facts to add to scientific accumulation, were walking around on springing steps in the atmos-

phere above the solid part of an area adjacent to and connected with the third-dimensional satellite. The year was 1978.

They each became able to sky walk in a short time. Tom had to be urged to try, but, when he did, he found he could do it too. It was slow going however. One must pause slightly at each step or his foot sank a little. It was as if the atmosphere under the foot solidified. Acton was on the point of advancing the theory that it was small intelligences again, invisible this time, that gathered under your foot and held it up, but at that moment Madison pointed to a sort of tower to the right which he hoped was a hilltop residence belonging to the man who owned the place.

They wandered in the general direction of the tower, trying to acquire speed and aptness in their new art. Clark, slightly ahead of the others, turned to watch them. Unconsciously he reached into his pocket for a cigarette. He had not smoked for a long time. He put the cigarette in his mouth and reached for matches. The first match did not strike. He tried another which didn't strike either. Tom came up then and tried his lighter. It didn't work. Mad tried his lighter. "Bless me, ding!" said Clark. "Look, they won't even spark." Acton supplied more matches. None lighted. Tom remarked dryly, "Well, that's that."

They saw now that there was no hill. The tower was in the air. In order to reach their objective, they must rise higher in the atmosphere. None of them relished the idea very much as the going seemed to be more difficult as they rose. They could see the building below the tower now though, and, in their eagerness to contact the people of this land, they took the necessary risk of advancing higher. As they rose they could distinguish other towers in many directions, all of which shone with an opalescent and ethereal beauty. There seemed to be no single source of light anywhere but everywhere was light and shining and fluid aureorean beams. Below them the space through which they had climbed reflected these rays on myriads of minute surfaces and bent them back again and again in thousands of rainbow hues.

"It's all a mirage." said Clark, peering below with a hand over his brow to shade the gleam from above.

"It probably is a mirage," agreed Tom, stretching his neck to see if any familiar blue sky above might mark the end of this fantasy of swaying gossamer unrealism. "Do you notice how they stay away from us? These towers and things? Exactly like mirages. We could climb forever and probably not reach a thing."

"I think you are wrong," said Acton. "We can't expect to find out everything about this place in an hour's time. Only a science-fiction hero could land on a new world and know all about it, including learning to speak the language of the natives, before his next meal. We weren't going to find out anything about the moon but a few substantial surface facts the first trip. This place has a system no doubt as handy and convenient as our own if we just knew how to handle ourselves here. These things do exist. They have to in order to be reflected through the atmosphere."

"Yeh! But where? A million light years away?"

"That might be true in the third dimension, but this is the fourth--said to be past and future as well as the present."

"That's goofy," said Clark. "You know what I think? I think we're all dead and don't know it." The argument had brought them all to a standstill. "Say, I wonder if a guy can sit on this stuff." He tried it and found that he could sit very comfortably.

"Then the fourth dimension is a visionary one. It isn't stable. I don't like it." said Tom.

Acton smiled indulgently. "B-ut what is stable in the third? Doesn't everything change there?"

"Look," Tom carefully steadied one foot at chair level and rested an elbow on his knee. "A little while ago, how long I don't know now--my watch has stopped." Here the others looked at their time pieces, held them to their ears, tested the stems and conceded time, along with fire works, to another dimension.

"I figured yours had stopped too," he nodded. "Well, as I was saying, a little while ago we were in the space ship intact. Then we crashed and the ship broke up. Now, if this dimension is time, future and past as well as present, we can bring the ship through the door, I suppose, and have it as it was in the past."

Acton frowned. "Possibly, if the door was big enough, which it isn't. However, the Green Mist said -----"

"It seems to me," said Mad, who had managed to seat himself too and had remained aloft from the conversation so far. "that Green Mist is the thing that got us messed up in the first place. After all, wasn't that what brought us down?"

"Sure it brogght us down," agreed Tom. Acton turned his back to them. He was trying to think out the situation.

"No, what I saw in the visa screen was purple and not green at all," Clark was emphatic.

"Confound it, Tom! He's right. It was violet. I remember it was the color of my girl's dress. The one she wore the other night, the last night, whenever it was."

"It might have looked different in the screen."

"Anyway," Acton turned to them again still frowning deeply, "the Green Mist aligned the two dimensions so we could get here, or at any rate it told me where to find the door."

"And now that we are here, what are we going to do?" Tom pounded his knee in desperation.

"That is what I am trying to figure out." Acton demonstrated his

point by striking his palm with a fist. "The idea is, Tom, they penetrate. Get it? The one penetrates and o-verlaps the other."

"but how could some other matter penetrate, say, my arm, for instance?" Tom stretched out his arm and looked at it.

"You know that physical matter is composed of atoms, don't you? It isn't solid really?"

"Of course. Air can penetrate it, I suppose."

"Space, you mean," Acton grinned.

Tom waited as he thought that one over. Then after a moment, "you mean we are not in the same places we were when we were in the third dimension?"

They all laughed. "You're telling me!" said Clark.

"That's right," went on Acton. "We're occupying the other material that was in between the material we occupied there."

"Wait a minute!"

"That-is-right," Acton grinned indulgently. "Now take the ship, for instance. It was penetrated too by past, and future, or continuum of 4-D matter, regardless of any specific time check on its 3-D temporalness."

"You mean we could see it from here?"

"Not only that, but it is not expendable."

"You mean it didn't break when the third dimension ship broke?"

"Oh, it suffered damage, yes. The combination of materials here, as you have seen, changes, but the material itself is sustained. We've found out we can't burn it. Water doesn't wear it away. So, the 4-D ship is still out there, or here. And, since we are here and know something about the law -----"

"We might work from this side?" finished Clark, his eyes wide.

"I think so."

"Thunderation, Nilo! How can fiddling around over here help the other side, the 3-D side of the ship? We've got to find somebody here to help us repair the ship. We don't have enough materials out there to do it with, even if we had the air, which we probably don't have. We've got to have help."

"Let's go look at this side, the 4-D side, anyway," said Mad.

The four men went down to nearly ground level for better walking

and followed the contours of the little range above the cube door. As they went over the range and down the other side, Acton thought about the Green Mist. He wondered what it would be, how it would be represented, on this side of the barrier, in this intensified dimension. He would certainly like to be guided by its intelligence.

There was no verdure on this side of the range. It glowed however with many colors, deeper hues and steadier reflections than those in the valley. There were greens and blues, brilliant reds, and orange and ochre. Wavering still, but less flexible than those in the valley beyond the range.

They moved on down below the rim toward the wrecked ship. Treading like men on snow shoes, clumsy but smooth, they made their way a few inches above where lay the jagged edges which they had agonized across when they first rushed from the broken rocket. Tom and Acton were well ahead of the other two who had dropped back to examine the brilliant colors around them.

"Damnation!" said Tom, stopping a little above and to one side of the wreck.

"See what I mean?" Acton chuckled. "Though, I have to admit, I never expected this. Look at the colors!"

"Transparent too!" Tom croaked. "Absolutely unreal!"

"Out of old 3-D, you mean," Nilo reminded him. "The closer you approach a section the clearer you see. Why, we can tell exactly what's wrong with it. Just like an x-ray."

"Sure, look," the big Crenshaw grew enthusiastic as they moved around the wreckage. "That is what happened in the propulsion chamber. The pile is O.K. We have power all right. The explosion was in the electronic sub-head which transmits energy from the pile to magnetism in the grav plates by beam. And, Clark's got a spare. Good old Clark! He insisted on bring a spare. Good old Clark!"

"Hey, Clark! Mad! Come on over here."

When Clark and Chestne came up they were carrying a huge chunk of pink plastic-like material with them. Before they reached the ship however, they both howled and dropped it.

"B-less me, ding! She looks like the air castles back there, colored as all get out. Isn't she pretty?"

"Wow!" was Mad's donation.

"And look," went on Clark, "the hull is the same color as this pink stuff. It's all around here too. We can use it for repairs, I bet."

"I doubt if we'll need a great deal of it though. Look how this material re-aligns itself." Acton demonstrated by re-shaping and

pushing together split pieces of the hull. "See how it re-conforms. Repairing this stuff will be a cinch."

Tom moved inside the ship and they all followed. He grinned when he saw the oxygen capsules. He could tell by a glance that they were in-tact. "We have air. The filter system though looks out of kilter."

"The fan is smashed but I can fix that," Clark was flat on the floor, face pressed against it, getting an eye full of the smaller damages. "There's some connections broken. A shaft split. I won't have to look for the trouble. I know exactly where it is. Now if I have sufficient repair materials-----" He crawled on over to examine the radio and radar apparatus.

Nilo got out a microscope and began examining different parts of the inner chamber. "Come and see, Fellows." He said after a moment. "This 4-D stuff is made up of geometrically shaped parts that continuously shift and re-establish. The movements, which are not seen by the naked eye, causes them to glisten. And, different arrangements of the assorted shapes, produces different materials. Now bring me a piece of the pink stuff and a piece of our frustrated hull."

When the two pieces were examined under the microscope, they were found to be of similar composition. After that, they examined other colored elements and matched them with the parts that were damaged.

"Bless me," Clark exclaimed. "You can see the outlines of the little jiggers perfectly. Where there's more squares and triangles, the stuff is firmer, and in the case of this rubber tubing, or what was rubber tubing, they're all kinds of shapes and they don't fit together tight at all."

"The coloring, I think, will be our greatest lead. We'll select the materials by the colors that match the parts that need repairing. Then we will put them together and see if they fuse."

"Righto!" agreed Clark. "I walked right over some crystal stuff back there. Probably just the thing for that broken visa screen."

"Thunderation, Fellows," bellowed Tom. "What good is it going to do to hang around mending up this side? It's the 3-D ship we'll go home in, if we go."

"Bless me, ding! It'll be fun, at least."

"Sure thing," agreed Madison. "No wonder they build castles all over the upper sky back there. With building material like this, they probably build just for the sheer pleasure of building."

"But it's more than that. The ship structure here is a sort of 3-D blueprint. See what I mean? If the blueprint here is perfect, the construction there will be less difficult. Knowing exactly where all the damage is and mending it here, will certainly facilitate the repairs on the 3-D side."

Tom ran his fingers through his hair. "Yes, I guess so. Knowing where

the trouble is, will sure help. But how do we know the materials will match over there, even if they do match here?"

"We don't. We're guessing."

"Well then, go ahead. Clark get out the electric furnace and the welder."

"They won't work. Remember the matches wouldn't strike."

"Bless me, ding," said Clark a little later as he experimented with the welder. "She won't dazzle a single daz."

By trial and error they soon learned much about the elements of 4-D. Acton and Clark nearly went daffy over the accommodating characteristics of the little jiggers, as they began to call them. They were like children with building blocks.

Madison Chestne, who knew almost nothing about chemistry or physics, felt he had indeed missed his life's work by not studying them. The laws he had thought so inscrutable were made plain here. He poked around with this stuff until he became nearly as adept as the other two at 'maintaining a flow line', 'countenancing a break', 'chucking them in', as the experts soon began to call the new processes by which they converted the abundant pink chunks that grew all around into a fitting and glamorous new hull.

A roll of paper was sufficient conveyor belt through which to flow the disconnected jiggers to the damaged area where they fused themselves with the ship's materials.

The workmen activated their materials in different ways. Acton whistled, lively or lazily, as the need required. Clark herded his like teams of oxen. He 'geed' and 'hawed' a great deal, shouted still more, and cursed a bit. Madison, feeling much inferior to the other two in ability, practically prayed his into order. The progress sheet grew rapidly.

Tom was dumbfounded with both the manners and the progress. He kept saying he couldn't believe it. Yet he helped. He outlined the work, and he carried great hunks of the solid stuff over to where the men were putting it together. But he couldn't get the hang of how to break it down, or flow it.

He kept hurrying the others as though time meant anything here. When the critical parts were in shape again, he even suggested that it was sufficient repairs. He considered it in 'take off' condition.. Why waste more time. But the others liked their work. They could not be satisfied with anything less than perfection.

Even the lesser appointments inside the ship which did not matter at all, were worked over with great pains and sometimes great argument.

"No wonder there are castles all over the sky back there," Said Madison for about the tenth time. "They build for fun."

"No doubt, they do," agreed Acton. "In fact, I have an idea we have only just touched on the possibilities of the system here."

"Me too. I hope the door stays o-pen."

"So do I," said Clark, coming out of the wall orifice under machinery where he had just completed a final adjustment between amplifier and transistor unit. "I want to make a 1000-foot ski jump on the air way back there. Imagine zooming out of the sky on a pair of skis without cold feet?" They all thought the idea good. "Look," he went on, "the oil doeshn't even stick to your hands here."

"I noticed that. Our hands are all clean."

7

Later, on the other side of the low ridge, the four men ate again of the fruits in the valley and drank from the streams. Then, finding a pool of the rare and sparkling water, they undressed themselves and waded into it. It was not deep enough to swim in, but they found it exceedingly exhilarating to the body. Tom, whose back and shoulders were covered with scars from his long ago crack-up, went nearly wacky to see them fading away before his very eyes. The three others crowded around him and witnessed the actual breaking up of lesions and the restoration of perfect skin texture.

Some of the other fellows had small scars which also disappeared, speedily and completely, as they submerged them in the liquid. Clark had a tattoo mark on his upper arm which he made a gallant effort to preserve as he soaked himself otherwise. Nor were these healing qualities alone all the magic to be derived from the water as Acton and Chestne soon discovered. Crenshaw and Ned Clark had retired from the water and Clark was musing about their circumstances.

"I wonder what time it is. Back where my girl is," he said. Bless me, ding, we don't even know what day it is back there. How long we've been here. Wonder what they think really happened to us?"

"They probably think we're in deep freeze by now," said Tom cheerfully, pulling on his socks.

Madison and Acton were still in the water. They were both thinking about air. The capsules in the space suits, as they all knew, were nearly empty. From observation on the 4-D side, the compressor tanks in the ship were intact. But it would take time to get to the ship. If anything at all were wrong with the mechanism of the pressure tank, it would be a nearly hopeless race against time. Tom had said he believed they could make it though, and they both hoped Tom was right.

Suddenly the two men looked at each other and realized that they were following each other's thoughts. Experimentatively, Acton put a direct question in thought. "Do you know what I'm thinking?" Mad grinned, "Sure. Air." "Bless me, ding!" It didn't seem so silly to think it as he always thought it sounded when Clark said it. "Bless me, ding!" Mad sent back.

"Very well, Old Fellow, get this one. What is this element we are lying in? It's not real water, you know." "Not much hydrogen, eh?" "Probably none. In fact it isn't water." "Wow! Not water?" Mad sat up. "Then what in the thunder is it?" "It's oxygen." thought Acton. "Oxygen?" "Oxygen plus a 4-D element, or elements: Unseparated, unchecked, and unvouched for, of course." "Bless me, ding!" Mad grinned and lay back down.

"Now I am thinking that, if we put it in the buckets on the space suits and then take it through the door, presto, it will be the same stuff we've been using all our lives." "Wow! but how can we get it under pressure? and in the buckets?" "That will be easy," Acton splashed the stuff in Mad's face. "It's already under pressure, or will be when it goes through the door, and I'm sure Clark can devise a way to get it in the buckets."

Mad grinned clear to his ears. "Then what is this stuff?" He motioned above them. "What is this we're breathing now?" "That, I don't know. I haven't finished my education." The two suddenly yelled and began splashing each other violently. Tom, who was worrying about air too, very silently within himself, while Clark rambled on about the possibilities of a hki jump through the space above them, had to have a full explanation.

8

Coming back to the harsh, barren surface of the three-dimensional moon was more of a shock than the fellows expected. Moving again in the awkward confinement of the space suits in a gravity to which they were not accustomed was very nearly painful, especially as it came close on the heels of a sojourn in a land of unencumbered ease.

When they first came out of the cave, they experienced a brief exultation at seeing the sun again. It was far down on the rim of the planet they noticed and realized for the first time that this was the very edge of the light side. The valley beyond the cave was really on the dark side.

They made their way carefully back to where the rocket ship came down. All but Acton had put on their supersonic ear screens again. He frankly hoped he might receive further instructions from the Green Mist. The others as frankly hoped they would not see the thing any more. Tom still insisted it was responsible for the crash. Acton felt sure it was not and that there were more than one entity, evil and good alike, both out there in space and here on the moon's surface.

They found the outer hull of the ship badly damaged. A complete portion was broken away. A split ran through the airlock and both pressure doors sprung wide. Some portions of the inner chamber were caved in. Trappings were scattered, visa screen shattered. All, in fact, checked with the damages on the 4-D side. They would not have to seek out the trouble at any rate. They knew exactly where it was—even that which was hidden under layers of structure.

Tom felt better when he examined it. It was wonderful to be back among the difficulties you understood and could sink your teeth into.

Among surfaces that concealed properly and materials that were solid and stable. Ned Clark felt pretty good too because his welding apparatus, fueled by its own unit, flared brilliantly. It was wonderful to have things react in a familiar way.

Tom and Acton surveyed the inside chambers thoroughly, checking mentally where other damage, which the 4-D structure revealed so readily, now lay invisible. They checked the propulsion chamber and found the pile undamaged; the transmitter for the grav force blown. "Clark can put in that spare he insisted on bringing along, and this will be fit," said Tom as he stooped through the low opening back into the main room. Then they went outside and discussed leverage methods and felt sure, because of the low gravity, they could manipulate the cleft portion of the outer hull back into place.

"If we can find materials that can be worked, I believe we can do it" Tom reasoned, adjusting his air pressure.

Acton was listening to some supersonic sounds which were coming to him from somewhere in space. He heard Tom too however. "The pink stuff will do it" he assured him abstractly, trying to make something out of what he was hearing.

"Where is any pink stuff?" Tom asked.

Acton came to attention at once and looked about. Neither of them saw any sign of anything pink. It wouldn't be pink here, of course, Nilo thought, as he surveyed the surrounding terrain. "It was right here though," he said aloud. "Now there's nothing here but this dirty gray crusty stuff. I wonder could it be ----. It does resemble magnesite. It's ore, alright. Yet it isn't magnesite, at least it isn't any I am familiar with. Look at this stuff." He picked up some and the two men examined it closely.

Acton watched a grin slowly brighten Tom's face. This was his job and his kingdom. He knew ores pretty well himself; the 3D type, that is. Madison came out of the ship just then and reported that Clark was doing things to the radio. "Let the radio go for a time," said Tom, "we need all hands for more important things. Get Clark and his gimmicks. We're going to start a manufacturing plant over there in that ravine where it looks like sand. Use the sand for molds. Bring out what repair materials we have. Build a tank. Bring some chlorine and get the electric furnace working. Nilo and myself will collect ore."

The ore was all around them in profuse quantities. However it had lost more than its pinkness. It had lost much of its magical qualities as well. Nevertheless, with earth heat and earth brains, it altered and lent itself to become an agent in a giant repair job on the unfriendly surface of its mother ore. It cheesed readily enough when placed in the chlorine equipped tank with anode and cathode. It gave a good tough metal, lighter still than magnesium, when they ran it out into molds made from the sandy defile. They called it moonesium. The men worked four-hour periods, then they went through the door. They ate of the fruits there and they drank of the stream. They refreshed themselves completely by bathing in the stream. They felt

no need of sleep after that. They refilled their air capsules and returned to the gruelling work on the other side of the door.

Though they felt no need of sleep after eating and bathing, a few hours on the moon's surface and they were nearly exhausted. As the work progressed, Tom insisted on even longer periods of work. An uneasiness hovered over him. When he saw Acton pause in his work as though carried away by what he heard that he himself could not hear--and didn't want to hear--he nearly went mad. He had all the familiar needs and necessities with which to accomplish his project and wanted no quality X to interfere.

Nilo was conscious of this fact and tried to make his listening inobvious. He did however constantly listen and watch for the Green Mist. He could not believe it ever meant harm to them. He tried to imagine what stupenduous business kept it away now, or why it had once turned aside for a moment to give him aid. Did it know now that they were moving toward the completion of the outer structure? That very soon, if all went well, they would finish sealing the inner compartments, start the filter system and renew the air? Did it know that soon after checking and adjusting instruments, they would make an attempt to blast from the moon's surface and return to earth? Would it refuse to let them go, or would it prevent another entity from trying to wreck them again?

"Confound it, Nilo. Stuff up your ears if you can't resist that caterwauling. The work's moving slow enough."

"Sorry, Tom. I was waiting for this to cool anyway."

"He's learning Maltese, you know," called Clark from the top of the airlock. Acton carried over a length of still hot metal. They were all tired. Tom knew the time was up, that they should go and rest but the outer shell was complete now and the door would shut. In a few more hours they would have the cabin sealed.

Fame was close to Tom Crenshaw. He had touched it for sure but he wanted very much to carry home his bounty. He wanted to push the work now as he had never pushed it before. He would check the pile more carefully as soon as the air was renewed inside the ship. The power, that was the main thing. Assured of power, he would head for home with the accuracy of a pigeon with military strategy glued to its heels. Later, having checked the re-checked the propulsion chamber, the lines, the connections and the controls, Tom became a changed man. He felt a great load lift from him. There was the possibility now that the mist, or the strange alien force whatever it was, might try to hold them here. He did not think it could. It had caught him before unprepared. In a moment when his defenses were low and his own forces idling. It would not happen again.

"Why are you putting those space suits back on?" He turned from day dreaming and faced Mad and Nilo. "Going for some of that crystal stuff. The viewscopic units are shot, you know." Mad explained, pausing half in and half out of his space suit as he saw Tom's face. "We've got to rig up a view scope of some sort," added Nilo. "Let them go," Tom's lips thinned. "We still have radio

and radar." "No. We don't." Clark announced as he crawled out of the wall from among the mechanisms. He looked meaningly at the other two men as he picked up a head set and defiantly passed it over to Tom. "Checking. Checking. One, two, three. See what I mean?" Clark spoke through the microphone. "I got the grav beam going though. We can turn on earth gravity now." Tom laid the head set down and turned to Clark. "I thought you had them working." "So I did. Then suddenly they go dead. Just like when we were on observation keel a half-mile up -----" "The Green Mist!" exclaimed Acton, a slow grin starting. But Crenshaw snarled openly at him. He spoke fast. "Weblastoff at once! WE-BLAST-OFF-AT-ONCE!" He shouted. "Activate the pile. Power! Power! All we've got! I'll outdo that monster. It should have a weak spot somewhere. Everything does." He raced to the controls like a mad man. The others moved to follow orders.

Madison, struggling to extricate himself from the dangling space suit, reminded Acton, who was already out of his, to, "Double charge the grav units. He's forgotten it and we'll have no time to get into the boots." Acton followed instructions. The extra gravity would protect them materially in the take off. His hands worked with speed to manipulate the grav bed under their feet. It took seconds to charge. Already the ship was vibrating with the starter controls. He inched the grav lever. He lifted his feet continuously to test its efficacy as the indicator was not working. He adjusted such safety mechanism as the chair was equipped with, but all the while he was listening. Listening, with the supersonic equipment with which his inner ear had been strangely fashioned, for a rhythm he would not forget, ever.

Then as the propulsion press reduced him to a mere human design glued to the contour of the control chair, he heard again the strange high note that doubled and doubled and then pressed all four sounds together. Two and two, and four. Two and two are four! Tom is a fool! He doesn't need such force as this for a take off. It's murder! Murder! His lungs exploded as he fought for air. Two and two are four. It was the only sane thing in the universe. Tom--a fool! FOOL! His chest caved in and through the hole in it the atoms that made up his body began to pour forth. Then he was dropping like an arrow through space, so fast he was burning all through with the friction of the fall. Then gently, gently the air began to catch him like the element in the space beyond the door way. Finally it stopped his fall and---he floated on a cloud.

Seconds later he opened his eyes. His hands and feet were so heavy he could scarcely lift them. Blood was pouring from his nose and mouth. He remembered the grav units and forced his hand to move the control to reduce. Then he looked around him. Tom, he saw, was flopped over the Pilot's chair. From the corner of his eye, he saw Madison lift his head wearily from the radio console and wipe blood from his mouth. He turned further just as Clark's face issued from the pressure bunk. Clark was grinning. "B-less me, ding!" he croaked. "What kind of a blast off was that? That was a real test for the old pressure boot. Gosh! There's still some excitement in this old third dimension." Then he saw the faces of Mad and Acton. "You Fellows! Damn! It must have been awful out there. I knew old Tom was

going to do it. That's why I got in the boot." He climbed out of the bunk in a hurry as the others did not speak. He got the medical kit and went to work. But no medical kit would help Tom. His heart had stopped. When the others had recovered sufficiently, the three men lifted the body of the big man from the post of duty where he had died and placed it carefully between the halves of the well-tested pressure bunk.

Clark soon found that radio and radar were Okay. Once back in atmosphere, he could pick up anything on the air. Madison kept fiddling with controls although there was nothing much to be done that automatics couldn't do until they reached earth's atmosphere. Acton looked over the log. "Notice Tom's written up quite a record about our repair job on the moon." "Yes, I noticed." "Not a word about 4-D." "Nothing at all." "That's funny. Poor Old Tom!" Clark remarked. "When we hit the ozone and get in contact, we'll report the whole thing verbatim, won't we? I mean the 4-D stuff too?"

"Get us a fix on location first, man," said Acton. "Remember we're blind." "We'll report it, yes," said Madison thoughtfully. "We still aren't safe home in port ourselves, you know. When we establish contact, they'll silence stations until we determine position." He paused. "When we've done that, we'll make the report." "Earth will be a zany old planet when this report gets down there." Madison smiled feebly, remembering his new responsibilities. "I'm thinking we'll look darn zany ourselves. Too bad we couldn't get some pictures of that place." "The film cases were smashed to smithereens, all films exposed." "It wouldn't have done any good anyway," explained Acton. "Our film wouldn't have been able to capture that other material." "We might as well get ready to face it. We're going to sound pretty crazy telling the stories we've got under our belts." "Space crazy, they will be sure to call us," agreed Madison. "And we haven't had our ear plugs out once, in 3-D, that is." "Oh, the 4D stuff will be just like flying saucers. It'll be hushed up by the military." Acton drew down his upper lip and bulged his chest.

"Yah! I bet. That is, until some high brass pushes his low chest expansion through that cube door." The others chuckled but Clark changed his tone. "What bothers me is that the mist thing might take that door away. Leave us out on a limb for proof."

"That's possible," said Nilo. "Do you believe the door was opened just for us, or has it always been there? Always been there between the light and dark sides of the moon?" Mad asked Acton. "I'm only a poor mathematician, Fellows. A very poor mathematician. I used to think I was pretty good too, but I met up with an expert who put me in my place. However--if I can remember--and, if I can arrange and solve those final equations that Green Mist sang out to me, I believe I will be able to build my own door to the fourth dimension anywhere I choose." "You mean it wouldn't have to be on the moon? That everything--everything in the third dimension, does have a fourth dimension?" "Yes, of course." "But I can't understand where, in what direction, it can possibly be." "Directionally, it is at right angles to the third dimension. Specifically, it is on the dark side." "But that is absolutely impossible to place," said Madison combustively, leaving automatics to stumble toward atmosphere.

Acton laughed. "It is only impossible as long as you look at the third dimension. For instance, did you ever stare at the sun, or a light bulb, with your naked eye? What did you see? Because your eye was so full of light, you saw nothing beyond brightness." "Then if I shut my eyes, I should be able to see the fourth dimension." "No. It would be just like closing your eyes after staring at the sun... You would still see the image of what you had been seeing." "Then by the dark side you mean the invisible side? The side we just can't see?" "We can't see it--until we shut out of our senses the impressions of the light side. Look. We entered the cube and walked up a slant of forty-five degrees. Now actually we walked into a passage way whose four sides sloped forty-five degrees."

"Wow! That would end in a point." "That's right. It did. A point at which there was no impression or third-dimensional extension, so we entered into, saw, and were aware of the fourth dimension. We actually walked through an infinitesimal number of diminishing planes whose center point, alone, remained constant." "Then, when we went through, why didn't we notice this diminishing?" "Because you can't conceive more than you can conceive at any point, or remember more than you can remember." "Then we passed straight through that cube and never realized we were first reduced to nothing and then re-extended on the other side?"

Acton laughed gleefully and his eyes sparkled with enthusiasm. "We were never reduced to nothing. We simply had no extension of third dimensional knowledge. All known facts were reduced to a point; a point whose bearing runs through both dimensions, and whose extensions may be expanded according to the direction we are going. As for passing straight through the cube, we didn't do that either. We turned at right angles." "How did we know to turn?" "We didn't. It is just the law. Like setting the automatics for atmosphere. So, when we hit atmosphere, we'll be aware of it, and we'll start doing something about it." Madison took out a cigarette, lit it from the one just finished, and took a long drag filling his lungs. "Then you believe," began Clark, taking over as if by arrangement, "that you can set up a series of reducing planes, one superimposed upon the other, and promote and gradually diminish an area into a point, and then re-establish, or re-expand, it into another area?" "Not exactly. The second area is there already, remember. I would merely turn on the light in that area, and, in order to do that, I would have to black out the first area. For instance, the basic law of mathematics is "two and two are four" --in the third dimension, that is--So as long as you see two and two as four, you can have no conception of other things they might be."

"But it seems perfectly ridiculous to start denying an established fact like that." "Sure. Now, I have been meaning to ask you, Clark. How come you discovered you could walk on the air back there in 4-D?" "Oh, that? Why, I saw one of those green and lavender, fluffy-ruffled birds walking around above me. So, I thought I'd try it." "And the idea was perfectly ridiculous, wasn't it?" "Well, it was until we all got used to it." "So! Now remember Tom had scars on his back. Scars that were the natural result of burns such as he had, and what happened to them in the fourth dimension?" "You mean---? Do you think---? Clark's eyes automatically turned to the pressure bunk

where the body of Crenshaw lay. Acton stretched out his own arm, pulling up his sleeve at the same time. "Look at my arm where the cat bit me." "Bless me, ding! Then we do have something to prove we've been to another dimension, after all." "I'm thinking we have a great deal more than that. We have the knowledge that certain, possibly all, facts are not irrefutable. Man has found certain phases of this before, is finding it all the time, and, like the green and lavender bird, others imitate him. Science discovers a new fact that disproves an old fact, so the new fact is accepted. Perhaps we have been given a further key which will unlock this firmament between materials and establish scientific contact with other dimensions."

"If you had said that a couple of weeks ago, or before this trip, Nilo," Mad spoke quickly, "I wouldn't have recommended you for navigator, and I am sure Johnson wouldn't have. Now---now I think you may be right. In fact, I believe you are right." "Facts are facts," reasoned Clark. "Old 4-D exists. I've seen it, and if anybody can build a door to it besides the Green Mist, or some alien intelligence like it I believe you can do it, Nilo." He moved over and slapped Nilo cheerfully on the back. "And listen, Fellow, I am just the guy that will help you do it too." Acton grabbed his hand and squeezed it. Madison Chestne smiled feebly, shaking his head. "I am not much of a physicist or mechanic either, but I sure would like to be in on that project myself." "Fine thing! It's a deal!" laughed Acton as the signal rang out indicating they had hit the ozone.

Down the sky way they plunged into earth's thickening atmosphere. They came in blind and staggering. The gentle hands of science reached out and guided them to a safe landing. They had to circle half the globe to reach the space port in Nevada where an electronic subhead established contact with their own grsv beam and brought them in.

"This is a brilliant day here in Nevada," an excited voice told them as they came down. "The sun is one hour high." The voice then offered condolences and praise for their discoveries in the same excited tone. It also told them, "Several thousand people are here already to greet you. The Honorable Senator Shafter is here. Other high government officials are here also. The army, navy, and air force are all represented. Telegrams are piling up! Extras are going out! What a homecoming!" Then another, more excited voice, broke in just as Madison Chestne's hand was in the act of releasing the door control. "Three air liners are on their way from Washington, filled with high military and government officials, and, what is more---members of the Federal Bureau of Investigation." The voice paused for breath, and then "We have just received orders from Washington to hold from the public all further Darkside Data. Really, Fellows, did you guys actually discover the fourth dimension? Come out, and tell us about it."

The three men looked at each other. "Sure glad we shaved," said Clark, rubbing his chin. They all grinned. Madison Chestne crushed out a half smoked cigarette and started buttoning his jacket. "This is it, Fellows." The others buttoned up also. Then, with a fleeting look at the pressure bunk where their Commander lay, the three men passed through the open door into the airlock. They squared their shoulders as the outer door began to slowly open.

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Dear Faans: I omitted two pages of the story and crowded much of the conversation into paragraphs, thus anything that might seem not right to you should be blamed onto me, not Loubel. Also, must say that part of the typing format isn't very good because at times I was tired and should have waited; but I was so interested while stencilling -and that was my second reading-- it seemed I just couldn't stop for wanting to know what came next even though, as said above, I had read the story once before. Hope that many of you will like it, and especially those anti-mlg.comment members. In case the latter do not, then I give up I theenk.

This is February 9th, evening. Started snowing last night and is still snowing. My window panes are frosted. Yesterday it was so mild and sunny we had several windows open all day. Crazy weather.

I'm going to "talk to" the zines in no special order as in stack, until for one reason or another I stop cutting stencils for SAPS. Eight Hundred fourteen pages. 814 pages. 814. 814.. Glory beee!!!

And we were, not long ago, fretting to gain a little old 500, Hoo!

The "Moon" cover for Bronc #14 in October was reproduced on a Rotolite by Loubel Wood and mailed to me. Isn't it nice for me having a pal like that? Not only draws the illo but publishes it for me!!

Well, here I go, typing right smack onto an unprotected stencil because the old worn ribbon finally turned into lace. Ooo am hitting some these small c keys too firmly. Now have to change my touch.. This at least appears to be much nicer than all above. Maybe I can manage to avoid punching thru toooo many letters, I hope.

--EvaF--

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Letter Quote. Some meat packing firms are importing furry things from Australia, where they build fences not to keep the sheep in but to keep the rabbits out. The Rabbit Fence there is over one thousand miles long, probably the longest fence in the world. Only a few rabbits started all this, when an Englishman brought them over from England. Today the rabbit is a pest, as it has no natural enemies in Australia.

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The accused strode forward. "Your honor," he said, "I wish to plead guilty." "Why didn't you do so at the beginning of the trial?" the judge demanded to know. "Because," replied the accused, "I thought I was innocent, but at that time I hadn't heard the evidence against me."

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Awakened from a nightmare in which he dreamed he was caught in a smoke-filled room and couldn't get out, Peter Harmon, 17, of Rutland, Vermont, found his house really was on fire. He roused his family and all escaped.

R E P Wally  
C E P THE Cover picturesque and weird and interesting, in-  
E Weber dicating an adventuresome spirit. A-Moving-Story  
moved me greatly; in fact I had to shut off the  
record player while reading the sad tale. And I  
am so glad that the ending was a happy one..I guess. It will be so  
devastating to see those forty-two pages of mailing comments; per-  
haps your better nature will prevail and avoid shock to SAPS who're  
subject to nervous disorders, no-t to mention danger to all hearts.  
Gee! Wally, please be careful how the 42 pager is presented to us!!  
IF you ever do give us su wunnerful a treat, it is a sure bet that  
the following poll would list your name top of each category and if  
you do not believe me, just test it out once, and just think, you'd  
be President of S.A.P.S.. Such prestige is worthy of the Weber ef-  
fort...famous as we are now. On the other hand, should you feel in  
need of being rid of our nagging all of the time for more activity  
on your part, there is Art's plain statement, right out in print, ie  
"Such a massive exposure to the insidious radiation of a Weberzine  
might well be fatal to the reader, of course -- but what a faanish  
way to die!"

POT POURRI -- Hi! John Berry. Read but no comments are  
aroused except to say that I am still  
skeptical of Russian scientific ability

R E T R O - BuzBusby. Agree with this comment, you have on page17  
"I don't really think that humanity-in-the-mass is so  
bad as you let on, Art, re 'the consumers of bread&circuses, TV, and  
Confidential,' because all that crud is not 'humanity's efforts....  
diverted into placating them' but rather the damn insistent profit  
seeking effort of a few to pander to their weaknesses and exploit  
these for profit." And on page 19 the statement: "It seems that  
my own esp faculties shy away from testing and only show up in emer-  
gencies now and then, or on wholly unpremeditated occasions,.."  
is of interest- in that although I'm aware of esp I seldom if ever al-  
low myself to think about it and am most uncomfortable when have to  
talk and write on the subject; and it makes me uneasy to hear some  
one telling me an incident- (reading doesn't bother as much). I think  
the reason (one of the two reasons) is because I have no opportuni-  
ties for conversations--on any topic--with people. Brief chats not  
considered. I agree with you in reference to Megan. It was clear--  
to me right from the beginning that she had not the least interest  
in us as-people for friendly contact. The truth is that all of her  
sines chilled my spirits.

FENDENIZEN - ElinorBusby. I like the Atom  
cover. Several of you men-  
tion in your zines in this mailing that Don Ford won TAFF. This was  
the first information (and the only in so far as that goes) I rec'd  
about the result of voting. Thus you see what I mean in my former  
grumblings about faithful subscribers being left in the dark. Well,  
things will change now since Don will be handling the business for  
a while. I have not heard anything about British fans being named,  
other than your mention of Mal. Enjoyed reading the "Dog-Gerel, Songs  
for the Birds, & So Forth" -especially the Song for Lisa. I'm always  
interested in reading titles of new books you've collected. Like to

know what other members are reading. I'm rereading Lorna Doone. The first time was during childhood. Interesting but drags now and then with the "padding." Do not recall any of the titles you mention, but remember reading a few works of Samuel Butler and many books by Dorothy Sayers.

T.A.J. - Ted Johnstone. Welcome, Welcome, to SAPS.

Your prediction of page count for 50th mlg missed a few pages, Ha! "625 plus/minus 50 pages" Tsk! Now I will make a safer guess for the April bundle, that there'll not be 814.. Think that 814 is the peak for a while and now we'll drop back for conservative activity. Am reading your zine second time right now, and still find it interesting (now on page 16) but, either I'm in a lethargic state, or may find something in following pages, can not seem to think of conversation for you. Your mention of all night "pubbing session going on" (for the deadlined things) makes isolated members -there are a few of us yu'know- feel slighted by fate, even though we know that an up-rooting of our hermit-like state might not be a good thing. We're not adjusted to so much excitement. I'm resolved to carry a supply of tranquilizers with me next time have chance to attend a convention. I've been hearing about man-mount-ain Donaho -reading rather- in various zines this year. I'd like to know -how tall is he anyway?. Wyoming's basket ball team has 4 men away over seven feet, thusly:-. Oh, I went to get that clipping and remembered I'd sent it to Loubel. But as memory goes, of four the tallest is 7' 9" and the shortest 7' 6" Should have copied the names and information. Is Donaho over seven feet tall? Also, how tall is ENEY? Of all the wild tales I'm being feed in letters! And about Bruce Pelz, too! Let's see a size chart of super-men SAPS in mailing 52. Thoroughly enjoyed your paragraph of comments to Wally Hope to remember to copy it for Loubel- Liked the green ink. It is my favorite color I think- at least most of the time. Poems ok and especially "A Neo's Soliloquy." Good SAPSzine. Glad you joined....

B\*O\*G - O. W. Pfeifer, esq. Thoroughly enjoyed but no comments.

PENCIL POINT -- anonymous. I'm fond of this. Keep it coming please

The Elephant's Odyssey - Bruce Pelz. Wanted capitals for title and forgot to lock the key. This is very good. Interesting. Thank you for much entertainment, and thanks for the photo covers!!!

LYNN HICKMAN:

Thank you for Detention zine with photos. Thankseee!!

SAPSTYPE #10 - RayHiggs. Like that Murphy cartoon. Wish Dennis may become more active in near future. Almost have idea sending letter to him requesting an illo or two for my zine. Don't tell us that YOU and JoJo are attending Beatnik parties! Wouldn't it be a little risky to hold a world con on a river boat? Many fen cannot swim. However, there are some advantages- non-fans wouldn't be around complaining of noise. Believe the suggestion is fine. It certainly seems unreal to see your name on the waiting list! Must be the very first time for you? Well, now you can expend all efforts in N'APA while waiting for re-entry to SAPS. Your mimeo work is very neat. Stop running it down.

● U T S I D E R S - Wrai Ballard. Good art work on the cover and it is very well stencilled to be so nicely mimeo'd That little NancyJuneShare is an OK artist in my opinion. As always your editorial amused me (want to say right here that whenever I've used the word "amused" in Bronc, it was meant in a nice way and not at all in a sarcastic way, as mayhap some members unused to my ambling might think). Liked reading the reprints, especially your "As I See It." hmmm is there sech eh word as "unused"? Must check dictionary..good, there is but it sounds out-of-tune to my ears. That cover- I do not know why the signs are in French, but I know reason they are not in Russian--simply because the Russians are NOT there. Propaganda to the contrary phases me of the very least re the Moon. Here too, "I dislike symbolism or too many hidden meanings in a story." Yes, "The Green Odyssey" was interesting. Ne'er can forget how excited and like-that, I was upon picking up the paperback and then seeing Nangee's name on a front page. I didn't hesitate buying it and an extra one, although Farmer is not one of my favorite authors.

COLLECTOR - Howard DeVore. A beautiful Spectator cover written in gold! I ought to send some stencils to you to be mimeo'd in that golden ink..just once. Wonder if my bank account would stand it. I voted for \*E\*N\*E\*Y\* to be our OE, Nice to see all of your mlg. comments. I'll be happy to get that list of the fans who attended your world convention. Am always interested learning WHO was there- more than just reading same names published each year in fanzine con-reports..always and forever the same names- with only one or two new ones..maybe, depending on the writer.

COSWALZINE - W.A.Coslet. This is February 14th. Read the version comparison of what the Bible says happened at the parting of the Red Sea, with much interest. Only two differences and these are not serious. All\*give an east wind with exception of Brenton saying "a strong south wind." And Thomson: "a strong south easterly." (\*that mention a direction). Checked again and note that Geddes, in second line- "south wind."--Greek same as Brenton. "The World Outside" was good reading. Liked it a lot. Poor John Berry, wonder if his nerves are calmed down yet. Long time since I read any Sherlock Holmes, and then only a few. Appreciated your reviewing the history of NAPA in your comments to SpeleoBem. For a certain reason, I'm hoping to investigate the earliest rosters..those in 19th century. I'm dense of understanding reason for an emotional shock to a man upon discovery he is wearing- or has worn -"mismatched pairs of socks or something." Grace Warren has not answered me in reference to question you asked about the moon-not-being-there in her story.

NEMATODE - Bob Leman. Read all of the zine. You weld a mighty typer.

KAREN ANDERSON - I greatly admire your dainty art work, and am very fond of Doheug.

BUMP - Don Durward. Hi! and did I have a sufficient increase in mlg. comments in Bronc #15 to satisfy you? This issue will smaller in so far as my personal rambling goes, or so I think today. Enjoyed the story "LNF Case #314" and your mlg.comments are lively and pleasant for my reading. Hope the last bundle of 814 pages did not frighten you tooo much. We're not usually that active.

MHO\*DJEE - J.A.Hayes. Here too, I like to see the editor's name out in clear sight, either on the first inside page or cover. OR on the bacover, just so it is somewhere easily found to save time when cutting stencils. Loubel hasn't much time for correspondence - She works in her husband's office, (He is an engineer), keeps house, too. So, that probably is reason you've not heard from her recently. Yes. I sent a cheery card and note to Jean Linard- also a book. Sure hope he recovers health. Is a wonderful personality. It may be correct to apply the name "Thoroughbred" to other animals and to people but the general understanding is that it applies to a special horse, a special lineage type horse..and not given to any other named hoss. Oh, well- no doubt you know all this. I was taught in school that the title "Thoroughbred" should never be applied to anything except that one special breed horse; but your statement to Elinor made me check the dictionary- and by jings! you are right. Sure surprised me. Not that I was surprised that you could be right, unnerstan, but because- all of these many years I believed as taught in school and did not, before now, look in dictionary for exact meaning! Hah! that is one of the best comments on Jack's zine I've seen in a long time. So often I felt same way after reading a Harness zine- "I'm not sure if I'm coming or going, after reading this ish. Found it good." He can write the most confusibobbling, in an intellectual style, material!! Your story, "Time Trouble" interesting so far as I've read and I'll finish it tonight.

SAPLINGQ- Guy Terwilliger. Hey! Only 13 pages and you are the one started this race to get 50 pages out of every member. No fair! driving us like slaves by the suggestion while you take it easy with a measly 13..Tsk! I'm so disillusioned now. I read fiction with the same attitude as you have, to enjoy, not to find any hidden meanings. Agree that the 'average' youth of today - more of them are the normal decent sort than otherwise..I have been saying that for years. We hear more about the "otherwise," because of newspapers and so forth.. Oh well, is same for everything Press plays-up the bad and sensational and makes little effort finding UP-beat items to print. Agree, it is foolish for parents to try to give their children everything they didn't have, outside of life's necessities. Such course does not prepare the children to meet tough problems when eventually out in the world earning a living. It would be far wiser to bank the money for their university training. Had I children in school, I'd feel they were in good hands were they under the direction of such teachers with your attitudes.. Ah, now- Please. Eliza crossing the ice can't be comic- if you stop to think- She was a mother- had her baby in her arms! And believe me, it is possible.. for a mother to do miracles in order to save a child. I know from experience! A woman otherwise timid can and will preform deeds even a strong man might shrink from doing. And for heavensakes- what could ever be comic about the scene where poor Tom is whipped to death by Legree??? Such things could have happened you know, and no doubt did. To me, no matter how poorly presented today- are always tragic. Like- wise the little girl's death scene. I hate jokes and parodies made of such things..not that you did, but I've heard and seen by others now and then- in non-fan world. You would need a great deal of conditioning to "appreciate" some of the former Squink Blogg stories... One in particular was slimy! Should have made a few paragraphs but didn't know I was going to talk so much. Had intended writing only two or three lines..

IGNATZ - Nancy J. Share. This February 15th. Sunny-mild-calm. Have window by typer table wide open. Ground still snow covered. Certainly cheered me to see another full-sized Ignatz in the mailing "Dark Dawn" was worth publishing. It is much better than many I have seen in prozines. Hah! we have here a rebuttal to Birch-Bark, "Sacred Squeeks." Your way of reading is mine too; seldom remembering a title and author unless the story pleases me so much I want more by same writer. Also, same here with regard to Heinlein's work..doesn't interest me enough to read unless I have nothing else on hand & even then- usually prefer to reread an old book. I have his "Methuselah's Children" in hardcover..which is ok but not as good as when the tales were published in magazine form. Seems as though the best ones were omitted in this hardcover edition. I was greatly disappointed. There are more stories by Asimov which I like than by Heinlein, but years ago, both of them were in my list of favorites. Oh, there can be no comparison between your art work and that of WR. Yours is vastly superior, in every way. The girl page 26 is beautiful. When I see the word "harmonica" it reminds me of my childhood,.because at the time- it was one of the most popular musical instruments. Have been just sitting here chuckling and grinning while reading your comments to Outsiders. Seems like old times again in most of the preceding,also. I enjoy SAPS more when you are in a mailing with all of your gleeful glee-type-talking. Now reading page 30- How can a person type shaking all over with laughter..as I am most of time reading I G N A T Z Loubel published that "Moon" cover on a Rotolite and was the artist, so I can't tell you how the diagonal-link border was done. I'm glad you wrote about the labor business; saves me the time explaining to one of the boys who asked about it in 50th mlg. And you did the writing in better detail and clarity than I could have. So Thankee. I'm lazy when it comes to discussing anything serious and generally look around for some method of avoiding it, if possible. Appreciated the comments about mental-blocks. Agree with you. Right you are! We thee U.S. citizens do not have any say about the candidate nominees. Our choice is limited, VERY limited, when it comes time to vote in presidential election. And you are right about Beauty. Have been hearing nice things about Bill Danner for a long time and am looking forward to a time I'll have chance to read some of his zines. I'll have time after stencils are typed- to read ML's story, as will do some of the other stories in this mlg.#50.

SPY RAY OF SAPS - Richard Eney. Liked your cover. Believe you will be our next OE. Same as NancyShare, I was hesitating between you and Jack Harness and finally marked the X in your square, because you have had experience and Jack hasn't seemed overly interested in SAPS for some time. However, if he had been more active he would have rec'd my vote, because I've been disgruntled ever since reading Fancy II, re your snide treatment of a certain fan club. There was no necessity at all for the remarks. As soon as I have any definite knowledge of Presidential candidates, I will fill in the ballot and mail it to you.

HERE THERE BE SAPS #2.

Bob Lichtman. Like this Fibre-Tint blue mimeo paper you have used. It seems fairly heavy. Did it cost more a ream than other brands generally seen in our mimeo'd SAPSazines? I am beginning to have an urge to unwrap my old duplicator and try own publishing again, reason for interest in paper. Whenever I am puzzled whether to us "a" or "an" before a word beginning with "h" I use the

one sounds better to ear. That's when/if I stop to think. Is doubtful you'll think it easy to contribute more than minimum every mlg. when your time becomes divided among three apas, in addition to other publishing (non-apa) and attending school. It seems a big order to me, it sure do! However, if you eat only one meal a day- or every other day, and sleep only two hours in twenty-four- perhaps you'll manage. Ain't I a nice cheery advisor though!! And when will you be able to do any corresponding? Another thing: now that you're a club member, there is N'APA to join- no waiting list so far. And Seth will be hounding you to join Round-Robins, and Welcomers will be urging you to become active in a committee or so.. Ok ok, I'll keep quiet as of now. I tried various home made affairs with glass and a light under it for stenciling art, but although tried various thickness of glass- all would be too hot in too short a time- was more bother than holding stencil up on window pane during sunlight hours. I have a new stylus now with a fine point..we'll see what happens when I try it out - maybe on something for a bacover. Personally, I'm entirely happy that Dell's comic books ARE "clean and wholesome" because- otherwise there would be not a thing on stands fit for children to see and read- I buy Dell comics for several youngsters - The only brand -Dell\* that can be trusted if and when- I do not have the time to check before sending to children. No, dancing lessons probably would not help us win in the space race, but on the other hand- training in foot-ball certainly would not ever help either- and of the two- dancing is at least civilized and foot-ball is barbarism. You will lose my friendship (for whatever its value) if you publish any playlet which ridicules NFFF Fem-members. The story you mention seeing on "Twilight Zone" series, is one I read and I thought it sadistic- ugly. It is the type stf I'm forever screaming against- the down-beat depressive sad pessimistic type. I HATE 'em.. Thanks for the reviewing of SAPS mailings One, Two, Three, Four, Five, and Six. They were interesting to me. You are a TruBlueSAPS-Member.

# F L A B B E R G A S T I N G

Burnett R. Toskey, Ph.D., the OE of Spectator Amateur Press Society.. There is some strange weird attraction about the Garcone art similar to fleeting remembrance of nightmarish dreams. Background of the illo pleasing- like it, but have to look at it via corner of eye in order to save fearful bems in foreground. At least there is nothing stereotyped about the Garcone covers. Today is the 15th of February and there is a strong driving wind filled with snow. A cold one. And at this time, I suppose vegetation in Washington is a lovely green!! This paper you used certainly is a lovely texture. Aristocratic. The Postal Clerks just barely memorize one book of rules when here comes a new one for them to agonize over interpretation thereof, is reason for different ideas about mailing rates. In just one Post Office the clerks have to discuss the business and decide which in the maze of gobblideedook -hundreds of pages- seems rational for use. I've looked thru various P.O.books.. they would give most anyone a headache.. Use a real thin pancake mixture- then the cakes will not be gooey in the middle..and do not have the griddle too hot! TAFF was set up for fans who had done the most for Fandom, not for those who couldn't afford expense of trips. As for the latter- they could do as I do- deposit a small sum in savings each month labeled "Con-trip-fund." For years I've been so doing..often only five dollars a month..going with out things in order to save the fund- since it was most important, and

other things of little worth in comparison. Now over on page 8, I'll back you up on the high quality personalities who are mathematicians. All those I've known, including non-teachers, were - are of the very best types; friendly and interested in people. I've heard of several men named Carol and of only one fem, thus it seems masculine to me.

Right! Members who seldom, if ever, write mlg.comments seem most remote, and I always have a suspicion that they do not read the zines, or perhaps merely skim thru; and thus they impress me as having only a slight interest in SAPS.

Listening with closed eyes is best way to enjoy music, yes. Unless your are dancing, that is. Reminds me - recently saw some marvelous dancing on ice-skates - can't recall the name of show nor channel.. All I remember is how I sat there entranced while watching.

The information given you was correct. Rattle snakes at certain seasons will strike without the rattle warning. Out here it is in month of August, when they lie in torpor, coiled under sage brush, rocks, and other half concealed places. I've heard that they are blind such times. Have seen them of immense size in that season because I was being very careful of my feet while hiking on prairie during August. It is most difficult to see the things unless you're on the look out.

I would like to own a hard-cover of Nelson Bond's "Lancelot Biggs." Enjoyed them in magazine form.

Was hoping you might run again to be our OE. However, it was good to see so many names on ballot. Shows there is interest in S.A.P.S., if when more than one or two try to get a time consuming job in group..

Comments about animals reminds me to say that, when pre school age, my sister and I had a pet toad which would come when we called, and would eat from the palms of our hands.

Well, now I see the point in favor of copyrights. Buy one and then - add the permission for anyone to copy material. OK, first time I'll have a world shaking theory published-- will do so.

I copied comments in SAPS<sup>s</sup>zine about the Moon cover & sent to Louela who replied thusly: "The reproducing machine is a Rotolite Blue Line machine." To BOG- "T'anks Pal. I like Toskey too." To IG-NATZ: " 'Twas a template. A small square designed for symbol in drawings." And to Coswal: "The answer to that Moon story is that the Explorers found only a HOLE in Space where the Moon was at one time. It has been removed long hence, but we Earthlings are such fools for legends and traditions, we believe it is still there." To OUTSIDERS: "Who dat say somethin' 'bout French? We's got Sans Soucis all over the south, Honey Chile. Thas jes' Southern for Susie's Sand."

Had to retype (restencil) this page and then accidentally tore<sup>this</sup> stencil -beginning of second line above paragraph- hope the correfluid is adequate mender. Also have to restencil page 37..about a dozen of the letter "o" hanging by a mere whisp. Think I'll quit for tonight, wait for another day...

SPACEWARP - Art Rapp. Of course, we will take your word for the authenticity of the reasoning, page three, since all was mathematically proven. I commend your keen discernment! On page 5, you say: "I notice its members are beginning to omit the apostrophe in writing N'APA." Please, sir, only two members did so, and those two are in the habit of seldom, if ever, using an apostrophe; also are careless of spelling in other material. It seems doubtful to me that you did much of a reading of the zines. You are not similar in any way to the TV Sgt., but he is a lovable character, thus John's comment should be taken as complimentary. I saw that article about AF research project to study beaver-mental-processes. Can't recall where; perhaps in "Science World." So would I be dubious taking a trip in some vehicle which had been sprinkled with "holy" water, and think I'd try to avoid it. Appreciated the reprints, the letter by Andy Young, and the article by Major Mayer.

SPELEOBEM - Bruce Pelz. I have a stack of travel-folders could give to Alan Dodd. So, that "Rev" stood for "Reverdy"! This is the first time I've ever heard of the name. Like it. Look, I do not believe that the Russians orbited the moon, nor that they took a photo of the dark side. Go ahead and believe all that propaganda, as much as you please- but don't force it at me as-a-fact! I would not care to reread Sue's "Wandering Jew" and tried several times to finish "Hunchback of Notre Dame, but gave it up. Saw the movie- ugh it was horrible! HoHum, still gibbering at Burnett. Well, I'm 100% for Toskey and am becoming a bit weary of your snapping at his zine. Liked this comment to Jack, "Side references.. some of which I do not get -- but I don't care ... I'll get some more later on a re-reading." I'll read the stories, letters, etc., after finish these stencils.

DEE - Doreen. A musical lilt to your name. nice. I admire your sea-type drawings..graceful. This is nice reading. A wonderful quote: "I'm fed up with the whole world - especially huMANity. Fear not, I'll never give up - the world will meet my terms - or else! " Enjoyed all of your commenting. Made me feel young and light hearted. Bravo!

NULL A - WARHOON - Richard Bergeron. This is a beautiful contribution, both in format and in the writing. If you were at the top of the waiting list, I would be tempted to give my place on roster to you.

\* \* \* \* \*

This, I think, is the 16th of February. I do know it is morning a sharp freezing cold morning - last night was rather awful. We were very thankful there was no wind, else I would have sat up to "watch" the stoves. Ooooo what a winter this has been! Sudden ups and downs in temperature since September. Guess I will now wrap these stencils and send them to the U-R-P-ress care of E. T. Mills, and let him do the difficult part of publishing... And I'm not making any excuses to members whose zines have been skipped in my mlg. comments, because the truth is that if I did try to type another stencil it is possible I'd fall into a coma (a deeper one) or just ramble along filling space. Adios, EvaF.

FIFFENELLA, lovely thing, won't you heed my calling  
and the motors of my plane, please to stop up-balling?  
It is not your lovely form, height exact one foot,  
nor your hair which has the shade of a glob of soot  
Which attracts my notice now, sister to a gremlin  
but the closeness of the shave which has set me tremlin'.  
Please refrain from breakfasting on the sparks from sparkplugs  
or my legs will quite soon feel gentle little shark tugs.  
I am flying high above the calm and blue Pacific  
and if I should immerse therein the splash would be terrific.  
Air - Sea rescue craft would come at a great expense....  
Fiffenella, sweetheart, dear, your actions have no sense.  
Please do not bite clear in two my only rudder cables  
or insist on ruining my navigation tables.  
If you would depart I would feel so much more safer....  
"\$%!\*!\*\$", you're mean enough to be a dero writ by Shafer.

--Fred Remus, Jr.--

(Bronc #5)

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1960

B R O N C #16

Eva Firestone  
Upton Wyoming

"Just as mathematics must have zero, matter must have space. Space has no dimensions. Therefore, it seems logical to assume that the universe is a geometric figure filled with space. For instance, a bottle is filled with air. The bottle has dimension. The air has dimension. Now we hook the bottle up to a vacuum pump and remove all the air, dust, etc. The bottle is now empty, or it is filled with nothing. We prove that the nothing has no dimension by letting it out of the bottle, at which time it cannot be measured. Things without dimension cannot be measured because they do not exist. If the vacuum did exist, then find it!"

--Sat.Eve.Ghost #5--