

CRY

NUMBER 172
FEBRUARY 1964

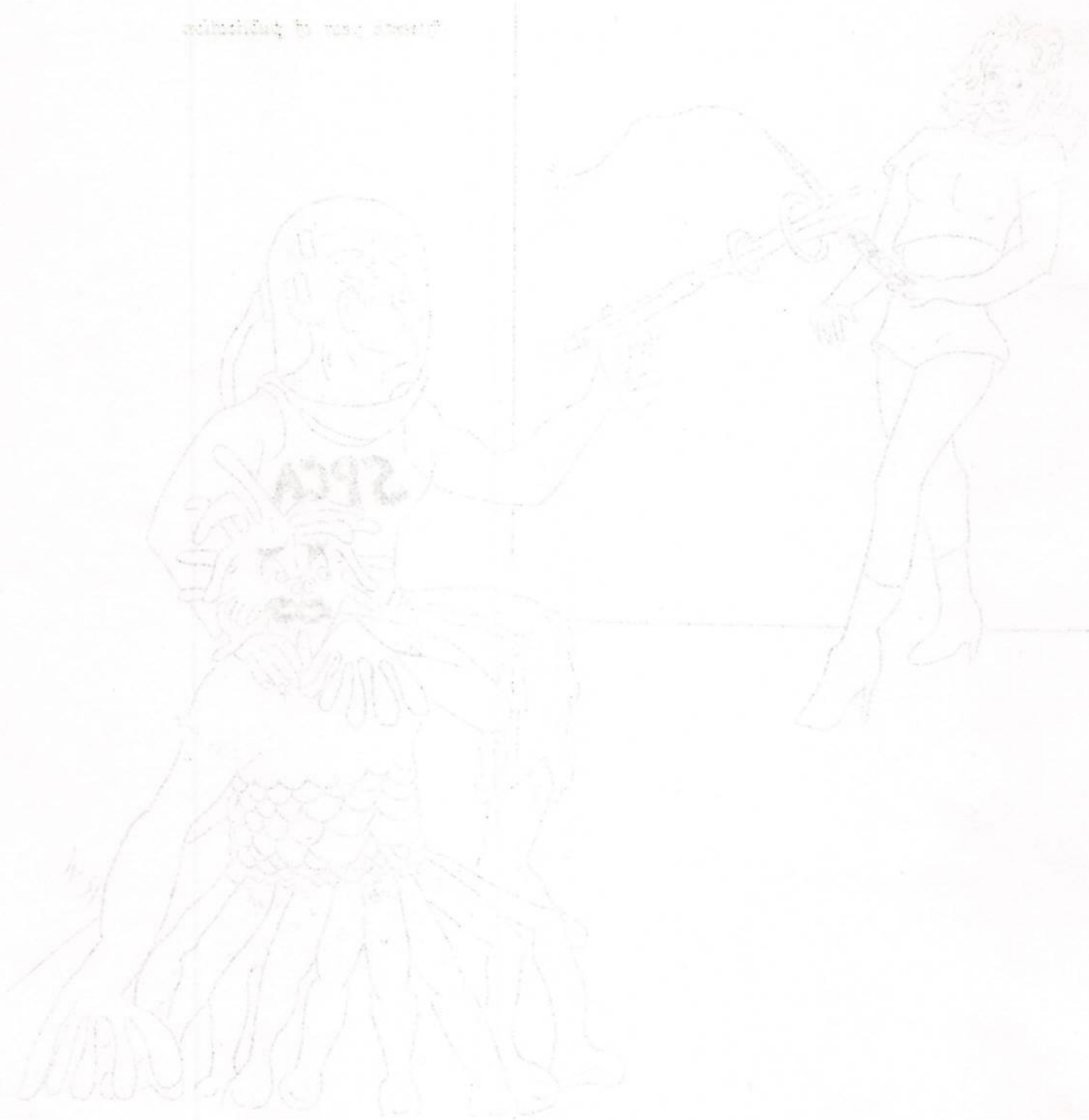
fifteenth year of publication



CRY

THE JOURNAL
OF THE
CRYSTAL BALL

Published by the
CRYSTAL BALL



I bet you are relieved to find that this is CRY 172, for February 1964, another goodie from Wally Weber and F M & Elinor Busby, and beginning CRY's 15th year of publication even though we are chicken and skip the Annish month lately.

I should probably remind you that Elinor as the Circ&Mail Dep't cashes all the checks in this area and sends out 5 CRYs for every dollar received, with one single issue for individual sticky quarters. John Berry of 31 Campbell Park Ave, Belmont, Belfast 4, Northern Ireland, handles all that stuff on the UK side for the sterling equivalents which are 7/- (5 issues) and 1/9 (single copies).

If you made it with a letter or contribution you get this issue free, of course, or you may be one of the lucky ones to whom our Trade Policy has goofed in a favorable direction for a change. We Aim To Please, but often miss.

While you are paying attention I might point out that the copy DEADLINE for CRY 173 (Apr '64) is MARCH 15, 1964. That's a Sunday, so don't crowd it, folks.

...inevitably this issue will be filled with C O N T E N T S :

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Wally Weber cut 18 stencils this time; Elinor 10; Buz just 3

of course ATom for TAFF of course

Are all you people out there in CRYland busy quitting smoking? If you are representative of the people quoted in the newspapers, you are. If you are on the other hand representative of the people I know personally, then you are not doing any such thing; either you already quit or never started, or you're just muddling on in the same ole way. I wonder where the newspapers find all these people who are just now shocked by the Nicotine Report; I can't see a thing in it that we didn't hear back in 1954 only more luridly then.

As for me, I am still in the Effort To Cut Down that I began a little over 3 months ago, in October 1963. Last summer did get to be a little bit too much; I had been reconciled to being unable to get below 2 packs any more, but fighting it between 2-1/2 and 3 packs got to be a little bit much if you don't mind repetition. So in October I made a mighty effort and have been fighting it mostly in the 1-1/2-to-2-pack area since then. One pack a day off the top is not so bad, I keep telling myself. I don't notice much difference, though, since I didn't have a Cigarette Cough anyway (I did a number of years ago on lesser rations, but it broke a leg and I had to shoot it or something). Oddly enough it is much easier to cut down at work than at home; I get by on 4 to 8 at work (compared to 20 to 24 for the past several years) but once I get home the lid flies off somehow. I would like to get the intake down to a pack or less but in order to do so I will need another breakthrough comparable to whatever it was I did back in October.

I realize this isn't the most thrilling saga you ever read; maybe next time we can get a Guest Editor who is trying to kick a big H habit or something.

Inclosed, if we do not goof the way we did one year, you will find a big green Hugo Nominations Ballot to be voted and forwarded to the Pacificon II which of course you will have joined long since or else will join now and fake it that you were One Of Us all along. There; I KNEW we could depend on you; you always were a good kid, at that. OK, you got your egoboo now; nice, isn't it? So vote.

Let's all join the Peace Corps and go help fill up the Panama Canal; right?

Having been the victim of fannish hoaxes before, I was rather wary of the postcard which arrived this morning, January 6, 1964.

Aside from the fact that I was sleeping blissfully in bed when son Colin brought it in to me (and it usually takes me at least half an hour to discover who and where I am when I wake up) several things about the postcard were, to say the least, peculiar.

For one thing, the stamp on the postcard was not franked. There were criss-cross ball-point lines all over it. This immediately made me think it was a hoax, and I had an idea who was behind it. I'll explain why later, but to the postcard.

The message on the back was cryptic, to the extreme. It asserted that the editor of the Ft. Mudge Railway Gazette was going to be in Belfast for one hour, between 8 and 9 pm 6th January. The message went on to say that as the aforementioned editor could not make the trip to my house, he would be obliged if I would be at the quayside, and to be on time because the editor had to catch the 9 pm boat to Glasgow....he would be attired in trench-coat and blue scarf.

Of course, I immediately thought of George Scithers.....I must add that the hastily scrawled signature looked nothing like George Scithers.

But look at it from my point of view.

The postcard stamp was unfranked. The message was, er, unusual.... I hadn't heard that George Scithers was in Europe...how could anyone be in Northern Ireland for just one hour...?

A hoax I mentioned earlier.

Well, my interest in aviation had centred the previous week on the first flight of the massive Short Belfast, a new heavy transport 'plane which had been due to make its first flight for a week. Bob Shaw, of budgie and rusted typer fame, was intimately connected with the publicity side of this prototype flight, and I had been on the phone to him every hour of the day, asking for the time of take-off so that I could rush down to the aerodrome (a couple of miles away from my office) and see the flight. I sensed that Bob was getting rather fed up with my insistent phone calls. He passed near to my house on his way to his office; what could be easier than to drop this mystic postcard through my front door?

So, well, it was cowardly of me, I admit, but I dismissed the tryst from my mind. George Scithers couldn't be in Belfast, could he.....?

* * *

At 8:15 tonight, someone kicked the front door. I was watching the LUCY SHOW, so, my head craned backwards looking at the screen, I felt my way to the front door and opened it.

Walt Willis was there with this big broad hunk of manhood.

George Scithers.

Heck.

I had made a major miscalculation.

I ushered George and Walt into the front room. I didn't know what the hell I could say. It was almost 8:30, George had to catch the 9 pm boat, and because I had apparently rudely refused to meet him, he had had to come to MON DEBRIS.

He told me, kindly enough, to get offa my knees.

To make matters worse, I hadn't shaved for about three days. I had some leave to come, and when I'm at home typing and duplicating, I like to be scruffily dressed and unshaven; it sort of moulds me into the fannish environment, such as I first learned at Walt Willis's. I could see Walt approved of my appearance, but in the few moments at my disposal it seemed a waste of precious seconds to explain just why I was so scruffy.

I congratulated George on the superb illos in AMRA....particularly the double-page spreads he'd recently featured. He told me all about his printing machine, and how, to make the colours come through evenly, he had to turn the roller three times before letting a sheet of paper go through. In a second, this technical discussion

brought us together as three keen faaans, although George, in his FBI-type trench-coat, looked anything but a faan. I asked him why his visit had been so short... it seemed that his duties as a physicist took him to Frankfurt, and he was on a flying trip to the British Isles. By a fluke he'd just met Ian McAulay in his laboratory in Dublin; he'd also been to Bristol, and walked in on Archie Mercer without any warning at all. The boat which left for Glasgow in 27 minutes time (and the quay was four miles away) was to take him to visit physicists in Edinburgh, then he was returning to Frankfurt again.

Diane brought in light refreshments; there was so little time left. George gulped his tea, took time only to write down his Frankfurt address on a blank sheet of music paper.....Willis cracked a superb pun which I couldn't note because George had looked at his watch, gulped, eyes protruding, and rushed to the front door.

We shook hands warmly, and forgave me my omitting to be at the quay. He said he understood how bewildered I must have been. Willis suggested I should go to the boat with them and see George off, but I felt my stubble, and reasoned that it would perhaps be embarrassing to George to be seen in the company of such a scruff.

I had a final promise from George that he'd soon be over again on a longer vacation, and, with rain pouring down outside, he skillfully hopped down my path, avoiding all the puddles except the last one. He leapt into the car, Walt hit middle gear by mere chance, and the kangarooed down Campbell Park Avenue.

* * *

It has always seemed to me that one of the more exciting facets of fandom is the sudden surprise visits.....the strange ways these sometimes come about.... and at the same time the rapid way in which initial hesitation is lost to a fannish exuberance which mundane people would find it hard to explain.

Certainly I've had my share of these snap meetings. I find them all equally exciting.....the one anti-climax was when Robert Heinlein didn't come.....but it took me ten thousand words to cover the incident..remember?

Meanwhile, I'm all set for the Weber/Toskey visits.....

John Berry

1964

All this unprecedented Blank White Space

is in honor of

A T O M F O R T A F F !

GOAL NUMBER THREE

COMPUTED BY wally weber

When I first started reading science fiction, the readers had three goals to which they dedicated their lives. One was to remove pictures of sexy girls from prozine covers, and two was to make the prozines trim their edges. Goal number three was to someday write science fiction themselves.

Recently I stopped to look at the prozines. I didn't read any, of course, but I did stop to look. One look verified that goals one and two had been accomplished. But goal three? Now that was a different matter.

Hey you guys-who-read-science-fiction-when-I-started-reading-it, what happened to goal three? I expected the prozines to be filled with stories by Art Rapp, Frank Dietz, Ed Cox, Michael Widgodsky...well, that's going a little far - maybe not Michael Widgodsky...Wilkie Conner, Charles Burbee and the rest of that crowd. There wasn't a one of them to be seen, not a single one. They weren't even in the letter columns any more. In case you haven't looked lately, you might as well know the worst; for the most part there wasn't even a letter column for them to be in.

Well obviously science fiction is in bad shape. How can the prozines print decent science fiction if the only people who know what it's about aren't writing their stories? No wonder Planet Stories quit. You can't expect an author, who has never matched wits with Sgt. Saturn or won an original for his letter, or had his fanzine featured in The Frying Pan, to write science fiction. It isn't possible. The prozines must be in a terrible state, floundering, losing readers, gasping their last.

Luckily I have a method of saving the prozines.

First, in order for you to fully appreciate my solution, let's look at the problem. Let's look at it objectively, from my viewpoint. Let's find out just why the prozines aren't filled with stories by Don Wilson, W. Paul Ganley, Michael Widgo---...no, probably not him...Rick Sneary and Shelby Vick. As a matter of fact, you are going to find there isn't just one reason; there is a whole herd of reasons. I will mention a few of them to save you from having to go out and buy a magazine for yourself.

1. Public Image. For some time after Hugo founded the term "science fiction," the man on the street (as opposed to the fan in the den) had no idea what science fiction was. If he had heard of it at all, he at least regarded it as reading matter, and that, if nothing else, put science fiction in a literate class. Between that time and now, unfortunately, Hollywood and TV have discovered science fiction. Now everyone knows what it is. Ask the non-fan and he will tell you. Science fiction is them radioactive lizards what crawls outta the Saturday matinees and rots kids's little brains, them is what science fiction is. Read that stuff? A healthy, sane, educated man read that stuff when he could be watching the Beverly Hillbillies instead?

Well, that's the Public Image for you.

2. Economics. How is science fiction financed these days? From the discussion of the Public Image we know that nobody reads the stuff. Who buys it? Even public and school libraries, those institutions dedicated to saving every scrap of writing originated by man or beast -- so fervently dedicated that they will even fill out their own diabolically multi-copy forms in order to subscribe to fanzines, even those libraries will accept prozines only if they are donated in complete years. Actually I don't know who buys them; my researches into this question have been fruitless. Certainly my friends wouldn't pay money for the things. I would guess that the purchasers consist of the editor, publisher, authors, artists, and their relatives and devoted -- deeply devoted -- friends.

While only a theory, it would go a long way to explain the present quality of the prozines. Contributors would be picked for the size of their families rather than the quality of their work.

Compounding the Economic problem is the rising cost of paper, printing, distribution, and taxes that has continued over the intervening years. With the possibility that birth control might soon make qualified authors unavailable, the days of the prozines are numbered.

Those are two of the reasons prozines are in trouble. There are many more, but solving these two problems alone would be enough to save them, at least for the time being.

The problem of the Public Image is so difficult it becomes simple. By now the public mind has become so set against science fiction in any shape or form that the only way to improve the Image is to amputate the Public. Take the prozines off the newsstands -- some distributors seem to be working toward this end already -- and make the magazine almost impossible to get. You'd be surprised what people will do to get something they don't want if you just refuse to let them have it. It could even, in some cases, be put on a membership basis where dues alone would not be sufficient to maintain membership.

As for the Economic problem, much of it would be solved by the reduction in copies required when authors' relatives will no longer be able to obtain the magazines. In addition, less expensive means of publication could be used, and this, in turn, might even improve the quality of the reading material to be found in the magazines. Campbell would put less stress on astrology, for example, if he had to vent his frustrations in an editorial describing how his hecto jelly curdled part way through Analog's page 10 run.

Perhaps this would not make much of a profit for the prozines, but at least they would be losing less money than they had before.

The important part of this limited circulation of prozines goes beyond Public Image and Economics, however. The real value of this change is that it will entice back the old masters, like Redd Boggs, Edwin Sigler, Michael Wi-- uh, never mind, you know who they are. They will take interest again, and in a little while they will write again. Probably they won't write stories, at least not at first, but they will write letters. Letter columns will spring up once again in the prozines as the letters become more interesting than the stories.

Soon the prozines will be in greater demand; fans will insist that they be issued more often in larger sizes. By this time, obviously, the mundane world will have forgotten all about science fiction and its unpleasant Image. Planet Stories may rise again.

But it's going to take a lot of work, hectographing a million copies of a monthly prozine. We're going to have to work together, harder than we ever had before. That Old Spirit of science fiction has to be revived and sustained, and, although it will be the toughest job we've ever done, we'll be amply rewarded. We'll have prozines written by the folks they were meant to be written by. That third goal will be scored and we'll make science fiction a literature that will stand, unashamed, with the Great Works of our civilization -- Shakespear, Michael - um, well, you know those Great Workers who produced the Great Works.

Don't think we can't do it. With my plan of turning prozines into fanzines and then turning them back into super-prozines, mankind can carry science fiction to the very stars. It will be our contribution to the culture of an entire universe. We cannot hope to accomplish this without sacrifice and hardship, but it will be worth it.

Consider the consequences if you fail. Imagine, if you can, an entire cosmos deprived of, say, Morgan Botts or the Ballard Chronicles. Could you rest easy, even in your grave, if you let your race down by not achieving that third, that all-important, goal? I urge you to start now. Strive! Struggle! Suffer if you must, but make that third goal!!!

I'd do it myself, except I'm busy watching TV tonight.

The Kennedy-Oswald-Ruby shootings missed our November deadline by just about a week; since then both the mundane and fan presses have said practically everything there is to be said on the subject, if not more. Suffice it that this corner is convinced on the evidence that Oswald pulled the trigger all right and that Ruby is merely an action-minded self-dramatizing slob in his own right. There was an interesting rumor for a while, that Oswald had come back from his Mexican visit to the Russian and Cuban embassies with \$5,000 of somebody's money, but it seems to have died out by now. Certainly the Russians had more to lose than to gain by putting this country into any sort of panic situation; it would be the Chinese-Albanian-Cuban faction who would go for that kind of a mess, and no one seems to be pushing that angle much if at all.

I did not by any means always agree with JFK, but he was basically one of the Good Guys and in the clutch he showed that he had guts as well as brains; politics aside, we lost us a good man there; what more can be said?

It is a little early yet to try to assess Lyndon Bird in his new role; the first impression is of savvy and ability combined with ruthlessness and perhaps too great an affinity for that which is expedient. Well, we'll see.

I trust that at least one or two of you will have read Jack Vance's "The Star King" in the recent December and February issues of GALAXY; if not, then you should. Jack Vance burst upon the fannish horizon in 1950 with the paperback appearance of "The Dying Earth" and suffered for some years under the rumor that he was only another Kuttner pseudonym. He threw stories of vast scope into STARTLING and its sister zines for several years at probably quite low word-rates, and some of these were among the best stuff you will find anywhere in your files. The original versions of "Big Planet" and "Planet of the Damned" come to mind, and no doubt you will have your own Vance favorites of that period. "The Star King" tastes of that vintage; it is a rather enthralling piece so far as it goes, and therein lies my disappointment; it does not go anywhere near far enough. That is, at the beginning of the story we are given a list of the hero's objectives, the five Demon Princes that he is out to stonker as his life's work. And at the end of the story we come back to life and realize that we have had to settle for One Gold Band as it were. I grant you that the pursuit and disposition of Grendel the Monster and his satellite Hildemar Dasce (who rather steals the show, himself) fully occupies the forty or fifty thousand words allotted to today's s-f "novel". But what of "Kokor Hekkus (the Killing Machine)" and his theories of absolute frightfulness? And Howard Alan Treesong: what of him and his pleasure palace? Not to mention Viole Falushe and Lens Larque, who could have been handled offstage since they were never more than mere names. Now if it is the case that we were deprived of the saga of the hunting of these entities because of the limitations on the serial for bimonthly publication, then I can accept it even though it grieves me, hoping that the lack will be made up in the book version. But I shall be saddened no end if a paperback "Star King" appears and in it we are still not given the spectacle of our hero faced with Kokor Hekkus being absolutely frightful. An author should not be so evocative without following through, I say.

If there is to be a sequel, then I take it all back, of course...

I talked with Burnett Toskey! Yes I did, actually and literally! On the phone this evening, as a matter of fact. Oh sure, I can hear you saying "So what's with him?" and "Big deal!" and other such irreverent comments, but there really is some pizazz here: Tosk is seriously talking of visiting England and Ireland this summer if they don't make him teach ~~the/abacus~~ math at Seattle U this summer, and I thought you folks there in the English-speaking countries might want to be alerted and all. For instance he is talking of renting a car over there and you might want to double your insurance or provide him with a driver who is used to driving on the wrong side of the road. You hear, Ella? Arthur? Ron? John? Walt? Mister Commissioner of Public Safety? Well, I tried.

At hand is A E van Vogt's "The Violent Man" in the 60¢ Avon pb edition; as yet I have not figured out whether this is a rattling good book or whether I am just still as always susceptible to the vV style of word-magic.

(Y'know? I THOUGHT that typeface looked a little emphatic there. O well.)

It would be easy for a dk-type reviewer to pan the hell out of the book... here we have 23 Caucasians including our hero Mr Seal Ruxton confined in a Chinese Communist prison on a sort of do-it-yourself brainwashing project. It is naturally pretty rough in a number of ways, but our hero happens to be making out regularly with the maid of the wife of the commandante and then with the wife herself; naturally she shoots the whole bit eventually, but that is later when we need more conflict and all. There are, I think, some holes in the final solution through which you could drive a B-52. Sideways. For instance, at the end just one man stands between Ruxton-and-his-buddies and Freedom, but this Violent Man finds that he cannot kill the joker. But: "Ruxton knew how to damage without killing. He struck a single, incapacitating blow with the knife" and walked out leaving the guy supposedly immobilized and helpless to holler for help directly or by phone. Having a nasty skeptical temperament, I tried to imagine what single blow of a knife would accomplish this purpose and still heal up pretty well later; the bad guy is stooping over to pick up a gun, so obviously Ruxton did not use the knife to nail the fella's tongue to the table top or whatever, which was the only fully "incapacitating" non-fatal gimmick that came to mind. What do YOU think?

But the book is better than that. It is filled with the vV technique of suggesting greater scope than he ever uses and it is built upon a Theory, as were all his best s-f tales (in fact, the book could just as easily have been s-f as not except for one reason: it wouldn't have paid as well to set the story in the empire of Enro the Red, as in Communist China). I won't reveal the gimmick though. It's good for several pages of discussion in its own right, is why.

Finally I have received a complimentary copy of a pb I hadn't already bought several months ago: Crest Books' 60¢ edition of Philip Wylie's "Triumph", which is another delightful rollicking whimsy of World War the 3rd. The trouble with Wylie (besides his habit of using one chapter to try to make you throw up, and this time I was braced for him and hardly gagged at all when he brought up his refugees with their features charred off so you couldn't tell which was the front of the head until you see them walking-- and I don't see what that would prove, since they might have their heads on backward just like the author)... the trouble, as I started to say, with Wylie is that he is chronically behind the times. In his "Tomorrow" he was blowing the bugle for Civil Defense after thinking persons had given up on it long since. Now he postulates a Russian Total Attack on the old premise that the USSR would happily wipe out the entire Northern Hemisphere if they could just hide out maybe 100,000 people to come out later and rule whatever might be left, in the sacred name of Marx-leninism or what have you. Now maybe he could have made this plausible using Mao as the villain, but I just cannot see the post-Stalin Kremlin as quite that type of fanatics (they're bad enough, Lord knows, but we saw during Cuba Week and the Oswald Weekend that Krushchev is not willing to risk seeing Mother Russia melted down into slag for The Cause).

Aside from that the story is quite interesting. We have some 14 people all holed up in a private \$150,000,000 blast shelter and the author pretty well takes them over the jumps. Oddly enough, both books mentioned so far on this page are deeply concerned with sexual fidelity and the consequences of lack of same; you would think that no one had ever thought of this idea before, the way they go at it. Maybe they both hate to see the divorce-lawyers make all that easy money.

At the end I can't tell whether Wylie is kidding me or kidding himself. Our survivors 2 years later (the only living beings in the Northern hemisphere) are rescued by Australians and goshwow Australia which had disarmed has now its very own H-bombs and is going to Keep the Peace with them, and all is brotherhood but by God nobody is going to move in on Australia, but we sure do have brotherly love in the Southern Hemisphere. I thought of the kicker ending on "Lord of the Flies" and reread Wylie's ending again, but it really does look as if he means it, 100%.

And I have about 23,000 words done on something you may or may not ever see.

Mary Batson, who you might better know by the nickname "Mary Marvel," has been away from the public scene for many years now. What most people don't know is that the reason for her absence is a twelve year term she is currently serving in the Buffalo Women's Penitentiary. This probably comes as a shock to most of you, especially those of you who remember her only as a sweet little girl in red--the image that Fawcett Comics foisted on the world. Those others of you who are familiar with di Broise's biography of Mary, "Jaegernaut in Skirts," actually have but a little better idea of her true character and personality. In real life, Mary is no more the Girl Scout that Fawcett would have us believe than she is the goody-goody heroine limned by di Broise. Mary is, like all of us, a human being. As such, she has all the vices as well as the virtues concomitant to humanity.

* * *

We are so used to thinking of Mary as a comic book star that it is strange to find that she fell into that role quite by accident.

Surprisingly enough, when, at the age of sixteen, Mary packed up a few belongings and left Cedar Rapids, it was not to New York--home of Wonder Woman and Liberty Belle--that she headed for, but Hollywood.

Yes, Mary had the itch to be an actress. She almost made it, too. For six months she was under contract to Warner Brothers, and was looked upon by those in the know as a very promising starlet. Under the name of Salli "Yum Yum" Toogle, she even played a minor part in "Mrs. Skeffington." It would be of high interest to view this footage, but, unfortunately, her part in the picture was cut out in the editing room at the demand of the picture's star, Bette Davis, who deemed Mary "...too damn sexy for the bit."

I sincerely hope some future biographer of Mary is able to procure clips of her part in this film. (I, myself, have been unsuccessful in an attempt to do so.) What a loss to comic book historians, otherwise!

In case you haven't guessed it by now, Mary's physical development, even at that young age, was most startling. Alas, she was twenty years too soon for a movie market where, today, such an adolescent staple as Tuesday Weld cavorts uninhibitedly for popcorn crunching voyeurs. When Mary was trying to make her mark in Cinemaland, the idea prevalent among movie moguls was that sixteen year olds should look like sixteen, and not like Jayne Mansfield. Jack Warner, who had a fondness for Mary, wanted to keep her under contract and suggested the use of straps, harnesses, and a slouching posture--something Mary, perhaps more proud than wise, absolutely refused.

Her contract was not renewed.

* * *

When her option on the Warners' lot was not picked up, Mary sadly thumbed a ride in the direction of Iowa. As she climbed into the cab of a truck its driver saw a broken-spirited washout.

By some freak of chance, or perhaps Fate's design, the trucker who gave her a lift misunderstood her intentions, and she wound up in New York. And at the brink of a new and unimaginably lucrative career in comic books.

All of what little money she had previously earned had been spent on publicity releases, press-agentry, etc., and now she found herself alone and destitute, walking Gotham's streets in the midst of winter, down to her last nickel. It was at this time that she first gave consideration to a profession that, this time, she was enabled to decide against by her fortuitous discovery by Mr. Morris.

With that last nickel, Mary purchased a paper from the newstand of Freddy Freeman--or "Gimpy" Freeman, as he was known in his younger days (before his discovery) when he ran a bookie joint out of his newstand and sold under-the-counter 'French' novels. Freddy was not, of course, really crippled. This was a device he employed to gain sympathy from his parole officer.

Freddy was thinking of opening up a sideline business and asked Mary, as she handed over her nickel and opened the paper to the want-ads, if she might not be interested in working for him as what he euphemistically called a "hostess." Mary, after many emphatic "no's!" and "what do you take me for's?" (half of them drowned out by the pathetic grumblings of an empty stomach), was weakening when Kismet, in the form of Mr. Morris, intervened.

Mr. Morris was a wealthy financier. Besides being sole owner of Station WHIZ, he was a stock speculator (and also a horse speculator, which accounts for his being at Freddy's stand) and a comic book talent handler. He was sixty-three years old, tired, jaded, and in search of something new. After running through seven wives and a Greek valet, he was ripe for Mary's fresh charms.

It might not be remiss to say here a few words about Mr. Morris, beyond the above. No other person, except Mary herself, has been so bowdlerized, white-washed and dehumanized. For instance, di Broise, in the chapter entitled "Fateful Day At The Newstand," describes a Mr. Morris who has no counterpart in reality: "...a kindly, greyhaired gentleman in the twilight of life, who gave Mary a helping hand but never lived to see her reap the success he had sown." Bosh! There is hardly one whit of truth in that--nor in his other statement: "...[Mr. Morris] became a substitute father for Mary, delighting in displaying a protectiveness and counsel which Mary had never before known."

So much for the glossings-over. Why some people find enjoyment in wool-gathering and fact suppression is beyond me! If the truth were known, Mr. Morris, at the age of sixty-three, was anything but 'in the twilight of life.' The third Mrs. Morris, Hazel Morris Scanlon, in her book "Morrisian Memoirs", correctly called him "...an eccentric reprobate...absolutely without moral qualms or fear of the law...with the libido of a goat."

The fact is, at sixty-three, Morris was just as anxious for the joys of life (as he saw them) as he was at thirty-eight; or, indeed, at seventy-eight, when he succumbed to a heart attack while going from room to room at Saint Cupido's Home For Wayward Girls, during the Christmas of 1962--handing out Christmas goodies and cheer (he said).

But, getting back to the narrative: Even though snow was falling in New York on that memorable day, and Mary was wrapped up in an old blue mackinaw, Mr. Morris could not help but spot her attractions. In a whimsical return to poesy, Morris immediately dashed off a poem to her on the back of his scratch sheet and slipped it to her with a twenty dollar bill. By a stroke of luck, the poem is still in existence. Freddy Freeman plucked it out of a trash container where Mary had thrown it. Through his foresightedness, it is here being published for the first time:

Now you might not think it's so,	I'm parked round the corner--
Because of my age,	(The blue Caddy car)--
But I've made Wonder Woman....	I think I can make you....
The absolute rage!	A big Comic Star!

Mary jumped at the chance; and the rest, as they say, is history.

* * *

I trust you are enough acquainted with Mary's subsequent success as to save us both the rehashing. There are a few things I'd like to point out, though. The title of the comic Mary made her debut in, Wow, was not inspired, as di Broise would have us believe, by the initials of the Welfare Offices for Waifs (which di Broise further erroneously credits Mary and Mr. Morris as being co-founders of!); but simply for the interjection Morris fervently uttered as Mary threw off her mackinaw in the warm interior of his car. Originally, Wow was not the projected title of that comic book at all, but another, less ambiguous expletive. (One that Morris gave vent to after Mary had reached his fourteenth floor penthouse apartment.) Luckily for the youth of that time, even though the Comics Code had not yet reared its odious head, self-restraint and inherent decency prohibited its use.

Possibly the most misunderstood of Mary's many attributes were her "super powers". Did she or didn't she have them? There are many ex-criminals who will give testimonial to her paranormal powers. Jimmy "The Finch" Crawford has been put

on record as saying: "Who could put up any kind of fight when that dame comes along? My bullets bounced off of her. She flew in circles around me, I couldn't get away. And that damned lightning nearly blinded me."

Al "Quick Gat" Larsen offers a more picturesque explanation: "I dunno what if it was magic or not. Beats me, but I don't think so. I think she couldn't fly. She did it with wires is my hunch. But, boy, you just let her descend on you someday. She came down after me feet-first with her skirt blown up somewhere around her shoulders. I was like hypnotized..."

The quest of her "super powers" is a touchy one and I do not really care to get into it too deeply. Some people believe in these things and others don't. Personally, I have an open mind on the subject. It is not altogether unlikely that she did have some sort of latent talent which Morris was able to bring out in her. Morris, after all (and whatever we may think of his personal life), was the man responsible for the discovery of Billy Batson/"Captain Marvel" and Freddy Freeman/"Captain Marvel, Jr." and, of course, Diana Prince/"Wonder Woman." Never mind that Billy Batson, a stand-up midget comedian in vaudeville prior to his discovery, was given his comic exposure and build-up before Mary. (He is no relation to her.) He was just brought in to pave the way for Mary. And if, as some suspect, Freddy's comicdom success was due to a little blackmailing, still, he did make a fine success no matter what his route to it was. So what if "Wonder Woman" was discovered in a burlesque house where she headed the act "Princess Diana, The Amatory Amazon and her Paradise Island Cuties." Her good works in the comic field make her to this day an inspiration to young American girlhood.

This digression has led me to a ponderous question. Of the four former stars, only Diana is left active in comic books. Billy, who was fifty-seven in 1942 ("boy newscaster," indeed!) has long since retired. Freddy has been the object of an FBI manhunt for, lo, these many years. And Mary languishes in a cell.

Why?

We know that Billy simply became senile. And Freddy's proclivity toward the illegal was an ingrained trait.

But, what about Mary? Why has her star set? And has it set for good, or will there be a come-back for her?

I was as worried about these questions as you are. Which is why I petitioned the warden of the Buffalo Women's Penitentiary to let me have a personal interview with Mary. I was quite gratified and pleased, and not a little surprised, when my request was granted!

* * *

When I was led into the visiting room, I was astonished to find Mary looking much as she did in her hey-day. Oh, some of the spring had left her formerly carefree gait. And her formerly bright reddish/maroon hair had greyed a little, true. But, all in all, she was the same Mary Batson so many of us have such fond memories of.

Following are some excerpts from our interview:

Int: First of all, Mary, how did you become the reigning star in Fawcett's stable of comic book heroines?

M.B.: I guess I just had that 'something,' is all. Old man Morris used to always say I did. Oh, it's a story all in itself.

Int: Yes, and I'm anxious to hear it.

M.B.: Yeah, but let me say something about Bulletgirl, first. You remember Bulletgirl, don't you? With Bulletman? She really gave me some competition there for awhile. I was the one who got her that dog--Bulletdog, they called him. God, how he hated to wear that helmet!

Int: I'm afraid I'm really not familiar--

M.B.: Oh sure, you remember--she flew just like I used to? And bounced bullets off her helmet and all? And wore that tight, tight jersey outfit?

Int: Well, yes. I think I do vaguely recall her now. Whatever became of her?

M.B.: That dog took care of her. She was getting too much in the limelight, you see--and had me kind of scared, I don't mind telling you. So I went to

this petshop and got her this dog. He wasn't housebroken, either. I made sure of that. Ha! Old Bulletgirl had her hands full then. She spent most of her time rushing back home to launder her costume from then on out. Ever notice how she always tried to fly above the dog, and not under him? Fat lot of good that did! That doggone mutt was determined he was going to be top dog, no two ways about it. Did you ever hear about the time she went to put on her helmet and found the dog had gotten to it first? I taught him that myself!

Int.: Mary, your former success was the product of many factors: an unsuccessful stint in Hollywood, a chance discovery by Mr. Morris, even Freddy Freeman had a part in--

M.B.: Freddy Freeman! If you know Freddy Freeman, I don't even want to talk to you! He's the creep responsible for my being right where I am now, that jerk!

Int.: I'm sorry, I didn't know. Would you care to explain that?

M.B.: What's to explain? After I'd been in comics for awhile and made a smash and all that, I got bored. Anybody gets bored, don't they? Then I remembered Freddy's offer to set me up in a sideline business, so I asked him if he was still interested and he was, that's all. Not that I needed the money. You know it wasn't that. I was just bored stiff. Couldn't go nowhere except to answer those police calls. Day in and day out, answering police emergency calls--it got to be a real drag. Oh, some of the cops were cute. But a person gets tired of nothing but blue uniforms all the time. So....

Int.: And you were caught at this other, er, pursuit?

M.B.: Not right away I wasn't. Oh, I had to do a lot of covering up. Old man Morris tried to keep it from the people at Fawcett, but they eventually found out. I couldn't have cared less. I hated working for those people. Remember that Mother Hubbard of a uniform they used to make me wear? That red gaberdine skirt nearly down to my ankles? You'd of thought my legs were deformed or something. Maybe you saw me in my later comic appearances where I finally got to wear a nylon skirt six inches above my knees? My legs looked pretty good, even if I do say so. Of course, I didn't get to wear that short skirt because I wanted to. Oh, no. It's just that someone at Fawcett decided my public image had better start conforming a little more to my private life.

Int.: I do recall your skirt shrinking through the years.

M.B.: It's a shame no one ever got to see the costume I was going to wear. I had it all picked out, what there was of it. And then the cops nabbed me. It would have been a stunner, too. I was told my comic sales were dropping off. This would have revived them, boy!

* * *

That's about all of the interview I care to disclose at this time. Those curious for further details will find out all they want to know, and more, in a book Clamont Publishers have commissioned from me, tentatively titled "Holy Moley, What a Girl." (There is some irony and restitution to truth in this commission--Clamont in the publisher of "Jaegernaut in Skirts"!)

I will relate just one more piece of information. Before I interviewed Mary, the warden told me she was a model prisoner, always eager to lend a helping hand in prison routine whenever she could. He also stated that he would have no hesitation whatsoever about recommending her for an early parole. "She's paid her debt and she's learned her lesson," he said. "I firmly believe she's ready to return to society as a useful member."

I later passed on these words of praise and hope to Mary, and asked for her comments.

"I can't wait to get out," Mary told me.

"What do you plan on doing when you regain your freedom?" I asked.

"Get even," she said.

--Rob Williams

I think one can truthfully say that operations are wasted on sick people. To enjoy, really enjoy, an operation requires good health and good spirits. Let me tell you about my operation.

I must admit that I wasn't cheerful about it at first. When Dr. Banks gave me to understand that it would be necessary to operate on the little lump in my breast, and that there was a one in ten chance that it would be malignant, and that I would go into the operating room without knowing how much of me would be coming out again--I went into a state of panic. The next day I had my X-Rays, and felt depressed and apprehensive. But after that I was enjoying life again.

On December 16th I packed a bag with unread books, embroidery, slippers and robe, and took a taxi to the Virginia Mason Hospital. It took about an hour to admit me. First I spoke to a woman at the admissions desk, then I sat in the lobby, then a young nurse ushered me to a little room where samples of blood and urine were taken, and then I sat in the lobby some more. Finally another nurse came and took me up to my ward.

I had applied for a six bed ward, the cheapest, before I discovered that our hospital insurance paid for a semi-private room. But I didn't try to change it. It saddened me not to squeeze every possible penny out of an insurance company, but I felt that a ward would probably be more fun.

Up at the ward I found that there were two empty beds--one on either end thereof. I could take my pick. What a momentous decision! I knew that one location would be infinitely preferable to the other, that there was no way I could tell in advance, and that I had to choose quickly. I picked the bed at the east end, where one woman was receiving a blood transfusion and the other was making doll clothes.

Mrs. Sullivan, the doll-clothes maker, was in for the same operation that I was. She was a cheerful, sturdy woman of 51, with graying dark hair, blue eyes, and a fair skin. The other woman was Mrs. Watson, who had been hemorrhaging. She was 25, and was very thin, gentle and feminine. I liked them both very much. I had picked the right end of the ward. There was a woman at the other end of the ward who was a terrible phony, and talked ALL the time. After an hour's monologue, she reached into her purse and pulled out a poem clipped from a magazine, and read it to her companions. The burden of this verse was that old people should be quiet, not talk all the time, listen to other people now and then, and so forth. "I think it's kind of cute, don't you?" she said. Mrs. Watson murmured to Mrs. Sullivan and me, "She was talking until 1:30 last night."

I knew it was the custom for incoming patients to be examined by an intern, because I had stayed at Virginia Mason Hospital before, when I had rheumatic fever in 1954. But no intern came. An intern came and examined Mrs. Sullivan (pulling the curtains on their tracks all around her bed first) but he didn't even look in my direction.

Mrs. Watson had a visitor. I heard a voice say, "Mrs. Watson, I'm Dr. Pillow. Dr. Banks asked me to stop by and see you." Since Dr. Banks is my own doctor, my attention was caught, and I looked at Dr. Pillow carefully. He was dark, rather goodlooking, of a slender-growing-portly build, and obviously extremely distinguished. He was wearing ordinary dark trousers, but one felt that they were, in a higher sense, striped. He shot questions at Mrs. Watson like a rather Olympian machine gun, then nodded briskly and dematerialized. I felt sure that he would shortly give Dr. Banks a magnificent analysis of Mrs. Watson's condition. I admired him tremendously and felt quite jealous that Dr. Banks had not asked him to stop and see me.

But I did have a visitor. A short plump little woman with a round rosy face and round bright dark eyes came to see me. She informed me that she had come to prepare me for surgery. She had come to shave me. "I'm the Little Shaver," she said. "Everybody calls me that. Old patients call me the Little Shaver when they meet me on the street, and even the doctors call me the Little Shaver." All the while that she was explaining to me how she was called the Little Shaver (though

she could never tell why) she was fitting a new blade to her razor, anointing my breast and the underside on my arm with shaving preparation, and shaving it with long quick accurate strokes. I hadn't realized it before, but they shave all the area that the surgeon could possibly have any interest in, whether there is any hair on it or not.

Then I had another visitor, a doctor wearing the odd little piratical cap that doctors sometimes wear. He was a good humored and intelligent looking man with bleakly regular features, a patchily weathered fair skin, eyes of a beautiful gray-blue color and one wrist in a cast. "I'm Dr. Murphy," he said. "I'm going to be giving you the anesthesia, and I am going to tell you just what will happen to you tomorrow." I was delighted, and said so. So he told me, and it all came true save one detail. "You will get dinner tonight," he said. Dinner? One cup of chicken broth, a dish of lemon jello, and a cup of tea? Dinner? Not in my dictionary, it's not!

One thing he said puzzled me. He said that the pentothal would be injected through the same needle through which I was receiving a glucose and saline solution. I didn't see how this could be, but I thought I would see it next day and then understand it, and leaped to a more important point. "I suppose I will babble," I said accusingly. "Oh, no," he smiled. "You'll just drop off to sleep, like this," and he mimicked a person dropping off to sleep with great suddenness.

After "dinner" I called Buz on the phone. He had offered to come down to see me, but I felt that it would be better not. It was more fun, more intimate, talking on the phone, and since there didn't seem to be anyone waiting to use it, we talked for a long time.

Then I went back to the ward and chatted with my roommates. It was fun. It was a little like being in a college dorm the first night of school, and it was also a little bit like finals week. We talked until it was time to go to sleep, and then we went to sleep.

An hour or so later a voice said, "Mrs. Busby, Mrs. Busby." I woke up. A young woman in a white jacket apologized for disturbing me. She said she'd been by to see me earlier that evening, but I'd been on the phone. "Are you an intern?" I asked. She said yes, and I felt very pleased. She checked heart and lungs and eyes and ah's and reflexes and so forth, and asked me about members of my family who had died of heart disease and cancer, and my previous illnesses. She was a nice young woman, gentle, brisk and polite, and she looked just a little bit like Ruth Berman. I liked her a lot.

But after she was gone I couldn't get back to sleep. Earlier that evening I'd gone to sleep with Mrs. Loudmouth at the other end of the ward still talking, and workmen outdoors using power equipment not far away. But with the ward and the street as quiet as a tomb I couldn't get to sleep. Finally I gave up and went to the nurses' station and asked for a sleeping pill. The nurses looked on my chart and saw that I was entitled to one and that I hadn't had it earlier. They gave me a long yellow pill and a tiny paper cup of water. I took my pill and went back to bed. A few minutes later I felt a burning sensation at the back of my throat, and a few minutes after that I had drifted pleasantly off to sleep.

Tuesday morning I was awakened early. After I'd washed up, the nurse gave me a hypo and insisted on my putting a horrid little muslin cap on my head, to confine my hair. Then I got on a cart and was rolled away, into an elevator and down several storeys. My glasses had been taken away, so I don't know how much the blurriness of subsequent hours was due to sedation and anesthesia, and how much to myopia. I was rolled into a smallish room, where the nurses affixed a bottle of saline and glucose solution. They had to stab me three times before they got a needle in a vein. It didn't hurt especially, since they pricked me with novocaine each time first. But it worried me a little. "Is there something wrong with my veins?" I asked. "Oh, no," a nurse said. "You have small veins because you're a small girl." I'm not all that small, but I was reassured.

Then Dr. Murphy came in and spoke to the nurses, ignoring me. I wasn't about to be treated as an insensate lump. "Good morning, Dr. Murphy," I said firmly. Then he spoke to me very politely. I don't usually ask personal questions of strangers,

but feeling rather privileged I asked him how he had hurt his wrist. He said he had fallen down and broken it. I murmured that he had a lot of use of it, and I supposed that in the old days he would have had it in a sling. He didn't answer, and I felt that I probably wasn't supposed to be chatting away.

Then we went into the operating room and I scooted over onto the table, and my right arm, with the bottle hanging over it, was laid out upon a leaf at right angles to the table. There was a big light over me. Then a nurse came in and said, "Dr. Banks is in the hospital. He's changing his clothes now." Dr. Murphy said, "Then we can go ahead." I was out like a light, so I didn't get to see Dr. Murphy put the pentothal in, and I still have not the slightest idea how it was done.

The next thing I knew I was on the cart in the recovery room, and a nurse was by my side. "It was benign, wasn't it?" I asked her, and she said, "Yes, it was benign." Some while later, by myself, I suddenly began to shake all over. It was just as if I was very cold, and yet I wasn't cold at all. Another thing I was aware of, was that to my surprise and annoyance the incision hurt. It didn't hurt a great deal, but I somehow hadn't expected it to hurt at all. I could tell that it was a single narrow cut, about three inches long.

The shaking stopped as suddenly as it had started. Then a woman in the room began whining and moaning, and a nurse told me she was taking me back to my ward. I thought she was taking me away so I wouldn't have to listen to the other woman, and I was glad.

But on the elevator, I seemed to leave my stomach a floor behind. I told the nurse, "I'm going to be sick," and she answered very repressively, "Don't you dare. Put your head on one side and breathe deeply." So I did and I wasn't--not until I got back into the realm of suitable containers.

Back in the ward, I found Mrs. Watson dressed and starting to leave. "Mrs. Watson, it was benign!" I said. The nurse looked at me, and gave an astonished laugh. "My goodness! I didn't expect you to remember that!" Then I was astonished. How could I have forgotten something of such importance to me?

The nurse then said, "Your husband will be here in a minute." I asked her what time it was, and she said 10:30, and I said, "He won't be here for half an hour, then. I told him I wouldn't be back in the ward before 11." Just then I saw Buz's face looming out of the mist, and I said, very enthusiastically, "There's my sweetie!"

Buz didn't stay long, and I spent the rest of the day sleeping and vomiting alternately. The vomiting didn't bother me much, as the yellow stuff neither burnt nor tasted very bad, but as I couldn't hold anything at all down until around sixthirty or seven, I felt very weak.

That evening Buz came and told me that I could go home. "You can take me home tomorrow," I said. Buz was rather unhappy about it, because it meant taking another day off work, but I refused to go home before the next day. Apparently it's unusual for people not to go home when the hospital will let them, because two or three nurses and an intern asked me if I knew that Dr. Banks said I could go home. And it wasn't that they needed my bed, because Mrs. Watson's was still empty.

Mrs. Sullivan's lumps were benign, too. We compared notes. She didn't remember her trip downstairs, but the pentothal didn't make her sick. She had two bottles of saline and glucose solution, whereas I had only one.

The next morning I enjoyed my breakfast. Then Buz came for me and I got dressed. As we left, Dr. Ainsworth (the intern who had asked me if I knew I could go home), Dr. Banks, and Dr. Schultz (the intern who had examined me) were lined up at the door of the ward, and it was just like going down a reception line, only in reverse.

It was a beautiful day, and I felt very contented. This experience has been good for me. Women are supposed to check their breasts for lumps quite often....But I never did. I felt that if I had a malignant lump I would as soon not know about it, that I would rather be dead than mutilated. But I don't feel that way now. Having looked at the whole thing close up, I am sure now that had I had to go through the rest of my life like a left-handed Amazon, I would still be a happy wife, and the world would still be the beautiful and interesting place that it is now. Elinor

as stifled by Wally Wastebasket Weber

AVRAM DAVIDSON SUSPECTS SMITH ADDRESS IS FISHY Libertad 13, Amecameca,
Very Estimated Senores, -as, y -itas, Mexico Dec. 6/63

Thanks for free copy of CRY 171, an auspicious (or is it suspicious?) number. I'll do my best to acknowledge it although there is a woman and also a little boy making noise and ruccus (sp.?) at the other end of the hacienda sofa. The latter just celebrated his 1st birthday a short while ago by coming down with the measles on top of an allergy he'd earlier come down with, but is better now of both. He has blond hair and brown eyes and a nubbin nose and broad hands and feet and a grin of the kind called infectious, and his name may be known to one or two readers of CRY as Ethan Michael Anders Davidson (proud beam).

Science Fiction Reference by Wally (congratulations!) Weber was as full of meat as an egg. Try the cider at The Tiger pub near the Tower, Wally. Queen Elizabeth (the one who never was pregnant) drank there. So did I.

Grania and I are appreciative of Elinor's tip-off for Georgette Heyer and we will try to bespeak copies. We are both Jane Austen buffs and my occasional crie du coeur is, O would that Jane Austen had written sixty books and Anthony Trollope, six!

A belate copy of FANAC (some may call that a tautology, but being a friend to Mr. W. Breen, ahem) claims that the World Con is to be holden in Okland (oops, Oakland). Gin the thing be true? If so, I am conglobulated and flummoxed. I had the notion that a San Francisco Convention would occur in San Francisco. This is like holding a NYCon in Newark. Much as I esteem the Hon, the Committee, does anyone want to post o'er land and ocean without rest in order to visit, gawdelpus, Oakland? Really, was there not one hotel in all of SanFran...?

Shudder. Buz's article on property rights and civil rights overlooks one point. If the State, Nation, Society, or Government can conscript a man's body and jeopardize his life, then, Sir, there is nothing which it cannot do to or with his or anyone else's property.

Re Don Franson and Norm Clarke (a pseudonym of Sir Wilbur Grenfell) and COTR's resembling "The Vizigraph," "The Ether Vibrates" and "The Reader Speaks", re-- I would mention "The Aeryie" except that I don't know how to spell it and also there's almost no resemblance now that I come to mention it, he heh.

Attention Mae Surtees Strelkov: (a) Any kin to Famous Surtees who did Sporting Prints? (b) As a new resident of Mexico (actually a tourist) I would admire to know your reasons for admiring Mexico and its president.

And Don Franson again--speaking of Old Time Fans, I got a letter lately from Rosco Wright, wanting to know if I was the Avram Davidson he knew at Field Medical School in Camp Pendleton during WW II. I was. Dennis Lien; Dennis Lien wrote me a 53 pp letter with a self-portrait, but I lost it.

Grania says, "You can tell them we're expecting another." Who said, "So what?" I pardon that man. Nominations for names can now be entered. Who said, "Another what?"

Ah, cummon now, Sgt. R. F. Smith -- bad enough it was when you tried to con us into believing you were in something called "Amenities Company," but--COD Sgts' Mess? Really now. What next? Haddock Corporals? PLAICE Privates? SALMON Lieutenants? Tut tut tut. ...Not only were there Phoenicians in Mexico, Bob, there still are. I buy my eggs from one.

Grania says, "Why is CRY fastened for the mails with staples thick enough to build a house and fastened for reading with staples thin enough for trolley transfers?" A good question. #171 came apart in a day.

Enter James R. (Chief RedFeather) Sieger, the man with the map-coordinate address. Jim, you are not trying to tell me that King Farouk moved to Mexico?

Hey, maybe my egg man is not a Lebanese after all, but an Eggypitian? A hoo ha haw! As for our making the trip in a yacht stuffed with whiskey, poor King F. was noted for never drinking alcohol in public, and this may have been his 1st chance to take a shot of the substance without having to duck into the mens room. We made the trip in a 54 Ford station wagon stuffed with ourselves, our baggage, a dog, and two cats; and it was hideous beyond measure. The car kept busting down and we gave it away on the streets of Laredo to a bearded hitchhiker who somehow managed to get it to NYC where it busted down again. We have offered it to Calvin W. Demmon, whose comment was, "It's a good car, only it doesn't run." As to how beard hairs can tie themselves in knots, they can't. They are tied in knots by the zoogles. Grania will tell you alllll about the zoogles. Anyway how come you have a beard if you are an Indian? and don't reply with, "How."

Thank you, Nathan A. Bucklin, for counting the words in all the SF magazines for me, and for acknowledging that the Quality of A Certain One "is high..." And thank you, too, for WANTing me. Here I am, I'm yours.

Well, dear friends, it is 10:20 p m and in Amecameca that is late. We are going to make our daily or rather nightly pot of tea and go drink tea in bed. I am finishing Pepys again and Grania is beginning Augur's "Zapotec." And on this fascinating note I will close. Er... am I never to get that issue of CRY I missed? Love love love and love alone,

Din Sawsnig,

Avram

[Maybe I shouldn't drink cider at The Tiger pub until I'm older, Avram. If it was strong enough to keep Queen Elizabeth from becoming pregnant, I don't think I'm ready for it. How are their banana splits? --www]

GRANIA WANTS TO FEED A CARDINAL

Libertad 13, Amecameca, Mexico

Dear Cries & Congratulatory Weber!

Today Avram went to el mercado for fish & baking 'taters, & tangerines (which here are huge, juicy & ridiculously cheap -- & we got Roses in December, too -- yet it isn't a bit hot/humid -- but warm in daytime & cold at night), & what did he come home with, beaming & chuckling (no, not the municipal wicked woman) a beautiful cardinal (bird) with wings, long tail & cheeks of shiny jet black -- & breast, head & crest of brilliant red. Hoo haw -- a gorgeous thing & he can sing, too. Does anyone know about the care & feeding of cardinals?

Mae Strelkov: You're wasting your time directing hive ideas at such rugged individualists as Buz & Betty K. -- you ought to get in touch with such like-minded folk as Ray Nelson, Walter Breen, MZB, Ted White, & er, Kevin Langdon. These fen speak glowingly of "nests," "group or expansive love," etc. & it would probably be of interest to you to exchange ideas with some of these.

Congratulations Lupoffs -- if we haven't already!

Betty: I wish the cons were in July, too -- especially this year when I'll be giving birth in August & have to worry about a newborn baby at the con instead of just relaxing & having fun. In July, I could just be my "glowingly pregnant" self & wear a "Secundus Homunculus" name tag on my belly. Mand-Rice Davies fan clubs are fine by me, but I feel real hatred for the hypocrites who made Dr. Ward's death necessary.

By the way, I never mentioned it, but I was really gassed out of my mind to receive a Cry Letter-Hack card. When I first married Avram, I would say, "Well, I'm going to the movies this afternoon & you can invite some of those F-A-A-A-N-S (sneer)! And when any fannish types would drop in unexpectedly, I would hide in the bedroom -- furthermore, if Andy Main (who was staying with us at the time) would so much as mention that he wanted to ditto something, I would have hysterics. Well gradually I became accustomed, then fond, & by now I am the most avid fan that fandom has -- like I really, really love the stuff -- so a Cry Letterhack Card made me feel like I've arrived.

Well, thank you for your Cry & may we receive many more.

love

Grania

[When Buz learned you wanted to feed and care for a Cardinal, his first reaction was, "What will the Rabbi say?" Anyway congratulations and good wishes for your forthcoming blessed event. May you and Avram win a Hugo for the best issue of 1964. --www]

DENNIS LIEN PEERS THROUGH ROSEY GLASSES Box 23 Snarr, Moorhead State College,
Dear Eternal Triangle, Moorhead, Minnesota Christmas Day,
Let's consider CRY #171 from a new angle. 1963, Ho Ho Ho!

Er -- no -- it's hard to read upside down. Well, let's look at it through rose-colored glasses then. If you three editors would also don rose-colored glasses, we could contemplate CRY #171 as a quartet. Just the four of us. This would make for Four-Roses-Colored glasses, which is a nice trick when you can do it.

Those ATom figures look like they stepped right out of a hangover. Mine or yours?

I didn't comment on the CRY-into-snapzine suggestion last time largely because (1) shortness of last letter (2) didn't think you were serious. My God, were you? Ghastly -- may the Great Glaroon turn you off for such heretical thoughts.

So England ~~got stuck~~ is about to be honored with the Mastermind of the Mailbag, the Caliph of Cry, the Seer of Seattle? So maybe you think I'll congratulate you? Don't you know it's parasitical, maudlin, and old-fashioned to congratulate people?

Congratulations.

Norm Clarke: COTR resembles COTR. Accept no substitutes. TEV and TRS were close but not very. TEV is no more. TRS is no more. COTR is, more and more. Rejoice!

Harry Warner, Jr: When the ground's gotta freeze, and hasn't anything in it to freeze, what does it do? It gets frostrated, of course. What else? When you gotta freeze, you gotta freeze. Relieve it or rot, as Mr. Ripley used to say...

Hey, guys, why did you leave 95% of page 21 blank? Was it an editorial oversight, or -- gasp -- that must be it! Franson has struck again! Another identity gone forever! I wonder who he -- choke -- was. All that's left of him now is a blank CRY-hack card and a Wally Weber Discon badge that survived the disintegration into atoms, and a few trunks of CRYs and clothes moldering in some railway depot somewhere.

Dick Lupoff: OK, so comic books don't got no literary value, nohow. So what else is new? Comic book fandom is sick? Hell, what isn't. "Sick" is the going thing, man. "Togetherness" is out, "sick" is in. What I mean is -- what do I mean? I don't know. But don't get narrow-minded about comics. If there's one thing I simply can't stand, it's intolerance...

Glaroondamnit, Weber, nobody's come out with a Frankensline doll! That's a Frankensline's monster doll! Frankensline was the Mad (plug) Scientist who built the monster in his spare time with ten thousand dollars which he turned into real estate or something like that. The monster was just a monster, 'cuz he never got a name. He was the first Nameless One (except maybe Cain's wife) and you be more polite to the charter members, you hear?

Mike Deckinger: I'm sure I can speak for all Burroughs fandom when I say we vastly appreciate your generous concession to us in giving Krenkel a Hugo.

"Savage Pellucidar" likely won't win -- it isn't good enough, I'll admit. Let's see some of the manuscripts Canaveral has scheduled for the spring of '64 -- what about it, Mr. Lupoff? Any Hugo possibles there?

Rob Williams: Don't blame Tarzan too much. It's heredity. Tarzan, being a human being by way of his mother and father, just naturally had to become mean,

cruel, and uncaring. If he'd been 100% ape, instead of merely one by environment, he would have been kinder. Bad blood -- it'll do it all the time. Anyway, Tarzan grew up on the wrong side of the tracks. Water-buffalo tracks, of course.

James Seiger: Beard hairs are knotted by the gremlins when you sleep, and if you untie one, you doom yourself to death within six months. Since your letter was dated September 28, live it up while you can.

Nathan A. Bucklin: I want Avram, too... Elinor wants Avram... we all want Avram. And who do we get? The University of Washington library! Why I'll bet it doesn't even have a beard...

Being now jaded and tired, consider me as having returned to the columns and Such Rot.

"Science Fiction Reference" -- some of today's fictional spaceships do have bathrooms on them, you know. See Wilson Tucker's To the Tombaugh Station, for example, in which an especially hilarious murder is committed by a unique weapon -- a rigged toilet stool. How's that for Sense of Wonder? Moral: "Never flush in a vacuum."

Hwyl: How'd an ugly, witch begotten villain like Caliban ever wind up with Cleopatra, Queen of Egypt? Strange are the ways of Hollywood...

CRY of the heart was beautiful. Let us all hope Avram believes in Tinker Bell.

"Flight of Fancy" was the high point of the issue. Frankly (be this a heretical admission?) I had not previously gone ape over John Berry's columns, but this changed all that. Maybe George's idea would solve Mae's problem of transportation to the U.S.?

WJBEAAB: Muddy Cliff nest anyHow penurier? ((Same to you, fella. --FMB))

The Great Glaroon Bless and Keep You,

Dennis Lien

/Dennis, why did you change the typeface on your handwriting partway through your letter? --www/

MAE SURTEES STRELKOV FINDS HORNETS IN HIVE
Dear Individualistic Cryers:

Las Barrancas, Ascochinga, Cordoba,
Argentina January 2, 1964

I seem to have stirred up a hornets' nest, and I mistook you for just another happy hive of b---s! Oh, well, I apologize. Nobody wanted to delete your individualities or turn you into a bunch of drones. Sex is fun -- who said it isn't? Shouldn't take me literally. Though I suppose it's our heritage to be literal... America (at least the America that produced my grandparents) is full of folk who take even their Bibles literally, as Gospel Truth.

But brothers and sisters, learn to take me figuratively, or I shall hoist the white flag of truce in the form of a blank sheet of letter-paper next time I risk writing to all you high I.Q.'s.

My thanks to you who remained neutral! Those who don't give a damn about hive-psychology are so wise! Well-balanced, and not even worried about whether their individualities are in danger or not. I'll let you into a secret... reason I care about gestalts is I'm so incomplete myself. I'm just a composite of all the people I've ever admired and copied, and I wouldn't recognize my own face if I met it on the street. I'd run away, maybe, in horror.

I'll just say briefly, I was an awful dumbcluck for an awful lot of years, and the only reason I have a slightly larger vocabulary than I used to, is I keep a dictionary handy and look up all the words I don't know, in every new book I come across. I do need people, to admire, enjoy and learn from ... also to love, and/or hate. And I still believe the Hive idea is good. But not the picture of it you seem to conjure in your replies.

Don Franson, Mae Surtees Strelkov is touched, by your indignation! That's all. As for being touched in the head as well, why of course! Didn't you know? It's fun! As for being social, social people are so boring I could gag. I wasn't defending social high jinks -- everybody shouting together at a cocktail, like a senseless babble of jungle apes! I didn't mean that, heaven help us. I meant,

simply, such phenomena as CRY. A sign of what the future might -- just might -- be like. If A-bombs don't dissolve us all before, which I refuse to believe. "Have Faith" as the gospellers all cry. (Did you know my folks were China missionaries? Explains everything, don't you agree?)

Yes, Sgt. Smith, CRY is about the only fanzine I've seen so-far, true. I am reluctant to give all my heart, and unable to give less than all, so I hesitate to go all over, with new mags or zines... About CRY (and all you amazing Cryers,) I'm as crazy as though I were a visitor from Mars, meeting Earthlings for the first time. I like your outspokenness. Here, nobody shoots their mouths off.

Betty K. -- Oh, Lord, how to answer all your challenges in three short words? Fear of solitude? Yes, I plead guilty... if I couldn't enjoy the whole wide world full of people ... and my own family in the bargain (Vadim, our seven kids, and my future daughter-in-law, who lives in B.A. and collects my letters, silly girl), I'd shoot myself. I do not find my own company entertaining. Meditation and silent prayer scare me stiff, alas. Books, at least, I simply have to have, when for any reason I'm alone. Vadim, my husband, is the same ... finds everybody fascinating, even the folk who enrage us with their views. Maybe it's because Vadim grew up in China too, and spoke the language even better than me.

Okay, me-me-and-god-only is good, as you say, if one has it in one to take a big dose of God. I believe in a Creator, even when my faith falters and I doubt He can exist. But even thinking about Him sends me into a blue funk. Remember -- my missionary upbringing spread God on thick! I was buried beneath the weight of this Gothic deity...

About the Chinese, I shall say no more. Those of you who were born in, and grew up in, China, will know what I mean. Even my own kids jeer at me everytime I praise the Chinese. South Americans that my kids are, they simply do not understand! Nor do I argue.

But those were damn good answers, anyway, Betty K! I am awed!

Oh, dear, Roy Tackett finds my "hope" sickening. Maybe so would I, if I lived in a crowded city, with people rushing around on every hand. If the population explosion continues, we really will create hell on Earth. (I'm embarrassed to have seven, though crazy over all seven of them. But I do beg the kids not to have more than two each. I realize now -- by watching the expanding miseries of the natives here -- that any population explosion is a mistake. Especially when unmarried, uneducated, unfed, homeless women are forced to bear babies 'every seven months' as the free hospitals complain, to machos they never see again. That's so tragic, I'd better change the subject.)

Harry Warner: you speak of Sturgeon's books, and I must say that that sort of gestalt -- too -- is unattractive. Creepy. An idiot genius of a baby; a girl who teleports; and ... but I forget, now, details. His gestalts were pitiful, in the sense that each separate member was so incomplete apart from the whole. What I had in mind was that each fellow human would be individual and whole, yet enriched by a "party-line hookup" -- to borrow Betty's term for CRY. As I've said, I feel myself a composite of all the friends I've ever thought the world of. Since getting into correspondence with Betty, I begin to feel like her too, somewhat (seeing things afresh through her eyes), and I hope she won't mind. I'm not aware that I depleted my friends, ever, by borrowing to the best of my ability all the qualities in them that I most admired. I have too much respect for the group intelligence of mankind to do my own thinking.

Want to hear the latest about U F O's? Right after that truckdriver ran away, saucers started making nightly visits to a point north of us. I glimpsed one. At first I thought it was the light of some car coming from above. Then the darn flying saucer with its "landing light" (I presume it was), swooped low, flying horizontally and at such a speed it was gone before my wits could be gathered together, disappearing about where there is a queer "Cueva de los tigres", so deep and dark, local yokels have never dared enter.

Now don't ask me to explore that cave. I don't dare. The boys say they will, yet...

Simultaneously, Robert (our 21-year-old, working below) reported a fellow at his office was seeing the saucers regularly, manoeuvring by night over the hills and even over Caroya town. (That's an old wine-producing settlement. What would saucers want there????)

Now for another curious item. Vadim came back from Cordoba, some weeks ago, saying, "Oh, there's some office of space-fans welcoming Galactics in Cordoba."

"Space-fans!" I mumbled absentmindedly. "How boring." (I was reading some book or other.)

Most offended, Vadim left me uninformed of further details. He detests me when I'm deep in a book ... I read greedily, gobbling! So now, New Year's Eve he starts telling friends about it, and they're agog. Me, too! But he's reluctant to discuss it with me. Still sore! I crawl back to him humbly and beg details. It costs great effort to extract any, but here is what I've managed to obtain from him so far, by humbling myself...

The office has a name something like "Galactic Brotherhood -- Welcome to Spacelings!" Its window is full of clippings of sightings, in all languages, from papers all over the world. There are some models of flying saucers, and a painting of a Galactic in a spacesuit. It sounded so phony to me, I'm afraid it didn't register in my head at first, and that's why Vadim was sore at me for not even assimilating the story when he first brought home the news. Since then he's passed the place twice, and the office is always closed.

Well ... fans are zany folk, aren't we! There are a lot of slimy products of evolution that on Earth, at least, fortunately, aren't intelligent. But some Galactic forms might be, as Heinlein used to postulate (Puppet Masters). I'd be inclined to caution, after all, in visiting a queer office like that "Galactic Brotherhood" joint, I guess. But still, I'm driving into Cordoba next time with V. to have a look. (Fly will walk into Spider's den!)

Nathan Bucklin: - Do tell! Rosario's bigger? Don't tell that to the Cordobes! They'll lynch you! Lucky man, visiting famed Bariloche. Some of us have been that far (two boys; and Vadim was even to Santa Cruz), but not I. However we do recall the Chilean fjords and Magellanes Strait. If you were in Bariloche, you will recall Lago Mascaradi. Know why that name? It's after the Jesuit who sought Linlin for years, and was murdered when he nearly reached it (maybe). He wrote letters in all languages to the strange, blond folk there, sending same by native messengers, but the strangers never answered. Maybe they didn't know the languages. That's what Mascaradi feared... I came across evidence in a book of old Jesuit letters, that a governor pal of theirs was inside Linlin once, and gave them secret directions on how to reach it finally. (By sea. Immediately thereafter, the Order did try the sea route, around 1740!) Did you know that Viruloche is the right spelling for Bariloche? Marvelous native tribe used to live there by that name, with a glamorous queen who's truly legendary! She was going to lead Father Mascaradi to Linlin -- promised him to do so! Never did. Betrayed him, instead, I suspect. All very curious, but don't ask me for any opinions here.

One last gem, and I close shamefacedly. Viracocha, Bochica (I spelt it wrong last time), and your mysterious Quetzacoatl, have another "civilizing" pal, down here. Pay Zume of the Guaranies, whom the Jesuits Church mistook for the Apostle Thomas, and the research I've since done on his fossilized footprints, and on the lawsuits proving the Church got to America before the Spanish King's men, is leading me into dark byways, the more I ^{delve}! I am also discovering gory, scary details about a mysterious, archaic Andean race (the Calchaquies, supposedly "devil-worshippers" with a dragon god), whose valley was inhabited 6,000 years B.C. already, by hunters and primitive agriculturalists. The Calchaquies refused to be converted, and died to the last man, woman and child. And what was it conquered this brave, brilliant tribe, after 150 years of struggle against Spain? An odd, marble Virgin (now called La Virgen del Valle), of Catamarca, and already I

could write a whole book just about her. Her unknown origin, her hypnotic hold on the natives, etc. This statue is the queerest mystery of all!

Dr. Antonio Zupla scares me. "May I ask of which country comes Mae Strelkov from?" Indeed. Would he be a member of the secret police of some far planet, masquerading as a Spaniard, maybe? May I ask of which planet comes Dr. Antonio Dupla?

In closing, WWW, Betty is not nosey. Just interested in everyone and everything. That's bad?

Ye Ende...

Mae.

P.S. (I've just developed glop! It's an allergy. To fellow-fans!)
[First Betty is nosey, and now you are gloppy. Sometimes the things we letter column editors have to deal with shrivel the imagination. --www]

JOHN-HENRI HOLMBERG HAS BEEN THINKING Norrskogsvägen 8, Stockholm K, SWEDEN
Dear Box 92, January 7, 1964

You please send me CRY and I'll send you anything. Might even send you money. And trades or LOC:s. OR ALL, if nothing else'll work. I'm desperate. I WANT CRY. Help me, please... Especially me wanna get #170, 'cause that's the one I read 'bout in FFF (Fantasy Fiction Field).

Then, dear Box 92, I've got a question, over which I've been thinking ever since I was a little neo; are you male or female?

Good-bye.

John-Henri Holmberg

[Why do you want to know? Are your intentions honorable? --www]

TERENCE A. BULL IS OFF 60, Manfield Road, Northampton, England
Hail Cry, 30th of December

O.K. off we go on Cry 171. ATom is as usual cool, clean, clear and, er cute (well alliteration such as this is hard to find).

On, on, to Georgette Heyer. Well I wouldn't have given Heyer such a rosy review. Heyer, while she often writes about the same class of people that Austen does i.e. the rural gentry, often allows herself really high society with unmarried peers, visits to the court of the Sol Rei. In many of the books I've read she's gone in for the romantic adventure stuff, oh toned down by the deprecation of the young-middleaged peer, gent who the heroine marries ---too or two stock characters. An Austen who could write such an anti-romantic novel as Northanger Abbey surely can't be compared with a workmanlike romantic novelist which is all Austen is. If you like historical novels, which I do, try Alfred Duggan.

Flight of Fancy was, as is normal for Berry, excellent fannish material, light as a souffle and twice as edible.

On to the heart of Cry. Ah Mae Strelkov and UFO's, the liveliest part of the LC. So Argentina has a new president I haven't kept pace with events. Is he a stooge for that bewildered military junta that imprisoned Frondizi or have they allowed further elections with no Peronists standing?

In Betty Kujawa's letter, talking about the Press's excreta, we mustn't forget that any market was created by the Press Barons. Their cry of "we only give the public what it wants" just won't do. Working-class men were reading serious minded political and social reform newspapers long before sensationalism was even thought of and education was far more rudimentary than today. The Newspapers created "human interest" stories and found that the uneducated public liked reading about sensational happenings. They created the market and since then have been sliding down the path of literacy taking the standards of the country with them. A child who only sees sensational magazines at home is naturally going to buy these papers when he grows up. If this was the U.S.S.R. it would be called indoctrination.

Seems from all comments "Gestalts" are definately out amongst individualistic fans. (Same here.) How come More Than Human was so well received?

Krenkel is a GOOD artist and Savage Pellucidar at least didn't suffer as

Vanguard did, ... er how did Vanguard suffer?

Aha Nathan A. Bucklin with some fascinating facts about the cost of wordage in magazines. Tut Science Fantasy giving the least value for money.....two minutes silence for Nova.....

Now the roll of Honour, now how many fans haven't written in to Cry?

farewells from a moronic neofan,

Terry Bull

[Len Moffatt is the only fan who hasn't written in to Cry. He just kept smiling. --www]

GEORGE NIMS RAYBIN LOAFS AT SEA

R.M.S. Maasdam

Dear Cry-ites,

Dec. 30, 1963

It took a free period on my cruise to finally find time to sit and read CRY 171. May I add my voice to the multitude asking that CRY be kept just as it is! The uniqueness of CRY fills a niche in fandom that would be left hollow if CRY were to be changed.

I am now loafing in the sun between Puerto Rico and Nassau (Bahamas) while New York is freezing with 27° and snow. The heat and sun make me so lethargic that I just sit and relax, too lazy to engage in any activity except reading and writing. And even that takes extraordinary persistence. I can understand why people in the tropics often become beachcombers. The climate saps all ambition.

Again, keep up the good work on Cry and please, please, please don't change it.

Sincerely yours,

George Nims Raybin

[Okay, we'll have the Cone Company save the stencils for this issue, and we'll just multigraph new headings on the cover each issue. By the way, how come nobody in the States writes to CRY anymore? Avram, Grania, Mae, John-Henri, and Terry are outside the country. Dennis Lien isn't even in the same world. I thought I could depend on you, but now I find you are out to sea. Is there something I should know? --www]

ELLA PARKER HAS AGED 43, Wm. Dunbar House, Albert Road, London, N.W.6.

Dear CRYslaves: ENGLAND

December 16th

Hell, it's been simply ages since I last wrote a LoC to you. I suspect I may have forgotten how.

Should I congratulate WWW on winning TAFF? I suppose I should. That isn't meant to be as grudging as it sounds, it's just that as I write I'm trying to figure out how he did it. At last I get the chance to pay him for his SCoAW crack, and pay him I will!

I am on the verge of living through my first full winter in the new flat. One flaw has already shown its face; the central heating. When we first moved here the radiator in the living room emitted an awful ear-splitting whistle. Council officials came round in answer, they said, to many complaints. They left with promises that it would be seen to before time to use it again came round. That time is with us....and so is the whistle. It is perfectly true that you can get used to anything if it goes on for long enough. I sometimes have to listen real close before I can tell if the whistle is on or off. Then, too, they have the charming practice of shutting it off some nights, which means you come into a cold room first thing in the morning. This isn't a regular thing and makes for uncertainty. Another uncertain factor, is the lift working today? As I live on the 7th floor this is important. Apart from these trivialities, we are enjoying our new home.

"What about some comments on CRY"? CRY? Oh, CRY! I hope you'll forgive me if I just kinda ignore all the others and deal only with the last two issues.

I was aghast to read of your plans to make CRY other than what it is. While I may shudder at thoughts of being a member of a 'hive', I do have an affectionate regard for CRY and the special atmosphere it seems to generate. CRY reminds me,

more than anything else, of a room party at a convention. You can wander in and join the talk, take off to see what's doing elsewhere, and come back to pick up practically where you left off, if you wish, or take up an entirely new conversation. CRY has a unique personality; it would be a crime to try and change it.

I always enjoy ConReports written by WWW. Maybe it's because he doesn't drink and so manages to keep a clear head throughout the proceedings, I don't know. Does Wally ever have a clear head?

If/when we get the bid for '65 in London the Worldcon will be held on August Bank Holiday; that is the first weekend (first Monday, actually) in August. As you may have heard, we went to the Bull, in Peterborough last year. At the closing session we were stunned, pleased, but stunned, to hear that the management were prepared to have us again next (this year, by the time you publish).

We have so many children attending our cons now that we are thinking of mounting a 'Junior Con' for them. Jeeves brings one child, Bulmers have 3, Shorrocks bring 2 - an elder daughter to babysit with the youngest, Slater brings his daughter, H. Harrison brings 2 and when next we see him at one, Joe Patrizio - remember him? - will be bringing one, unless they've had another in the meantime. Usually it can be arranged for the hotel's chambermaids to act as 'sitters' while the parents attend evening sessions. During the day, the children are brought into the hall and taken out again by the parents if they become too restless or noisy. There hasn't been any real problem as yet.

Buz: Of course, the prevailing attitude these days is to give as little work for as much money as possible, without actually putting their jobs in jeopardy. The subject of unions is a sore one with me. I've had long arguments with ATOM on that score and now we've agreed to disagree.

Now I come, with trepidation, to WWW's own province in CRY: CotRs. Ethel Lindsay (there's another?): I remember one Friday night up here, Ted Tubbs, Charles Smith and I were having a discussion/argument on the subject of loneliness. We had seen a programme on TV when some lonely people were interviewed. None of them were old people living alone with no contacts in the outside world; neither were they all very young in a large city for the first time in their lives. The one thing they had in common was that they were lonely. Oddly enough none of them mentioned being bored, though I should imagine the two go hand in hand. I couldn't understand why so many folk dreaded solitude. I suppose it is mainly a matter of temperament?

Bob Lichtman: About Dr. Ward: He needn't have died if Profumo hadn't lied when he did about their position in Parliament. Profumo was asked in the House about Keeler and he stood up in public and denied it. When he realised the amount of much-raking there was going on he knew he couldn't get away with it for long because of the letter he'd written to Keeler, so belatedly, he admitted the association. I believe that if he had admitted right from the start that he knew her, none of this would have reached the lengths that it did. So alright, the papers would have gone to town on him and Keeler - they did anyway - but I don't think as many people as were would have been dragged into the limelight. Of course, the unforgivable crime was being found out, not what went on. Hell, I'd like to know what there is about me that makes you think I need Dr. Ward to make my contacts for me? You haven't even met me; on what do you base your remarks?

Paul Williams: I don't believe one can get back into fandom, especially if one has left it for any length of time. I know that sometimes I have tried to get Bill (W. F.) Temple interested again. He came to a couple of meetings at the Globe and mentioned that standing there listening to all the same old arguments being fiercely disputed as urgently as if they were new and original, just took the heart right out of him so that he couldn't beat up the drive or the urge to become closely involved all over again. If I came back to fandom after an absence of some years to find that the Busbys, Weber, Harry Warner, Betty Kujawa etc. had long gone, I don't think I'd be bothered either. Fandom is a very personal thing; you make your own, really. You have your own circle - not necessarily a local one - plus some with whom you maintain a desultory correspondence. With your own circle

missing, where's the fun? Those in the full flush of their fannish life on your return will probably be the new, younger fen with whom you'd have little but SF in common.

Harry Warner: We are a couple of old crocks, aren't we? Not so very long ago I used to stay up all night at conventions; not now though. It may be 3-4 before I hit the sack, but hit it I make sure I do. ConComs who programme for the early morning are the bane of my life. I'm never at my best in the early morning; I'm not really prepared to face life until I've had a couple of cups of tea, a cigarette and read the paper. Anyone who stays here and falls in with this arrangement will always be welcome (listening Weber?). If I had the choice I would work nights (no cracks out there!) and could then retire to bed when the rest of the world is setting about its business.

Well, that seems to dispose of CRY #170. While I'm at it how about #171? Now where did I....whoinhell has got...where's CRY #171???? I had it a minnutago. I might have guessed, your other reader in this house had it! Just for a second there I thought I'd imagined its arrival.

ATom's cartoons are marvellous, aren't they? The beauty of them is that any caption he chooses to put to them seems to fit what they are doing/saying. It makes a luvverly plug for the LonCon in '65. I hope your readers are an obedient bunch and will come over to see us all. The more the merrier.

Elinor's column reads more and more like a natter-type Editorial. This I like because she writes as if you were sitting in her living room listening to her talk. If this column ever disappears from CRY I'll....I'll cancel my sub, that's what I'll do.

Buz: Yes, Wally did win TAFF, didn't he? Routed the opposition too. Fred doesn't know whether to stay home and meet the man, or take to the hills until he's gone back home. Honest, it wasn't anything I said.

Honest to Gawd I'm getting a bit choked on all these talks, articles and TV programmes on the coloured question. I began by being real interested and noted all that was being said and written on the subject. Now I can hardly pick up a paper, fanzine, or turn on the TV without there's someone beating the same old theme out again. I appreciate how serious it all is. Yes, Betty, I do feel for them and I'd like for it all to be settled so they can vote, get good jobs and live happy and equitable lives with the rest of us. But, is all this talk in the papers doing much towards bringing that day nearer? Why don't we just ignore their colour and accept them as members of the human race?

Eeech! CotRs again. "A telegram that really isn't anonymous once you know who sent it"? You sound like Ian McAulay (remember him? He's married now and a proud dad!) who signs anonymous letters! No, I don't know who sent it either.

Is Mae S. Strelkov writing with her typewriter in her cheek when she mentions UFOs? I suspect she is. Nothing personal in this, Mae, but I hate the sound of these countries where one has to carry an Identity Card around. It was bad enough during the war. I can always see as the next logical step to that kind of thing, the insertion of a 'fix' into the brain on birth, so that the authorities can tell at any given time where one is. To be stopped in the street for no good reason and asked to produce proof of identity is shocking. It is only done here when the Police are looking for someone who might bear some resemblance to you. After midnight they can stop you, if you are carrying a case or a package and ask you to open it for inspection. This in case you have been breaking and entering for the purposes of theft, but to stop and ask for proof of who you are, no. Your letters make for fascinating reading; I hope you manage to send them to CRY regularly.

Don Franson: I too dislike the idea of fanzines lying mouldering in a library, the more so if it's a non-fan library. I resent like hell having to run off a copy of anything I publish for the British Museum where, presumably, it lies unread and forgotten.

Well, that's all I can drive myself to this time. By the time you get this

Xmas will be over, as will New Years Day. That makes this election year for you people, doesn't it? Do you think Johnson will make it for a term in his own right? I regret the death of Kennedy more than I can say, but I don't want to write about it, it is still too close. The might have been.

'Bye for now. Nice to be back with you all.

As ever, yours.

Ella

SCoaW(Certified).

[Fred is considering taking to the hills? I was depending on him for protection. I should have realized he is only mortal. Where are the hills, by the way? If I can't avail myself of Fred's help, perhaps I can make use of his knowledge of hiding places. He must have some well developed survival trait to have allowed him to live as long as he has in his, er, environment. --www]

CHARLES E. SMITH IMPRESSED BY ELLA

61, The Avenue, Ealing W.13, London,

Dear CRYters,

England.

Jan. 1st. 1964.

First of all, let me add my congratulations to Wally for winning Taff. I'm even getting to know something of your slight eccentricities by reading over past issues lent by a certain Miss Parker.

Actually this borrowing of the old Cry's from Ella came about this way: I came up to her place one Friday, a regular meeting day for fans of London, and I was greeted with the cry, "Guess who's won Taff?" So I looked suitably impressed and waited with baited breath for the answer. "Wally, Wally Weber." I waited a few seconds to allow the import of these words to sink in and then I said, "Who's Wally Weber?" This was a mistake; when she'd finished trying to make a wax impression of me in the brickwork of the wall - and though I say it myself, the place would look better for it - she suggested that I borrow some of her file of past Cry -oops, sorry - CRY's. I accepted her offer; anything was better than continuing the Eton Wall Game we had been playing.

Enjoyed Elinor's discussion of Shakespeare on TV. The thought of Julie Harris as Miranda rather makes me drool. Unfortunately we see very little of her over here; I presume she's doing mostly stage-work now. I believe, though, that a film called "The Haunting", starring Julie Harris is about to be released over here. I'm looking forward to this.

I have to admit that I usually find that most productions, especially Shakespeare, seem to lose much of their magic when they appear on the little screen. I suppose it's because viewing in your own home the mundane surroundings tend to detract. There's none of the excitement and sense of occasion that I get at the theatre. Even going to the cinema means a night out and this tends to add a little excitement. The only time I've really been excited by Shakespeare on the teli was when the B.B.C. produced a series called "An Age of Kings". It was treated as a serial and they took the plays right through from Richard II to Richard III in a series of an hour to and hour-and-a-half installments. Shylock may have been considered as a straight hiss-the-villain-type character by Elizabethan audiences but I'm not convinced Shakespeare intended him as such, not with that speech: "I am a Jew. Hath not a Jew eyes?" There's a great deal of sympathetic treatment for Shylock.

I see from the letter column that there's been some talk of turning CRY into a 6-page snapzine (whatever that is); it wouldn't have surprised me had CRY folded. I seem to have this sort of effect on fanzines that I like. Accident prone or something? Certainly with machines. I deliberately buy my machines, a bike and a typewriter recently, new as there should be less chance of them going wrong. Not a bit. The typewriter's been back twice and the bike three times. I've just spent the whole day mending a puncture. Every time I finished one, two more would sprout. I began to feel like a character out of the stories of the heroes of Ancient Greece. I mended seven in the end before giving up. They've found out

that I know that machines are planning to take over the world and they're out to get me before I can convince anyone of this. I'm not sure looking back, how the closing of fanzines fits into this; still give me time and I'll come up with some sort of unified field theory.

ATaff for Tom.

All the best,

Charlie

[Machines take over the world? Silly fan, whatever would make you think that?clik think that?clik think that?clik think that?clik thin-scrrrreeetch --www]

HARRY WARNER, JR. SNICKERS LIKE OLD TIMES 423 Summit Avenue, Hagerstown, Maryland
Dear Cry:

Elinor's remarks cause me to be glad that I didn't watch that television production of *The Tempest*, using instead the time to work on fan history. Caliban's island and fandom have a good bit in common, but fandom hasn't been tampered with very often by television directors. It is conceivable that the Miranda emphasized "new" in that line because of some vague notion that Shakespeare wanted to remind his audience that this scene was occurring somewhere in the general vicinity of the New World, but it's a doubtful way to vary the rhythm. I was going to say that putting so much emphasis on that famous speech of Prospero, by playing it up at the end, is a special kind of blunder, because part of the passage refers to the limitations of the theater for which Shakespeare wrote the play. Then it occurred to me that it was after all rather fitting for the television version, because television has much more severe limitations than those in the Globe. Shakespeare's audience saw things in three dimensions and they knew that real people were before them, not the twice-removed shadows of taped video transmissions. I'm saddened to see Elinor continuing to devote time to fake sciences like handwriting analysis and astrology when she could do important things like step up her fanac. I've never yet found a handwriting expert who could forge someone's handwriting convincingly after learning all about the individual's character, so I don't believe any of them can be trusted when they try to put the reverse process into operation.

John Berry made me snicker and smile all through *Flight of Fancy*, just like old times. Recent Berry humor has been subtler and the smiles have been up in the mind where they don't give the facial muscles exercise, but this piece brings us back into the world of *Retribution*.

Maybe I remembered what I wrote in that letter on October 20, when I heard of the President's assassination in November. I regret to say that my first reaction was not the conventional one of grief nor the primitive one of anger nor the cynical one of wondering what this would do to Goldwater's chances, but the fannish one. The fannish reaction consisted of going into a state of mental shock derived from this thought: "Suppose that a fan did it?" Texas fans have become such a legend in their own time that I couldn't drive away the premonition that one of those strange individuals had suddenly gone off the deep end.

Mae Strelkov may get clobbered over her flying saucer remarks as vigorously as she did over the hive matter. But in this case I'm inclined to be on her side. The persistence of legends or traditions on the same general theme in many parts of the world can mean that the original legend has been transmitted by traders and soldiers and such or it can mean that many similar causes have inspired similar legends. So I'm going to continue to believe in occasional visits from flying saucers and past contacts with men or semimen from space all over the world.

I really did read most of the list of Cry letterhacks, partly to test my ability to think of one specific fact about each of them. A few are completely unknown names to me. I can't think that I've forgotten such a fine name as L. Ron Foos. Can Don Franson, Wally Weber, and any other people involved be trusted about Himmel's first name? I've seen it spelled at least five different ways and I'd like to know which is correct so that I can get at least one thing right when I start writing about Los Angeles fandom in the fan history. Or when I continue writing

about it, rather, since I've already covered the first Pacificon, he said laconically.

Yrs., &c.,

Harry

[Your fears may have been realized, Harry. Betty Kujawa, at the end of her letter, pasted a short article from a magazine excerpting a part of a Lee Oswald letter, asking his mother to send him, "science fiction." He also asked for 1984. But Betty is optimistic. She says, "'science fiction' and '1984 by Wells' -- he can't be a fan--" Hope I haven't upset you with this, Harry. Heh, heh. --www]

BETTY KUJAWA WILL TAKE TO THE SKIES

2819 Caroline Street, South Bend 14,

Dear Winning Weber....

Indiana Saturday, Dec. 14, 1963

On December the 26th we fly to San Antonio, Texas for 10 days to 2 weeks of party-party and flying instructions for Betty(!). I have volunteered in case (and Ghod forbid) Gene ever becomes ill while flying I will be able to contact a tower and land our plane in a passable and non-destructive fashion. Was going to ask you and CRYfen for good wishes and prayers on my behalf but upon thinking it over it's better if you all pray for the Texans down below where I'm flying overright? Matter of fact I will be flying right over Austin; is Marion still there?

And speaking of that I've been getting snide and bitchy remarks about our visiting Texas at this time. Damned if I blame Texas or Texans for the assassination of President Kennedy. Damned, damned, damned. Wouldn't it be the ultimate of fuggheadedry for me to hold the act of a lone Marxist psychopath against, say, Marion Zimmer Bradley or Tom Armistead or Lloyd D. Broyles? In my opinion this terrible thing could have happened in So. Bend, Seattle, Chicago, Norfolk or even Blanchard, North Dakota. It only takes one nut with a gun. And so help me Ghod, Wally, no gun-laws will guarantee us protection against a real psycho who is determined to kill.

Republican though I may be, and a non-follower of JFKs ways of doing things (exception; civil rights) though I am, I am shaken deeply by the awful tragedy. That was my President....not only that, that was my cousin, and I rather object to the spilling of Kennedy blood, 50% of my own blood is Kennedy blood. Right now I couldn't be prouder of being an American woman, thanks to Jacqueline Kennedy.... a valliant, magnificent First Lady. And any who psneer and jeer at "class" or "breeding" or at "gentlewomen" can all go take a flying leap....Jackie is a truly fine example of what upbringing and breeding does perform.

Bill Mauldins cartoon (the Lincoln statue leaning forward head buried in hands in attitude of grief) was a perfect tribute.

And from the sublime to the ridiculous I do hope that you and especially Buz and any car-buffs around caught the Dec. 12th Mauldin cartoon. It showed 'Automobile Vallhalla'; on clouds the fine old long-gone classic cars, Stanley, Maxwell, Duesenberg, Pierce-Arrow, and my own beloved Cord all looking sad and wistful. The title was..."Not Studebaker!" As nice a R.I.P. as a car could hope for.

At one time Indiana was the automotive state of the entire nation (or world) ...thirty cities were manufacturing cars....over 200 makes or names of cars have been produced here....now the last has departed. Due to managerial concessions to labor demands during WW-2 (when all shrugged and felt that it was government money that was footing the costs so why not give 'em the moon...) Studie-automotive after the war didn't channel funds into new equipment, designs and the like....the gravy still was ladled out to the UAW workers. The Corporation found themselves with a car that cost them a kings ransom and with no profits coming back in. Ergo, finis for Studie cars.

The cut-back came. Only the men with real seniority were able to hold their jobs. Did you know that this present force consists of men with more than 18 years seniority? And that the average worker is age 55 to 58? I am hoping the government will use this opportunity to really try out some rehabilitation experiments.

Buz look, I'm sure there are many other fen like myself who are ignorant and would like enlightenment as to the Oriental Minority out all along the west coast. Just what prejudices are there in public and in private between Caucasians and Orientals out there?

Those 'we reserve the right to refuse service' signs here, in So. Bend, never were intended to exclude Negros. Such signs were aimed at drunks and hooligan types....actually in my city they were put up to exclude Irishmen!

Ah good! Mae has now told y'all about Linlin (pronounced; 'lean-lean'??)... interesting, no? Ah, we miss so much by being ignorant of the fascinating legends of South America, don't we?

Oh nuts to Don Franson, he beat me to it, darn him! Week or so before CRY arrived while washing my hair and mulling things over through the shampoo suds it came to me too that Eney indeed deserves a TAFF victory and I was wondering how many other fen thought as I.

Aaah, and here is Dr. Dupla being charmingly Latin! Matter of fact I haven't known many real Spanish Spaniards. And as to woman-dominated America and the like ...humph. Someday I hope to see women no longer second-class American citizens ...that day will be here when they are paid equal salaries as men for the same labor. This present inequality is most aggravating, and utterly unfair...comments?

Happy Holidays to you and the Busbys.

Have fun, kid....

Betty

[I think I can get used to equal rights for negroes and orientals and, maybe, even a Democrat or two, but I'll be damned if I could get used to equal rights for women. --www]

ART WILSON WILL INTERCEPT WEBER Air America, APO 152, San Francisco, Calif.
Vientiane, Kingdom of Louise, 1iere Decembre 1963 et Annee du Lapin, youall.
Dear CRYtypes -

Re: CRY No. 170 - noted that Copy deadline for No. 171 was Nov. 15th. Of course I received 170 on Nov. 22nd, but we're not going to quibble about that. Are we?

Wally's DISCON REPORT was nice. About Dick Lupoff's remark that people who take comic-books too seriously are sick, I was about to add that people who take anything too seriously are sick, but I shall not say it. For one thing, old Tarzan Sunday comics from circa 1935 are selling for \$75.00.

Page 11; SEND WEBER WEST? It's OK by me - I shall intercept him in Hongkong, but I really thought it would be closer to go widdershins from Seattle to London.

KEEN BLUE ~~BLIZZ~~ &c. from Buz; keep CRY the way it is (more or less) & start another one if you want variation. Strong Unions Dept: I agree with you. I used to think that Labor-Management relations were like a pendulum, but she's been over on Labor's side for quite awhile now, didn't it.

Harry Warner: If I ever retire from driving tin wind-machines, I would like nothing more than to own & run a used-book store. Whether I would like to own & run a used-bs in Hagerstown is of course another story.

Sra. Strelkov: Which part of China are you from? My wife was born in Harbin - her father's name was Krupnov. Thought you might have known them.

Yes, I saw a typically happy every-day street-scene in Hongkong just the other day. Two coolies were having an argument. After calling each other turtle-eggs & other esoteric Oriental courtesies, one whaled the other over the head with his carrying-stick & tookoff like a striped ape. I went back to reading Fantasy & Scientific Friction, a technical journal edited by one Avram Davidson.

But it is possible to have a fear of heights & still enjoy an airplane ride, since there is no connection with the ground & no sensation of height. I've managed to combine a fear of high places with airplanes for 21 years. I won't fly with amateurs though.

Roy Tackett: About Fair Gods et. al.; the Karens, a mountain tribe of Burma, once had a legend that a pale man would appear among them one day, bearing a book containing the Truth. What a setup for the missionaries. The Baptists got to them first. Now the whole tribe is Baptist, in a Buddhist-dominated country.

Madeleine Willis: I too would like to subscribe to Hyphen. Where formeth the waiting-line, & how many \$/pounds are involved?

Michael L. McQuown: "...if he wants to pimp, and do a few people a favour.... he (Ward) shouldn't have got tied up with the Russians, though...". Then you sign yourself "Misha" which aside from being a diminutive of Michael also means "Teddy-bear". In Russian.

Ave atque vaseline, youall -

Art Wilson

c/o CAT Kaitak Airport
Kowloon, Hongkong. BCC

[Whaled him over the head with his carrying-stick, did he? That's an Oriental courtesy I've never heard of before, but I'll bet it was effective, particularly if used on a turtle egg. --www]

PHIL HARRELL DOESN'T READ LAYOUT 2632 Vincent Ave., Norfolk, Virginia 23509

"Amen" to all Elinor said in "CRY of the heart" on page six. Only I must disagree on the second paragraph and first 4 lines of that paragraph. I usually find myself saying just those very things about CRY everytime I can work those flishenlugher staples out that you guys drive in with airhammers. "How B*E*A*U*T*I*F*U*L!!!" I'll think and immediately run thru it barefingered. Maybe not so elegantly laidout but it serves the purpose and hell who reads layout anyway? "How magnificently illustrated!" I'll think looking at the cover. "The perfect fanzine" I'll say clutching it closely to my heart.

I have just one threat to make, concerning turning CRY into a 6 page weekly snapzine. If you do that I'll move to Seattle to live for Keeps and bring all my uniques with me just for the hex of it. Then you'll see. I'll even get Don Franson to blank your CRY cards, then where would you be?

Let's ATOMize TAFF

ATOM FOR TAFF.

all best,

Phil

[You mean to say you open up your CRYs and read them? Dirty the pages with eye-tracks? What do you think we use those huge staples for? --www]

MIKE DECKINGER ENJOYED CHARACTERIZATION
Dear CRY,

14 Salem Court, Metuchen, New Jersey
12/11/63

I thought the best item in issue #171 was Don Franson's short story on pages 31-2. Unencumbered, as are most works of fiction, by plotline or superfluous wordage, it rightly concentrated on the characters alone, from Ackerman to Young. Fiction like this comes along all too infrequently, and thus its arrival is doubly welcome.

Your caption for ATOM's cover is all wrong. What these critters really are saying is: "I first saw the Willis baggage here, then when I checked on it later..."

Perhaps Norm Clarke is right and fandom is immortal. I'm inclined to pursue his line of reasoning regarding resurrection in fandom a bit further. Every 2,000 years Forry Ackerman descends from Fan Hill in a soiled bathrobe, carrying with him a mint set of the first ten issues of AMAZING, which are lovingly distributed to the curious multitude. These magazines immediately energize the latent fannish talents that time has driven into seclusion and before very long fanzines and letterhacks began to appear. This has already happened once and you can see what the results have been.

If an ape puts out an apa-zine, as Don Franson suggests, what would he call it? Gorilla my dreams?

I'm more than a little amazed to learn that Roy Tackett was cruising along at 130 mph. Tell me Roy, don't they have traffic cops in New Mexico? ((Yes. Fast ones. --FMB))

Sincerely,

Mike

[Gorilla my dreams -- that did it! I've been stretching out this letter column so my regular two pages would get squeezed out this issue, but after that one, Mike, I don't want any more to do with letters. I'll write my two pages any day rather than suffer through another one like (shudder) Gorilla my dreams. --www]

WE ALSO HEARD FROM:

NATHAN A. BUCKLIN threatens us with a long-term sub to his fanzine, STOPTHINK. RICK BROOKS says, "John Berry is the only writer of fan fiction that I have read that I consider worth reading." Wonder where he reads Berry fiction? Every word John writes for CRY is true. HARVEY INMAN notifies us FANTASY FICTION FIELD is folding, "for an indefinite period." RICHARD H. ENEY claims to have moved to G. H. SCITHERS, USA R&D Group, APO 757, New York, NY 09757, but we interpret this to actually be a change of address for GEORGE SCITHERS sent to us on an Eney-type postcard. DICK LUPOFF combats Mike Deckinger's anti-Burroughs remarks with an article pointing out that (1) 60% of Burroughs's fiction is science fiction, (2) Roy Krenkel won his Hugo in free competition, and (3) he doubts that Mike has even read "Savage Pellucidar." Dick sent the same article to Twilight Zine and Yandro; perhaps you can read it there. JAMES SIEGER thinks our bi-monthly schedule kills off some of the spontaneity of the letters. W. J. JENKINS complains about "Lichald Rupoff." He say, "Bad enuff torking Talzan tork without doing it in Clazy Bloken Japanese -- tho Erogawa Lice-a-Bullows velly fine Tokio Lighter." ROB WILLIAMS hopes Avram is, "hard at work on 'Son of CotR #2.'" J. K. KLEIN hopes to have the next Convention Annual out sometime in April or May. BILL GLASS was suckered into subbing to CRY by an ad in the Discon booklet and some fan named Nate Bucklin. GUY H. DORSEY JR. is getting his dander up over all those schnooks who can't read his name right. G. H. WELLS suggests, "I think you should change the name of your zine to Kennedy, as a fitting tribute to the late President." We do too, of course. DWAIN KAISER agrees, "ATom for TAFF, who else." LEN BAILES is a fellow trombonist and wants to know how to play B natural with short arms. (I always stand on a chair.) G. H. SCITHERS remembers Ike's cry at the Hugo presentation as, "... You've ruined my whole bit!" He could be wrong, of course. After forcing TOM SEIDMAN to write a letter to CRY in the wee hours after a Nameless meeting, I now (cackle-cackle!) refuse to print it. GREG BENFORD comments on pornography in CRY. SETH JOHNSON would appreciate some help on the Fanzine Clearing House project. MISHA McQUOWN sends two letters and an address change: 308 S. Franklin Blvd. Apt 7, Tallahassee, Fla. 32301. Lovely money from MARTIN HELGESEN, ROSEMARY B. HICKEY, DAVE VAN ARNAM, RICHARD C. MARKLEY, DONALD A. WOLLHEIM, LIS BRODSKY, FRANK DIETZ, DON HUTCHISON, BILL EVANS and POUL ANDERSON. Lovely Christmas cards from TOM & SARA PURDOM and BOB SMITH. Now I write big, long article.--www

from: CRY
Box 92
507 Third Ave.
Seattle, Washington 98104

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