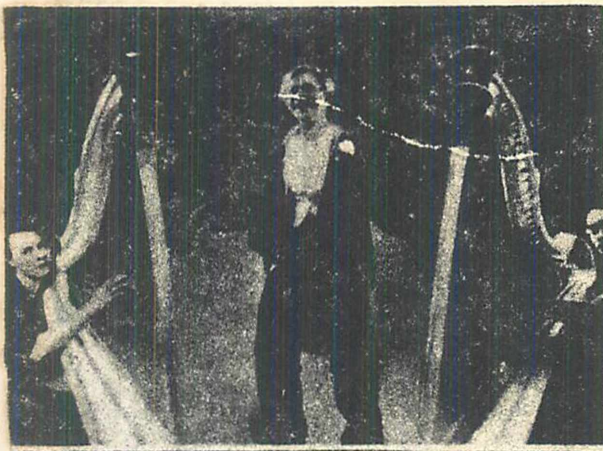


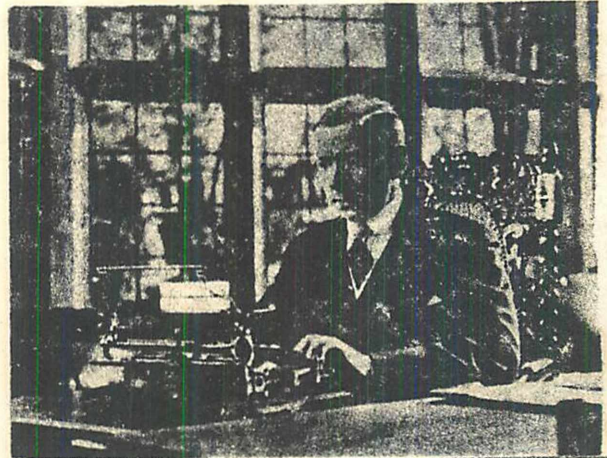
DESCANT

No. 11 - Nov. 1963 - (Feb. 1964)

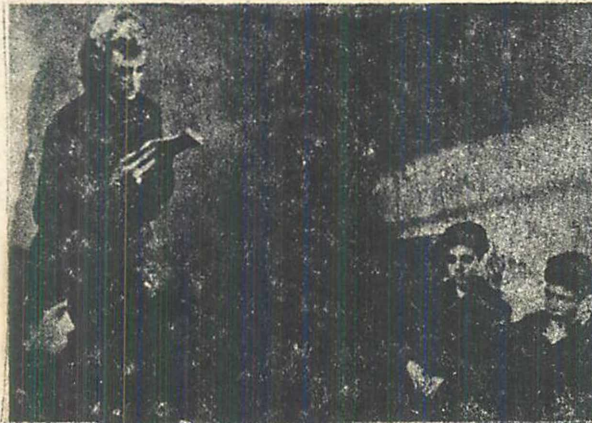
Clarkes, 223 Bancroft St.,
Aylmer E., P.Q., Canada.



"So this is FAPA!"



"Goshwowboyoboy..."



"I now read you my fabulously
perceptive Rogue articles."



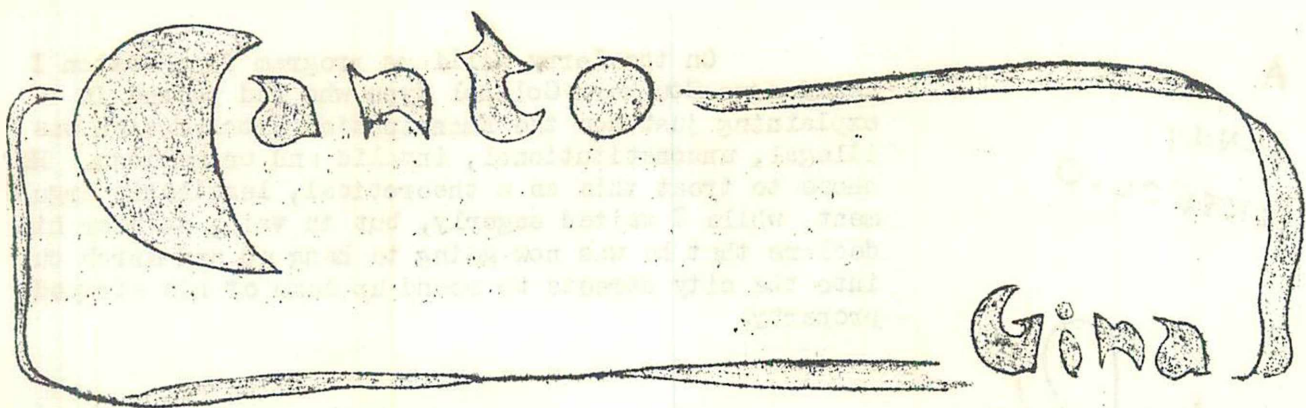
"Not that goddam watermelon
story again."



"What do you mean, Boyd Raeburn
says we can't come in here?"



"Well, I guess I'll get started
on my mailing comments."



I was reading Jenny a story out of her Humpty Dumpty magazine, all about George Wombat and Betty Beboon and like that, when I came across two characters named Dr. Quack and Officer Fuzz. I thought it was funny, perhaps a sop to haggard parents reading this stuff aloud to their kids for the dozenth time, but Norm suggested it was a sly plan on the part of the writer to get kids to blink their innocent blue eyes at the family doctor, as he leans over them with his stethoscope, and pipe up, "Mommy, is that Dr. Quack?", or say brightly, as the policeman sticks his head in the car window to write a ticket, "Daddy, is that Officer Fuzz?"

* * * * *

I have a sort of Martian garden this year. It's hedged by a chartreuse bush, now turning scarlet, and, except for a few tomatoes sprawled about on the ground, is inhabited mainly by a very peculiar plant, which produces a scarlet stem five feet high, with bright green leaves that slowly turn red, and at the top a bunch of dark crimson, furry tassels grow and grow, drooping closer and closer to the ground, finally touching. They look like so many giant red croquet hoops. The things are called LovelliesBleeding. I got the seeds because the package said that they thrive in dry, poor soil, and I wanted to plant something where what had been a driveway was plowed up. They grew so ferociously that when I thinned them out I had plenty to transplant in places where other hoped-for flowers didn't show and where second and third crops of vegetables didn't get planted. The result is that the whole damn garden is full of them. The only other flowers in the back garden are some orange zinnias and a row of the queer cockscomb flowers, which look like slices of brain, convoluted and shiny.

The zinnias are flourescent, the LLB are red, the hedging bush is turning red, and the trees at the back fence behind the garden are turning red. In a couple of weeks our backyard will be downright blinding.

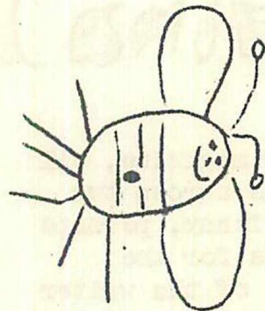
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I watched the CBC television coverage of the March on Washington. The commentator described an interview he had with a white woman tourist from Montana who just happend to be in Washington that Wednesday. "It was a thrilling experience," she said, "simply tremendous. I can't get over it. I'll never forget this day as long as I live. Just imagine seeing Marlon Brando, Charleton Heston and Burt Lancaster all at once!"

PETE GRAHAM

* * * * *

A
JENNY
PORTFOLIO



On the Jerry Williams program from Boston I heard some Southern Colonel type who had phoned in explaining just how the Emancipation Proclamation was illegal, unconstitutional, invalid and un-American. He chose to treat this as a theoretical, legalistic argument, while I waited eagerly, but in vain, to hear him declare that he was now going to hang up and march out into the city streets to round up some of his strayed property.

* * * * *

Our Jenny is getting quite grown up. She insists on holding her own hand to cross the street.

But she's not growing up fast enough to suit her. The other day she was musing aloud about all the things she could do when she was big. "When I'm big I'm going to wash dishes, and touch the tv, and drink coffee and beer..." Eager to taste these delights, she turned to Norm with the request that he take out the thing in her head and blow her up big, big, like her blow-up dog. We told her that this was impracticable, and she then suggested that maybe Norm could take hold of her head and pull and pull to stretch her neck big, big. She backed down, though, when it occurred to her that it might hurt.

* * * * *

There was a piece in the paper about a man who took in a female Boxer (a dog) (a ~~female~~ ~~Boxer~~ ~~dog~~ ~~presented~~ ~~him~~ ~~with~~ ~~thirteen~~ ~~pups~~ ~~After~~ ~~some~~ ~~thought~~ ~~he~~ ~~figured~~ ~~out~~ ~~a~~ ~~way~~ ~~to~~ ~~dispose~~ ~~of~~ ~~the~~ ~~pups~~ ~~He~~ ~~put~~ ~~an~~ ~~ad~~ ~~in~~ ~~the~~ ~~paper~~ ~~saying~~ ~~IS~~ ~~YOUR~~ ~~DOG~~ ~~GETTING~~ ~~OLD~~ ~~AND~~ ~~WORN~~ ~~OUT?~~ ~~TRADE~~ ~~IN~~ ~~YOUR~~ ~~OLD~~ ~~DOG~~ ~~ON~~ ~~A~~ ~~LIVELY~~ ~~NEW~~ ~~PUP?~~ ~~The~~ ~~ruse~~ ~~worked~~ ~~Before~~ ~~long~~ ~~he~~ ~~had~~ ~~disposed~~ ~~of~~ ~~all~~ ~~thirteen~~ ~~pups~~ ~~Now~~ ~~he~~ ~~has~~ ~~thirteen~~ ~~senile~~ ~~dogs~~ ~~he~~ ~~doesn't~~ ~~know~~ ~~what~~ ~~to~~ ~~do~~ ~~with~~).

* * * * *

A recent triple feature at a drive-in featured the following: SEX IN THE SERVICE, THE HORIZONTAL LIEUTENANT and THE PERFECT FURLOUGH.

* * * * *

My pages in the last DESCANT got printed in the wrong order, and that quotation from ESQUIRE about having writers portray their protagonist in movie versions of their books was continued elsewhere, or was supposed to be; actually, it disappeared somewhere. It didn't originally end with the rather tame speculation that Holden Caulfield could be played by "J.D.", but went on to consider such books as TROPIC OF CAPRICORN, etc.

* * * * *

Serious Over Review of a SF Movie

Some nights ago I watched what might possibly be the worst science fiction movie ever conceived by the mind of man.

The star was Anthony Dexter, who won fleeting fame by looking sort of like Rudolf Valentino and playing him in a movie "based on" his life. The Valentino movie, on a few nights before, was bad enough, but this movie wasn't even trying. I think it was written round-robin by half a dozen drunken Hollywood hacks.

It went something like this (allowing for lapses of memory and periods of complete bogglement):-

A Dedicated Group of Young Scientists were planning Man's First Trip into Outer Space. Now if you'd had a look at this Dedicated Group of Young Scientists, you wouldn't have been at all surprised to learn that their idea of a good place to go for Man's First Trip into Outer Space is the tenth moon of Jupiter.

Well, Dex and two friends take off. Under the acceleration, which lasts 2 or 3 minutes, they lean back in their chairs and wince some. Then they unfasten their seat belts and sit up to watch the stars rush at them and past on their rear viziplate.

Then, after a while, they get to the tenth moon of Jupiter. They are only momentarily startled to be contacted on their radio by someone from that moon, speaking English. The voice gives them landing instructions. "If we do what he says, we'll miss the planet entirely, or crash on the mountains, or something," screams one of the crew members. Dex thinks about that for a moment and then says, "Let's do what he says." So they do, and they land all right.

Then one of them examines a couple of dials and announces that, amazingly, the temperature and atmosphere are almost exactly earth-like. (There was no explanation as to why the place was warm and bright, neither of which I would have expected.) "Well, what are we waiting for", they cry and tumble out. They're big brave men and don't worry about Alien Bacteria or anything. Once out, gaping about the earth-like terrain (sort of Southern California landscape) they suddenly spot a light blinking at them a few hundred yards off, and they gallop to it, and it's a life-size statue of a woman with a beacon into which is set the blinking light. They look at it and scuff their feet in the dirt and then they hear a scream and see a pretty blonde girl being carried off by a man in a mask. The man in the mask, as it turns out, is supposed to be some sort of Woods Monster, but such a poor monster that it would never be written up in a Boggs or an Ackerman zine. It's just a slightly-built man with a rigid, pop-eyed mask, hardly worthy of the terror he inspires in the inhabitants of this moon (we'll meet them in a minute) who refer to him as a throwback to the cavemen. Anyway the brave earthmen shoot him, which makes him let go of the pretty blonde girl and shriek a bit, but doesn't really damage him much but just scares him off because he's immortal. Then the girl, grateful for being

in a pig's eye —

~~When~~ ~~the~~ ~~monster~~ ~~is~~ ~~rescued~~ ~~from~~ ~~a~~ ~~fate~~ ~~worse~~ ~~than~~ ~~death~~ ~~at~~ ~~the~~ ~~hands~~ ~~of~~ ~~something~~ ~~of~~ ~~the~~ ~~monster~~, ~~she~~ ~~immediately~~ ~~falls~~ ~~in~~ ~~love~~ ~~with~~ ~~Dex~~. She leads him and his friends to a stone wall, built to keep the monster out, and through a Secret Passageway, to a garden and palace (sort of Southern California architecture). Here they meet the blonde's "father" who was the man on the radio, and who is crazy, and who isn't really anybody's father, and her "sisters", a dozen young starlets, all dressed alike in tennis costumes with little pleated skirts. This mess, plus the monster, are, as it turns out, all that remains of the descendants of the Atlanteans who had built a space ship just before their continent sank under the sea and who also had had the bright idea that the tenth moon of Jupiter would be a good place to head for on Man's First Trip into Outer Space. I'm afraid I'm not too clear on these people's real relationship, or how the last 15 people of a race could end up being one old man, one monster, and 13 beautiful girls.

I couldn't make too much sense out of the rest of the movie, my brain having gone numb, but it seems that the old man is going to kill the earthmen so nobody on earth will ever know about him and his ~~Wife~~ "daughters", but the blonde, bedazzled by Dex (who was tall, dark, thin, and may or may not have had a hairline mustache) gave the old man a dose. Of poison. The rest of the girls are then inflamed by the fiery rhetoric of a jealous Bad Brunette, who sees her chance to take over leadership from the blonde, who was really entitled, and steal Dex too. So the girls get the blonde and tie her to a sacrificial stone and light torches and beat drums and sing and do orchiastic dances and shout hooray. After many a heart-stopping chase through underground tunnels of Dex and friends by a Congaline of damsels, our hero rescues his girlfriend and the other girls backtrack quickly and say they're sorry they acted so badly and turn on the Bad Brunette and toss her over the wall to the monster, and then acknowledge the good and beautiful blonde as their rightful leader. He blesses them regally, simpers up at Dex, and then tells her subjects, "I'm going back to Earth now with these Earthmen but we'll be back in a few days and get the rest of you ahahaha."

*

It was the best/worst science fiction movie I've seen since the one where Man's First Trip into Outer Space consisted of a man being shot up in a rocket to chase meteors. When the spaceman catches up with a meteor he presses a button and a big meteor-scoop comes out of the nose of his rocket, catches the meteor, and then the rocket goes back to earth. Only trouble with the project is that the first couple of men sent up go out of their minds, and small wonder.

...custommadebusinessunder

SHORTS

* * * * *

The old sf idea about children being a Different Species or else, as often as not, aliens in disguise, has never impressed me as having any take-off point in reality. But now I'm not so sure. The other day we were chuckling in jolly parental condescension over Laurie's cute pronunciations. "Isn't it cute the way she pronounces 'Laurie'?" I cooed. Laurie suddenly spoke up and distinctly said, "It's not 'Laurie', it's 'Yawee!'."

* * * * *

There's an institution in Ottawa called the Champagne Bath. It's just an old chlorinated swimming pool, though.

* * * * *

There was much noise a couple of years ago from the flour companies about how they had a wonderful new way of packing their flour in bags so that it no longer required sifting. However, if you read the fine print on the flour-bag, you would find that it tells you to sift before measuring for cakes but that you don't have to bother for biscuits and bread. But that's the way it's always been — batters are made by measurement and doughs by feel.

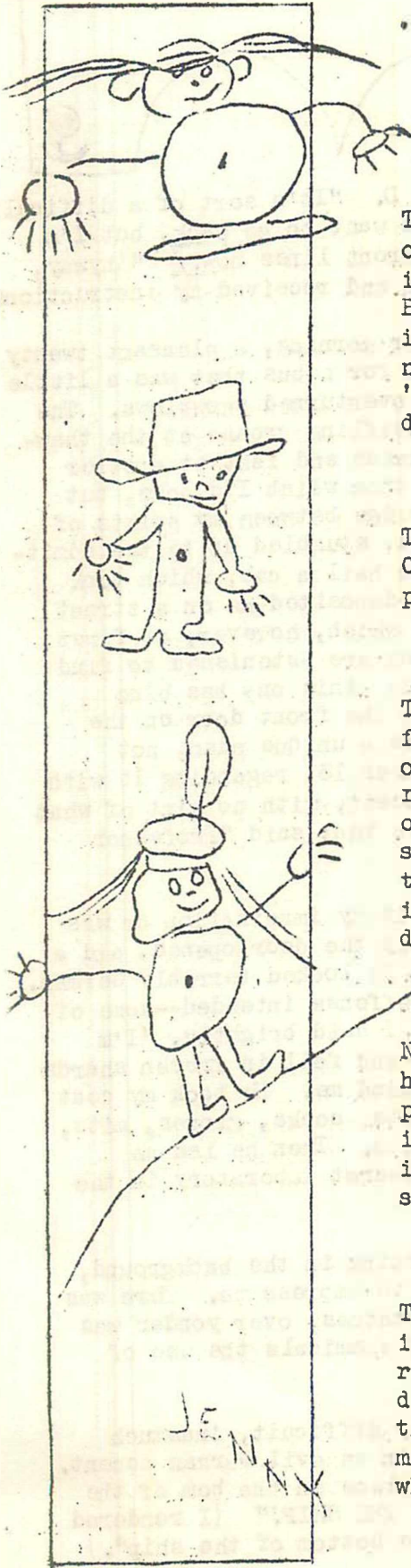
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Norm's sister, Nancy, told me about a couple of flippanant headlines she's noticed lately:- TEACHER PASTES (the poor fellow died) and IN FAVOR OF ADULTERY (some lawyer in divorceless Quebec was quoted as being in favour of instituting divorce courts and having adultery be the sole grounds for a decree).

* * * * *

The fall schedule of new tv programs had one or two interesting listings--"IT IS WRITTEN: A half hour religious hour" (that's the best kind) and another described thus: "A new detective series but this time the star drives a Lincoln Continental", which made a little more sense when I'd seen an episode or two of (surrealistic whisper) Burke's Law. (Hi Boyd).

* * * * *



a short sad story

9

My phone rang. "I have a job for you," announced Miss D. "It's sort of a difficult job, I understand. None of the girls who have tried it want to go back, but I'm sure you can handle it." /Calling up the boys for the front lines now./ "Anyway, it's just for a day." I made the appropriate responses and received my instructions

Next morning, at eight o'clock of an invigorating winter morning, a pleasant twenty below, with playful breezes kissing my cheeks, I waited for a bus that was a little behind schedule because of a few drifts and wrecks and overturned snowplows. The bus finally arrived, and I rode 15 miles into Ottawa, stifling groans at the thaw-pains, and then got off the bus, renumbed my agonized hands and feet at another bus-stop, and then rode 15 miles back in the direction from which I'd come, but on the other side of the river, there being no other bridge between my points of departure and destination. Then I got off at a hospital, stumbled up to the admitting door, not to seek treatment for my frostbite but to hail a cab, which took me through the confusing crescents of a Development and deposited me on a street in an upper-middleclass neighborhood of expensive houses which, however, at first glance all look alike until you peer closely and then you are astonished to find that actually each is cleverly Individual and Different:- this one has blue clapboard on the gables and that one has yellow; here is the front door on the left and there's a front door on the right; over there is a unique plan, not duplicated for all of 7 or 8 houses... I approached number 13, regarding it with eyes slitted against the balmy blizzard.. It looked innocent, with no hint of what lurked inside. Beside the doorbell was a small nameplate that said "Professor Waynegarden."

I rang the bell and waited a suspenseful eternity. Was it my imagination or was I being covertly observed through a one-way pane? Finally the door opened, and a tiny old man peered up at me through his heavy glasses. He looked terribly German. A real German scientist type, with a pale evil face (no offense intended--some of my best friends are pale evil Germans). "Good morning," I said brightly, "I'm Mrs. Clarke from Women Unlimited," and my lips shattered and fell in frozen shards around me. "Come in," he hissed, and locked the door behind me. He took my coat and hid it and then waited while I divested myself of boots, socks, gloves, mits, scarves, bandanas, cardigans, tights, woolies, falsies, etc. Then he led me through the kitchen and down a secret passageway to his Secret Laboratory in the cellar.

Down amongst the cobwebs, with beakers of chartreuse blurping in the background, he showed me a few of the things he was working on, just to impress me. Here was a vestpocket laser, here was a package of dehydrated potatoes, over yonder was a square of bullet-proof cloth, behind me were bottles of chemicals the use of which I couldn't understand, and he cackled slyly.

Then he dictated a few business letters, which were fairly difficult, inasmuch as they contained many technical terms and were rendered in an evil German accent. "...and these barrels are to be stored in their reserved place in the bom of the ship..." "Bom!" "BOM BOM" he shrieked, "B-O-T-M, BOM OF THE SHIP!" (I rendered the passage roughly as: "You can stuff the stuff into the bottom of the ship".)

Towards the end of the day, when his business letters had been done, Professor Waynegarden leaned back in his chair, puffed on his pipe thoughtfully, and began leisurely to dictate a personal letter to a Dr. Germanname⁽¹⁾ in South Africa. In a very casual way he discussed Dr. Germanname⁽¹⁾'s brother in Florida, Dr. Germanname⁽²⁾. "Whenever I write Fritz I tell him he should try and get along with his neighbors, but he cries on my shoulder that they're being difficult, not him. Now he's spending a lot of money building a big house and it's getting bogged down because he's fighting with the contractor. I hope to see him in person next month when I go to New York and he comes north, and perhaps I can help him out more than I seem to manage in letters..."

I typed up the letter and then the Professor guided me back up out of the cellar to the front door and let me have my coat back. He called me a taxi which took me on a circuitous and confusing trip back to a thoroughfare and a bus stop.

Six weeks later I was called back to the Professor's. The day went as before--a number of business letters, and then towards the end of the afternoon the Professor cleaned and filled his pipe and dictated a long, rambling personal letter. It was to a Dr. Germanname⁽³⁾ in South Africa. Another one? But even more remarkable was that this one also had a brother, Dr. Germanname⁽⁴⁾, in Florida, who wasn't getting along with his neighbors! "I keep telling Franz that he just has to learn to get along."

Then the Professor wrote a letter to Dr. Germanname⁽⁴⁾ in Florida. "I keep telling you, you've got to learn to get along. Your brother in South Africa worries about you and asks me to find out what's wrong with you." Then he went off on an apparent tangent: "That was an interesting idea you had about taking up sailing. Now I don't know as much about these things as you do, but I wouldn't think you could safely put a motor of that horsepower on a rowboat..." What was he really saying? "We need more information from the Cape. Our contact in SA is anxious. Old Nik* is pressing him." ...and something like: "I don't think you're correct that they'll be able to get that much thrust from a rocket that size..."

Well, I'm publishing my suspicions. If you never hear from me again, you'll have some notion of what might have happened to me...

* See, Dan Gregg et al, I'm on the side of the angels.

FROM A CARD THAT CAME WITH A BOTTLE OF SAKE:- Japanese Sake, rice-wine, is an alcoholic drink made from the Japanese staple food namely rice. Each of world Nations has brought up their own specific liquor, and also the Japanese Sake has appeared as the nation's drink according with their life through a long history of their land. Drink Sake poured in a glass as it is or after cooled a little, and you can enjoy the oriental delicate rice-wine which stands unrivalled in the world. You may also have another taste when drink it after warmed it moderately. As a long period of preservation does not apply to Sake, you had better drink it early after you once uncorked the cap. If you want to preserve it for a short period, a cool and dark place is advisable.



ALLIGATOR

BETTER-TRAPPER BEAT BY SCIENCE

London (AP) - Science has caught up with Britain's only professional beetle-trapper.

For the last eight years, George Harrison, 60, has been trapping beetles for the forestry commission's research department.

Working a five-day week for an average of 20 weeks a year, George said he's trapped and destroyed more than 50,000 beetles.

His method is traditional. He puts a succulent piece of bark into a pit. Overnight the bark lures the beetles.

"It gets them by the score," said George.

Next morning he gathers the beetles, counts them and takes them to his boss. A double-check is made and then the insects are destroyed.

The toll is written into a book and this goes to the forestry commission.

But now it's all over.

The commission said it now is working on a new and more scientific system in protecting its thousands of young trees by dipping them into a solution before planting.

Said Harrison: "The new method will be no fun. Out-witting beetles is fun."

(How about calling him back into service and letting him try for 50,004.)

* * *

Sometimes I think somebody is making up some of these strange items I see in the paper. Most of them are dated England, conveniently uncheckable.

For instance, the wild story about

the little old lady who was taking driving lessons. She terrorized half a dozen teachers, the second-last one reputedly leaving her by just opening the door and leaping out as she was roaring along at 60. Her current teacher was formerly a British army bomb-dismantler. (Sounds like a composite steal from two Newhart routines.)

Or the story about the male dog that changed into a female dog, but which had first earned the reputation of "being something of a gay dog" in his neighborhood.

Or the item about the young man who went into a bank to cash a cheque. "Well, said the teller, "where is it?" So the young man opened his shirt, and there was the cheque written on his chest. So, after only a brief conference with the manager, the teller got out his rubber stamp, cancelled the young man's chest and paid him.

Or this:

Hertford, Eng. (CP) - Topsy, the Picasso of the feline world, was killed by a car while crossing a street here. Topsy drew pictures by pawing a crayon suspended on a piece of string. Her most famous work, a horse and rider, once was exhibited in Canada.

Then there was the school play, presented somewhere in England to a group of horrified parents. The kiddies played bedroom scenes and talked about incest and said Bad Words. The schoolmaster, alarmed by the parents' reaction, protested that he'd only wanted to do something a little different from the usual school play.

And, most unlikely story of all, while he was still Prime Minister McMillan had a record on the British hit parade. Yes indeed. The story is that McMillan, during the course of a speech somewhere, quoted the words, "She wouldn't say yes, She wouldn't say no," from the song. Some character lifted this bit from a tape of the speech, re-recorded it on top of music, and produced "a real rocking" thing "similar to You Ain't Nothin But a Houn'dog."

AS YOU WERE
Saying... njc

Lighthouse 9; Terry Carr, Pete Graham

Now that's a Lighthouse. Not a hundred pages, maybe, but recognizably a Lighthouse in the great tradition.

Pete: I'm sorry as hell that I wasn't able to get to DC -- not only for the convention, but also for the march. Steve Stiles and Boyd Raeburn and others will jeer at marching and picketing, and call them "inane and ineffectual"; but I am convinced that these are two of the very few things that individuals can do, in an attempt -- and not always a futile attempt -- to Change Things. I don't have much to say about "The Line of the March" -- probably because you said it all so well, yourself --, but it was a fine article. I don't know how anyone can explain away the shocking fact of 5% of the work force being unemployed "in the midst of the greatest plenty the world has ever known"; but I'm sure someone will, somehow. ("That's what keeps the Economy going," is about the way they'll put it.)

Thanks for the reminder, Pete; I hope my card pleading for your reinstatement got to you in time, this year. One of these years, though, I am going to be firm and decide, "Nossir! I've signed petitions for that fellow once too often."

Terry: I'll second you emphatically on your objection to the term "bleeding-hearts"; Gina wrote a letter to a local paper, recently, on the subject of integration; a few days later she received a letter full of the vilest stuff (including a pious reference to Jews as "murderers of Christ," immediately followed by "why do you want to crawl into bed with n-----s? It's a myth that they're better hung than white men, lol"). The letter was signed, "White Non-Bleeding Heart." Ugh. I'm afraid that, hereafter, anyone who uses the term will be immediately Associated In My Mind With.

When I read "The Star" for the first time, a few weeks ago (in The Hugo Winners), I thought it a pretty nothing story, with the Gimmick obvious right from the start; and I was amazed that this story -- as well as a couple of others in the collection -- had won a Hugo. Perhaps, though, if I had read it in my soppy, sentimental Youth, I'd have shed a tear and lost my Faith.

I agree with you that, for the most part, the present FAPA membership is a "pretty good group"; and there's almost no-one I'd really want to see drop out. The hell of it is, though, that there are some Good People on the w-1, too. An awful lot of Swell Folks will have left this "pretty good group" before Willis re-enters FAPA, for example. Perhaps one solution could be that some of these Good People on the w-1 get together and form a "Shadow FAPA" and ...

I thought "'64 Frisco or Fight" was funny as hell. Boy, if you only knew of the big plans to bid for a World Con in Quebec ... one of these years. It'll be called the GarCon.

(Lighthouse, cont'd.)

Walt: I don't know about drunken kittens, but watching a gang of pie-eyed flies can be fascinating, not to say instructive. A couple of summers ago, the band I was then with used to rehearse in the afternoons, at the club where we were currently working. The place would be deserted, in the afternoon, except for the flies: every table-top crawled with the things, and I mean crawled -- or perhaps "staggered." These flies would sip at little puddles of the previous night's spilled beer. Believe me, you haven't lived till you've seen a fly lurch sideways and fall on its ass. I've even watched little flies swagger up to bigger ones and shove them aside, for all the world like the little men who have a couple too many and start thinking they're ten feet tall. Those drunken flies sometimes got pretty sexy, too -- for a fly, that is. I mean it wasn't very exciting to watch.

Le Moindre 29; Boyd Raeburn

Glad you got around to putting a Lem into FAPA; now, what about A Bas?

A few years ago, a local hotel (the Standishall) booked The Jimmy Dorsey Orchestra under the direction of Warren Covington (isn't it a bit odd that the JD band was led by Covington, a trombonist, while the TD band is led by Donahue, a saxophonist?) Although the band was playing a dance engagement (as opposed to a concert), the air of Living In The Past was similar to that surrounding the concert you describe. Most of the musicians in the band were quite young (and quite good), and were obviously bored as hell, playing old "hits" from the 'thirties; they brightened quite noticeably when they got a chance to play some more modern stuff (you know, That Horrible Modern Stuff.) Aside: I didn't like Elman even when he was Good. "A kosher Louis Armstrong"? Why, that's Deathly Offensive To The Jewish People.

"In 20 years time, will, say, the Orlons be looked on nostalgically as one of those Wonderful Groups of the past? Don't laugh." Who's laughing? Who's laughing? Personally, I plan to cry a lot. Since Elvis Presley is now seen, in retrospect, to have been a pretty good Pop Singer (compared with the teenaged castrati heard everywhere today), it won't surprise me at all if someday the Orlons are judged Pretty Good, too, compared with whatever inconceivable New Sounds await us in that rosy future 20 years from now.

I'm amazed you don't know what the song, "If I Had a Hammer" is all about: it's all about if a feller had a hammer, he'd hammer in the evening; and it's about the love between the brothers and the sisters all over this land. Hell, it's obvious. The song, "This Land is Your Land" is a Communist one, I think; it seems to be about Communal Farms or something. I certainly wouldn't sing it.

"...If it drops, it drops ..." I've always thought the Fatalist viewpoint one of the more untenable ones; and I'm surprised to find you holding it.

Grue 31; Dean Grennell

How about a Goggle of tourists? A Flack of ad-men? A Hoard of misers? Spung-up: what I don't want to get, on Hoonerisms ("Hoonitions," parn me.) And, although I promised myself I wouldn't publish any Swifties, I think I'll break that promise, just to make you repent of having published a whole page of them: "I'm the funniest clown of them all," he said, superciliously. "I have strange

sexual preferences," he admitted, sheepishly. "And I don't want to hear any more jokes about Elephants' Feet," I say flatly.

There's a theory that some theatre-owners deliberately request films whose titles will go together in an attention-getting manner. We've had a few dandies locally -- and, dammit, Gina has just told me (when I asked her to refresh my memory) that she has already stencilled the best of these for her part of the zine. Grumble, grumble ... doesn't she know that she is supposed to be the Sober Serious Clarke? Anyway, she left me the dregs: "The Birds"/"Come Fly With Me"; and "The Mating Game"/"All Fall Down"; but the one she quotes is by far the best.

Well, now I suppose we'll have to wait until next August for another Drue (Drue: the GAGzine.)

Outstanding; SCFC

I say it's Maine-lac and I say to hell with it.

I really don't, though; it's just that I hate to pass up the chance to use a good line. What? Well, I say it's a good line, and I say to hell with you.

The title naturally makes me think of an interlineation I saw recently in Tom Perry's fanzine, Logorrhea: "Don't flatter yourself, madam; it is hanging out." I guess that's what John Trimble meant when he said, "sexual connotations of the title ... I'm sure suggested themselves at once to several members"; except that such connotations didn't suggest themselves "at once" to me, because I didn't see Log until several weeks after reading the August mailing.

Redd: I don't know what the opposite of "anabasis" might be, but I'm sure it would be no less printable than "go down." Have you ever seen the sheet-music for "St. Louis Blues," for instance? I'm sure the lyrics don't read, "I hate to see the evening sun (deleted)." Gee; do you suppose, Redd, that I have a Thing about "unprintable words"?

LeeJ: Your line, "Beer! What a glorious concept," was the Best Thing In The Mailing. If only more people would realize the true value and historic role and spiritual significance of that great Gift of God, instead of sneeringly dismissing it as Pagan Mambo-Jumbo, think how much better the world would be today! I trust that you have spread/are spreading the Wonderful Word of Beer all over this terrestrial globe, in the course of your Missionary Travels. May I call you: "Father Beeregrine"? I now reverently snap a cap in your honor, Reverend Father, you crazy bastard.

Redd, again: You know, without even waking up (in the course of composing these mc's), I can think of a much more absurdly impossible happening than that "the schools and colleges have discovered H.P. Lovecraft." Without attempting to match your masterful building up of suspense and curiosity, I think I can manage to make everyone turn pale and clutch their flaming pectorals, by imagining a much more absurdly impossible happening than that of the schools and colleges discovering H.P. Lovecraft. Are you ready? Got your Digitalis handy? Okay: I can imagine fans completely forgetting about H.P. Lovecraft.

EdCo: "Redd Boggs had given it credance in the early sisties." Give till it hurts, Redd.

(Outstanding, cont'd.)

John: "(Fans) don't seem to care if it was cheeseburgers or filet mignon that filled them." I'd care, sometimes: good cheeseburgers can be delicious, which is something that can't always be said for filets. While filet mignon is an extremely tender cut of beef, it can also be a relatively flavorless one. Again: "Spaghetti or roast prime ribs are one and the same to fan tastes." I have tasted wonderful spaghetti (well, the sauce, actually), and I have tasted pretty bad Roast Prime Ribs. The thing is: It's All Relative, John. A "far-out menu" doesn't necessarily mean good eating. We found it impossible to answer Bjo's questionnaire because questions like, "What are your favorite spices?" were unanswerable, to us; we like all kinds of spices, but it depends on how and with what foods they're used. Hell, anybody can say, "Oh, I just love filet mignon. And escargots are simply divine. And just give me a soup du jour and I'm ecstatic." Actually, my favorite spices are Salt and Pepper: we use them in almost all of our cooking.

Throw The Rascals Out #1; Seattle Rascals and Guests

This is one of the better one-shots in the mailing; it is even legible. Anyway, I guess you could call it the one-shot of Instant Nostalgia, what with all that talk about lettercolumns in old prozines. Was the letter in the Spring '55 issue of Planet Stories Elinor's first? *Holy Cow*. I've just looked it up (said he casually, meanwhile imagining everyone croggling madly at the revelation that Norm Clarke has a Collection of old Science Fiction Magazines), and I am planeted to see that Elinor's maiden (haw) letter to PS was climaxed (giggle shriek) by a torrid discussion of s*x with NJClarke1955. It certainly was a ... a ... (what's the phrase I want?) I only have one issue of Startling, and I looked to see if it was the one containing a letter from Gregg Galkins; well, he was among the WAHFs, right next to Ron Ellik who was "rushing out to buy an album of IMPRESSIONS OF OUTER SPACE." Howja like it, Ron?

Gee, Art Wilson in Seattle; Fapans sure are moving around a lot, lately, aren't they? I wonder why Art didn't stop by our place on his way from Seattle to Hong Kong; it wouldn't have been that much out of his way.

Lots of fun, this one-shot. My copy even smells like beer. Or maybe it's just me.

Show me a rose, I'll show you a girl named Sam --Old Popular Song

Synapse; Jack Speer

Well ... hello, I guess. You mean you've changed your mind about our "publishing material that is so obscene that the magazine should be ignored altogether"? How come? We're as obscene as we've ever been.

"There is getting to be too much capitalization of phrases..." Where you-all been? This is Standard Fannish Practice; and there are people who will invoke the name of Geo. Ade at you, if you don't Watch Out. (The quoted remark of yours, above, coupled with your custom of writing "i" for "I" almost leads me to suspect that you are Against Capitalism.)

"I suppose all our surnames meant something back in England or somewhere ..."
Agberg?

(Synapse, cont'd)

"I don't think it needs be called pluplural ..." I don't think you need have said, "needs"; or, if that was the word you wanted, I think it needs to be followed by "to".

You enter a creeb about Gina's having stencilled, "The girl stumbles ... she crawled" Gina knows better than to goof up tenses that way; and I think you should know better than to pick nits about what is quite onviously a minor error resulting from hasty stencilling. The same exasperated comment applies to your "Little Lessons in Grammar," wherein you profess to be "startled" by my writing that I traveled "back to Ottawa by war with a friend." That's got nothing to do with grammar: it's a simple misfingering of the typer keys -- one that I didn't catch before slapping the stencil on the mimeo. If you're so easily "startled," it's no wonder you're a Science Fiction Fan (too much Capitalization Of Phrases?)

I'm glad you finally got around to using mimeography, anyway.

Salud; Elinor Busby

What? No mailing comments? Why, as a long-time proponent of the fiat that Mailing Comments Are An Apan's First Duty, I ... I don't seem to have much to say, at all, except that you sure Describe Good. Oh, and we never got around to making any wine at all; maybe next year, though. It's probably illegal as hell, or I'd ask you to send us a taste (an ounce or so) of your wine when it's ready -- but I guess that would be a Crime.

Sercon's Bane; F.M. Busby

Gee, single-sheeters from both halves of the Busby Dual Membership; you been busy or something?

It's become customary with me to groan and clap hand to forehead and say, "Yecch!" upon hearing, or being told that I am about to hear, a Tom Swiftie; but it occurs to me that this is just a Socially Acceptable Pose, just as it is customary to groan, rather than laugh, upon hearing a pun. While bad puns and bad Swifties are pretty low forms of wit (and most of the Swifties I've come across -- the Swifties of the marketplace, I guess you could call them -- have been Pretty Bad), the WAWish pun is an art form; so, with the tradition of mind-boggling puns behind you, it's no wonder that your and D.G.'s Swifties in this mailing Rise Above the generally uninspired level of the mundane ones (how many dull Swifties have you heard, for instance, built around breast fetishism and ending, "...said flatly"?)

Perhaps FAPA's "kicking in toward the Fan History" should be put to a formal vote; here's one informal affirmative one, anyway.

Bete Noire; Redd Boggs

That's about the orangest Tru-Ray mandarin paper I've ever seen; perhaps you should have titled your Tapazine Bete Orange.

There's not much need for me to go over, point by point, just how much I agree with you about Martin's expulsion and FAPA's reaction (or lack of it.) But having said that "FAPA must act honorably at all times and remain above reproach," and that

(Bete Noire, cont'd)

"the principle needs to be re-established," isn't it about time that something concrete was done? As I'm sure even you would agree, there has been enough and more than enough talk about "The Martin Affair." So now I propose that an official petition be included in the next mailing (on a stamped postcard), asking that Martin be reinstated. No questions asked; no apologies; no recriminations. I fervently hope that FAPA will thus put to an end, at last, this distasteful business. Such a simple Gesture on FAPA's part may gain us a "worthless member"; but will perhaps rid us of the chilly climate and moribund gloom that have blanketed FAPA for the past couple of years (take a look at the last few mailings; not much evidence of jolly, lighthearted camaraderie there, is there?)

"Shabladoocelyadabobadoodweepopadopadiddlyoroonaysfabeesedopaddlyamacreenylopadow

Your interlineations, Redd, are magnificent, if a bit sex-crazed: "Lord Rosse's 72-inch," "second-degree sex burns," "50¢ pieces." If you're interested in That Sort Of Thing, I have here an advert for "Unusual Items for 'ADULTS ONLY'" from Wilgri Publications, PO Box 6401, Richmond 30, VA. After stating your age, you may order such fripperies as Hypnotic Lozenges or Ointment; Lol's De-Icar Kit ("this breaks down the sex barrier"); or a Sexy Set 4-Pc. Costume (state waist size). Fun? You bet.

mop."

Esdacyos 8; Ed Cox

Well, you know that I was hoping you'd be able to stop by our place when you made your trip to Maine; but you also know that you weren't able to make it (either to Maine or Aylmer.) We were disappointed as hell about that; and we hope you'll be able to make that trip sooner than Real Soon Now. Just let us know, and we'll be waiting with open ~~xxx~~ bottles.

I think you misunderstand the purpose of the three extra copies that must be included when you send your bundle to the OE. You seem to have the idea that they are to ensure that, in the event of a miscalculation, there will still be a copy in every Fapan's bundle. Not so; the three extra copies are intended for immediate sale to waitlisters or whoever has First Claim on them. What are you trying to do? Fight the system? You probably didn't need a copy of your own Fapazine, anyway. You probably had plenty extras; I hope so, anyway. Come to think of it, I didn't get a copy of Blues In The Closet (the one-shot that Boyd & Gina and I put out) in the August mailing. I wonder if it was because Boyd only sent 66 copies. I certainly wouldn't want some Top Priority non-Fapan to be deprived of his complete bundle, just for my sake. Let's not be Selfish, after all.

You said that if I took a walk to my bathroom, I would find a "commode" there. You even suggested I might find a "hairy, purple one" there. Well, I did and I didn't. I took a walk to my bathroom (I often do, while writing me's), and I found Gina there. Are you calling my wife a "commode"? Hairy and purple she may be, but ...

I was just getting interested in Tackett's column, when I got to the bottom of page 8. Unfortunately, the next page was page 11. Got a loose 9 & 10 around?

Null-F; Ted White

Since you specifically called my attention to your record review, I suppose I'd better say something about it. The only trouble is that I don't think I have much to say. One of the reasons why I'm not able to discuss your review is that I have not heard the album in question. Ideally, of course, a record review should tell the reader enough about the record that he believes he has a pretty fair idea of what he'll find when he does get to hear the music; but I'm afraid that your review fails in this, as do almost all of them. I don't think that this is solely your fault; because music, by its very nature, is almost impossible to describe (music "says" ~~unspeakable~~ ineffable things.) I have at last learned, through Practical Experience) just how difficult it is to write about music: I tried to write a record review column for Joe Pilati, and by the time I got to about the tenth page of "notes" on one LP (Blues and the Abstract Truth), I'd decided that it was a hopeless task, for me. The stuff I'd written was just about as bad as almost any jazz reviewing I'd ever read -- perhaps worse, for in my attempts to evaluate some passages in "technical" terms I succeeded only in making the review more incomprehensible. I am now firmly convinced that the only possible way to review or criticize music is in terms of subjective emotional reaction (" Illinois Jacquet plays six raw, exciting choruses, each more frantic than the preceding one, climaxed by the screeching high harmonics for which he is noted. Yech.")

But let's get back to your review. Because it dealt with the more tangible aspects of the concert, your description of the circumstances preceding and attending the performance was to me the most absorbing part of your article. Behind-the-scenes details do, I think, help one towards a better understanding of a jazz performance (I don't think they would usually be relevant to a recording of ~~Good~~ Classical Music.) For example, it helps us to know that, say, an LP by Irving Futhermugger was recorded on a Tuesday evening at a club in Providence, R.I., with fifteen customers present (half of whom sipped Cokes), and the clubowner in a terrible temper. It also aids us in our appreciation to learn that the drummer's wife had come back to him that afternoon and that he was therefore in a fit of pique, which of course explains why he occasionally drowns out the rest of the band by kicking his drums off the stand. We also gain an insight by reading that the trumpeter was suffering from a Sick Headache and couldn't stand hearing himself play; now we know what those intermittent screams are meant to Express. Well, I see I'm being frivolous, here. Tsk.

I am serious, though, in saying that I liked your remarks about the foul-ups that took place both at the concert and in the subsequent Careful & Artistic editing; it is always good to read an indictment of record companies' shoddy, dishonest practices (such as misleadingly labelling an LP, "FIRST PLACE WINNER," in your example.)

Much as I'd like to, Ted, I honestly can't find anything to say about your descriptions/appraisals of the music. You say that "My Search" contains some excellent solos; if I'd heard the LP, I could agree or disagree -- but I haven't, so I can't. "Finale" is, in your words, "a jam session ... in which the musicians finally let go"; I'd probably like to hear that, for I often enjoy recorded jam sessions -- yes, even some JATP discs --; but then, sometimes (to quote another eminent jazz authority, a Mr. B. Reeburn, of Willowdale, Ont.) "the resulting sounds are dull and boring." It doesn't help me much to learn that "Don't Come Back" is actually a piece formerly called "Duke's Choice" or "Open Letter To Duke," for I've heard neither of the other versions; besides, I can't imagine a jazz group's being "conducted" and expected to swing at the same time; so I just can't imagine what "Don't Come Back" is like. You tell us that, on "Clark In The Dark," Clark Terry

solos brilliantly; well, he usually does -- so what can I say? Your remarks about "Epitaph, Part I" come closest to actually describing some of the music, and I think I have some idea of what to expect when I get around to hearing that track on that LP (Dolphy's bass clarinet squawks, Mingus' twangs and thrums on his bass, a slow solo by Dolphy and a faster one by Terry, and some Ellingtonian voicings; that sounds -- um -- Interesting.) "Freedom" is "Mingus's recitation of a poem"; okay, but is it *Jazz*?

Oh well. I haven't been putting you down here, Ted. In fact, for what it's worth, I'd say you are at least as competent a jazz critic as any; I'm sorry I can't make that sound more like a compliment, no matter how hard I try.

Horizons 95; Harry Warner

Concerning your remarks on absolute pitch and the ability to "play almost anything by ear": Aaron Copland has pointed out that neither of these gifts has anything to do with being "musical," i.e., "sensitive" to music; but, of course, granting that one is "musical" it would probably be nice to have, also, perfect pitch and the ability to play by ear. On the other hand, it might drive you nuts: imagine a Sensitive soul, with perfect pitch and the ear-playing talent, trying to play (by ear) an Ornette Coleman saxophone solo on an out-of-tune piano. While I'm at it, I'd like to shoot down the notion that jazz musicians play "by ear." This may have been true in the early days of jazz; and it is still true that jazz musicians (generally) have the ability to play brief, if perhaps complex, passages after only one or two hearings. But when jazzmen improvise on a song -- or, rather, on a particular harmonic pattern -- they do so mostly by weaving melodies out of *Learned* chord-running devices. The great jazzmen (of whom there are far fewer than most people think) have been able to transcend this rather mechanical (and universal) method in much the same way that the great classical composers (of whom there are mighty few, also) were able to transcend the similarly mechanical devices such as Rules of Counterpoint, etc. What I mean is that all good musicians, jazz or classical, Learn Stuff; and true absolute spontaneity is rarer than an intelligible record review.

Your remark that "perhaps she's bilious" struck you as hilarious when you were a child (although you can't imagine why), coupled with the admission that Jack Benny may be a great humorist, reminded me of an anecdote that Fred Allen (surely a great humorist) told about Benny and the indefinable aspects of his alleged humor. Allen was walking in the country with Benny, one day; and they came upon a Simple Rustic Soul, who said, in his folksy way, "Fine day, ain't it?" Benny turned a baleful eye on him, and slowly and quietly answered, "Aw ... go to hell." Allen averred that that was one of the funniest lines he'd ever heard.

Maybe this isn't exactly the right thing to say, but a couple of the deaths you described struck me as among the funniest things I've read in some time. As a matter of fact, I read the stories of the man who couldn't give up his favorite exertion and the man who drank too many Eups aloud to Gina -- literally with tears streaming down my face; and I'm afraid they weren't tears of compassion. I certainly hope that when I die, it will be in such a bizarre manner as to cause merriment among my friends. It's so rarely that death can provoke laughter; but I suppose there's nothing one would rather be able to laugh at.

Target:FAPA; Dick Eney

I think I'll enter a minority opinion, here, by saying that I find the works of Dorcas Bagby a bore. I wish I could say more to you, Dick, but dammit, this has got to be the last page of mailing comments. We're much too late, again.

OR ALL THE ZONES WITH CLAMS

NORM CLAMM

"Good Lord! Found dead in his own closet with an unraveled coat-hanger coiled tightly round his neck?" the man said. Oscar slapped his big hand against his purdgy thigh, scratched absently at the orange thicket in his armpit, raised his heavy face, and did other characteristic stuff. "Te-up," Oscar said.

"But ... but how did it happen?" the man asked. He had eye-glasses and a business suit. His hair wasn't orange. "Are the police investigating? Do they have any clues?"

Oscar uncapped a bottle of beer, and rinsed the first mouthful around and swallowed with all the brute pleasure of a beer-drinking man with orange hair, a heavy face, and an uncouth speaking style. "Te-up," he said. "Jeez. Sumbidge. They's been a bunch of suspicious-lookin' safety pins and bicycles around lately. The cops has tooken some o' them into that custody thing for, you know, question-
ing. Jeez. Aaarrrgh."

* * * * *

"It's no use, Chief," the policeman said, "We can't get a thing out of them. Those safety pins just won't open up. That red racing bicycle is a shifty sort -- a bit too smooth for my liking; no matter how hard me and the boys ride him, he simply won't break down; he won't squeal; he won't tell us who's the Big Wheel behind this rash of unexplained killings which has gripped the city in a wave of terror unprecedented in recent times. We'll have to let him go."

"Hm," the Chief mused. He wore a blue uniform with silver buttons. He had steel grey hair. But that is irrelevant. "Perhaps, Officer Clancy," he said slyly, "if we let him go, he will lead us to the brains of this mob of fiendish killers who pass undetected among us in the guise of inanimate objects, thus making us a laughing stock."

A scream of tortured metal rent the air. "Hark! What was that?" cried Officer Clancy, cupping his burly hand behind his cauliflower ear. "It was a scream of tortured metal," shouted the chief, "you fool dumb cop. Come, let's away." Together, they raced in the direction of the noise which has been identified as metal: tortured scream of.

The cell door stood open. Inside lay the twisted remains of a red racing bicycle, its spokes ripped out, its sprockets bent, its handlebars twisted horribly. "He knew too much," the chief whispered. Then he yelled, "This is an inside job! Who else would have access to these cells if not one of our own men?"

"Not one of our own ... men, Chief," Officer Clancy said grimly. He pointed to the floor. "Look: the unmistakable imprints of motorcycle tires, such as are readily to be found on our own regulation two-wheeled Police Vehicles." And, as he spoke, the fading sound of Puttputtputt and Chahaha came, for the first time, to their attention

* * * * *

"And you really think that a safety pin or a bicycle or some such seemingly harmless object was responsible for Ferd's horrible death in his own closet with a coat-hanger coiled tightly round his neck?" asked the man with eye-glasses and a business suit.

"Jeez. Are you nuts?" Oscar said, wagging his thick head in a coarse manner, "I killed the sumbidge myself, cuz he was a crummy Fagg alluz readin' books an' listenin' to Good Music an' like that. But don't you think of squealin' on me, or I'll croak you, too, an' I'll tell the cops it was a kiddie-car done it. Haw! I thought it was pretty smart of me, tellin' them about them suspicious safety pins an' bicycles. I got the idea from a magazine I alluz read called The Magazine of Chilling Little Vignettes and Silly Pointless Stories. And them stupid cops believed me. Ee-up. Jeez." Oscar guffawed crudely and opened another bottle of beer.

"O my goodness!" cried the man with the business suit and eye-glasses, for at this juncture a huge diesel truck had entered the room. "Aaarrgh," cried Oscar, almost spilling his beer, "What . . . frightful apparation can this be?"

But with a menacing mutter of, "Zo! I haff you in my glutches," the huge truck rolled lethally over the frail human bodies of the man in the business suit and Oscar-with-the-orange-hair. Then, its grisly mission accomplished, it sped away to a secret rendezvous with its leader, a harmless-seeming Polaris submarine. Residents of the sleepy hamlet of Milford, Pennsylvania, were amazed, the next day, by reports of a Diesel Truck that sped through the night, laughing evilly and shouting, "Tomorrow -- ze world!"

-- njc

MADNESS IN FORT COULONGE, QUE.

njc

Last summer I played a three-day engagement in faroof, but not very exotic, Fort Coulonge, Que., which is the closest thing to Dogpatch I ever want to see. Its main street is an unpaved, rutted cowpath: in fact, as we came into town, I immediately thought of the opening scene in "The Ox-Bow Incident" (actually, I'm lying about that; I just thought of that scene a moment ago, and thought it would be a terrific allusion to throw in: one that would show that I'm a keen student of Great Movies.) Please don't press me for details of how I happened to be playing there, no matter how desperately you may crave to know; for I'm not at all sure that I can remember -- I think, though, that money may have had something to do with it.

"Well, here I am in Fort Coulonge, Que., at four o'clock on a Thursday afternoon," I said to myself, who was the only person listening, "by golly. Whee. I guess I will have a drink." At six o'clock the drummer and I decided we'd look around the town; we stepped out of the hotel, turned right, and walked one block; then we turned around and walked back. "Tomorrow," we promised ourselves, "we'll see the rest of the town." The thought was so cheery that we immediately had several more drinks; and then we went to our room to lie down a while and Rest before making our grand opening later that evening. We must have Rested quite soundly, for it took a lot of yelling by our Leader to persuade us to arise and Go now. I won't bother telling you what tunes we played, etc. It was just a Gig; and the people we played for were just ordinary folk: hicks, oafs, and -- as the drummer called them -- Gorf's. "They're a bunch of dumb Gorf's," he said. "What's a Gorf?" I asked. "Spell it backwards," he replied; and I did, moving my lips for several seconds before bursting into uproarious mirth. "That certainly is clever," I wheezed.

A funny thing happened to me while I was standing at the bar (some of my Best Stories begin this way); the bartender was telling a few barely interested barflies, including me, about a Fealer He Knew who could bend beerbottle caps "two at once in one hand" between his index and middle fingers. "I bin practisin at it," the bartender confided, "an I can bend one. But not two. And even bendin one took me about a month of buildin up my muscles." Absently, I picked up one of the beerbottle caps he had strewn on the bar, placed it in the crotch of my forefinger and middle finger, and casually bent it. My amazement was greater, I'm sure, than that of anyone else present; I'd never tried that before, and I am by no means a Big Strong Guy. But I tried to look as though this was mere child's play: I yawned a bit, flexed my fingers thoughtfully, and sauntered away from the bar, a dangerous, don't-mess-with-me look in my steely eyes. I haven't attempted that Feat again, for I'm afraid I will find out it was just a fluke. Meanwhile, I'm enjoying the feeling that perhaps, if I really tried, I could leap tall buildings at a single bound.

I can down for breakfast next morning, about 2 p.m., and as I sat in the hotel's dining-room, blood streaming from my eyeballs, the bartender came in. I

looked at him balefully. "You must have put something in my drink last night," I accused, "I think it was alcohol." The bartender didn't smile; instead, he asked, "What were you drinking?" "Beer," I answered, kind of sorry I'd said anything in the first place. "If there'd been anything like that in it, you would of tasted it," he said sternly. People in Fort Coulonge, Que., are not aware that I am a Great Humorist.

One of the local boys introduced himself to us, that evening: his name, he told us, was Shorty. He was short, you see. "Hey cat," he said to the drummer, "you play a mean drum." "Thank you," said the drummer. "Yeah," said Shorty, "you play a mean drum, and I wanna wish you a lotta luck for the future." Then he turned to me. "Hey cat," he said, "you play a mean sax." "Thank you; it's a Martin," I replied. "Yeah," said Shorty, "you play a mean sax, and I wanna wish you a lotta luck for the future." Strangely enough, it turned out that everyone in the band played a mean instrument; and Shorty's fervent wish for the lots of luck that we would surely need, in the future, was bestowed equally upon each of us. Having introduced himself thus, Shorty sat down at our table; he looked at us for a few moments, and wrinkled his brow in thought. Then he turned to the drummer. "Hey cat," he said, "you play a mean drum." When he left our table (after about twelve or fourteen hours, I think) he wished us all a lot of luck for the future.

I had spent that (Friday) afternoon and evening trying to contact Lloyd Hollinger in Pembroke, a town some thirty miles from Fort Coulonge. Hollinger is the mad, sometimes bearded, bassist who was also a reporter with the Pembroke newspaper, and who once got himself in the national news by announcing that he was going to ask the Prime Minister and the Canada Council for "a grant to launch a 'super-swinging jazz gig.'" I had a difficult time just reaching the newspaper by phone; and when someone finally answered and I asked to speak to Lloyd, I was told, "Mr. Hollinger is no longer with us." No, they didn't know where he could be reached; and his name wasn't listed in the Pembroke telephone directory; so there seemed to be nothing left to do but go and find him.

Saturday afternoon, the bassist, the drummer, and I (fortified by a breakfast of bacon & eggs, macaroni salad and pickled tomatoes) got into a car and drove to Pembroke. Pembroke is a fairly small town -- perhaps 20,000 people --, but it is no village; so finding Hollinger wouldn't be a simple matter like walking up to someone in the street and asking, "Where's Lloyd Hollinger?" We parked the car on the main street, and I walked up to the first cop I saw and asked, "Where's Lloyd Hollinger?" "He's living in an apartment over the Palace Restaurant," the cop said, and went back to bullying a little man who had been caught jaywalking. We decided to have a draught beer or two before continuing our quest, so we went into a tavern that just happened to be passing by. As the waiter was setting our glasses on the table, I asked him, "Do you know Lloyd Hollinger?" "Why yes," he said, glancing at his watch, "He should be here any time now." "Well, in case we can't find him, can I leave a message with you?" "Sure." So I wrote on a piece of foolscap I just happened to have in my hip pocket, "Lloyd God: Super-swinging jazz gig at LaBine's Hotel in Ft. Coulonge (9 - 1:30). Make it on by and sit in." I signed the message and the waiter took it back to the bar, where he evidently passed it around for everyone's inspection; for we soon noticed people peering around corners at us, pointing and giggling. So we said, "Rooney," and "Vout!" and stuff like that, and left, snapping our fingers.

The Palace Restaurant wasn't at all hard to find, being only a few steps from

the tavern. There was a door beside the entrance to the restaurant; and we went in, and up one flight of stairs; and then I heard a typewriter; and then I saw a door with a printed card on it. The card read, "Lloyd Hollinger, Journalist." "Dis mus be d' place," I said colorfully, and thumped on the door. "Crazy," a voice yelled, "Fall in."

Lloyd sat at a typewriter. He was surrounded by, and ankle-deep in, books, records, empty bottles, fishing rods, shotguns, and more prosaic stuff -- such as dirt. "Lloyd Baby," I yelled. "Normie baby," he yelled. Then he pulled out a five-dollar bill and threw it towards us. "There's a wine store two blocks down. Get a couple jugs of that groovy port, man; I can't walk, cuz I broke my leg or something when I fell down." "How'd you fall down?" I asked with some fascination, for Falling Down is one of my favorite topics. "Aw, you know -- them sidewalks, man. They end on you when you're least expecting it." He lifted the leg of his pants and displayed his ankle, which ordinarily measures about twenty-five inches in circumference. It was swollen.

When we returned with the wine (one bottle of port and one of rosé), Lloyd explained that, since he had left the Pembroke paper, he was free-lancing, and doing some feature stories for Ottawa and Toronto papers. He showed us clippings of things he'd written; there was one absorbing story that began, "Unknown assailants ambushed the mayor of Pembroke late last night, and kicked him savagely in the testicles ..."

We sat around for a while, drinking the wine and listening to Duke Ellington and reading (aloud) poems by Jack Kerouac and Irving Layton (he's a Canadian poet who is at least Dirtier than Kerouac); and then Lloyd yelled, "Hey! You know what? Bill Stevens is in town, on his vacation." Stevens is a tenor player who had left Pembroke to work on some newspaper in western Ontario; he is almost as mad as Hollinger. He used to compose the headlines for the Pembroke Observer, and he used to send me clippings of some of them: "ARMAND FRANK DIES AT 69" and "KHRUSHCHEV DANCES AT GAY PARTY" were a couple; and there was another one concerning a couple of crooks who tried to crack a safe, but were injured (and foiled) when their explosive detonated prematurely; Bill headed the story, "MUFF JOB; BLTY TOO SOON"; but I think he got into trouble over that one. Anyway, Lloyd yelled (everything said in his apartment, that afternoon, was said in a yell), "Let's call Stevens right now!" So he picked up the phone, dialled, and yelled, "Bill baby! Hey, crazy! We're all going mad here! Mad! Hey, somebody wants to talk to you." He handed me the phone, and I yelled, "Bill baby! Crazy!" Musicians' speech-patterns, you will notice, tend to be formalized -- nay, even ritualized. "It's me -- Norm," I yelled, "Like we're swingin'!" "Normie baby!" Bill yelled, "Like wild! What's happenin'?"

We conversed in this manner for a few minutes, intermittently interrupted by Lloyd's shouting toward the phone important information that just wouldn't wait: "Everything's going MAD around here! We're all going crazy!" To be honest, though, there wasn't really any wild party going on: we were just sitting around drinking wine and playing records. But to Lloyd and Bill everything is always utterly mad; and they are always on the verge of hilarious insanity.

"So make it on by groovy old LaBine's Hotel, baby," I shouted, "and bring your axe. We gonna blow, Daddy." "Frantic, Normie baby," Bill screamed, "Like later. Oops -- hey, say 'crazy' to Lloyd for me." "Nutty!" I hollered, and hung up. "Stevens says 'crazy', Lloyd." He was digging through a box full of old 78 rpm records; he looked up. "Did you say 'crazy' to Bill for me?" Without waiting

for an answer, he started passing handfuls of discs to me. "Hey, remember this one? Looka who's on trumpet -- B. Bopstein! It's mad, mad, mad!"

After another hour or so of wallowing in wine and the nostalgia evoked by old be-bop records, my fellow Bandsmen and I took leave of Lloyd (in order to get back to the hotel in time for our Free Supper), after extracting from him assurances that he would not fail to show up for the evening's festivities at LaBine's Hotel in Fort Coulonge, Que. I leave it to you to imagine exactly how Lloyd phrased his assurances; I leave it to you because I am tired of typing the word, "crazy". That's about how he phrased his assurances, though.

Back at the hotel, we had supper (for the third consecutive day, we had our choice of roast pork or roast chicken) and continued drinking. We didn't, after all, want to be anything less convivial than completely demented when our Special Guest Stars arrived. "Boy, I hope they really come," the bassist and drummer kept worrying; they had been thoroughly impressed by Lloyd, and were ready to be impressed half to death by Stevens. The pianist (who also happened to be the Leader of the group) hadn't an inkling, however, of the gala All-Star Jam Session that was scheduled; he was pretty preoccupied, anyway, with attempting to make it with the Girl Singer. This Girl Singer was a native of Fort Coulonge who had gone to the Big City (Ottawa) to Make Good. About thirty years ago. No-one in Ottawa has ever heard of her, but she was a sensation at this engagement in her home town. I guess she should never have left there; she might have been a big Star, in Fort Coulonge, Que.

It came as a bit of a surprise, then, to our Leader the pianist, when a guy wearing a plaid shirt, jeans, and a week's growth of beard suddenly appeared on the stand and started blowing. Actually, though, the pianist didn't see him come on the stand; he was playing something like his fortieth chorus on some blues tune when Bill came in, by a side door, carrying his saxophone case. Bill and I yelled "Crazy!" at each other a few times, while he was unpacking his horn; but the pianist probably thought that these were cries of encouragement from the crowd. So when he suddenly heard great loud HONKS and SCREEs behind him, and digested the fact that I was standing beside the piano, holding my horn neck-down, and grinning even more idiotically than I ordinarily do, he immediately came to the conclusion that something unusual was going on. He spun around on the piano stool, bugged his eyes out at the sight of this backwoodsish-looking guy stomping and honking, and then spun right around again and began pounding hell out of the piano. Bob, the pianist, is from the Swing era; and he can play more or less in the Waller/Tatum style, with some Peterson, etc., thrown in as a concession to Modernity; and he loves loud, vicious tenormen; so he was going, "HOHO," and "YEAH," and walloping the piano while Bill blew a lot of choruses. And then I blew some, and then we took fours (i.e., alternated blowing four-bar solos), and when we finally stopped playing -- the tune lasted about fifteen minutes, I'd guess -- damned if the crowd didn't holler, "HOORAY," and "YAHOO," and "C'EST FOU, MON HOMME!" Yes-sir, jazz is the Universal Language, even in Fort Coulonge, Que. -- especially when it's full of honks and screams. Bill Stevens can play nice and cool and relaxed, with a fine round Lester Young-ish tone and style, when he wants to. But that wasn't the way to play, for that scene and with that crowd and with all that booze and hilarity in us; so right away we called for another blues, in the same key (B-flat -- it's the only key for that kind of session); only the tempo was different. We played a medium tempo blues that Sonny Rollins and John Coltrane had recorded, called "Tenor Madness," but it didn't sound much like Rollins or Coltrane -- as a matter of fact, it sounded like the Same Old Honking. But you'd

better believe that it was *fun*; and the rest of the night was like that, especially when Hollinger straggled in and began thumping his bass (allowing our bassist to play the electric guitar he'd brought along, hoping he'd get a chance to play it.) I don't mean that we just Made Noise the rest of the night; no, we played some Good Music, too -- "Body and Soul," and good old things like that --; but we did make some lovely noise, much of the time. And everyone did, indeed, Go Mad -- crowd, waiters, hotel owner, and, not least of all, the All-Star Jazz Band itself.

When the last fortissimo B-flat had finally been sounded, Stevens and Lloyd and I bought a case of beer at the bar, and went to my room; the bassist and the drummer begged off and went to sleep in another room, with the excuse that they had to get up early to drive back to Ottawa (so did I -- I was going with the bassist -- but I didn't care.) The pianist didn't join us, because he had an appointment with the Girl Singer, in her room (which was next to mine; Lloyd, Bill and I yelled encouraging remarks through the wall, most of the night.) So we sat in my room, drinking beer and listening to fine jazz from WCFL, Chicago, on Bill's portable radio. About five o'clock, Bill sighed deeply and fell backwards on one of the beds, snoring melodiously (honk scree.) About ten minutes later, I did likewise, on the other bed. Lloyd still had about another hour of talking to do.

About eight o'clock, the bassist walked into the room and asked if I wanted to go back to Ottawa with him. I didn't, especially -- not right then, anyhow -- but I woke up anyway and discovered that every bone in my body was broken. This I perceived to be due to the fact that I was being crushed to death against the wall by the gigantic form of Lloyd Hollinger, Journalist; I had to kick him rather severely in order to pry myself from the bed. "Huh? Wnuzzat?" he muttered, "Mad, thass what. Madness," he said, sitting up. "Hey, Stevens," he yelled, "Get up! Crazy! Let's GO!" Then he stood on his head. "Yoga," he explained, "Crazy."

And so we all stumbled down the stairs, and out to the parking lot, and got into our separate cars. Once again we yelled the ritual words at each other; and then Bill and Lloyd vroomed off in one direction, while the bassist and I went in another. So what's the point of this story? There surely isn't much plot, and there certainly isn't any punchline. I guess the point is that I felt like writing about it because that little Happenin' is one of the things I want to remember about my Line of Work. I want to read this a long time from now and laugh like hell, remembering those two madmen and good old Fort Coulonge, Que. I don't know when I'll see both Hollinger and Stevens, together again: Bill is hundreds of miles away in Chatham, Ont., slyly inserting double-entendres into the headlines and news stories published in the Chatham News; Lloyd Hollinger, Journalist, is going Mad all by himself in Pembroke, Ont., while all of that town's citizens watch with awe. It may be years before the three of us get together again on some creaky bandstand in some jerky village, and make glorious noise and yell at each other and generally go Mad. And mainly the point of this story is that I am going to send copies of this Descant to Bill and Lloyd; maybe they'll enjoy re-reading it, in 1990, and maybe they'll give me a phone-call, then, and yell, "Normie baby! What's happenin'?"

Crazy, Bill! Crazy, Lloyd! Nobody's going very Mad around here. What's happenin' in Chatham? What's happenin' in Pembroke? And what do you suppose is happenin' in swingin' old Fort Coulonge, Que.?

Why don't you move to Ottawa? Crazy?