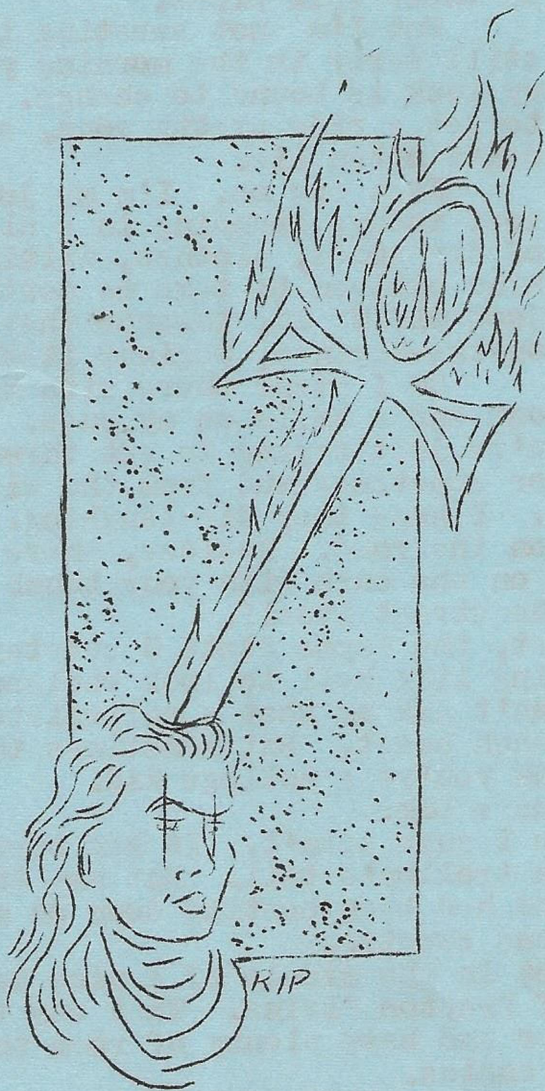


ENVOY
#7





RIP

THIS DON'T LOOK LIKE U.S. 10 TO ME....

by RiP

It's been a dragging day so far. All the kind Citizens are heading north like they were trying to get to the castle before they drew up the drawbridge. In other words, the sheenes, the cars, were all wheeling past me like they had missiles stuck up their tail pipes.

But I'm not sweating it, it's still early in the morning yet and my luck is bound to change. I'm bound to get a ride pretty soon, stastics don't often lie.

Just dig me. I'm my jolly elf sort today, standing in a clean set of dry goods, clothes, waiting for a kind citizen to take me north along Good Old US 10, towards that Babylon-on-the-Saginaw, Saginaw itself.

So I stand there with my thumb out and a smile on my puss. No use

walking, most of the time, unless you're just trying to get through a town. And ye gather a little dust, or sometimes mud from the wiseacres who'd swerve towards you for a laugh. I hope they die laughing. That's why it don't pay to get too far out on the road. Besides, where the cops might disregard ye for just standing on the curb with your thumb out, they'll bust ye if ye stand out in the street itself.

So there's my AWOL bag at my feet, the Wayne State U sweater showing under my black jacket and myself trying like hell to look wholesome and clean-cut and collegiate typeish. Don't ask me what a collegiate type looks like, I haven't ever been any such beast. But sometimes they'd take you for a ride because they think you're a college kid.

Just look clean. Nobody picks up a bum.

Trying to be comfortable, though I sure wasn't. It had been cold that morning, cold enough to freeze a trollop's tail. But now the sun was up like the standard of living and had been beating down on me for a while. I was sweating under my cap and sweater.

I'd picked myself out a nice spot in the middle of a nice long stretch of straight blacktop north of Drayton Plains. That way the folks in their wheels can see a poor hitcher and have plenty of room to stop for him. Ye have to figure all the angles.

That land is all peopled up anymore, full of suburb type folks. One can see little salt-box houses spread out haphazardly all over the countryside, each with their gravel driveway and identical mortgages. The kids are always the first up this early in the morning, especially on a weekend when the old man is resting from his weekly labors. I got tired

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of smiling at this one blond three year old and am hoping he'll go away, but he's just sitting under that elm and sucking on his popsicle. It's nice and shady where he is. The sun just lays up in that sky beating down on me like sunlight is going out of style.

So I just try to ignore him. Maybe his folks will wake up and call him in for breakfast or something. Why don't parents look after their kids better, shouldn't he be getting fed or rested up or something this time of day?

So I almost don't see this green panel truck cut in front of me I'm so engrossed in thinking about that kid and the sun and his staring at me like I was some sort of a freak and sitting in that cool shade by the drainage ditch.

Anyways, that green panel what almost clips me, when he cuts in sharp off the black-top, it rolls down the shoulder of the road a piece, and just sits there, motor running. There aren't any markings on it I notice, just the grey Michigan license plate, but I'm one to worry? I leap with my dry goods, my clothes, in the AWOL bag, and letting a full set of teeth show, gambol up to the door of the truck, preparing to give 'em the old hooraw routine about Going My Way? I pulls the door of the panel open, it swings open like it's rusty.

Most times the driver will lean over and open the right-hand door. But not this one. He just sat there, leaning slightly back against the worn black leather of the seat, the black plastic steering wheel firmly grasped by both hands. And staring stone dead ahead, like he was nowhere in this world anymore. It's a dry dusty day but he's impeccably clad in a Sufferin Bros. \$50 non-special, creased and clean like it had just been picked up from the dummy in the window.

He tilts his head to the side a bit and his swivel around on me like a pair of white agates in a dice cup. And the corners of his lips sorta crackle, like it hurts deep inside but only hurts when he laughs only he can't laugh or his face would crack.

It looks like he's trying to smile, but the lips open up and a smooth mellow voice, tenor I think, says, "I'm going your way."

I mean, like that's obvious, but I'm in no mood for laughing. This guy looks like he could stand in for Zacherly in the Late, Late Show. No shadows under the eyes, no painfully bloodless cheeks. He's just nowhere on this world.

I'm standing there like a fool with the door in one hand, my AWOL bag in the other and my mouth open, wondering if maybe I made a mistake and this guy wasn't intending to pick me up after all. So I'm about to excuse myself and he speaks again. It's like he's mouthing the words while a phonograph plays the words themselves. I expect to hear a li'l static. But he says, "Aren't you coming along?"

That's it. He's funny as all hell, maybe he's a fruit or a queer or the Lt. Governor on an off-day, but he's a ride and it's hot out here. Someone forgot to tell the weathermen that it isn't Spring yet.

So up I toss my AWOL bag, and leap in after it. Slam goes the door (tho not too hard...some people are awfully sensitive about your slamming their doors)

I look past him, out the open window on his side and see that kid still standing there, watching my every mood. And then the Dodge panel truck is put into gear and we move out and the kid disappears into the past.

Normally I let them start the ball rolling, if they want to talk by saying something along the line of, "Thanks muchly for the lift, I'm heading for so-and-so, how far you going?" But not this one. I just sat there and wondered what was a guy driving a '59 Dodge panel truck doing wearing a fairly expensive suit, not a wrinkle in it at that?

He's just sitting there, silent and staring forward like he's under

4) a hypnotic spell, or acutely embarrassed or something. But then he turns those beady eyes on me again, the wind whips a few stray strands of hair loose, it looks so out of character for him. And asks, "How far are you travelling?", pronouncing them slowly but clearly, like he was unfamiliar with the language.

Naturally I answers as far as Saginaw, and he replies that he is going as far as the river and no further, he will take me there.

Normally I would say to myself, "What a stroke of luck!" For one just doesn't get rides like that, to the doorstep practically. And it had been a bitchy morning for rides, too.

But I don't say nothing, he's looking dead ahead again. I zips my jacket up, the sky is all coarse and cloudy, like it was gonna snow, even as it had been warm and cloudless a bit ago. It's cold in the cab of the truck and my man rolls up his window, I do likewise.

Now let me tell ye something. Most of the time a person will pick up another for a ride, they want something. Someone to talk to, so they don't succumb to highway hypnosis, fatigue, or just loneliness. They might want you to talk to them, play an instrument, tell dirty stories, or just look interested while they tell you stories or their troubles. Some want a person to spell them at the wheel, or just simply because the wife gave them sausages and pancakes that morning and they're still feeling generous. And, of course, there will be a few queers.

But this one is like nothing that has ever picked me up before. He just sits there, all the way to Flint. Now that I look at it closely, it seems an old face, but still not over forty. I know enough not to get my rides teed off, so I keep my mouth shut until he opens up first.

We reach Flint and my man wheels his panel truck through the morning traffic like he was driving a Triumph sports car, through the housewives

stocking up for the week-end and Detroit idiots trying to get to the lakes before each other. He drives like he's got precognition and telepathy, and like he was born with a Reo steering wheel in one hand and a Pierce-Arrow shift stick in the other. Not a drop of perspiration, not a wrinkle in the suit. An artist with the gear shift, a deVinci on the accelerator. We don't hit more than three red lights in the whole town.

So I'm a bit more relaxed now, confidence in a wheel-jockey like that is a natural.

We're hitting the farm land north of Flint then when the clouds fall open and the rain comes down like water was going to be rationed tomorrow. And he turns to me and asks if I ever studied mythology much in school?

I clear my throat and try to think of something to say, and finally sputter out, "A little bit, but not much."

"Ever study the Greek legends in particular?"

The rain is really coming



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down now, coating the windscreen, the wipers making bare headway against it. If outside, I'd get soaking wet even with a slicker on. I'm glad I took the ride after all.

I cross my arms in the chill and cough. "Oh, a little bit, but I was more interested in the Norse and Germanic legends. Lots of action and blood and gore you know." He smiles weakly, small minute cracks forming around his eyes and lips as he does so. My God, how old is he anyways? He looked like he was over 45 then.

The clouds rolled overhead during a break in the rain, the Dodge panel hit small pools of oily water and sent them leaping for the edges of the road. The farms, many decaying from the onslaught of mechanized co-ops, trailed through the wet trees on either side. An empty auto trailer roared by, its diesel moaning in the humid air.

The lines once more formed on the windshield, and I leaned back as the world once more disintegrated, became unreal through the film of tears from the sky. Cars with their blinkers on went the other way, but no one passed us. Nor had I noticed anyone doing so for some time.

In all this time he had not slowed a fraction from the steady 45 he had held all that morning. I was uneasy about this, in this rain slickened time. Asphalt is dangerous when wet, the TV always told me.

He didn't radiate confidence or anything as mundane as that, but I knew He wasn't worrying about the road conditions.

Continuing to scan through the frantic actions of the wiper, he asked me if I ever heard much about stuff like The Golden Fleece, the Harpies, the Underworld, Hermes the Messenger, Athena, the Owl of Athens and stuff similar to that. Sensing that he wanted to talk, I replied with the standard stories about Homer and The Illiad and the Odyssey, the Judgement of Paris, Adophrite spring full-blown from Zeus' head, Helen the goddess of the Hunt, that turned this one admirer into a stag and slew him.

We hit some small town, a few stores and a stop-light, to the south of Saginaw, and pass through without a word passing through the dank air between us. It's almost stopped raining now, a drizzle is obscuring the world outside the windows, turning them hazy. If I didn't know better, I'd say a fog was forming.

I'm glad that this ride will be over soon. This guy can't seem to make up his ever-loving mind whether he wants to gab or not. With any luck I'll be able to get a ride on the Sag busses right to Simmon's place... Then he cuts in on my reverie with some more swinging jazz.

"Have you ever thot it strange why Christianity, when it started out in its campaign to convert the known ancient world, took over so many Greek customs and ideas? Not simply Hellenic influence, I can assure you. Nor to gain converts amongst the Greeks. No, I suppose that you just believed what you heard in school about the old religions and Gods. The Scientific age seems not to have yet developed an interest in Greek legends, beyond a few vague archeological expeditions at Troy and a few temples.

No, I guess you haven't thot it strange." he stated in that odd tuneful voice of his.

There were small homes springing up around us now, suburban developments lying on once prosperous Saginaw valley farmland, now sterile and giving forth but crab grass and nettles. Saginaw is very near now. In a little while the streets of the city will be filled with quarrelsome people, each intent on their own life. It's almost a physical relief, to contemplate being amongst living people again.

But where are they? And why does US 10 look so strange to me? Then, passing a small drive-in Restaurant, the answer strikes me. The lot is filled with cars. The lights are on. There are people sitting in their cars or in the restaurant. But they're not moving.

6/ We start hitting stoplights, and it's the same everywhere. The stores are full of people, there are cars parked on the curbs. But there is no moving people anywhere in sight.

I'm orbiting the place like mad but nowhere is a soul with the makings of life upon them.

I look over to my driver, funny I never noticed all those little age lines on his forehead before, he looks over fifty years old. I grab his arm, and mumble something about where are all the people.

He stops for a light and looks at me and shakes his head. I do not like this kind of set-up at all, let me outa here, I says to myself. And find that the door isn't operating nohow. The window is jammed, too. I'm pounding on the window then, when he starts up again and launches into his tale.

Not too much of it seeps in, I'm trying to get out, but he's talking about some beliefs the ancient Greeks had. All about how they believed in Heaven and Hell, with variations, just like the Christians. But that one's deeds and life counted more than a belief in any particular set of Gods. Had to have it that way, what with all the Gods the Greeks had.

It's stopped raining now, and the streets are misty. Saginaw looks deserted, even though I can see people inside some of the cafes and stores. We're still on US 10, though it's no US 10 I know of. We're heading for the river.

I sit back, shocked, paralyzed, shaking all over, my breath is roaring in my ears, nothing works, this place is tighter than a drum. I raise my foot and kick at the front windshield, but as I expected, nothing happens.

He said he was only going as far as The River, didn't he?

Now he's talking about the last rites the Greeks gave their dead, and how they always sent them on to meet the Gods with a few coins in their pockets.

That's the river up ahead, youknow. It's so coated with mist and drizzle that you can't see the other side. That's pretty unusual for the Saginaw river, it's not much really.

I remember that I still had some change from a dollar I broke last night. And he asks me if I know what the Greeks always gave their dead coinage for.

No reaction from me, I'm numb to the bone. Ain't nothing happening. So he goes on in that sweet melodious voice, it seems so odd coming from such a wrinkled aged man. That suit seems different now, somehow. He pulls up on the embankment and stops the panel truck, killing the engine.

We just sit there. He folds his garneed hands. You see, they believed that they had to pay a boatman, Charon, his fee in order to reach the other side. Otherwise they might wind up lost souls, in neither Heaven nor Hell.

He smiled then, it seemed so pale and wistful. "Don't worry my son, they rarely turn anyone away. They separate them on the other side, you know. You can leave now. He's waiting."

The door sprung open, easily, when I touched it. I leaped out. And as an afterthought, reached back and grabbed my AWOL bag. I swing it down, it seems light to the heft now. The fog is drifting in now.

"Good luck, my son." I raise my one hand a little bit and wave at him. Then I walk past the front of the truck towards the river. There's an old pipe-smoking man there, sitting in a scow-like boat. And smiling a bit at my humor, I note that today the Saginaw river looks as black as the river Styx.

Being: Odd comments, mailing comments and just plain comments like Mother used to make. But first an exciting word from our sponsor.

This 7th Issue of The New Improved ENVOY is manufactured this Summer, 1962, by KriFanTat Publications, Unltd, being Project #14. It is a Greedy Bloodsucking Capitalistic Printing Combine owned and operated by kindly Ol' Richard (RiP) Schultz, whose luxurious manse is in the exclusive Residential Area of Belly Rave Vista, or 19159 Helen, Detroit 34, Michigan, USA as it is sometimes know by the lackeys of Day.

This is naturally intended for the 32nd OMPA mailing, the last of a long and bloody series under the tuteledge of Bruce Burns.

The story in this issue is my first piece of fiction for OMPA and I'm worried about the reaction. Thank God assination is illegal.

Pepsi-Cola hits the spot, and save your Pepsi bottles, folks. The one you have might be the very one Ted White needs to complete his near complete collection of Pepsi-Cola bottles. Ted White likes Chili too.

OLLA PORIDA--Haben Bart, Wille reisen Exactly, Walt! That's why I called Humbert Humbert of LOLITA the year's prize literary kook. There was absolutely nothing happening at any empathy or understanding level between the two. Just sex. Lord, how some people can talk their brain into believing some outrageous hooraw, when the ol' glands get to working.

And the "nymphet" set doesn't prompt much of a reaction from me. Prompted mostly by the observation that immature sexpots are apt to be sexpots because they're unable or afraid to allow any other segment of reality to get near Them. They're keeping the world at a distance with sex because they don't understand it. So they indulge in sex instead. It's all they feel they can offer to any relationship.

Sage psychiatric sayings from The Ol' Doktor Hissself.....

My, you've got a weird idea of what is permeating the ~~propaganda~~ information and entertainment media these days, if you think sex is a sublimation for violence in today's society. More along the line, "'Tis Far, Far Better To Kill Than To Engage In L*E*W*D* practices" is the current line. As it has been for quite some time.

SCOTTISHE--Der durchsetzen The way I understood it, the Doc's were feeding me Penicillen (amongst other junk) was that they were afraid that I would could down with pneumonia and other such dangerous type illness. If ye want a full list of all my treatments, medicines and incanations performed over my supine body, ask my Doctor.

Ye know, after all these years, it's surprising how many people still believe that Brian Varley is married. I rather thot WAW had thoroughly squelched that rumor years ago. But rumors never die, they just change names or something. For what it's worth, let me assure everyone that years ago WAW squelched the rumor that Brian Varley was married, that's why the rumor is still active today.



8] The other week Shirley gave me a view of a weird little world termed the all-sterile room. As ye probably know, there is this all-sterile niche off the operating chamber, which has been carefully cleaned and entirely sterilized. The nurse who comes here is sterilized outside then once more in the room. The instruments, and she herself, are then denied contact with the outside world and even the normal run of "sterile" operating room instruments and personnel. Absolutely no one must break in on her, no one must touch her even in the chamber, she hands the instruments to the surgeons, as soon as anything leaves her hand out there it cannot be touched by her again, it is "dirty", and will have to be re-sterilized before she can handle it.

The ordinary hyper-cleanliness of the surgical table, in fact, is quite dirty to her. She even has her own racks to keep stuff in.

It's fascinating what they'll do to get that extra little bit of safety into their labors, I guess I'd feel a mite safer on the table myself, knowing they went to such steps to combat infection.

ZOUNDS—Der gepanzerte Frust auf LA OMPAdom Now, now, Bob. When I mentioned your fanzine collection getting broken up a bit back, I had not heard much of anything factual beyond the bit about you vacating the premises. Then the Post Office pounced on Eney. And amidst the speculation going the rounds, I heard and assumed to be both logical and correct, the surmise that you left your fanzine collection behind. That your parents had "taken care" of some of it. Just a surmise, no one told me any "gory tales". Should have checked with you, but it seemed that you probably wouldn't know of the state of your left-behind collection either. Oh Well.

About this censorship gig. It all boils down to this. You and I can agree with Breen that censorship is morally wrong. And mayhaps campaign through the courts or protest marches or whatever, that is should be modified, abolished, or burnt. Okay, let's agree on that. Censorship is morally wrong.

But at times society does happen to see censorship as a necessity (wartime censorship anyone?) and enacts laws to enforce this. Then some groups for their own reasons and ~~sicknesses~~ idocracies, will have the State declare such and such verboten. Probably some of it seemed to make sense when it was written up, but I can't help feeling these laws were as silly then as they are now.

In any event, they're law now. And barring social upheaval or a slow process through the courts, they're here for a while. As individuals without the bread to fight the bluenoses, it behooves us not to get incarcerated unnecessarily. Therefore, dirty mind rampant on a field of gray, I intend to take a dim view of



anyone who puts even questionable material into the bundles. Let 'em postmail.

In this day of creeping Big Brotherism, I'd just as soon anyone didn't get the PO interested in us and leafing through our mail.

Before anyone gets the wrong idea, let me state that in my own opinion fandom has not transgressed the borders of the law into obscenity. Therefore I am speaking more of an academic situation than a real one. Certainly Lichtman's magazines have never been "dirty".

And I must rephrase my statement re Role's MORPH cover to this: I felt it could be construed as lewd by some censor and therefore should be frowned upon, as endangering the mailing.

As a sidelight, that cover looks quite innocuous these days. C' est la vie.

OUTPOST-Selbstverwaltung fur Lerwick,
Ich sagen!

No doubt Freddy will try to con all you people into believing that Lerwick, Shetland Islands, and himself, are just like normal Scots land and people. But it's not so.

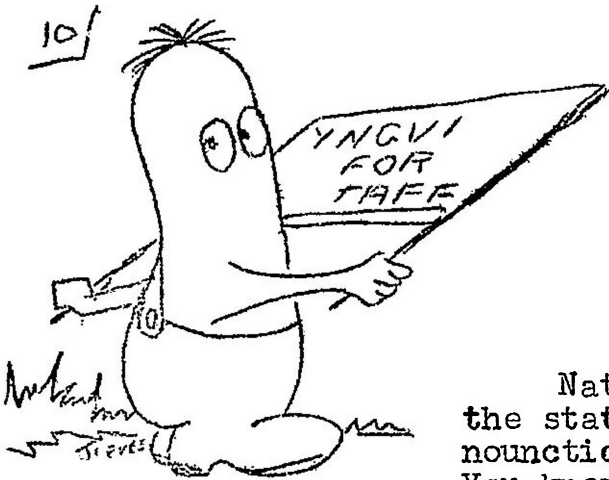
Actually Lerwick is a throwback to a primeaval age, where dark, brooding Norse berserkers sulk in smoke-blackened cold stone keeps while the fog drifts outside and oily waves slap against a gravelly shore. No doubt the oil comes from innocent Russian ~~ships~~ trawlers which their long-boats have raided, and they're brooding over the tendency of the Russians to keep their women home instead of taking them along on their trawlers.

ENVOY 4-Der Neue Verbindung Herausgeber Alles Heil! Art Hayes letter reminds me that we're having some troubles with our own injuns. A number of ~~bigots~~ people are trying to suppress the American Church, which is an indian outfit with no ties with Christianity, beyond a few vague moral precepts lifted from Christ's sermons. This is the same bunch that was found to be using peyote in their ceremonies.

Also, some white are learning of and getting real indignant over the conditions under which the Amerinds are living in our reservations. But not much is being done or promised, no one in Washington or the State capitals are doing anything to improve conditions. Shows you how much someone is concerned with prejudice and unequal Civil Rights when the minority in question doesn't control Big City votes like the Negroes do. However, in a recent New Mexico election, the rural Indian vote swung an election. An act to which the New Mexico politicians reacted by nullifying most of the Indian votes (these are off the reservation and putting up a bill in the State Legislature which would in point of fact defranchise the Indian population.

There were a few comments on it in TIME (the poor man's Volkeisch Beobachter) and NEWSWEEK, then silence. No one is worried about the Indians, it seems. And no one is worried about the segregation still practiced against the Indians either.





BINARY-Die klein Italien Schotte auf unsen.

At last someone has recognized my insidious campaign for what it is. I'm trying to get Burns to spell his name the right way. But he's playing dirty and misspelling my name now. Durn it, Bruce, all I'm trying to do is to help you! Also being helped are Pete Grahame, Stanberry and like that.

Naturally my single-handed campaign to reform the state of fannish spelling also includes pronunciation. Like Ella and her fanzine, ORION. You know what she called it? "O'Ryan", indeed!

ASP-Gross Wilhelm Ah, but Bill, you can get 90 proof cider if you flavor it with the right ingredients, after fermentation.

Being a group project, we always managed to let it slide down.

You should be happy, Bill. You're the first one to bring to my attention how narsty it is to mail copies of OMPA mags out before the mailings goes out. To quote Dean Grennell, it's "baaaaaadd!" Come deadline day, tho, and away they go.

If Ray Nelson was shocked to find THE SEX LIFE OF THE ABNORMAL AMERICAN FAN published after all these years, I hope it didn't get him mad at me. But everyone who wrote in said they liked it.....

DOLPHIN-Die glucklich Frau Frankly after having been in OMPA near a year, I can't see anything horrible about this concentration of Yank members everyone mentions. It's just the action of a natural law. When APAs are in "style", lotsa people join. When Britain loses interest in its own apa, the vacancies will be filled with Yanks up to a certain point. If interest goes up, so does the percentage of Britfans in OMPA. Also, the tight deadline schedule the Yanks have to meet, coupled with the postage will offset a Yank tendency to be in "that British APA."

AMBLEDie Wanderer Well, it's thisaway. Each state has different minimum standards every practitioner of medicine must conform to. Nowadays with everyone gung-ho as blazes, it's become a formality, a checking of the bona-fides more than anything else. Not beauracy gone wild, just a leftover from an earlier age when it was evidently necessary. Eney? Anything to add?

The Lindsay drawings in ENVOY #3 (Cheslin) were drawn from a foto after'a fashion, since I had some and could figure how she carried herself from them. I hope to see her do a Scottish dance in Chi.

ERG-Die Ehemann unter dem Pantoffel stehend? When Tubb started talking about what a wonderful world we're going to have in the future, oral birth control, European language, etc., I could only shake my head and wonder at some people's unfounded optimism. Apart from the world in which Orwell was horribly prophetic (Newspeak anyone?), the other one sees not color TV but a whacking big lot of craters spread out all over the country-side.

And God pity us if anyone really attempted to make us use the other nine-tenths of our brains. I figure there'd be such a witch-hunt started as would make every previous purge of the intelligensia look like a Sunday School meet. Why? All the Averages in the world would be very happy to be told by a group they're afraid of now (scientists) that they're stupid, literally stupid, and that'll be it....

See you all the next time I see youse....