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* 14524 Filmore Street, Arleta, California 91332, for the 111th mailing of the*
* Fantasy Amateur Press Association, also dated May 1965. In an effort to con*
* form with the current trend to index and number, I have spent hours, letter-*
* ally, slavishly, digging through stacks of old fanzines and apa mailings so *
* tthat I can say with reasonable assurance that this is sized Pub No. 105... *

e d i t o r i a l i z i n g s

I tried, people, I even got halfway through the 109th mailings but still have the balance of it and the bulk of 110 to read yet. It must be these damn weekly apas...one gets to read the egoboo the next week... At any rate, I had fully expected, despite weekly apas (and the montly one), to have all the stuff read so I could write lots of Mailing Comments, the kind LEE JACOBS writes. (Okay, Lee, I mentioned your name, where's th' beer...?)

On a more serious note, Anne's father died April 22nd and we, especially Anne of course, didn't feel much fanac for a while. Kevin has had his last major operation, no more for two years and that a minor plastic surgery..cosmetic type. We've all recovered from the spate of respiratory type colds and snuffles we've all had. In way of explanation, come to think of it, how these colds and such came about and hung on so long...

an operation a year for life

So far, that is. Kevin Lee Cox bormed into the world four years ago this July 20th, as some might recall chronicled (incompletely) some mailings back, was born with birth defects. Fortunately for him, they were minor. A double hare-lip and moderate cleft palate. At the age of about three months, he had his first operation which closed one side of the double hare-lip. That was October 1st. On the 31st, the operation that closed the other half took place. Then a long, slow, struggle to gain weight, etc. Most cleft palate babies are small. This is due to an initial difficulty in gettion the great quantities of nourishment they need when fist born. We used barious methods and such to get milk into him; often a 24 hr job to get into him what normal babies would take in one or two feedings!

But he crept onward until, while small, he is as active and vigourous as any other and is quite able to wear us both out with a nominal expenditure of energy! But all this time, Kevin still had the cleft palate. Perhaps some of you don't know exactly what this is. That is, among any group of people, some are bound to be simply unacquainted with the existance of it. This has been true in our experience. In fact, it is such a problem in some cases, that the Crippled Children's Society (the Easter Seal outfit) has, I'm sure among many others, a "Cleft" division, of which we are members of the Los Angeles branch and once a month, often preempts our attendance at LASFS.

The cleft palate is due to an incomplete fusion of the roof of the mouth and closure of the palate due to the tongue (all in the foetal stage of course) not receding to its proper place at the right time. It is now thought that this is due to a vitamin or mineral deficiency in the mother's diet at some crucial time, which somehow doesn't trigger a hormone or some such thing that is supposed to cause the tonge to "fall" down out of the way of the roof and palate so that they can close. We saw color slides of wonderfully done models done by a research group at one of the universities that are investigating the

cause of the cleft. At any rate, there are varying degrees of severity to the cleavage, all correctable in part or completely by surgery. It is almost down to a routine in this day and age and we were lucky in obtaining one of the best men in the field. Dr. Allyn McDowell. Clefts can impede speech and, at first, certainly inhibit normal eating habits inasmuch as the nasal passages normally closed off from the mouth by the roof of the mouth, are open unprotected. This allows food to pass out through the child's nostrils when he takes a mouthful. Beastly discouraging to the poor kid. Kevin's appetite was pretty much normal for a child his age but he had trouble eating. With the closure of the cleft, he could eat to his heart's content. Only problem was that at his current stage, children have passed the Bottomless Maw stage of their post-infancy and are now in the take-it-or-leave-it stage. At any rate, back to the story.

The cleft operation was originally slated for sometime last year but it was put off because Kevin's weight was not up to where the surgeon thought he could withstand it. So we bought a house so he could have a place to play (and I could have a place for a Den) and so Anne could have a place to keep clean....

Then it was scheduled for sometime last last year. He caught cold. Then it was for Early January. There was a death in the surgeon's family. All this time, in the colder, damp weather, we were endeavoring to keep Kevin from catching cold or even the sniffles. Anything like that and the operation is Off. So Anne caught cold. I had to stay home a couple of days to take care of her but mainly take care of Kevin so she could stay away from him. I caught cold.

You see, cleft babies, as long as the cleft is open, are more prone to take respiratory diseases of all types and gradations of severity. The cleft being open allows unrestricted access to a large area of mucous membrane or whatever. So... Finally, the date was set at January 25th and we took him down to Los Angeles Childrens' Hospital on Sunday, the 24th. Wow, did he have a ball running around in the high, iron-railed crib. The neo light directly above the bed with its two pull-strings particularly fascinated him and he got sort of carried away with the "Let There Be Light!" kick...

He didn't much pay attention when we said goodbye and left that evening...it was that much fun.

The actual operation was scheduled for about ten o'clock Monday morning and was to last two to three hours. It was a beautiful morning, warm, sunlit and the hills loomed almost in the front window. It was close to nine o'clock and we were ready to leave when the phone rang. Our neighbor called to tell us that she thought she saw our cat get hit by a car. I looked out the window and saw a familiarly long black form laying in the street....our beloved Gummitch, after only a few months of freedom from the apartment, didn't know enough about cars and was killed instantly. He wasn't very badly hit, it was clean and instant. With tears in my eyes, I gathered the incredibly limp, warm, form and carried him back to the house where Anne was still crying... Hardly able to talk, I phoned for people to come take him away and with heavy hearts (a phrase fraught with real meaning aside from its triteness) we got into the Volvo hoping that this was no promise of how the rest of the day would go.

As a result of this, we arrived comparatively late but found the operation had also started late although still under way. It was close to eleven o'clock by then. So we sat in the "waiting room" which, unfortunately, had a television receiver in it.

I had wanted to read to keep my mind occupied but that inane daytime television blather was enough to distract anybody who already had things on their mind to a point a lot closer to violent frustration than somebody with a placid, happy outlook for the day.

Besides this obvious disadvantage by way of poor planning, another thing that I found I disliked about Children's Hospital when compared to St. Joseph Hospital of Burbank, is that they are somewhat lax in notifying the parents when the operation is over. We'd been sitting in that damn room, after a lunch break and a walk down Vermont Avenue for a few blocks, waiting and waiting, obviously for some time past the cessation of the operation. I'd gone out to the Volvo to move it to the parking lot and when I came back, Anne was in the reception area talking to Dr. McDowell. Both of us were more than happy to hear the doctor say that he was pleased with the way the operation had gone. It was very successful, if the word can be graduated, and we could go up to see Kevin.

So we hopped over to the elevator after bidding farewell to the doctor. Walking into the room, we were more than a little taken aback, as they said in old novels, to find Kevin in an oxygen tent.

We were immediately informed that this was S.O.P. inasmuch as the area affected by the surgery always, due to a drop in the system's resistance, caused a galloping case of the "croup". Sure enough, Kevin crou-coughed resoundingly from within the heavy plastic. We were told by other parent's in the four-bed room that he had been awake but had fallen asleep again. This didn't add to our appreciation of the downstairs desk information service!

He lay there, in diapers, breathing silently under the steady hissing of the oxygen into the side-zippered plastic tent. There was just a tiny fleck of blood in a nostril, otherwise there was no clue to the fact of his recent surgery.

Then he awoke. His great, dark eyes, rounder than eyes could be, immediately spotted us. Man, he wanted out of there! After a while, so agitated was he, that the nurse suggested that we not stay! Since there was little we could do except stand there with nothing to do for him, we reluctantly left. And returned to an incredibly empty house. I frankly don't know what we did the rest of that day. We went back Tuesday morning and he was awake and ready to forget about the whole thing and go home. As soon as he saw us, he stopped being halfway dozy and if not content with his situation, at least not complaining.

Staring at us with his big, dark eyes, not an expression on his sober little face, he'd lift one foot and kick viciously at the plastic tent. Kick. Kick. Kick. Steady and with infinite feeling. Kick.

But things improved, especially when feeding time came and Anne could take him out of the tent, change him and try to get some of the soups and juices down him. He didn't take to the eating bit very much at first which reminds me that all this time, he had an I.V. rig going which is what really kept him going since he didn't really eat much. I believe it wasn't so much that his mouth hurt or anything, but that it was a sign of his disdain for the whole bit. He didn't like being in that tent. He wasn't able to see the tv or the other kids or kick his Queen For A Day balloon around.

With the IV needle in one hand, we couldn't hold him and love him very well, but he enjoyed Anne's ministrations when he was wet. Also, since the oxygen was going into the tent

through a tray of cracked ice, it was pretty moist and cool in there. All of which was conducive to breathing and all, but tended to keep him pretty cold, especially his diapers when not wet by him! He was trying to sleep, but only with little success, when Anne covered him with a spare diaper. Warmer, he went to sleep. This was on Wednesday, by now, and I was at work. Thursday we went down to take him out of there.

We were still a bit surprised to find the IV needle still in effect but I guess they wanted him to get every last bit of nourishment he could get before he was eating on his own. But he had been out of the tent for a while and that tended to cheer him up. Unfortunately, just as he was dressed and ready to go, the medicine train came in and the nurses were damned if they were going to let him go without forcing some of that slop down his throat. This bugged Kevin considerably, with reason I thought, and probably was what caused the hospital to bill me twenty-two dollars more for after the insurance and I had covered "all" the charges at discharge time! Yech.

Of course, he still had his cold and tended to cough a lot and sleep less than soundly after he got home. His days and nights were spoiled by the fact that his wrists were tethered in such a manner that he could not move them higher than his waist. This per the surgeon so that he could not put his fingers or anything else into his mouth. After a while he could eat with forks but for the first couple of weeks, nothing abrasive, such as crackers or hard cookies, etc., and no forks.

At any rate, Anne and I were both up almost every night, especially me since she was busy with him all day long, and we sort of got rundown with little or no real rest...and we caught his cold and for a few weeks, it went round and round. I missed more days of work! And so the Feb deadline came and went.

At any rate, the above ought to explain a few things as far as Kevin's operations, averaging one per year so far of his almost three years of existence. He doesn't realize this much but I fear that a couple of years from now that his memory will probably be fairly good...as soon as he goes into the hospital. He's been in hospitals, counting his initial entry, five times already.

And to continue, Anne's father was already semi-immobile when another stroke occurred sometime in late March. He was in a rest-home type hospital for two weeks and then home for about a week when pneumonia set in. Thence to the hospital where he remained for about two weeks until he went quietly in the evening of April 22nd. I somehow decided, almost at the last minute, about going down to LASFS that night although things didn't look too dark and Anne's mother was up to spend the night with us. I'd run over to Dave Hulan's to pick up the APA L mailing ...oops, SAPS mlg which Bruce had taken to LASFS that night, Dave being unable to stay since Katya was working that night. About fifteen minutes before I intended to leave, Anne called.

But enough of this. I'm sure it isn't of the utmost interest to most of you who are reading this, especially this latter part. However, we feel optimistic that the rest of the year will be better and plan on a 3 week trip to Maine in August. Watch Out, Norm and Gina... And now, on the next page there will be an article which ought to go far in revealing to you, one and all, What Happened to happy, young, ~~drunk~~ bachelor about LAFandom, when he went and got married these already many years ago. And, if there is no space in between, it will be followed by a double book review by Dave Hulan submitted in July of 1964! Illustrations were to have been by Robert E. Gilbert except that this is a last-minute effort for reasons beyond my control, some of which have been outlined above. Onward!

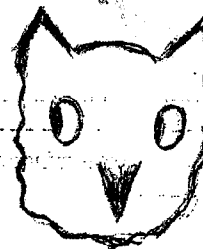
THE OWL AND I,

or,

I Married a Owl-Goddess

by

E. Married Cox



I suppose there was a time when I didn't know what a owl was. It must've been when I was very young, digging holes in the backyard at 63 Newberry Street in Somerville, Massachuettes under the brassy blue sky of a hot summer, day. Before that, I don't remember much. After that period, I became old enough for my folks to take me to the movies and that's probably where it all started.

I remember some of the early Walt Disney pictures. It might have been in one of those that I first saw a owl. That is, maybe not in Snow White but certainly in Bambi although there seems always to be a forest scene in a Disney picture and a lot of those eyes glowing in the dark must belong to owls. Then there is the scene where our frightened young hero(ine) is alone in the deep woods (there never seem to be shallow woods...) and a owl makes its characteristic noise and wow!, is our young hero(ine) ascarded! But it was only a owl and everybody titters nervously, all one of them. I'm sure you've seen this scene scores of times.

I'm also sure you've seen owls. I mean, like they appear to be some sort of Symbol or something, connoting wise-ness. Owls are a bunch of smart-alecks!

And there are all the things attributed to owls besides intelligence and all that. If you eat owl's eyes, you'll be able to see in the dark like a owl. In northern India anyway. And, besides cats, owls are sometimes witches' familiars. I never thought I'd want to get familiar with a owl, but... In some parts of the world, owl's are the the sex-symbol of women (and bats are the men). Nothing spectacular or anything like that. It'd never make RAVE or KEYHOLE or whatever they publish today. Owls are more of a totem-animal or whatever.

With this vast array of background knowledge about owls, let us continue into my life surrounded by owls. Having been a POGO fan for many years, I became well-acquainted with Ol' Owl therein and my sum total knowledge and experience with modern*day owls was pretty well centered around the POGO manifestation. I also realized, if I had stoped to think about it, that they were real creatures that lived in woods and made things tough for field mice. Other than that, I went blissfully on my way, leading a bachelor existance otherwise unenlightened further about this particular facet of the universe about me.

Then I met Anne Seidel.

This didn't change things too much at first. Then we got married. Even then I didn't begin to realize that I had in reality married a Owl-Goddess.

Thinking back, now, I remember seeing an owl-pin or something here and there when I first was dating Anne. Then when we started sorting out our various possessions in our apartment, she started to show me some of her owls. But it was not until the Spring of 1962 when she had her owls displayed in the Hobby Show at the Shrine Auditorium in Los Angeles did I realize the extent of her collection. It was sort of a sub-display from the L.A.S.F.S., exhibit which generously granted her space and when I first saw them, I was flabbergasted. I didn't realize there were so many different kinds, sizes, materials and shapes that owls could come in.

I also found out that there are some other collectors that have even more than Anne does! If that were possible, I thought.

 Sometimes I swear I hear the flutter of wings,

For those of you who haven't really thought about it, these owls come in the form of a big pine cone (procured at Farmers' Market), carved wooden owls in various rare, exotice and common woods, salt-and-pepper shaker owls in multitudinous variety, cookie jar owls (useful as well as cecorative), wax candle owls (to which the torch shall never be put), jewelry stick-pin, earring owls, clocks (with eyes that move), candle-holder, book-end, paintings photos, etc., etc., etc. Owls without end. She used to have a stuffed one but aside from the thought of how it come to be stuffed, the cat sort of ruined it. And, in Los Angeles County, it is unlawful to keep a owl as they are, with reason, classified as wild creatures.

"How come," I once asked her, "how come you collect owls, anyway?"

"I gave away my elephant collection," she told me.

I figure this is unassailable logic. If only speaking volume-wise, think of the number of owls that will fit in the space of one elephant.

But I feel there is a fanaticism for collecting owls that burns brightly in only a few people, and does not exist in collectors of other things. I feel that it is significant that owl-collectors are women only, to my knowledge. So that there is probably some real basis for my theory that they are Owl-Goddesses and there is A Lot More to All of This than most people think...

So she goes on collecting them here and there, gleeing at each new acquisition. And she knows the hitory, and name, for each owl, telling one at the mere drop of a question, when and where she got it and for whom it is named, etc. But to collect isn't the only way to enjoy owls. She makes them in do-it-yourself mosaics, water-colors, sequins and what-have-you. She has probably knit one. Or will. It's available somewhere. I saw it in a magazine. She saw it too, which is why I say she will.

Imagine. A knit owl. The concept sort of staggers me, upon contemplation.

She is joyous even at the televised image in a White Owl cigar commercial. As yet she hasn't urged me to take up cigar smoking....

There are a lot of things one learns to assimilate into one's life-style when one becomes part of the ecological cycle of the Owl-world. First, it soon

grows on one that there is a high-pitched consciousness of the Presence of Owls. A picture in a book, an appearance in a movie, in an ad on television (especially if it's a live shot), a squeal of discovery in the Sunday "Home" section, etc. They are All About Us and you'd better keep a sharp eye out, is the way it works, I believe. Then there is the business of old bromides and new.

For me, the word "Owlishly" has become fraught with multitudinous nuance...

"Drunk as a hoot-owl" is a phrase, descriptive as hell until one tries to analyze it in the same light as "sick as a dog". Dogs notwithstanding, to sully the sily-bright reputation of the Honorable pantheon of Owldom is Not Done around here. "Drunk as a stfan" maybe, but not as a hoot-owl. And that reminds me...

Owl-isms creep into one's daily language. And into other people's, too. I will be talking on the phone to, say, Lee Jacobs...let's make that, especially Lee Jacobs, when Anne will come up and go "Hoot!" at the phone. Lee, well-conditioned, immediately goes "hoot-hoot!" back to her and there I stand with an alien conversation going on in my telephone call!

There is another phrase which is even more tabu around here than "drunk as a hoot-owl" although it falls into the same general state of being on the part of a person who has partaken more than liberally of some sort of booze or beer. I remember at a party at Rick Sneary's house, long, long ago, it was one of the last Outlander gatherings, in 1954 or thereabouts. Lee Jacobs (who else?) had partaken more than liberally of the brew and during the remainder of the party sort of sat quietly in a chair which caused me to, later, refer to him sitting there looking like a boiled owl. He did not much care for this description.

Anne cares for it less. In fact, I've taken to refraining from referring to her as a boiled owl! Seriously, though, that phrase is not welcomed around here. The very concept of a poor owl getting (shudder) boiled...

There are a lot of well-intentioned friends in Los Angeles who keep Anne in mind during their travels and often bring a little gem along and contribute to her growing aviary. Among these number, especially, Bjo Trimble, John Trimble, Steve and Virginia Schultheis (of the Santa Barbara annex of Los Angeles), Ron Elik, Al Lewis, Ellie Turner, Gail Thompson and many others. This is much appreciated... even by me. It sort of takes the pressure off since I'm not yet entirely accustomed, even after over four years, to track when during scan mode a blip hits my screen indicating the presence of a owl.

Among some of the unusualler items, there is a beautiful owl-checker set which came from Seibu's as a gift of a number of the nice peoples who made up the company of a number of the FAPA one-shots of a year or so ago (WESTWARD HOOG and like that). It consists of little owl checkermen, one set grey pearl, the other, white, around which little gold owlmen are constructed. The board, about six by six, is sort of gold and black squares and the owls are magnetized. It is truly a weird and beautiful array. We've never had the heart to play checkers with them.

Then there are little glass owls with ruby eyes, outlandish looking even for owls... There is a sort of owl-bell for calling people to dinner (or birds to the feeder?), but she never rings it for fear it'll hurt the owl's innards... And a sort of candle-enclosure owl in which the candle is placed and you put the owl's

head as a cover. I guess it is sort of a lantern since it has a handle. It sits on top of the television set and a little fuzzy owl is perched on the handle. There is a trivet with a owl design on it, a bridge score pad with a owl design, real modren, on the cover. It is written in. There is a sort of metal owl with a long tail. You blow into it and it goes "Hooooooot"! (Gift, I think, from Al Lewis...who likes to demonstrate how it works whenever he's over here...). There was an exhibit of driftwood art or sculpture or something like that, across from Anne's owls at the Hobby Show. Really beautiful stff. So the guy made a little driftwood owl perched on a branch. It has ruby eyes and is really beautifully done.

 it is becoming difficult for me to realize that a owl is a real feather and blood bird it is becoming

There is a owl magnifying glass and a little orange candy owl from Halloween that will never be eaten; a little pink squongy-rubber owl; a Katchina owl which is authentic in design and color; and a host of others of varying sorts.

 Owls are birds, aren't they?

Anne has been overjoyed to discover yardage with owl desings. She has made a summer blouse for herself with a little matching one for Kevin. Bjo found some yardage with owl rampant in a field of wild modern design. Anne hasn't used it yet, hating to cut it up. Then Bill Blackbeard brought a book for her, entitled The Owl's Nest. It is by E. Marlitt, a psuedonym of a popular German novelist of the late 1800s, Eugenie John (translation by Mrs. A. L. Wister). I've read the first chapter and intend to read the rest of the book one day as it is a reflection of a long gone way of life, another country, another time, and as such is very revealing. An era wiped out forever by the changes wrought by World War I. But, to get back to the subject, no owls are in the book, so far.

But I think this business of people helping Anne collect is going too far. For Christmas, a year ago, Ron Ellik and Al Lewis gave her a necktie with a owl on it. The main reason I think this is getting a bit out of hand is because she can't wear it.

I have to.

It isn't because I don't like owls, mind you (she might read this...), nor is it that I destest neckties with owls on them. I don't like neckties anyway, no matter how tasteful the owl design may be. I just don't like wearing a necktie around the house. With a tee-shirt.

I mean, like enthusiasm for one's hobby is great, but a necktie with pajamas? And it gets beastly tangled before morning, too!

Even Kevin is not exempt. He doesn't have to wear neckties, but she has found little playsuits and shirts and things with a owl emblazoned on them. I consider this rank brainwashing but she doesn't feel that he thinks so.

I guess it is with goodwill that such gifts, mentioned above, are given. But I fear it is difficult to reciprocate sometimes. Like the Trimbles. Bjo collects

unicorns and John griffins. Neither creature is very often found in the local knick-knackery shop. Maybe it's because nodels are scarce. I suppose, however, I could send John the entire football team of Canisius College... But unicorns are uniformly hard to find in any way, shape or mamer.

As for the owl-collecting business, there is now a big glass display case for them in the living room. It is sort of a divider. It divides the living room from the dining area and one's attention from whatever else is going on. It is to the left of the couch and while sitting there watching television or talking to somebody or reading in the quiet of the teeveeless evening, one gets an uneasy feeling. Looking to the left you see silent ranks of owls sitting there, wide eyes staring. I guess a hobby of that sort does demand a showcase but she vetoed my suggestion that it be in the garage...

After a while, I shrugged off the feeling that I was being watched...

As a final note about this owl-collecting business, I must mention an area of the field which is the frustrating part. Some stuff simply will not fit in the showcase. As an example, in the extreme, well...I guess it had to happen sooner or later. Rick Sneary wrote and informed us of a relic from the day of the zoo-morph here in Los Angeles. These things used to be (and some still are) built in the shape of the stuff they sold. Hot-dog stands in the shape of a long weiner dog or even a huge hot-dog, etc. This one Rick mentioned is a twenty-foot owl hotdog stand. I mean, I can't imagine them selling owl-burgers. Anne would picket the place! At any rate, she now knows about it. Rick was well-menaing, I suppose, but now I've got to drive down to South Gate so Anne can...oh, no, don't jump to conclusions!

I'm only going to take a few pictures of her standing beside it...

The foregoing is a serious and constructive non-stf type article which contains names of stfans which makes it all right. Be sure to watch for an article by Anne Cox all about this article, probably in the next issue. Owl illo by Anne.

Overleaf is reviews by Dave Hulan which I've kept all this time after firmly expecting to use them for the August 1964 issue of ESDACYOS which never come true.

Dial. Dial. Dial. Dial. Dial. Dial. Dial.

...rrring.rrrrring.

Click! "Tower."

"I'm flying upsidedown, my landing gear is out and I'm out of gas. What'll I do?"

"Crash."

platinum

picoseconds

by

dave hulan

The Search for Zei/The Hand of Zei, by L. Sprague de Camp, Ace F-249, 40¢.

This story appeared first as a four-part serial in ASTOUNDING from October '50 to January '51. Avalon, with their usual policy of putting as little as possible into a book, split it into two books, titled as above (the original was titled "The Hand of Zei"). Ace put them back together between the same two covers, but you have to turn the book upside down in the middle. Maybe there's something in the copyright laws or the arrangement with Avalon that prevents Ace from publishing this as a single or the same length, which it properly is; otherwise I see no sense in splitting it this way. Certainly there is no logical break in the story where you have to turn things over.

But enough of grotching. However poorly the book was divided, it is all in the same volume and is well worth reading. It is one of de Camp's Krishna stories - part of the universe of the Viagens Interplanetarias. This universe of the Viagens is the setting for most of de Camp's pure science fiction that I'm familiar with (and I think I'm familiar with most of it). His best pure SF novel, Rogue Queen, is a Viagens story, but that planet does not appear in his other stories. Some of the other Viagens stories are set on Osiris and some on Vishnu, but most of the better ones are set on Krishna - as might be expected from the nature of the planet and the sort of story that de Camp likes to write. Krishna is an incredibly diverse planet, roughly comparable to Earth at about the beginning of the 19th century (or so I infer) - that is, some fairly advanced countries, with most of the world accessible and loosely known of by the inhabitants of the more advanced countries, but with transportation somewhat precarious and a lot of room for high adventure and derring-do without the need of a private army to do it. De Camp has taken his usual pains to make the background consistent; the leading Krishnan language, Gozashtandou, is modeled on Persian, and dialects of Gozashtandou are represented in translation by consistent dialects of English. It's little things like this that I personally appreciate in a story; some people consider that Sprague is showing off and it irritates them, and I've no doubt that a goodly number don't notice it at all either way, but for some of us at least, such care is a source of great pleasure.

There is one point about Krishna which makes it a good source of stories. The rules of Viagens prohibit bringing anything which is above the technological level of the natives, or information in the manufacture of same, onto the planet - so that Earthmen on Krishna must use native equipment, weapons, etc. Which does make things more interesting.

The plot is fairly simple, in a crooked sort of way. Igor Shtain is a Russian explorer who is the head of Igor Shtain, Ltd. - a corporation devoted to making money out of his explorations. George Tangaloo, a fat, indolent Polynesian, is the corporation's xenologist, and Dirk Barnevelt, a de Camp-type hero whose weakness happens to be a mother fixation, is the speech-writer. Shtain is kid-napped when it becomes known that he plans to explore the Sunqar, a sort of Krishnan Sargasso (in the popular conception of the Sargasso, not the sea itself,

which is quite innocuous) which is the home of the makers of janru. The latter is a drug which has the effect of enabling a woman wearing it to completely dominate any man who smells it -- so it is naturally in great demand by the women of Earth as well as Krishna. When Shtain is kidnapped, Tangaloo and Barnevelt are sent after him.

They have no been on Krishna but a few days, and have not yet left Novorecife (the spaceport), when they are attacked by members of the janru ring and barely manage to escape with their lives. They assume the identities of two explorers from one of the lesser-known parts of Krishna (as if, say, they were Arab adventurers in early 19th century Europe), and set out for the Sunqar.

They are harassed all the way by the janru gang. Eventually they find themselves in the matriarchy of Qirib - where the local custom, aided by the judicious use of janru, is that the kind consort holds his position for a year and then is ceremoniously eaten. Barnevelt and Tangaloo become friendly with the queen and her daughter Zei, but are not getting much cooperation from them in getting a ship outfitted to sail into the Sunqar when during the ceremony when the current king is to be killed and eaten, a band of Sunqaruma invades the city and kidnaps Zei. Barnevelt is sent to arrange the ransom, and succeeds in springing Zei and escaping.

The remainder of the book tells of the chase from the Sunqar back to Qirib, and then the invasion of the Sunqar by the allied fleets of the Banjao Sea (which contains the Sunqar). It is rattling good action, but doesn't lend itself to any sort of interesting synopsis. If you like good action-adventure science fiction, nobody can write it better than de Camp, and this is good solid de Camp. If you're looking for transcendental imagery, go read Sturgeon or Bradbury and leave me alone.

A few notes on things of current importance.

I feel that the "black-balling" of the entire waiting list is an example of what a few people can do when they deliberately set out to mis-use the black-ball provision in the constitution. It is the first time that I can recall that this has ever been done. I recognize that it was done to demonstrate that it can be done but by doing so has proven nothing.

I fully support Bob Paylat's action in re-instating the Waiting List in the manner he did. It was the best solution to a stupid mess, and, quite within his discretionary powers. As for "solutions" to the problem of the waiting-list being so long and the proposed method of voting in people from the waiting list...there was once a fine, old American tradition of waiting-in-line-for-your-turn. I've noticed lately in the burgeoning American hysteria for the Big Me and-to-hell-with-everybody-else that this concept is dying. How many times has some stupid goddam fool pulled up on your right at a one-lane intersection and roared screaming tires around you because they simply couldn't wait a goddam minute or stand to see a car in front of them? It is a typical example. This Waiting List business will go on as it always has. If anybody wants to get in, they will have to wait, just like sores of others have before them. If there hadn't been so much stupidity on the part of a lot of fans in the past, blowing up the Idea of Getting On the FAPA

Waiting List is IN, Man! Everybody's doing it, let's get on! And so on. This is what originally swelled the w-list to unusual length. And what hasn't helped was the ridiculous bit that was passed some time back so that the w-list pays a little bit per year instead of acknowledging every FA they receive. I say that if a person isn't interested, is too damn stupid to mail back an acknowledgement to show continued interest or awareness, then who needs them? You people who voted on that bit can now shut up about how long the waitinglist is.

As for the idiocy of the CULT. Rick was being entirely facetious, originally, anyhow. It is a sign of the current trend in fandom that so many people got so upset and defensive about it. Jim Caughran certainly saw it for what it was and did a real funny bit in the FA but a lot of people evidently are lacking a sense of humor. It is basically this same lack of accomodation to something that affects them that That Was The Week That Was fell victim to. At any rate, the CULT types, many of them, obviously can't stand any laughter or satire in their direction. It is certainly surprising to me since I've seen a roster of the people in that outfit and at least a number of them always struck me as swingers.

At any rate, being listed as an Honorary Member cuts no ice with me. If I do not get the regular distributions and can not vote, then I am not a member. I have seen no such thing come my way notifying me of same.

Enough of that.

While I'm insulting people, let me call another couple of spades. While it is indeed harmless for all practical purposes as far I'm concerned, it does bely a childish petulance I find deplorable in Harry Warner to print old Ed Martin material. This doesn't seem to be the Harry I knew. I'm terribly disappointed to see him doing this, not for the cruddy material itself, but for the basic reason for doing so. Luckily, it doesn't cut much into the usual number of pages of Harry's own material which is uniformly readable and interesting.

As for the Breen business still going on, it has revealed to me that many members of fandom, that great trans-societal organization of idealists, don't have the maturity to carry any ideal to logical and practical application. This continual sniveling, blathering, on and on, is so stupid, people. If Breen himself did not, in the beginning take the ONLY action that would make sense, then there is no reason to carry on. Especially at this late date. Breen should have taken the Convention Committee to court. No amount of silly arguing can obviate this. Let's live in the real world for a few minutes. Or is that possible? At any rate, it didn't happen. Possibly for very good reason. The same reason Walter himself has not said a damn word. Any further arguing is pointless. It has degenerated to the same old bit, personalities using something as a medium to hack at each other. You Defenders don't even do the honor of respecting your Hero.

So why don't you all shut the hell up?

On that note of cheerfulness and light, I now depart. From now on, however, all pomposity and self-inflated egotistical ravings will be subject to pinpricks. Too many self-appointed sacred cows have been spreading bullshit too long. I'm sick of it. A lot of other people are, too. At the rate it's going, few of the people on the Waiting List will care to join. Many have told me this already!
