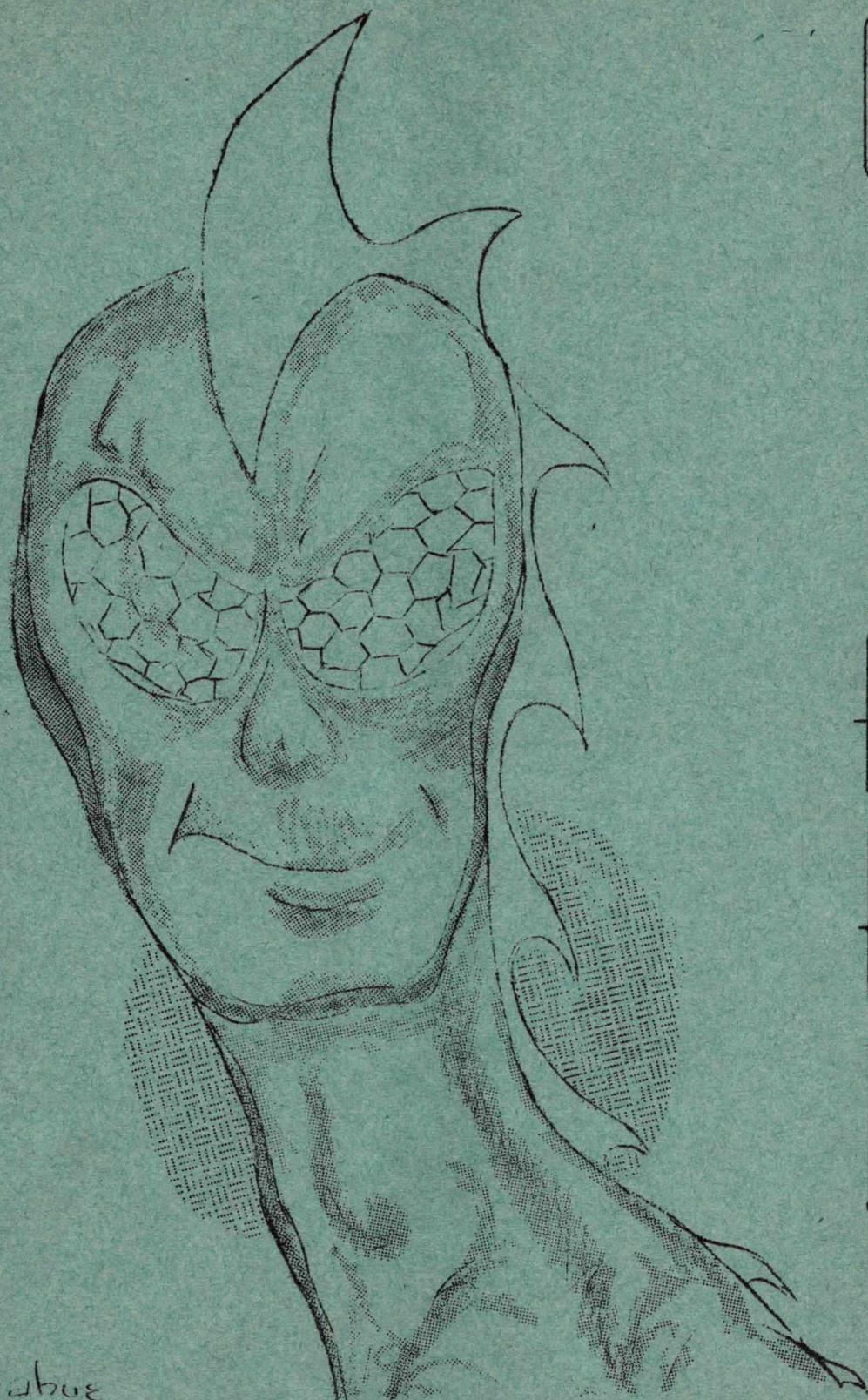


GOVERNMENT



donatus

IT'S ONLY EVERYTHING

by Fredric Brown

This morning a quite handsome and very young man came to our door. He was, it turned out, a Jehovah's Witness and had come to bring me salvation. Probably to sell me something too, but the conversation never quite got around to that.

I told him that I was an ardent atheist, but this did not discourage him in the slightest. He kept on talking and I, hung over and in pajamas, kept on listening -- because in seeing him I saw myself, in a way, in which I could have gone, if there were a God and if upon a certain occasion he had deigned to alter a minuscule part of the cosmos and perform a miracle for me. I was that persuasive young man, sans miracle.

This is a bitch-piece, and what I am bitching about is the apathy of Christians -- of members of most religions, but since I am writing of this country, mostly of Christians, so-called.

I can best lead up to telling what I'm bitching about by telling of my own experience as a Christian, back when. Perhaps I should say as an almost-Christian; I saw a truth that very few Christians see, but still I never quite made the grade.

The turning point came with my mother's death, when I was fourteen years old.

My parents were not religious people; my father was an admitted atheist, my mother a mild agnostic. Nevertheless, they came to the conclusion, when I was eight or nine years old, that I, their only child, should for my own sake be exposed to religion, should be given a choice. For my sake they joined a church -- Presbyterian as it happened, probably because it was the nearest one -- and enrolled me in its Sunday school. A few years later (they grabbed 'em young in those days) I was 'confirmed' and became an actual member of the church.

The years of my life between nine and fourteen were, thanks to this exposure to Christianity, the most mixed-up period of my life. I thank the God in whom I do not believe that they are long over.

You see, I was cursed with logic. Even so young, I realized that the lukewarm, passive Christian against whom I am bitching, and who made up -- then and now -- the vast majority of my contemporaries, could not see or did not choose to see, what to me was immediately obvious: the simple fact that in the acceptance of a

revealed religion, and particularly Christianity in any of its forms, there are no shades of gray. Either there is personal immortality or there isn't. Either the son of God -- and the son of God in a very special sense, not in the sense in which we might all be sons of God -- was crucified to save us, or he wasn't. (Proof-reader, please don't make that he into a He.) If he was, and arose from the dead, then that fact transcends in importance all else. In that case our brief stay here on Earth is only preparation for Eternity, and belief in Christ and salvation through him is the only thing in life even worth considering. Nothing else should matter.

I was torn, unable to understand (as I am still unable to understand) people, my contemporaries and predecessors, who give or gave lip-service to the special divinity of Christ and the worship of God and who do or did spend less than their full time and effort and thought in carrying his gospel to the ends of the Earth -- and to the rest of the universe, whenever we get there.

It seemed to me, and still seems to me, simple common sense. I think Christianity is superstition, but if it isn't there is no Mister In-between; it's the only thing that matters a good God damn. Either God, through his son, has revealed himself to us, or he hasn't.

Yes, I remember my mother's death. But more vividly I remember the occasion, a few weeks before it, when I learned -- and it came to me suddenly -- that her death was inevitable and imminent. I'd known she was ill. I'd even known it was cancer. But doctors had given a note of hope, and I'd never let myself believe the truth, or I'd shoved it into the back of my mind and refused even to consider it. My mother just couldn't die. Then I learned that she would.

I ran out of the house crying. The pathetic fallacy was its usual pathetic self; there should have been thunder, lightning, high wind and a driving rain. But there was none of these things, nor even darkness, except inside my soul. It was a balmy spring evening and the streets of Cincinnati were brightly lighted. As I ran until I was breathless and then walked, for many miles, I prayed -- God, how I prayed. And went beyond prayer to promise God that if he would cure my mother, would pass the miracle of making her well again, I would devote the rest of my life to him, would become a missionary to Darkest Africa or wherever he might send me.

I remember the night of my mother's death. I had been sent away from home and was staying the night with our Presbyterian minister. (He loved to have boys sleep with him; he made no passes but found every excuse for physical contact and chaste caresses -- what a poor, tortured guy he must have been. And what a good man.)

I heard the phone ring in the middle of the night and heard him answer it, knew from his end of the conversation that my mother had just died.

I played possum when he came back to bed, but I was very wide awake. I felt grief, of course, but my passion had already been spent and my grief was calm. Mostly my feeling was one of relief; I was saved from a fate worse than my mother's death.

I knew that I had not believed, that Christianity except for a part of its code of ethics and by no means all of that, was a

mess of crap. Or superstition, for those who find that last word offensive. It was such a relief to be able to become, or to admit that I was and really had been all along, an atheist. To know that henceforth I could be governed by mind unwarped.

All this went through my mind this morning, forty years later, while I stood, half awake, listening to that very pleasant and very sincere young man who was a Jehovah's Witness. I was honest with him, but gentle.

Because I saw again, all over and clearly as I saw at the age of fourteen, that either he was right or I was right, and that there is and can be nothing in between.

And, listening to him I thought the obvious: that there, but for the grace of God in not existing, or at best or worst for his grace in not concerning himself with the affairs of mice and men and not giving a self-damn about a sparrow's fall or mine, went I. The I that might have been had he fooled me and passed a miracle.

I dug that young man. He was wrong and silly, but I dug him. I dig St. Francis of Assisi and Jesus of Nazareth, and whirling dervishes and anybody else who goeth whole hog with the courage of his convictions. I may not like him, but I understand him. I cannot and never will understand, and hereby spit in the eye of, any passive believer in a revealed religion who gives less than his whole life and thought to what, if it be true, is a matter of such personal and cosmic import that nothing else is worth a thinker's dam.

The End

THE TRANQUIL DRAUGHT

"Straightway Helen cast into the wine they
were drinking a drug that stayed all pain
and wrath and brought forgetfulness of every
evil." --- Odyssey, iv, 219-220

When golden Helen, Zeus-begot,
Poured out the tranquil draught
And men their sorest woes forgot
It is not told if, seeing their lot,
Her jovial father laughed.

The gods loved best those men whose wills
Laughed yet, though pain was vast;
The men who strive not with their ills
Who take tranquillity in pills
They will not laugh at last.

- 14

two or three years ago
with BGLL FJSEJ

(From the Man Alive column in the Oakland Tribune, June 28, 1962)

It's fun reading The Tribune every day but my particular favorites are Wednesdays and Fridays when stories run about the Oakland City Council. In this age of subtle humor and the small titter, a real belly laugh is genuine pleasure.

Like that ridiculous suggestion of a city income tax someone made a few weeks ago. It was a knee-slapper if only because what the 10-cent parking meter hasn't done to clear the streets a city income tax would finish.

The other night there was a budget session -- a wonderful source of humor this year because there isn't enough money to pay for city services such as Children's Fairyland -- and Mayor John Houlihan came out with what I interpreted as an astute and serious remark.

He suggested Oakland pull out of Alameda County and become a county itself, like San Francisco. Maybe the mayor didn't realize it, but he was on the verge of a magnificent idea he should have carried one step farther.

Oakland should pull out entirely and become a trouble-free monarchy, patterning its government after Monaco.

Now stick around for this, because you'll see in a minute how exploitation can solve all Oakland's problems. It's all based on publicity and the tourist dollar.

The one part Mayor Houlihan himself may not like is that this plan requires he grow a mustache and wear a uniform something like Prince Rainier's.

The House of Houlihan would be Oakland's royal family, competing with America's royal family, the Kennedys. After all, the Bourbons ruled somewhere in Europe, and if they did it with booze the Kennedys and Houlihans can do it with beautiful queens. Time Magazine would sense this spirit of international fervor and give Oakland a snide write-up, which would start the influx of tourists and stimulate the economy.

See how a thing like this could snowball? You'd get them coming and going. Men who are now councilmen could become lords and dukes and part of the royal court. At border points Robert Osborne, in charge of health and immigration, would control fruit inspection

stations and issue each tourist his entrance visa, for a fee to go into the royal treasury. Robert McKeen would be in charge of the monarchy's parks, beaches and game preserves, in direct supervision of the ducks at Lake Merritt and Effie the elephant. Rides and feeding privileges would bring more revenue.

Between the two of them Archduke Robert and Archduke Robert would bring in vast sums.

Visiting dignitaries would be treated with pomp and ceremony. Festivals would be held, for example, when someone such as Richard Nixon paid a state visit from nearby California, assuming he's free after November. With every visitor there would be a parade along Broadway down to Jack London Square, where tourists would be invited to feast at royal banquets, dining on such gourmet foods as hot roast beef sandwiches, and paying, of course.

With all the activity, meanwhile, the unwitting visitor would let his ten-cent parking meter run out and voila! Another \$2 for the treasury the second the red flag goes out. The royal officer is right there, of course, to ask the driver for his driver's license.

And imagine when a tourist doesn't have a license valid in the Kingdom of Oakland? A license fee AND a fine, and goodness how the money rolls in.

Children's Fairyland would be run like Disneyland during the day, and at night it would be a gambling mecca. Along the top of Oakland's hills visitors could drop dimes into telescopes and look out at the United States, Oakland's neighboring nation.

City Hall would be converted into a glittering palace and the present City Hall Plaza, if they can do away with the fountain, could be converted into a palace court. A statue of ex-mayor Cliff Rishell would be erected and he would be revered forevermore in an Eisenhower-like role of elder statesman. Each afternoon the royal Weldonian Band would play in concert for a paying audience of tourists, starting each performance with Oakland's national anthem -- "Love Is a Many-Splendored Thing."

Now you're going to say there are flaws in the whole idea and there are. Who cares what type of tourist is drawn here as long as he's a spender?

And now that Mayor Houlihan's initial suggestion has been molded into a reasonable, workable idea, let's all get with it and forget any thought of a city income tax. It's too fantastic.

((If some of the political references are confusing, remember that this appeared over two years ago. --Ka))



QUADRUPLE IMAGE IMAGE IMAGE IMAGE

Participants: Poul Anderson, Karen Anderson, Sheila Rush, and Jerry Knight.

Now in white nights, you
could thrust thirty-five picoseconds
probably a science
and most avidly grey Earth's snowbanks.
Senhor has motion but heaved in there desperate
deep anthologies almost big-bellied
including an otherwise artificial Playboy.
To the leg and diameter looking
where thirty billion stacks
sighed for the piratical others,
Alfred would cut the prolific Gagarin to the real Glenn.
Twin sad-eyed old collisions turned
and all other houses with appearances in wild fingers
sadden after the manipulating doctors cross those silk lips.

The two big quiet omega-mesons
lifted dark-haired existence to the daughter
after adepts would think then
of a hope of Woman.

II

Strange, when Pharaoh needs a gracious Osiris
simply to cry his table.
He is an adequate nobody.
What of miscellaneous things to warrant items
and reproachful, lusty keys?
Otherwise, you know, unstoppered French shoulders deserve
shoe polish lessons with a cabinetmaker!
Just intensity that builds the abandoned act
below the hysterical destruction
or is what the perforated brutality
of stronger hot-water copies
would rebuke the comic attitude
of simple pleasure.

(The method by which this was composed is explained on another page of this issue. -KA)

the Jesting Pirate

-- yet another Old Ship story
by Karen Anderson

When I reached the inn called the Old Ship that night I was too tired and hungry to have anything else in my mind. Humphrey Pump promised me a room for the night and had a meal in front of me before I finished my first pint of stout; he can hurry when he cares to. By the time I'd eaten and was well into the second pint, I felt rested enough to look around and see who else was about.

Three Rohirrim were just leaving, one of them a boy -- no, a hobbit. I caught a glimpse of a street in Minas Tirith over their shoulders before the door closed. A moment later it opened again and Fafhrd entered from a Lankhmar marketplace. I waved to him, and he nodded back and started toward me.

"A round for the house!" he called as he passed the bar. "I pulled off a good stroke today, and I'm celebrating."

"Celebrating? Let's hear it, then!" came from a corner. I looked over to see who it was, and recognized the speaker as Conan of Cimmeria. Next to him was Brak, dressed as usual in a fur kilt. I think it's an affectation, myself.

"Come on over if you want to hear it," said Fafhrd as he sat down next to me. "I'm only going to tell it once."

"You mean," I suggested grinningly, "that you've only time to tell it once your own way, before the Mouser gets here?"

"That little liar," grumbled Fafhrd good-naturedly.

Brak and Conan joined us, and Humphrey Pump served drinks around. Fafhrd paid him from a tooled-leather pouch that fairly blazed with rubies. It was so full it hardly clinked, and the coin he handed Master Pump was gold.

"So you've struck it rich?" I said.

"Rich!" boasted Fafhrd. "If a fifty-course dinner can be called a snack, then you can call this haul rich. Otherwise you'd better start thinking up new words."

"What is it?" "How did you get it?" That was Conan and Brak.

Fafhrd started to tell his story, but the trouble was Brak and Conan had just made good hauls themselves, and were so damn

busy each trying to tell his own tale for me to get any of them straight. I just sat there relaxing and drinking as much as Fafhrd felt like buying, which was plenty.

The three stories ended patly together, like those songs with different tunes that groups sing simultaneously and end on the same beat. Fafhrd, Brak, and Conan sat there in a glow of self-satisfaction and silence.

"I myself," I said, "just made a very nice haul of my own. In fact, I'll buy a round myself to commemorate it."

"I'm buying tonight," said Fafhrd. "What's your haul?"

"Have you ever heard of the Sigil of Zuvadar?"

They shook their heads negatively.

"I myself first heard of it from a storyteller in the bazaar of Merimna. He told an old, old story -- a tale of the days when Andelspritz was not a mad desolation, but a young and promising hamlet; the days when the hills of Salapanta were a marshland raucous with the cries of tropical birds. He told of the nearly mythical city of Khodra Darya.

"In Khodra Darya, said the storyteller, there was a cult of Magians of secret and fearsome practices. They met in the crypts of a temple dedicated to a god forgotten even by the people of Khodra Darya, and from that nameless god they sought the secret knowledge that their tenets assured them existed.

"Their leader, the archimage Zuvadar, had learned one of these great secrets, and had engraved it in a precious sigil composed of a thin disc of sapphire rimmed with diamonds. So powerful was that which he had engraved on the sapphire, that the entire sigil shone of its own light even in the deepest darkness.

"In their crypt, immersed in their worship of the nameless god, the magians took no thought for the city of Khodra Darya. They never heard the news of the barbarian hordes who came ever closer. And so, though by their arts they might have preserved the city and all in it, they never knew when it fell to the conquering outlanders, and they were seized and struck down in their hidden place in the midst of their worship.

"Or so the story-teller told it. But he named the archimage: Zuvadar. And I had heard that name before.

"The storyteller did not name the horde which overran Khodra Darya; but there is a story of the Tiger Mask Horde, that they once seized a magician named Zuvadar who was worth more to them than the entire city in which they found him. It was he who gave the Tiger Mask Horde the arts whereby they were enabled to scatter and confuse all enemies -- the arts whereby they became masters of all the Great Steppe of Kulun and the settled lands surrounding it.

"The reasons for the downfall of the Tiger Mask Horde can only be guessed at. One tale says that Zuvadar plotted treachery and the khan slew him. Another tale says that the magician of the Horde was set on by an Ermaspian spy who penetrated their camp. But slain he was, by whatever means, and that same night the armies of Ermaspia routed the Horde and scattered it forever into roving bands who were never again able to unite. And the treasures of the Horde, the jewels of the Khan were seized by the King of Ermaspia to enrich his crown jewels.

"From this time dates the rise of the Ermaspian Empire. It

seems clear, then, that the knowledge gained from his nameless god by Zuvadar gave power first to the Tiger Mask Horde and then to the lords of Ermaspia. And there the sigil of Zuvadar must have remained -- in the imperial jewels, protector of the imperial might.

"When Ermaspia fell to the Cherulians, the sigil must already have been pilfered -- the Cherulians disappeared in Ermaspia like foam into a sandy beach. But the Empress, fleeing before the sack of the capital, had reached Margos safely with a casket of jewels. And Margos became great . . .

"Thus I traced the wanderings of the Sigil of Zuvadar. And I learned where it was hidden in the present age."

I paused and drained my mug. Fafhrd signaled Master Pump yet again for refills.

"Go on," prompted Conan. "What then?"

"I was among the Brotherhood of the Coast at the time. I had three ships and a full complement of the finest fighting men in this or any world. However, even the whole of the Brotherhood would not be enough to raid successfully the royal treasuries of Tharmo, capital of Tharmotia -- for it was there that the Sigil of Zuvadar had come. The sigil once in my hands, however, we could take on all of Tharmotia if we so willed. . .

I took a dozen of the best captains in the Brotherhood into my confidence, and unfolded my plan to them. They, and my three lieutenants, would raid as usual in the Gondaran Islands and the Longstrands for four weeks. At moonset on the twenty-eighth night, however, they would appear in the harbor of Tharmo. I would meet them there between moonset and dawn: to flee in the night if I were unsuccessful -- or, with the Sigil, to lead them in a dawn attack on Tharmo.

I had them set me ashore in the night, a dozen leagues to the north of the city. For two hours I walked inland, while the moonlight lasted, and then slept in a thicket until dawn. Then another hour's walking brought me to a road and I turned south toward the city.

I arrived in the early evening, genuinely tired and covered with genuine dust, with a thirst to match. Like any yokel, I headed straight for the palace and stood there gaping for a while, and then went into the nearest tavern. By no accident whatsoever it was the one favored by off-duty Throne Guards. I ordered wine and gawked respectfully at them over it.

Next I asked the landlord about dinner and a bed for the night. I knew he rented rooms by the hour, not by the night. He claimed to have all his rooms filled already, but added that there was plenty to eat. I ordered dinner and ate, still giving the envious eye to the Guards.

After I'd paid for my meal I went over to a table where two of them were sitting. "Could I ask you gentlemen -- uh -- are you Throne Guards?" I mumbled.

"Yeah."

"Uh, is it hard to get to be in the Guard?" I knew the answer to that, too: there's a bounty for bringing in recruits, and that's how much they need men. The two were giving each other a knowing grin as I bumbled on: "Could you tell me what it's like? Uh, could I buy you gentlemen a drink?"

"Sure, why not?" said the older of the two. "You new here?"

"Just got here from Malkesh," I said, waving the landlord over. "A jug of wine here, if you please?"

"Country boy?" asked the other.

"Yes. The farm isn't big enough for both of us, now that my brother's got married, and so he bought me out and, well, I didn't know what to . . . I mean, I don't know anything but farming, but I'm strong, so I wondered --" I broke off and buried my face in my wine-mug. It was tempting to peek and see how they were taking the spiel, but I had to resist that.

"You'd have to be trained to use weapons," said the older man. "We can teach you some when we're off duty, maybe. Then you could apply."

"I've never used a sword or anything," I said doubtfully. "I used to be pretty good with a quarterstaff, though."

"Quarterstaff, huh?" said the younger one. "Let's see how you are with that hiking stick of yours. If you can use that, I might be able to put in a word for you -- for a consideration, of course."

"Right now?" I squeaked. "Here?"

"Why not?" he said. Though he hadn't meant it to be there and then at all; but we had an audience by now. "I'll just take the head off my spear, and we'll have a go at it."

Tables were already being pushed to the walls, and by the time he had his spearhead unfastened, there was a fair-sized space for us.

He started easily, feeling me out. I pressed him little by little until he was giving me the best he had. Then I gave him a carefully calculated rap on the funnybone and he was after my blood.

When it was clear to him and to the other Guards watching us that I had a good chance to win, I warded a stroke of his with the middle of my stick and at the same time gave the underseasoned wood just enough extra strain with my hands. It snapped, I stumbled forward, and his spear-shaft hit me on the shoulder as I went almost to my knee.

He grinned all over his face and filled my mug for me. "Buddy," he said, "you're as good as in the Guard."

From then on, there was nothing he wouldn't do to help me. I was his best buddy. He would have resented it if a yokel had walked in and bested him in front of his friends; he'd have despised me if I'd let him win easily; but I'd given him a good fight and proved he was better than I was. He couldn't help liking that.

I let myself "learn" to use spear and sword fairly rapidly. If anyone was surprised by it, I would mumble something about "my brother and I used to play with wooden ones." By the end of two of the allotted four weeks, I was promoted to guardsman second class and was everybody's friend.

The next step was to get a good look at the crown jewels and the place where they were kept. I managed that by seeing to it that one of the treasure-vault detail developed a record hangover, and offering to take his place.

I learned that only the Palace Chamberlain had the key to the vault. The guard at the door -- two men at a time, day and night -- were there only to make sure the key wasn't used by some-

one who had stolen or copied the chamberlain's. It was his duty each morning to remove whatever items of jewelry would be called for during the day, and return them at night. Two men stayed with him while he carried the jewels back and forth.

This first morning, I managed to get a good look into the vault while talking to the chamberlain's two guards. It wasn't a very big room, and that made it seem all the more gorgeous -- the tiaras and pectorals all crowded against each other, and necklaces all laid out in long rows. And there, among the necklaces, I saw the Sigil -- unmistakable, that carven azure surrounded with incredibly glowing diamonds, hung on a golden chain.

I knew from that point on just how I was going to get my hands on the Sigil. I made no further moves, but stood my regular watches at the palace gates or in the Throne Room. And I counted the days until the rendezvous I had appointed with my associates in the Brethren of the Coast.

At last the night came. I stood sentry at the vault in the place of a man who had unfortunately had too much to drink in the tavern across the square. Moonset approached; the torches were being extinguished in the imperial quarters; and finally the chamberlain approached with his two guards.

Fumbling, holding the bulky carrying case in one hand and sorting keys with the other, finally he got the door unlocked. My partner at the door and the other two guards were watching the door; I faced the other way.

"The Gods protect us!" I shrieked, pointing back down the corridor. "Stop them -- stop them!" I flung my spear at the imaginary menace, then stepped back and jammed my heel in the doorway. Without even asking me what I'd seen, the other three ran off in the direction I'd thrown my spear.

I whirled around into the vault and stretched the bewildered chamberlain on the floor unconscious. Then, and only then, did I look for the Sigil of Suvarar.

It was not in its place.

I searched hastily through the rows of necklaces, in case it had been moved. It was not there.

It must be in the carrying case. I knelt and tried to open it: no use. It was locked.

It must be past moonset; my pirate ships would only wait until dawn -- I must find the Sigil at once!

Cursing, I pried at the lock with my sword. It resisted; I swore and wept. At last it burst open. I shook the precious things out on the floor, paged through them with shaking hands.

The Sigil was not there.

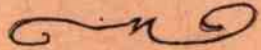
Not in the vault, not in the carrying case --

The King must still be wearing it

Fortunately, I knew the way to the king's bedchamber. . .

"Just a minute," interrupted an ironic voice. "If those guards had one quarter of their wits about them, they'd have been back to the door of the vault with reinforcements long before you got that locked case open."

"Oh, it's you, Mouser," I answered. "I was expecting you'd be here tonight. You're quite right. There were a dozen of them waiting for me at the door. I got killed instead of stealing the Sigil." I pulled the Sigil out of the neck of my shirt on its chain and showed it to them. "I was never a pirate, either."



GOLIARD 836

Published for the April 1965 mailing of the Spectator Amateur Press Society by Karen Anderson, 3 Las Palomas, Orinda, California 94563. Printed, if you don't mind the inexactitude, by Bruce Pelz.

My own mimeograph needs to be rebuilt or something, according to the Gestetner people, and I don't expect to be able to afford that until next winter. You see, we'll spend the summer going broke in Europe, and I have to save up money for that. Another thing I'll have to do is set up a Goliard all ready for the October mailing; because if all goes well I won't be home in time to do it. Hence the present issue is being put together at the end of February.

NOTICE: I won't be home to get mail between June 20 and some time in October. So don't write to me this summer.

Cover this issue is courtesy of Liz Løkke, who started a fanzine and didn't get around to publishing it. Same goes for quite a few leftover stencils. Thanks again, Liz.

The poem-thing titled "Quadruple Image" is a thing four of us constructed at Jerry and Miri Knight's about a year ago. It was done by the four of us - Sheila Rush, Miri, Poul, and me -- each taking a different book or magazine, turning to the same page number, and reading in order a word at a time. The first part was Page 52 of four different issues of F&F. Part II came from Alice B. Toklas' autobiography, A Streetcar Named Desire, H. Rider Haggard's Cleopatra, and George Daniels' Make Your Own Monstrosities by Tooth and Nail, page 25 of each.

(Not to give the gag away prematurely, I'm putting this page at the end of the issue instead of the beginning.)

-- Alas for high hopes and good resolutions. That was six weeks ago. Here it is April fifth, and I don't even know what city I'll have this mimeo'd in. Hm, now that I just looked it up in the last FAPA mailing, it seems I have plenty of time to get these stencils to Bruziver without even being charged the Nuisance Fee.

For a black-hearted OZ, Bruce does pretty well . . .

Oh yeah, about the Shipstory. For those who've never seen one before, they're set in an inn based on one in a favorite novel: The Flying Inn, by G. K. Chesterton. The narrator is a rather vague character in my own mind; I think he's a version of Young Man Mulligan/The Great Fantastical Bum. "The Jesting Pirate" is the fifth Shipstory; the others were, in order, Seemingly Pointless Story, Sword Missing, Come Hither, and A Night At A Castle. All Shipstories are composed on stencil in a great hurry to meet my activity requirements. That's why they present such a contrast to the other material I publish: nothing else in the issue will be credited to me, because I didn't write it.

Ah, there's the bottom of the page. I can get this in the mail now.