

# GOLDARD

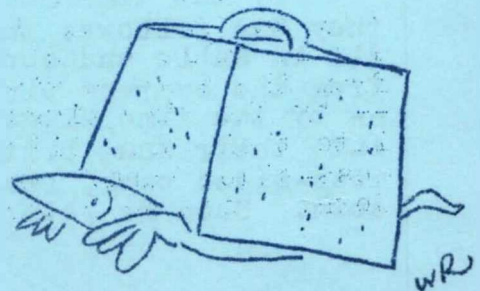
February 1969

God's-ounds, but it hath been long since last I cut a stencil!

The trouble is mainly that preparing for a tournament is far less work than publishing a fanzine, happens oftener than FAPA deadlines, and yields more immediate rewards. I'm going to save my membership (I hope) with eight pages, mainly of material not up to professional level; in that amount of time and effort I could make a fine-looking dress out of the green cotton damask curtains I picked up at the Goodwill two months ago, and then tomorrow afternoon I could wear it to the party Randall Garrett is giving for his brother. Or I could take some other goods I have to make Poul a new fighting surcoat; if the weather is good they'll have broadsword practice in the back yard. You see, medievaldom is a way of life . . .

It's very good for Astrid, though. Bot at the tournaments, and at the less formal functions like theatre parties (you should have seen us marching fifty strong to The Lion in Winter) and the Tuesday evening dance classes, there are quite a few youngsters with in five or six years of her age. Or even ten or twelve years: her best girlfriend is 26.

Not that medievaldom takes up all our time and attention. Far from it! there's gardening -- well, there will be, when we get some sunshine and things dry out a little. Yes, and there's talking-about-the-weather. Heavy rains, hailstorms, temperatures down to 26 degrees, a snow flurry here and a real snowcap en route. It's the worst winter for a long time. And if you want to laugh at us effete Californians for making a fuss over a little cold weather, consider the crops wiped out -- especially with the flooding of Sherman Island. If they can't rebuild the levees and pump it dry, one of the biggest tracts of asparagus land in the country will be lost under twenty feet of water.



## THE PLACE WHERE IT ALWAYS RAINS

It had been a dry summer. Nobody could remember when it had rained last. The Running Water was almost all run away, and the bluejays said that in a few more days it would all be gone.

"Where does it go, though?" Miggs asked, sitting on a large pebble and swinging his legs.

Slicky and Greedygut looked at each other and half-spread their wings. "What could you do with the People?"

"It just goes, that's all!" said Slicky. "And it has to rain to make more."

"I know that much," grumbled Miggs. "But it must go somewhere. There's probably a whole big valley full of it."

"Or maybe it just soaks into the ground," said Miggs' brother Cob. "You fellows can fly everywhere; why haven't you ever found out?"

"Because this is our place. We don't go into other birds' places, and they don't come into ours."

"Oh---" grunted Miggs. "Hadh't they any curiosity? But then, what could you do with birds? They were just habits wrapped up in feathers."

"Yippee!" screeched Greedygut. "There goes Tippy with something to eat, let's see what it is!" And the jays both took off after the unfortunate squirrel.

Miggs and Cob star3d into the Running Water. "When it's all run away, what will we drink?" said Cob.

"Once I cut a hole in the big vine and some water came out," said Miggs. "But it didn't taste very good, and anyway there wasn't much."

"Why don't we follow the water and see where it goes? At least we wouldn't get lost, like when we followed the butterfly."

"Cob, you get the wildest ideas!"

"Well, who wanted to follow the butterfly if it wasn't you?"

"Not I! I only said you could follow it if you wanted to, and you were crazy enough to do it."

"Oh, look, Miggs, we wouldn't have found the Running Water if we hadn't. We'd still have been dodging frogs in that muddy cow-pond."

"Well . . ."

By the time Miggs got around to admitting he was glad they had followed the butterfly (a Monarch it had been, splendid in sable and copper velvet, wearily homing to Kentucky from the cypress winter-sanctuaries above the Pacific breakers) -- by the time Miggs admitted that he was glad, Cob had darted into their snug little home, tunneled inches deep under the moss-sided bank, lined all with spicebush leaves and thistle-down. Soon he returned, dragging behind him a felted-gossamer



sack and carrying both their sticks on his shoulder. The sticks were fine strong things they'd wrenched from a lightning-splintered tree and polished and pointed with loving care. "I have what's left of the dried sparrow-meat and that bit of early grass-seed, but the beechnuts are too heavy and besides they're getting too withered to eat," Cob announced jauntily. "So we're ready to go."

Miggs looked sadly at the fine home they had dug by the Running Water. They'd worked so hard to make it snug and cosy! "I suppose we might as well go," he sighed. "The hole place won't be much good without the water."

When they left the woods and came into the meadow, they were almost stifled by the heat. The tall, musty-smelling grass grew in the very edges of the water, and the bottom was knobbly with grass roots and slithery with mud. They found that they had to hold to the thick grass-stalks with one hand and press their sticks into the mud with the other in order to keep their footing.

After about an hour, they came to a clump of trees. They were hot, tired, and covered with half-dry mud. The bag of provisions was soaked and filthy, and they had taken turns carrying it with such frequent exchanges that both were hoping that it would be dropped and lost. "There must be an easier way," said Cob as they lay in the shade.

"What?" grumbled Miggs.

"I don't know. I wish we were water-skipper."

"Well, we aren't."

Cob began pulling a grass-blade to pieces and throwing the bits into the water. They went away on top of the water like water-skipper.

"I wish we could float like that. Then the water would take us wherever it's running to."

"Well, we can't!" said Miggs. "That's all there is to it!"

"No, wait," Cob answered. "Maybe we can. Sticks float, too, don't they?"

"Of course."

"Wouldn't we float if we got onto sticks?"

"We're too heavy. We'd push sticks down under the water."

"No, but, Miggs, if we took lots of sticks? And we tied them together with grass, in a bundle? And we sat on top of the bundle?"

"On top of a bundle of sticks - - mm - - Maybe. Yes, maybe we could at that," Miggs agreed.

"Well, let's do it!" Cob began running back and forth picking up the biggest sticks he could carry and dragging them to a flat spot close to the water. Miggs did the same, though not so energetically.

"Look, here's something even better," called Miggs.

Cob ran over to see. It was a huge piece of maple bark, as wide as they were tall and over twice as long.

"Miggs, you're a genius!" cried Cob.

"Huh. I just thought how much time it would save if we didn't have to make grass ropes to tie up a bundle of sticks. Come on, let's drag it down to the water."

The piece of bark was very thick and rough, and it took them some time to get it into the water. At last it was done. They climbed aboard and pushed off from shore with their sticks. (The sack of food remained on the bank. Each had remembered it, thought the food was probably unfit to eat by now, and resolved to wait till the other mentioned it.)

Down the Running Water ran the raft of bark. Out from the clump of trees, through meadow again and toward more trees far away on the horizon.

"This beats sloshing, doesn't it?" said Cob happily.

"Sure does," agreed Miggs, leaning over the side and looking down through the sun-glanced water. "Hey, we'd better keep our sticks handy; the Water is trying to push us against the other bank."

The sun hung low and deep-golden over the meadow; then darkness gulped them as they slid under the eaves of the wood. It was time to stop for the night, while they could still see about them.

"This rock looks likely, doesn't it?" said Miggs. Cob agreed; they maneuvered to shore and dragged the bark raft out of the water. After a little looking around, they found a likely spot and used their sticks to dig up a fat white grub. The meat was sweet and tender -- much finer than the tough old sparrow-meat they had abandoned. When they finished, it was nearly full dark, and they made themselves a bed of dry leaves. Almost at once they fell asleep.

Cob woke with delicious slowness. He rolled over in the soft nest and cracked his head against Miggs' hard skull.

"Sorry, Miggs!" he sang out. "Come on, let's get up and see if the Running Water is risen."

"Huh!" Miggs grunted, sitting up. "Where are we?"

"Where -- I thought we were still at home, I guess. But we went to sleep at the foot of a tree last night. But now we -- Oh."

"That's right." They surveyed the nestful of sleeping squirrels. "Can't they count? Don't they know we're not theirs?"

Cob looked over the edge of the nest. "It's a long way down. I hope we don't have to take up squirreling for a living."

"We might convince them for a while that we weren't big enough to climb, but I don't think we'd do very well on a diet of squirrel milk," said Miggs.

"Me either."

One of the parent squirrels opened an eye. "Be quiet -- it isn't time to wake up yet."



"We don't belong here! Take us down to the ground!" cried Cob.

"Nonsense. Go to sleep with the other babies."

"But we aren't your babies! We aren't squirrels at all!"

"Oh, hush. You'll wake your mother. Of course you're our babies; I found you all sleeping together at the foot of the tree and carried you up to bed when the moon set. You can just stay here till you can stay awake late enough to get to bed by yourselves." And the squirrel tucked his tail over his eyes and went back to sleep.

"So that's why," said Cob. "He found his children asleep by us, and the smell had gotten onto us enough that he thought we must be his too."

"We'll have to find some way to get down by ourselves," Miggs said gloomily. "We should have stayed at home."

"If we'd stayed there five more days the Running Water would be gone, and we'd have had to try to follow it on foot! Or did you have some other idea for finding water?"

"Dear me!" The other grown squirrel lifted her head. "What is all this fuss? Why -- why, you two aren't children of ours at all!"

"No, ma'am," said Cob, who could be polite when he felt he was being treated reasonably. "I believe we must have been carried up by mistake last night."

"I've told Flip again and again that we have two twos of children, but he just can't understand. And, my goodness, you don't even look like the children!" Like most squirrels, Mrs. Flip knew "one" and "two" but had trouble with bigger numbers.

"Would you please take us down, ma'am?" asked Miggs.

"Of course. It's no trouble at all." She caught him by the neck, ran quickly down the tree with him, and fetched Cob in another moment. They thanked her and she returned to her morning's sleep.

Cob and Miggs rubbed their necks. "She held us the best she could, but we aren't baby squirrels," Miggs commented.

"At least we're down," said Cob. "Let's find some breakfast and push on."

The ants had already taken away the remains of the grub, but they located another and ate part of it for breakfast. What was left they loaded onto the bark when they started off again.

Soon they noticed that the Running Water was wider and faster than it had been, and they no longer had to keep it pushed away from the bank. They lay down and looked up at the trees going by, immense distances overhead, or trailed their hands and feet in the water. It had become deeper as well, but was perfectly clear and they could see everything on the bottom. There were many brightly-colored stones, and sometimes where the sun flickered through the trees a stretch of mica sand would flash like gold.

They shot onto a little pool where a dozen water-skipper were dancing.

"Look!" called Cob. "We can go on top of the water too!"

The water-skipper were not impressed. "Any little ant can crawl onto a floating leaf," replied one, as they continued their minuet.

Miggs chuckled. "A water-skipper saw an eagle. Said the water-skipper, 'I have seen sparrows before.'"

The water-skipper affected not to hear, but Cob and Miggs noticed that some of them missed a few steps.

Another Running Water had come into the pool as well, and when they came into the channel on the other side the current was much faster. The bark rocked and spun in eddies, and they had to be alert to keep it from being dashed against the bank or against the rocks in the stream itself. Everything went past at breathtaking speed. The Running Water became no wider now, but deeper, and so turbulent they could no longer see the bottom. The banks were becoming higher as well.

Cob was beginning to be frightened. "What if we were to falloff?" he said. "It's awfully fast and deep here."

"It was your silly idea, grumbled Miggs. "You've got what you wanted, and don't blame me if it's turning out different from what you thought." But Miggs was frightened too, little though he was willing to admit it to Cob.

Cob held tightly to the edge of the bark. He wanted to close his eyes, and at the same time he didn't dare to.

"Listen!" said Miggs. "I hear rain."

"Rain?" Cob was panic-stricken. "Can we live through the rise after a rain? Look -- look up! See how high the grass is caught on the branches from flood times!"

"But this rain is still far in front of us," Miggs said. "The sun is still shining here. We can try to get to shore and climb up above the high-water marks."

They tried; but they could not have reached bottom with sticks thrice as long, and they could not make shift to scull or paddle. The rain-sound grew ever louder ahead, and they realized that they were completely helpless. When the rain came and the Water flooded, when they were whirled under those overhanging branches, they must cling to the insecure bark.

But as they came closer to the sound, it seemed unlike rain. It was strange . . .

"I know what's different!" cried Miggs. "It isn't hitting and leaves. It isn't real rain at all, just something that sounds like rain."

Cob -- whose eyes were clamped shut now as he gripped the bark -- squeaked out, "Then what is it? What can sound like rain, when it isn't rain?"

"If you'd sit up and open your eyes you might find out as soon as I do," Miggs said unsympathetically. But I tell you, it can't possibly be rain. I can see the sky far ahead now and there aren't any clouds at all."



The current suddenly flung them past the wall of the woodland and into the open sunlight of a great pool. Their bark moved slower and slower, and finally almost stopped.

The pool was enormous. They had never imagined there could be so much water in one place -- and clean water, too, not like the muddy pond they had once shared with cows, ducks, frogs, and -- what was most frightening -- leeches, those savage aquatic vampires. It had been with leeches in mind that they had fashioned their splinter lances.

Clean water -- a world of it! Full of enemies, no doubt; there would be competition for this paradise. But the clear water would not hide those enemies. Competition for territory and sustenance would be fought in open field.

A world of water. On the side from which they had entered, thick woods and a steep-shelved bank where edge after edge of soft limestone showed like roughly-stacked cardboard. On the far side, a rolling meadow of owl's-clover and rabbit's-foot clover, yarrow with its fuzzy heads, Queen-Anne's-lace and goldenrod, ironweed and milkweed and thistles, wild black raspberries, the many many grasses, and close to the ground the pungent bergamot. But amidst it all, the water!

Warm shallows, where the tiniest insect-fry could swarm over a floor of delicate beige-gold mud. Deep shadowy coves where minnows drowsed invisible over drifts of dark dead leaves. Bright riffles over stones, where it seemed that fireflies' souls must be dancing, but it was only the water leaping up to renew itself in the sunlight. Slow dim reaches where the caddis-worms in their mosaic-faced silk sleeping-bags winnowed the current for anything that could be eaten, and that might otherwise rot and become a blur in the transparent stream.

Miggs and Cob were hardly aware of this fabulous pool. For there was a greater wonder to marvel at. It was the rain that was not rain.

Upstream, there was a downpour such as no one had ever seen. Not from the sky did it come, not from a high-puffed cloud; but raining tirelessly over a cloud-white ledge of limestone, the water fell as if it would never stop.

They gazed at the place where the water fell, not stopping until their bark grounded in a current's eddy. They stepped onto the shore then, on the soft gray-cardboard ledges of the limestone, and went on staring.

"A different kind of rain," said Miggs in a hushed voice. "I think it must rain this way all the time, to make this kind of Running Water."

"It must," whispered Cob.

"Let's live here," said Miggs. "Let's always live here. If that rain-spot can keep going through such a dry spell, this must be the best place to live in the whole wide world."

He was probably right.

## JOHNNY CORRIN

Johnny Corrin went to space,  
Golden freckles on his face,  
Golden stripes upon his sleeve;  
I saw Johnny Corrin leave.

Will and wisdom have designed  
Tools to see where eyes are blind,  
Ships as strong as human mind.  
Men will seek until they find.

Johnny Corrin flew a ship  
Where the stars of winter dip,  
Where the stars of summer rise --  
Outward Johnny Corrin flies.

Swirling stars a milkfoam way:  
Whispercrackling cosmic ray:  
Duskless night and dawnless day:  
Men have come and mean to stay.

Johnny Corrin found a world --  
Long blue rollers foamed and curled,  
Tree and meadow met the sand.  
This is Johnny Corrin's land.

Charting scouts to dream and roam  
Taste the stream and test the loam.  
Homestead, market, civic dome --  
Men have made the stars their home.

Johnny Corrin came to Earth,  
Named his world and told its worth;  
--Take me where the waves run blue,  
Johnny Corrin, home with you.

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And if I'd spaced that properly on the page it would have finished off the eighth stencil.

I can always repeat myself: to wit, that this is a Goliard whose serial number I don't feel like checking up on; and I am Karen Anderson hoping to maintain my membership in FAPA. Furthermore it is now 2:16 AM February 1st.