

GRANFALLOON



GRANFALLOON 8

Vol. 3, No. 1

Gf8 is edited and published by
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Pittsburgh, Pa. 15217
with assistance, encouragement, proofreading,
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Linda Bushyager

Welcome to the 2nd GRANNISH! (Yes, that's why it's lithographed, nextish will probably be mimeoed again, except for the covers and portfolio, of course.)

Recently I've been thinking about conventions, and how they go wrong. Perhaps this is because I'm con committee chairman for PgHLANGE 2 (you are going, aren't you?), and co-chairmen Suzle Tompkins, Ginjer Buchanan, and I have tried to prepare for all eventualities; but at each convention we attend we discover why things go wrong.

Sometimes a hotel can screw up a con despite the most rigorous planning, look at St. Louiscon. But generally a competent committee can eliminate such annoying things as lack of ice or coke machines, poor location, lack of free parking, and not enough booze. Items such as program, hotel personnel, and drunken elevator operators are harder to control.

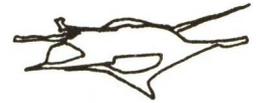
The recent Philcon, however, is the best example to date of a rotten job of convention committee planning. In a large city like Philly it should be easy to find at least one hotel with free ice, parking, and cheap restraunt -- or at least one of the items. But the Warwick had nothing -- not even a friendly management (they sent for the police instead of the house dick when several parties got too noisy). But the worst was the poor planning for the program and parties.

People generally go to the con for either the parties or the program, and sometimes both. On Friday some 200 persons had arrived; most just wandered around the hotel lobby because no registration had been set up. At 8pm some finally left for the open ESFA meeting (the local SF club) held 5 blocks away. Few cared to venture from the hotel's warmth into the freezing, snowy, darkened streets of Philly. Later we learned that this year's GoH, Joanna Russ had given her speech at the ESFA meeting.

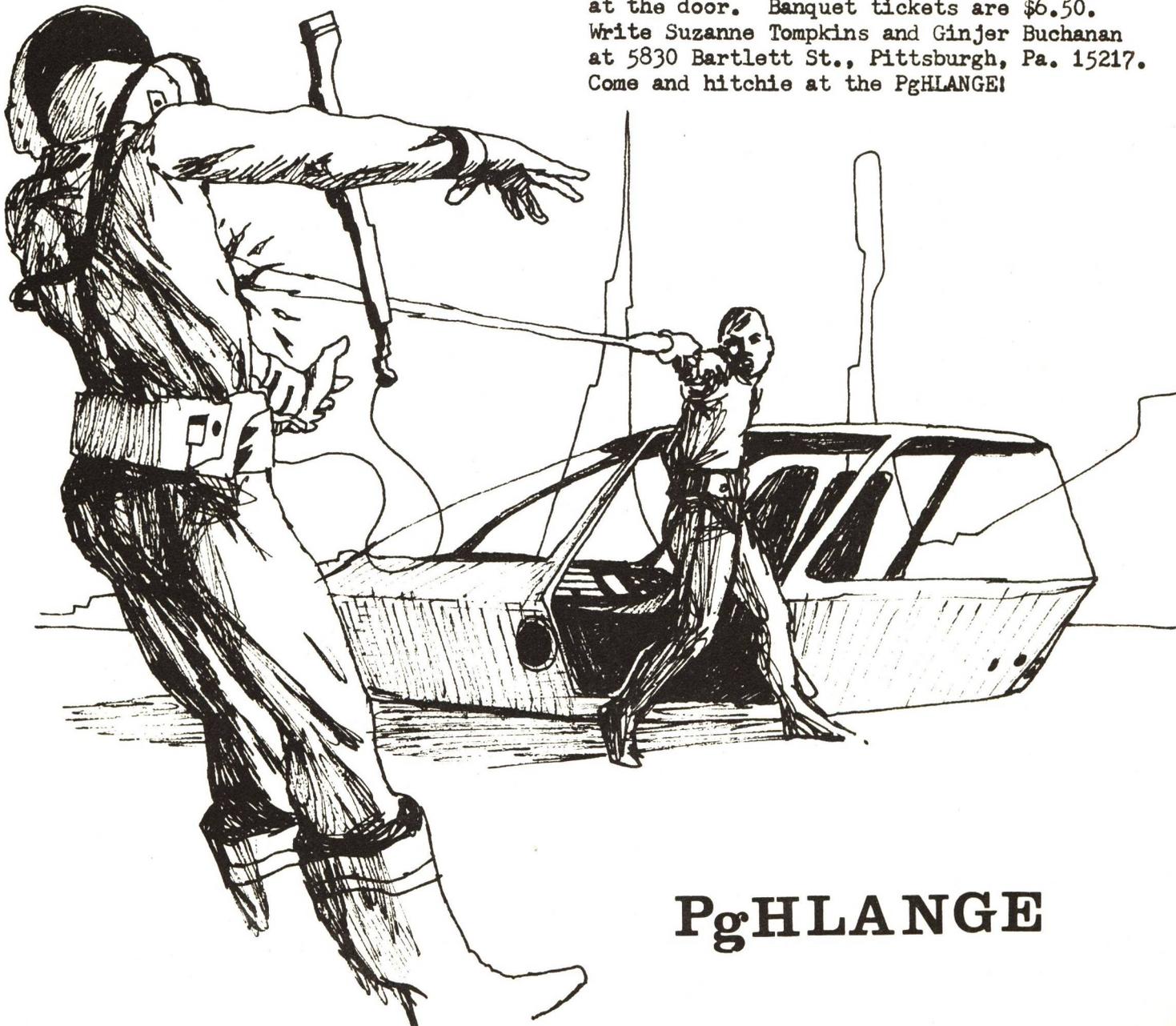
PgHLANGE ART PORTFOLIO: This collector's item, suitable for framing, will be lithoed and will contain artwork by Alicia Austin (one example on the reverse), Richard Bergeron, Steve Fabian, Connie Reich, Mike Gilbert, Jim McLeod, and many others. Editor Connie Reich will write biographical notes on the artists. Available now at a prepublication price of only \$1.50, this limited edition portfolio will cost between \$2 and \$3 when it's put on sale at the spring regionals. Write Connie at Box 193, Carnegie-Mellon Univ., 5000 Forbes Ave., Pittsburgh, Pa. 15213.

PgHLANGE II: Will be held July 17, 18, 19 at the beautiful Chatham Center Motor Lodge, downtown Pittsburgh. Harlan Ellison is CoH, and Robert Silverberg will be on hand as CoH Emeritus.

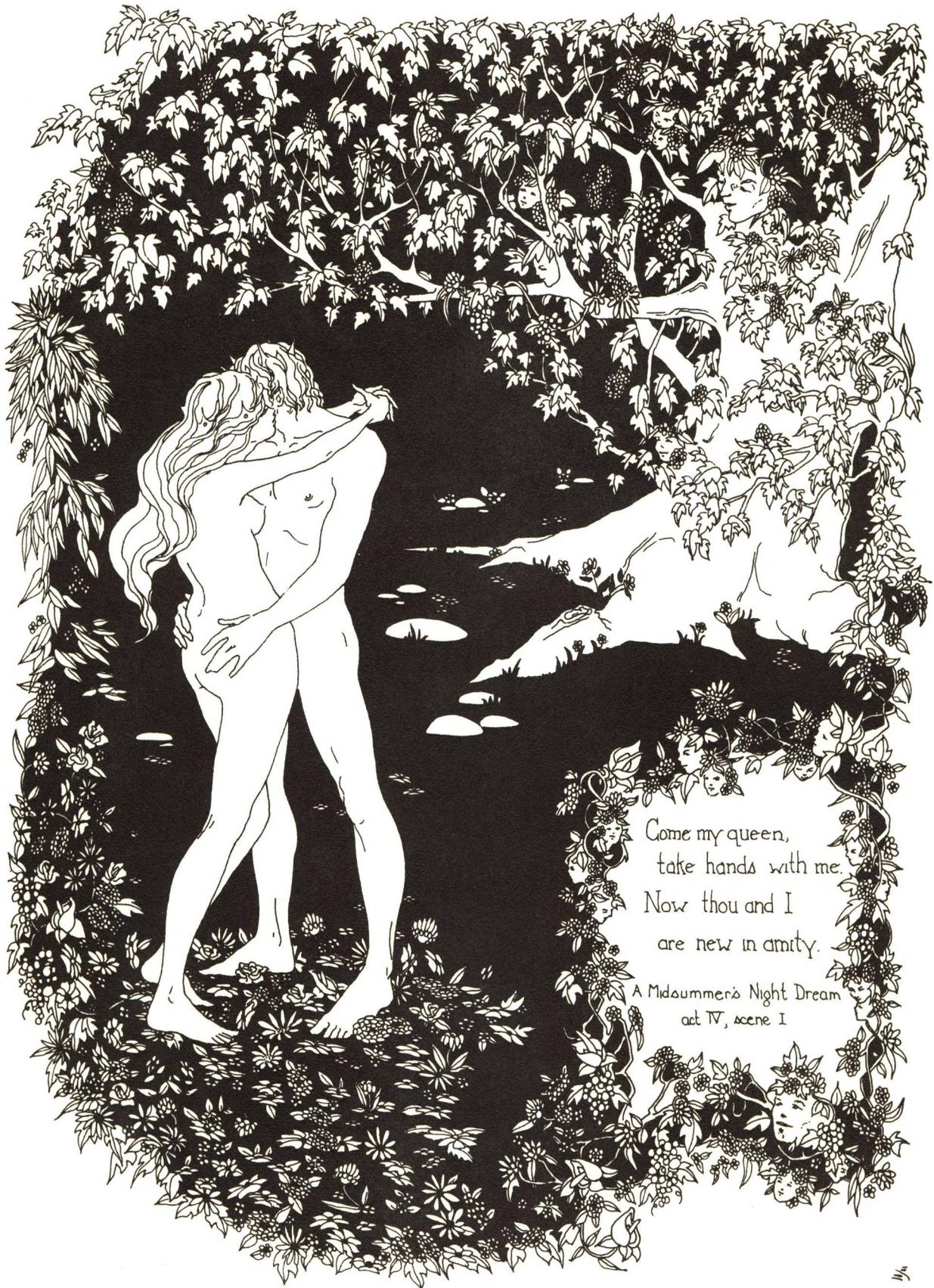
The program will include panels, art auction (including originals of most of the portfolio), parties, and all-you-can-eat banquet Saturday night. The Chatham has an indoor pool, free ice and parking, air conditioning, color TV, and is within walking distance of downtown stores, bus terminal, restaurants, and the city jail!



Registration is \$2.00 in advance, \$2.50 at the door. Banquet tickets are \$6.50. Write Suzanne Tompkins and Ginjer Buchanan at 5830 Bartlett St., Pittsburgh, Pa. 15217. Come and hitchie at the PgHLANGE!



PgHLANGE



This Alicia Austin drawing is part of the PgHLANGE PORTFOLIO. Get it!

Saturday's panels were dull, and the wonderful con committee held Anne McCaffrey's GoH speech for Sunday, after most fen had left. Result: only about a third of the con heard either of the Guest of Honor speeches, and I doubt that many heard both.

The committee used rather poor judgement (shades of Hal 9000) in planning the parties as well. On Friday (after the ESFA meeting) they eventually had an open party-- furnished with \$40.00 worth of booze, coke, and cups -- as you can guess, these ran out before midnight. On Saturday the committee sponsored a paid bar in a huge meeting room (only 50¢ a drink because several publishers chipped in). There were really no other open parties, and after 1pm this closed down.

In a year when no one is bidding open parties are few. The con committee has an obligation to provide a good, free, party for fen who paid \$2.00 registration. Many fen come to a con to attend parties and meet people, and a con without a friendly open party is not much fun (especially if you can't get into a closed one).

Moreover, the committee invited newsmen and a TV station. The latter set up its equipment in the hucksters room, right outside the program. It soon became impossible to leave or enter the hucksters room (and thus the program) without a 20 minute push through a group of similarly minded fans. (A side note: The Philcon collected over \$700 from the 350 or so attendees. \$200 was spent renting the meeting room, \$40 went for booze, and some was paid for suites and publicity. Undoubtedly this left a tidy profit.)

Well, if you plan to put on a con, I hope the above is helpful. Good gosh! I hope we don't run into such problems putting on the PgHLANGE!

I'm not sure when Gf9 will be out. It may be out before May, and if so, will be a slimmer issue than usual. The May issue will be the special 40th ANNIVERSARY OF FANZINES issue, with articles by Bob Silverberg, Bob Tucker, a portfolio by Steve Fabian (Fabian for a Hugo!), the rest of Jesus Cummings SEX AT THE CONS, and other surprises. (Well, actually the Cummings thing will be in Gf9 if Gf9 is not the 40th Anniversary issue, or if it is...well anyway, I'm confused and I bet you are too. Oh well, forget it!)

Ron and I are planning to go to Helcon. I keep getting information on Germany, Europe, and so on. At this point I'm more interested in visiting Europe than the con itself, although it should be interesting to see if a European convention differs from an American one. I've been reading EUROPE ON \$5 a day, and it is just unbelievable. Rooms for \$2-\$3 a person (including breakfast), a complete meal at 28¢, high priced meals at \$3 dollars, entrance fees to museums 24¢ or free if you are a student, and more. In fact, the rates are so unbelievable I am looking forward to going just to test them. I just hope nothing (like job, cancellation of charter flight, money problems, pregnancy [thank Ghu for the Pill!]) happens to prevent our going.

Does anyone else watch DARK SHADOWS? Several people recommended it and I began to watch the show, which is fortunately shown at 7pm here. Soon I was hooked. The plot may be dumb, the acting hammy, the music overly melodramatic, but I guess I'm a sucker for a good mystery story, which this really is. Of course the mystery revolves around "who is that stranger?" "is Barnabas a vampire now?" and mostly "What diabolically evil thing is going to happen in this half hour which will ruin the lives of the dummies who keep living at Collinwood?" and "Why am I watching?". But it is just like cigarettes, you keep on watching, even though you know it's not good for you.

* * * *

JESUS
CUMMINGS



SEX AT THE CONS

FOR THOSE WHO DO
and
THOSE WHO DON'T

INSTALLMENT NO. 1: For FEMMEFANS

(This is an article of advice collected and propagated by an inveterate con-man, one whose experiences in the field of sex have been truly ~~catholic~~ universal. Of course, Mr. C. does not wish this article to appear under his real name, as that would give his little strategems away, but he is willing to share a few of the up-till-now carefully guarded secrets.)

Installment No. 1, written for the sake of femmefans on the make and femmefans with virginal delusions, is a collaboration with Sally A. Phann, whose feminine commentary and advice were most valuable to the author. Installment No. 2, for all you sex-starved fellow fans of the other gender out there, will be printed in the next GRANFALLOON.)

FEMMEFANS -- Those who DO:

The first prerequisite for the average femmefan on the make (I say average here. Those with unusual ideas of a "make" will be handled under Article No. 3 -- Dikes, Faggots, and other Perverts) is to look like a femmefan on the make. To successfully pull it off (heh) is actually quite simple [just undo the hooks-and-eyes, and snap the elastic]: simply avoid stringently all of the following:

baggy clothes; clothes; hairspray; body odor; bare feet; married fans with wives in tow; bras (if possible); panties (these are absolutely inexcusable); girdles (avoid these like crazy); hair on legs and/or chest; lack of hair on head; your husband; your fiancé (unless, of course, he is the object of your manipulations); the house dicks (I mean the hotel detectives, unless they're swingers, in which case...); bobby sox; chastity belts; being under 18 or over 70; and hopefully, your period.

There are myriads of things in a positive vein which will accent your mood, but with the male/female ratio what it usually is (Unfortunately for the men.), any femmefan who avoids the no-no's outlined above can be relatively sure that she will be approached by a male fan with delightful evil on his mind.

Those positive things with which a femmefan on the make can concern herself are often useful, but are not guaranteed to get her a QUALITY lay. Unless she is a raving beauty, in fact, or damned lucky, there are no guarantees at all. She should, in any case:

allow the fan she is with to buy her drinks until she is ready to slide under the table (not always recommended if you wish to remember the events the following day): wear make-up tastefully (this means, if she is atrocious-looking, lots of it, and otherwise, as little as possible); wear clothes tastefully (this means as little as possible without endangering her health or hotel reservations); have her hair tastefully styled and soft to the touch (the first stipulation is a matter of taste, but the second is a necessity); converse intelligently (this does not mean that she must be witty, but merely that she know when to shut up); weigh over 80 but under 200 pounds (if you ^{don't} meet this requirement, you are either too young to be reading this, or too wide for me to get my arms around); be prepared (this includes hopefully being on the PILL. If not, it is a very good idea to already be pregnant -- I have it on the best authority that "the nicest part about being pregnant is that you don't have to worry about becoming pregnant."); know what you are (or are about to be) doing (read a book, or get your brother or father to help you).

There are dozens of other ways to get an eligible male fan to notice you: you can always praise his (a) fanzine, (b) latest book, (c) drinking ability, (d) reputation. In the latter case, challenge him to live up to it, and offer yourself as a volunteer victim.

FEMMEFANS -- Those who DON'T:

You don't know what your're missing, but if you still insist, follow religiously all the avoidables for the gals on the make outlined above.

Also, cringe constantly (esp. with another cringing femmefan), (or with an impotent male friend). Be adamantly antisocial, and wear a wedding ring.

If you find that these don't work, what in Christ's name are you doing at a Con anyhow?

CAN'T ANYBODY PLAY ?

THE HUGO AWARDS MESS

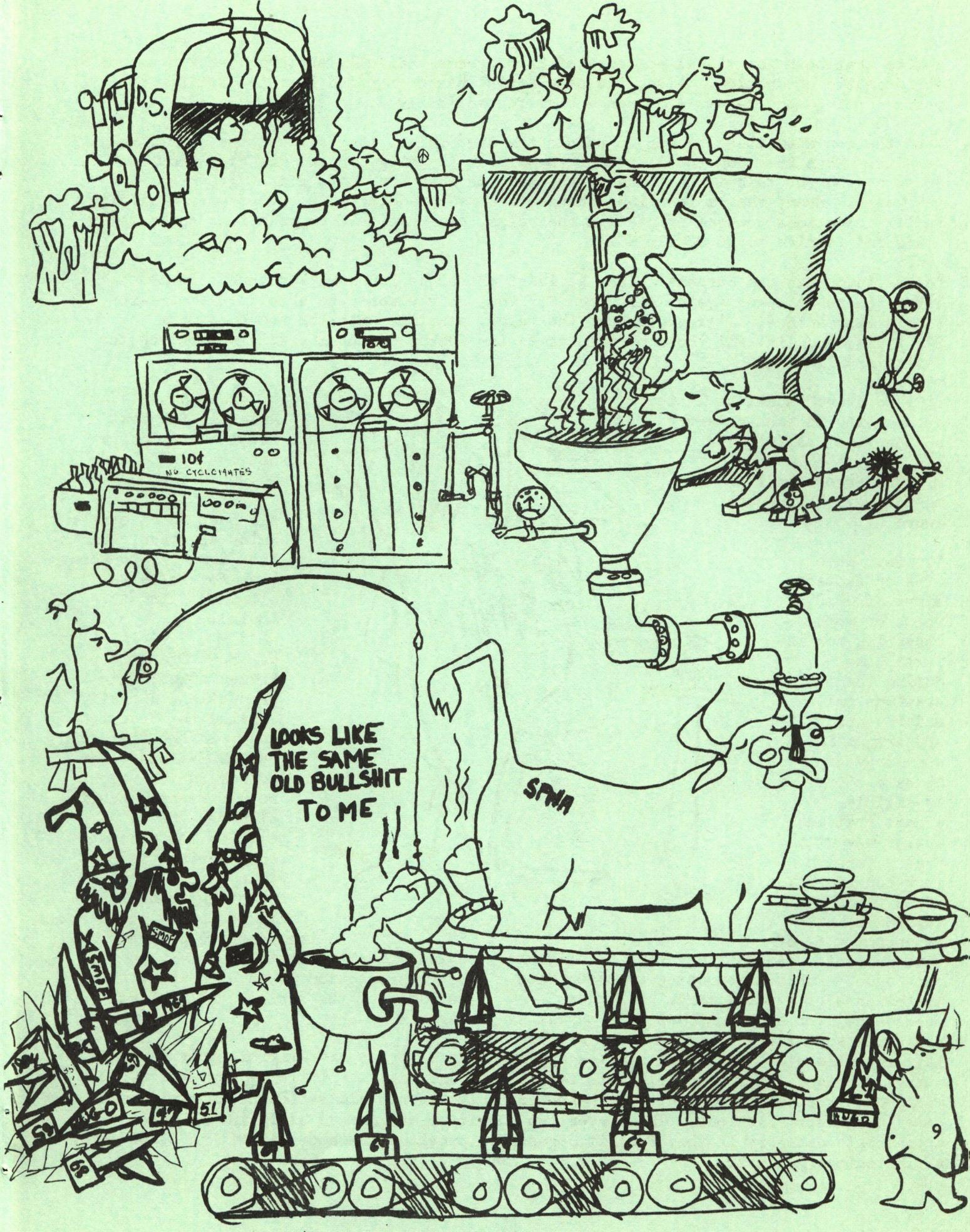
I intend to bitch about the Hugo awards for a while, so if you could care less (as apparently most fans do), tune out now.

First, a little (very little, hopefully) background. Since I'll be discussing the Hugos with specific references to the last 3 years, it might be nice to go over just what won what in those years:

<u>1969</u>	<u>1968</u>	<u>1967</u>
NOVEL - <u>Stand on Zanibar</u> John Brunner	<u>Lord of Light</u> Roger Zelazny	<u>The Moon Is a Harsh Mistress</u> Robert Heinlein
NOVELLA - "Nightwings" Robert Silverberg	"Weyr Search" Anne McCaffrey and "Riders of the Purple Wage" by Philip Jose Farmer	not awarded
NOVELETTE - "The Sharing of Flesh" Poul Anderson	"Gonna Roll the Bones" Fritz Leiber	"The Last Castle" Jack Vance
SHORT STORY - "The Beast That Shouted Love" Ellison	"I Have No Mouth and I Must Scream" Harlan Ellison	"Neutron Star" Larry Niven
DRAMA - 2001	"City on the Edge of Forever" (<u>Star Trek</u>)	"The Menagerie" <u>Star Trek</u>
PROZINE - F&SF	IF	IF
ARTIST - Gaughan	Jack Gaughan	Jack Gaughan
FANZINE - <u>Psy/SFR</u>	<u>Amra</u>	<u>Niekas</u>
FAN WRITER - Harry Warner	Ted White	Alexei Panshin
FAN ARTIST - Vaughan Bode	George Barr	Jack Gaughan

Go back and read that list again. Read it a few times. Notice, completely disregarding such factors as quality and popularity, some strange results. Notice that "The Last Castle" and "Gonna Roll the Bones" both won awards in the same category, although the former occupies nearly 60 pages in the April '66 GALAXY and the latter fills 20 in DANGEROUS VISIONS (count the words yourself).

jerry
lapidus



LOOKS LIKE
THE SAME
OLD BULLSHIT
TO ME

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LUMP

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Notice that both individual episodes of TV programs and full-length movies won awards for dramatic production. Also, the same artist has been named best pro artist for 3 years running--and he was ALSO named best fan artist 1967.

When the con committees bother to uphold the Hugo rules, they allow these startling results. When they don't--all too often--almost anything can and has happened. One prime reason for this is that the rules, such as they are, have simply grown up over the years. Every year a few minor changes are made, adding this category or modifying that. Sometimes someone prints all the rules, and when that happens fans shake their heads and resolve to DO SOMETHING.

Let me summarize the current rules, as least as far as I understand them. Better yet, let me (here it comes again) list them for you, so you won't be able to blame me for stupid misreadings. I'll go through the rules, starting with the new ones from St. Louis, and list all those pertaining to the Hugos. Numbering will not follow the "official" listings.

1. "No award" shall be listed as a choice in each category on the final ballot.

2. The Hugos shall be an English language award.

3. Best Novel:
A SF or fantasy story of 40,000 words or more, appearing for the first time during the previous calendar year. Appearance in a prior year makes a story ineligible, except that an author may withdraw a version from consideration if he feels that version is not representative of

what he wrote. A story may thus be eligible only once. Publication date, or cover date in the case of a dated magazine, takes precedence over copyright date. A serial takes its appearance to be the date of the last installment. Individual stories appearing as a series are eligible only as individual stories, and are not eligible taken together under the title of the series. (This was probably added to prevent what happened in 1962, when Aldiss' Hothouse series was named best short fiction.) The convention committee may move a story into a more appropriate category if they feel it necessary, provided the story is within 5,000 words of the category limits.



4. Best Novella:
Rules as for best novel, with length between 17,500 and 40,000 words.

5. Best Short story:
Rules as above, length less than 17,500 words (The novelette was eliminated in St. Louis).

6. Best Dramatic Presentation: Any production, directly related to SF or fantasy, in the field of radio, TV, stage, or screen, which has been presented publicly for the first time in its present form during the previous year. In the case of individual programs presented as a series, the separate programs shall

be individually eligible, but the entire year's production taken as a whole under the title of the series shall not be eligible.

Individual stories appearing as a series are eligible only as individual stories, and are not eligible taken together under the title of the series. (This was probably added to prevent what happened in 1962, when Aldiss' Hothouse series was named best short fiction.) The convention committee may move a story into a more appropriate category if they feel it necessary, provided the story is within 5,000 words of the category limits.

7. Best Professional Artist: A professional artist whose work was presented in some form in the SF or fantasy field during the previous year. (Notice this does NOT say the work has to appear in a professional publication, only that the artist must be a "professional.")
8. Best Professional Magazine: Any magazine devoted primarily to SF or fantasy, which has published four or more issues, at least one issue appearing in the previous calendar year. (Notice this does not specify that the magazine must be professional.)
9. Best Amateur Magazine: Any generally available non-professional magazine devoted to SF, fantasy, or related subjects, which has published four or more issues, at least one appearing in the previous calendar year.
10. Best Fan Writer
11. Best Fan Artist: (No wording has ever been given for these 2 awards. In my listing of the rules, I suppld the following suggested wording: Any fan whose work [written or drawn] has appeared in an amateur magazine in the previous calendar year.)
12. Additional Categories: Not more than 2 special categories may be created by the convention committee with nomination and final voting to be the same as for the other, permanent categories. The convention committee is not required to create any such categories; they should be held to a minimum, and those created by one convention committee are not binding on following committees. Awards under these categories will be Science Fiction Achievement Awards or Hugos.
13. The name and design shall not extend to any other award whatsoever.
14. No Award: At the discretion of the individual convention committee, if a lack of nominations or final votes in a specific category shows a marked lack of interest in that category on the part of the voters, the award in that category shall be cancelled for that year. (This is in addition to the now mandatory No Award listing on the ballot.)
15. Nominations and Voting: Selection of nominees for the final award voting shall be done by poll conducted by the convention committee under rules determined by the committee. Final award voting shall be by mail, with ballots sent only to Society members. Final ballots shall include name, signature, address, and membership, to be filled in. Final ballots shall standardize alternatives given in each category to not more than five. Assignment of nominees nominated in more than one category to their proper one and eligibility of nominees shall be determined by the convention committee. Voters shall indicate the order of their preference for nominees in each category.
16. Tallying: Counting of all votes shall be the responsibility of the convention committee, which is responsible for all matters concerning awards. In each category, votes shall be first tallied by the voter's first choice. In the event no majority vote is then obtained, the nominee placing last will be eliminated and the ballots listing him as first choice redistributed on the basis of the ballots' second listed choice. The process will be repeated until a majority vote winner is obtained.
17. No member of the then current convention committee nor any publication closely connected with them shall be eligible for an award.

18. The Hugo awards will continue to be standardized as to the design of the rocket ship on the model presently in use. The design of the base is up to each convention committee.

O.K.

Before we look at the specific rules, changes, and similar topics, we must make a few generalizations about these awards.

First, irrespective of value, quality, etc., the Hugo award basically represents first prize in a popularity contest. No matter how much we try to prove otherwise, people will vote for those works and authors with which they're most familiar. Proof? How about Poul Anderson's "Sharing of Flesh" winning over three better novelettes in 1969? How about Harlan's "The Beast that Shouted Love" winning at all? How about Heinlein's MOON IS A HARSH MISTRESS winning over three better novels in 1967? Of course, there will be exceptions, but I feel certain the overall generalization is sadly valid.

Second, irrespective of value, quality, etc., where and how a work appears will detail its chances of winning. A novel, for example, generally cannot win as a hardcover original. It must either be a paperback or preferably serialized in a magazine. The exceptions come when there is a great deal of discussion in fandom about the work, as with STRANGER IN A STRANGE LAND and STAND ON ZANZIBAR. Of 4 good novels last year, 2 sections of the winner--LORD OF LIGHT--appeared in F&SF. None of the top 3 novels in '67 appeared in magazines--but the winner, Heinlein's MOON, did. Similarly, short fiction must appear in the prozines, or at worst, in paperback. Unless there is great hoop-la (as was the case with DANGEROUS VISIONS) over it, the original hardcover work stands little chance. Here's one reason Richard Wilson's Nebula-winning "Mother to the World" didn't even come close, tho twas far superior to the Anderson story--ORBIT 3 didn't come out in pb in time, while the winner appeared in the December GALAXY. Who read (or heard of!) THE FARTHEST REACHES? Even WORLDS' BEST SF '69 didn't come out fast enough to save Terry Carr's "Dance of the Changer and the Three;" Harlan's winner, however, came from GALAXY, June.

A stage play, no matter how good, cannot possibly win, since only a few hundred fans--at the most--will ever see it. Even in New York, SF-related plays simply don't become recognized until it's much too late. AFTER THE RAIN, for example, appeared in New York in October, 1967, after a very successful British run. The stage version was far superior to the original novel, and certainly deserved to be nominated along with at least one of those STAR TREK episodes. But fandom, and the Hugos, paid it no notice. Indeed, even a motion picture must be fairly high-budget these days. And even then, unless there's much fan outcry about it, a TV program has a better chance. With probably half the fan audience watching the first season of STAR TREK, what chance did FAHRENHEIT 451 or FANTASTIC VOYAGE have? Even with the rules stacked as they are in favor of motion pictures?

Remember these, please, as we discuss other aspects of the situation. They ALWAYS loom above everything else.

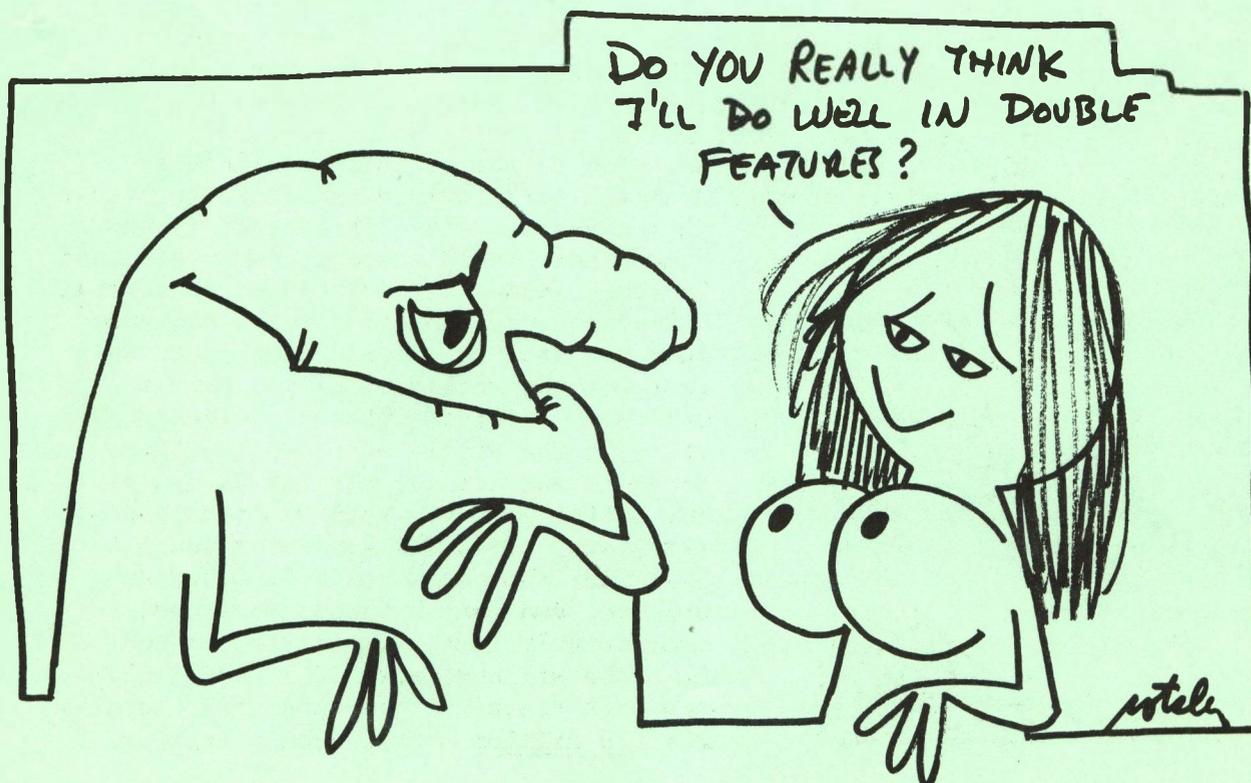
Those of you who read TOMORROW AND... or peruse letter columns closely, will probably remember that I've come out in favor of a sort of Hugo committee, a standing committee to supervise nomination and voting. I still feel this is a valid proposal, but I'm not going to push that here. I would like, however, to make one basic suggestion. What's needed most is a thorough rewrite of the whole mess, to make things

more coherent, to remove the many loopholes present, and to correct the obvious lapses and mistakes. Specifically, I'd like to recommend the establishment of a committee to go over the rules, revamping and rewriting, to attempt to produce a really workable set of rules. We NEED such a job done, if the Hugos are ever to become as meaningful as they could be. I see no other way of accomplishing it to most people's satisfaction. Think about it. I know right now that I will not be in Heidelberg to make the suggestion, but someone connected might be ready for it, please.

Quite aside from this, we have several rules and/or questions which need specific clarification.

First, What Constitutes a Fan?

In the past few years, we've had the ludicrous situation of several of the top writers and artists in the whole field participating actively in fanzines—and being nominated for (and in a few cases, actually WINNING) fan awards. In the past 2 years, several of these pros have magnanimously asked that their names be removed from the ballot in these fan categories. Under the rules, however, there's nothing to require such withdrawal. Many fans, in fact, have said that not only is it unrequired, it is also unnecessary—that they should in fact be eligible for fan awards. Personally, I feel this is ridiculous. If, for instance, the acclaimed top artist in SF is generous enough to contribute large amounts of his work to fanzines, it stands to reason that his work should be some of the best appearing in those fanzines, and thus he certainly should win the Hugo for Best Fan Artist. This, in fact, is exactly what's happened with Jack Gaughan. For 3 years he's been named best pro artist. In the first year he was also named best fan artist; and I feel he almost definitely would have won it at least a second year, had he not asked to be withdrawn from contention. And for many cases, it's essentially the SAME artwork, for much of Jack's fanzine stuff is either preliminary sketches for pro assignments, or actual work done for prozines but not used. This is an excellent practice, since it allows many people to benefit from work which would ordinarily have gone completely to waste. The point is that the best pro artist should be the best artist in SF; if he chooses to draw for fanzines, he should be the best artist in fandom and, under the present rules, win a Hugo for it.

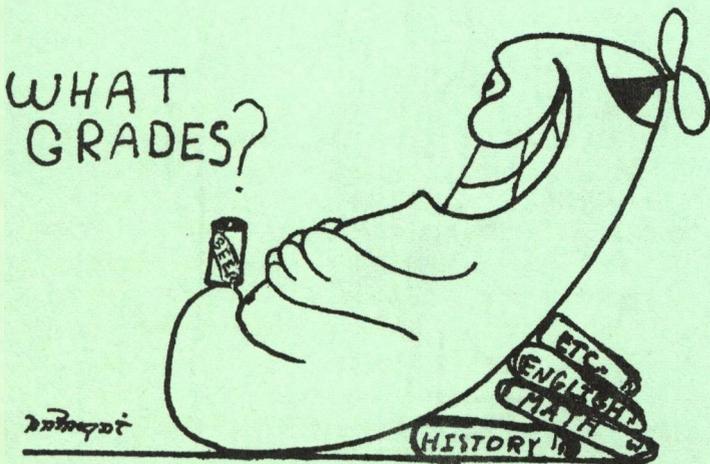


The situation with the writer is subtly different, but the difference is only in degree. Unlike the artist, the pro writer nominated for a fan award is normally nominated for his non-fiction work -- essays, letters, reviews, etc. -- rather than his (if any) fanzine-published fiction. While it is assumed that a SF writer would be proficient at non-fiction as well as fiction, this is not a prerequisite of his occupation. As we've seen above, the artist does the same sort of work for both the prozine and the fanzine; the writer, it seems, does not. Now, I feel this may be an important distinction in itself; I don't, however, advocate different rules for artists and writers.

As I see it, we need a limiting factor on professionals in fan categories. I can't really provide an exact one, for it's a rather knotty problem, and the trick is almost as bad as trying to define science fiction! Either you must include virtually everything, or else you exclude a lot of what you know should be there. The best I can come up with so far is something like: "Anyone is eligible for the fan hugos except those who make a living primarily from the work for which they are nominated." This wording needs a lot of work, but essentially it eliminates people who write or illustrate SF for a living from receiving fan awards. But note, this does NOT exclude a pro writer from winning a fan ART award, or a pro artist from winning a writing award. The major fallacy of this rule is that it doesn't account for people who work professionally in the field, but who do not actually earn a living from it. The Dillons, for example would fit perfectly through this loophole; as artists they DO much pro SF art, but it accounts for only a small portion of their total output, and as such, they do not make a living from SF art. Thus, under this rule, they WOULD be eligible for fan awards. [Also people like Bode, Mike Gilbert, and several others have sold professionally, but hardly enough to earn them a complete living. -LeB] The rule does, however, eliminate the pro in the SF field from the fan awards in his province, and I think this is at least a step in the right direction.

Another question is What is a Dramatic Production?

Under the present rules movies, radio plays, stage plays, and individual episodes of TV (or radio, I assume) series may be nominated. Originally an entire TV series could be nominated as a whole, but this was changed, if I recall correctly, primarily to stop TWILIGHT ZONE from winning every year (it had won 3 in a row). Today, however, changes are needed. In the first place we have to consider total size and impact. No matter how good it is, it is virtually impossible for a single TV episode to compete on an equal basis with a modern motion picture. Even STAR TREK, probably the best series-concept pure SF program we've had (THE PRISONER is really only fringe SF, though it's still of Hugo caliber), had to suffer. The TV series is forced into an artificial 60-minute-minus-commercials format, with all that implies as far as artificial plot climaxes, etc. The movie, on the other hand, is in comparison unrestrained in length and plot, and has no commercial interruptions. In a movie the audience does not have to be entertained and held fast for the whole period; you have a much more captive audience. Finally, there is the simple monetary question. Money is not art per se, but it can still buy better writers, actors, technicians, sets, etc. Even high-budget shows like STAR TREK must cost under \$200,000 an episode, and many episodes must cost considerably less. The movie can run into the millions, with 2001 (admittedly the best visual SF ever produced) topping the \$10 million mark. From a point of



fair and equal competition, one should be able to nominate an entire TV series (in addition, of course, to a one-time SF TV special, play, or movie).

In addition, this change would make nomination procedures for TV programs much more logical and sensible. The way things are organized now, with at least half a season's worth of episodes under the required time periods (and can you imagine how many programs this means, if you want to nominate a daily program like DARK SHADOWS?), unless a few episodes really stand out fans or supporters of a particular program will have difficulty getting it on the ballot. They must resort to the same method the STAR TREK people did, i.e., deciding ahead of time what episodes for the group to nominate, in order to get at least some on the ballot. And in the case of a particularly popular show, as was STAR TREK, this can mean that episodes of one single program might end up the only items on the ballot. This, in fact, is exactly what happened in 1968. Thus, a single program can dominate drama nominations.



The solution to the whole problem is simple: merely, as indicated above, allow TV (and radio, I guess) programs to be nominated as a series. This will allow us to compare a year, of say, Harlan's new SF series with a good high-budget SF movie (like the upcoming Warner version of STRANGER IN A STRANGE LAND). The path should still be open for individual SF TV programs, presented in anthology format or as specials.

There are other changes in details, but I feel these 2 are the most important aspects and deserve the most attention. The rest can be left to that mythical Hugo Committee I talked about a few paragraphs back.

So--read, ponder. The most important thing is that some sort of committee should be formed to look at the Hugo structure and revise the rules. This, if nothing else, is needed; if given enough rope, this could make all the necessary changes itself, with the final decisions, of course to be ratified by a con business meeting.

At the beginning I said I intended to bitch, but I got sidetracked and talked constructively for a while. So now for the special FANS MAY NOT BE SLANS BUT THEY ARE DUMB section.

Much of the above discussion has been pointed toward why things win, with quality taking last place. You would think that having recognized these fallacies in the awards, I would be satisfied when MOST of the deserving nominees win. Uh-uh. But, I have a thing about quality, and about the Hugos. No matter how easy it is for me to intellectually tell you why people vote like they do--I still can't accept some of the weird results that turn up (some good and some bad). Sometimes I try to insist that my own personal weird tastes may not be those of fandom. But I can't accept that analysis of my own motives and opinions. Unlike some I can mention, I can accept the fact that other people can like and enjoy material I do not; just because I think it's no good doesn't mean this is necessarily so. But--dammit, there is some stuff that's good by any standards, and some stuff that's bad. And while you or I might LIKE a bad story, we should be able to recognize it as an inferior product (I understand why you liked "The Steiger Effect,"

Buck, but I still think it's a cruddy story).

With that in mind, down to work.

STAND ON ZANZIBAR won. Somehow. Obviously, a rule-breaker, since it didn't appear in pb or in the magazines till after voting was finished. But this is another case in which there was considerable comment, almost all of it favorable, in both fanzines and prozines. OK. But what came in second -- RITE OF PASSAGE, Alexi Panshin's Ace Special. Beat ing Delany's NOVA (do you realize Delany has never won a Hugo, while he's taken three Nebulas?), something of a dissapointment for the Delany fan but still a superb novel, a winner in any year but this one. Only thing I can figure is that any New Wave support (NOVA and Delany are, after all) must have gone to SoZ, while Panshin took all the old wave votes from Simak's cute-but-outclassed GOBLIN RESERVATION. I really shouldn't throw myself into this article, but after keeping my mouth shut I just can't hold back any longer. While Jerry's analysis contains many valid points, he keeps forgetting one thing. Often people vote for what they happen to LIKE BETTER. It is just possible that more people actually liked SoZ than NOVA, although for my money NOVA beat them all.-LeB/

Two excellent novellas in the running--Delany's (again) "Lines of Power" and Silverberg's "Nightwings." Take your choice, both excellent. Two other fairly good ones, but neither anywhere near these two, but McCaffrey's second Dragon saga came in second, apparently fairly close. WHY? All four were from the prozines. Somebody tell me. I just did above. More people liked McCaffrey's novella than Delany's. It's really quite simple.-LeB/

1968 was not a good year for short fiction, particularly in comparison to last year, in which almost anything could have won and deserved it in the shorter categories. Result--four flawed novelettes up for the Hugo. One, maybe two had something valuable to present. Richard Wilson's "Mother to the World" was nothing new, but at least it was a pretty good character study. Brian Aldiss' "Total Environment" had some basically good ideas and lots of basically obscure and unnecessarily difficult writing. Give it a plus for ideas. The other two--Piers Anthony's worst story in years, with a telegraphed ending and, at best, cute aliens, and possibly the worst Poul Anderson story I've ever read. I'm not what you'd call an Anderson fan, but I have liked a bit of his work. This one, however, was cliché, boring, and bad--I really had to push myself to read it. You know what won--"The Sharing of Flesh," by Poul Anderson. Blech. You wanna know what came in last? Yep, "Mother to the World." Who reads OREIT anyway?

One good short marked the year, Terry Carr's "Dance of the Changer and the Three." From THE FARTHEST REACHES, and who ever read.....One or two good stories weren't nominated which would have taken my vote: Harlan's "Try a Dull Knife," and his collaboration with Robert Sheckley, "I See A Man Sitting on a Chair, and the Chair is Biting His Leg ." I read these at random during the year and really remembered them. But Harlan's winner, "The Beast That Shouted Love" was nothing special. I like Harlan's fiction, so I liked it--but no more. It won. And Larry Niven's "All the Myriad Ways" came in second. The funny thing is that Niven's written some excellent stories, among them "Flatlander" and "Handicap." He's had three Hugo nominations (including a victory for "Neutron Star"), but all for somewhat inferior stories. This, I feel, was one of them -- a parallel universe story, competently written. Feh.

I don't know if Jack REALLY deserves three straight Hugos, but what the Hell, it was his convention, and Jack's a Good Man and a Great Artist, and everything else.

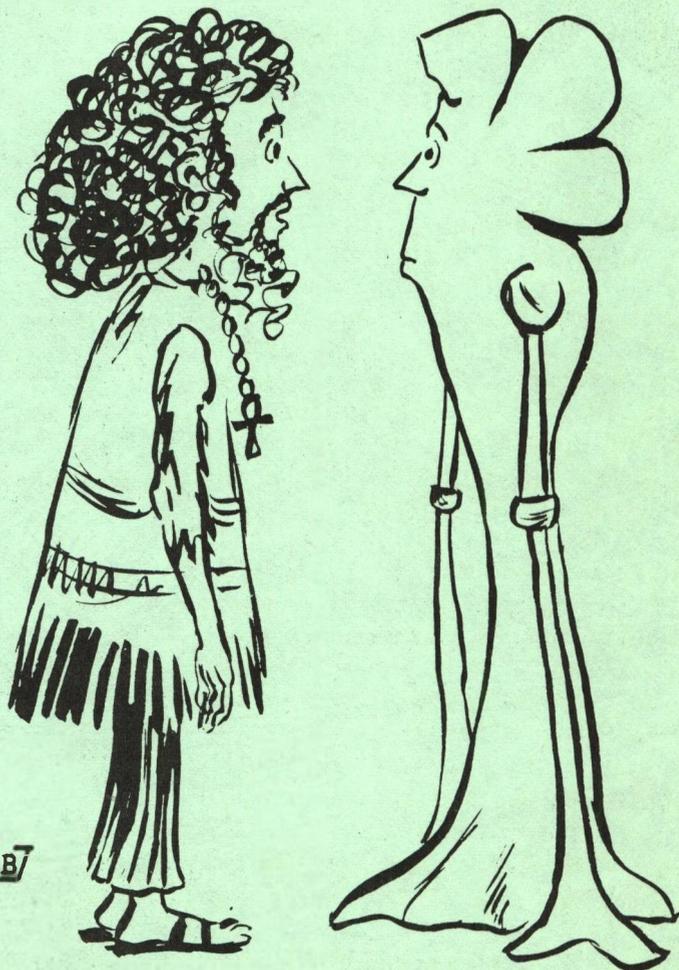
I won't argue, I've enjoyed his stuff as much as the rest. Do hope, however, that someone else (like, especially the Dillons, for things like LEFT HAND OF DARKNESS and PAVANE) gets a chance next year.

F&SF, to my mind, deserved it for at least the past 3 years; ANALOG and IF had controlled things since '63, and in that time, it seems as if F&SF has maintained a far superior level of fiction to any of the prozines. I'm glad to see, anyway, that GALAXY finished higher (third, to ANALOG, which had a pretty good year) than IF. I've always felt that GALAXY was far superior to its sister magazine, both in adult, innovative fiction and in other general features (especially Budrys' reviews).

2001 HAD to win, as anybody who knows me KNOWS I'll say, but I'd be interested to know what came in second. Hopefully, it'd be either "Fallout" or YELLOW SUBMARINE, but knowing fan sentiment, I'm inclined to doubt it. After all, both admittedly were only fringe SF, one being essentially animated fantasy and the other primarily action-adventure. I do hope that CHARLY didn't make it, though. Robertson's poor acting (Academy Awards do not determine acting ability) only added the final blow to an already poor translation of Keyes modern classic; I won't go into detail here, but please try to remember that indicating is not acting, and all Robertson did was indicate.

O.K. PSYCHOTIC won, as we all expected and most of us hoped. If fandom had a focal point in '68, this was it; and in addition, it was GOOD—with reviews, essays, etc., better than anyone else. And, of course, we all expected Richard Bergeron's WARHOON to come in second. Sure, we can accept surprises, but RIVERSIDE QUARTERLY? Give it to good advertising, I guess, since 1968 seemed a poor year for RQ. 1967 wasn't at all bad, with Alexei Panshin's Heinlein analysis topping it; this current year is also a fairly good one for Leland and crew. But last year was not very good, and aside from advertising, I'm at a loss to explain it. Well, there are those mysterious letters Leland sent out saying he had won before the winners were announced, and by how many votes. And there were the memberships he paid for for several Canadian fans, who might be expected to vote for the man who gave them a free con memberships. And several other interesting stories lead one to think that perhaps Leland was buying votes?—LeB/

Harry Warner, fine; Vaughan Bode, fine. Tho how did BARR take second — he's good, all right, but he's had very little published in the past year (and besides, he won the year before). Let's try Delap and Mike Gilbert next year.

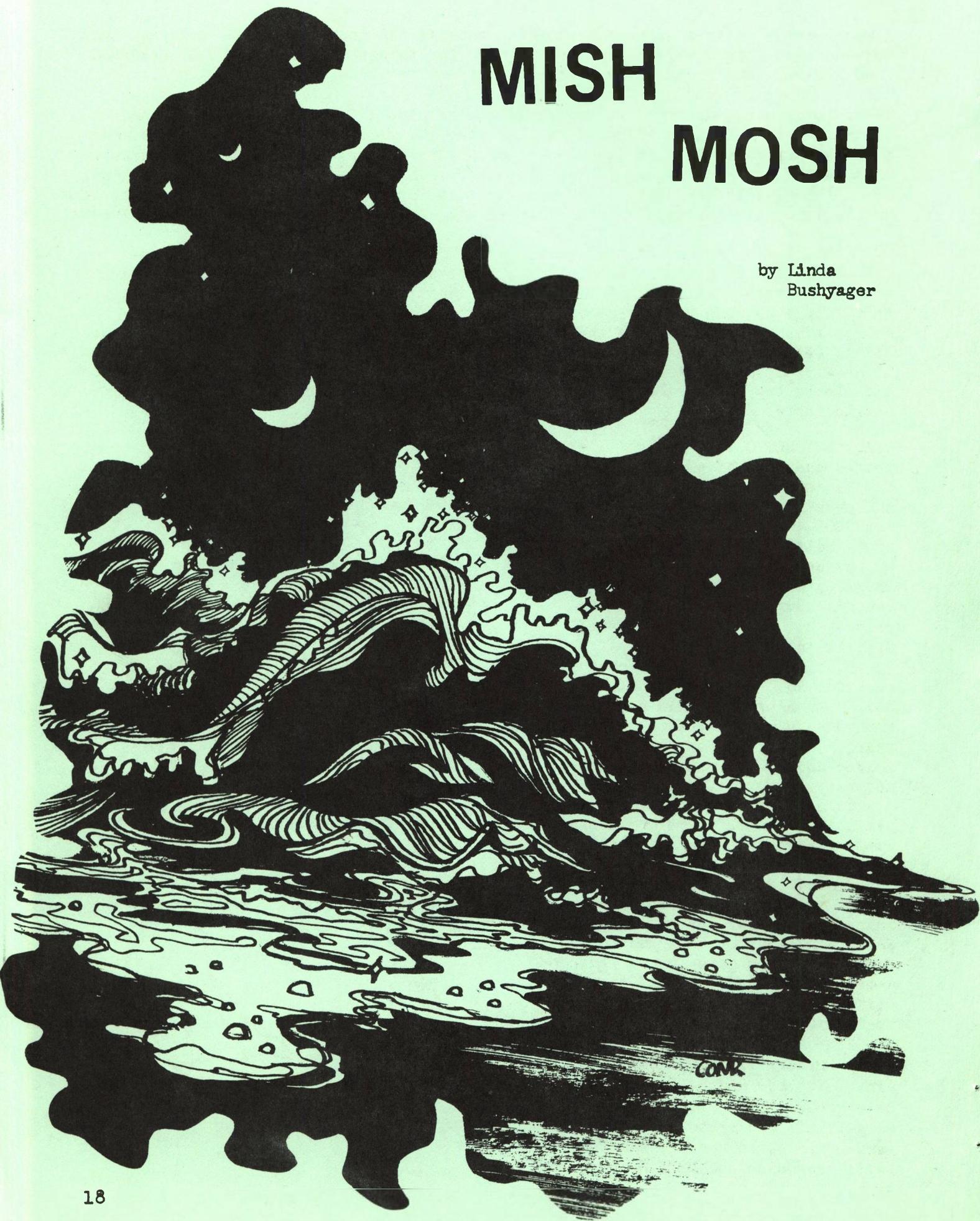


Zuber 68

MISH

MOSH

by Linda
Bushyager



WALKER BOOKS: You may have heard that Walker (720 Fifth Ave., N.Y., N.Y. 10019) has a new and unique SF book series. They are publishing books in hardback which have already been pubbed as paperbacks.

Why would anyone buy a hardback they could get for $\frac{1}{2}$ the price? The reason is the durable quality. The books are on good quality paper and have attractive library-type covers. ALL JUDGEMENT FLED (by James White) for instance, has an unusual Jack Gaughan cover. It's hard to describe: inkblotches of red, blue, black, yet they form figures. They are really worthwhile if you keep your books, as I do.

Besides having the new, attractive series, Walker is putting out The Walker Watchword, a fanzine-like advertisement. The fall edition contains such things as an article on SPECTER IS HAUNTING TEXAS (Texans don't like it), news about Galaxy, and of course, news about Walker. It's an interesting idea; no doubt Walker hopes to sell lots of books to fans. I wonder if these books will also be sold at the local book stores or to libraries.

HUGO BOOKS:

Recently I've read several books which will be, should be, or have been Hugo nominees. MACROSCOPE by Piers Anthony (Avon W166) has an October, 1969 copywrite, so evidently it will not be in the running until next year. Richard Delap just wrote me that he doesn't think it's very good, certainly not Anthony's best novel (which is what Anthony thinks). I feel, however, that it is Anthony's best, and a good choice for a Hugo.

Set near the end of the 20th century, the story revolves around the macroscope, an allseeing instrument which allows men to view actions on Earth, in the solar system, and all over the universe, and to tap broadcasts of knowledge from other interstellar cultures. But one broadcast ("The Destroyer") interferes with the macroscope's use, destroying the minds of its users. Ivo Archer, the average but not so average hero, and friends discover the secret of the Destroyer.

Piers Anthony is an uneven writer. He ranges from superb to awful. The trouble is that this variation occurs within each novel. To my mind every novel he's written has been merely good because the excellent elements and poor ones cancel out. MACROSCOPE is no exception. The flaws include a slow-moving, hard to follow opening, scientific explanations that are long, confusing, and probably of doubtful validity, and a plot which weaves around a little too much (a 480 page novel can cover a lot of territory, but the characters end up terraforming Neptune's moon, traveling all over the galaxy and outside it, and doing just a bit too much). The good points do outweigh the bad, however. The characters are excellent. The plot is interesting, imaginative, and though too intricate, generally fascinating. Anthony manages to make Astrology seem plausible, develop several galactic civilizations, and say something about human nature. The book just covers too much ground. In short, a flawed but excellent book.

NIGHTWINGS (also Avon) just won a Hugo in the novelette form. It is now out in paperback. I think it is Robert Silverberg's best novel. Again, characterization and somewhat intricate plotting are excellent. The story is fine both on an action and a thematic basis. The plot concerns The Watcher, whose job of watching space for possible invaders is finished when they actually arrive. He then seeks some meaning to his life and finds a meaning for past, present, and future life.

PAVANE by Englishman Keith Roberts is one of those "what if the past had been different" novels along the lines of TOO MANY MURKINERS, MAN IN A HIGH CASTLE, and so on. The answer to "what if Queen Elizabeth had been assassinated and Spain's armada had not been sunk" is a frightening one. The dominating influence of the

Catholic Church would have held back progress, kept up the Inquisition, and kept feudalism alive for an extra 400 years. Fortunately, this book is told in an interesting manner by giving episodes in the lives of various interrelated characters. The resulting picture of the society is real and horrifying. Identifying with the protagonists, the reader becomes a part of this world. The copyright is listed as 1966, 1968, and I had never heard of it before Richard Delap mentioned it as a possible candidate for a Nebula. If this book is eligible for the 1969 Hugo it is certainly worth nominating.

ISLE OF THE DEAD by Roger Zelazny (Ace) is not quite as good as any of the others I've mentioned, but it is definitely eligible for this year's Hugo. Of course it is not quite as good as LORD OF LIGHT or THIS IMMORTAL, but it is worthwhile for reading, or for nominating.

TALES OF ESP: edited by Idella Purnell Stone is out from Fawcett Gold Medal Books. Contains several excellent stories by Isaac Asimov, Heinlein, Fred Brown, and Zenna Henderson. A good collection of ESP-related SF.

HEIDLEBERG CONVENTION:

In case you are interested in going to Heicon next August, contact Don Lundry, RD 1 Old York Estate, Hightstown, N.J. 08520 IMMEDIATELY. You may still be able to get room on the charter flight (around \$200 for London arrival, Frankfurt departure, 3 wks.). If you have always wanted to go to Europe, this is your chance. Prices in Europe are astonishingly low (\$3 per person a night for a room).

FANZINES:

Agggh! My mailbox is flooded with fanzines, as usual. Did you ever count the number of them? There must be at least 50-100 published every month, not counting the APAs.

Some fanzines are highly readable, such as IMRYRR 1. It's not quite a first issue, since Suzanne Tompkins has lots of zine pubbing experience. She and Ginjer Buchanan (co-editor) reside at 5830 Bartlett St., Pittsburgh, Pa. 15217. They each have a talent for light chit-chat editorials that manage to say a great deal, entertain, and take up very little space. The good artwork (mostly by Andy Porter, Kevin Erwin, and Mike Symes) is enhanced by Suzle's excellent layout. The covers (Erwin) are great lithoed pieces. Suzle has the advantage of excellent mimeo machines and electronic stencil maker, and she uses them well. Book reviews, comments on St. Louiscon (by Sandra Meisel) and rock music column (by Bill Mallardi) are featured. (50¢, 3/\$1.00)

CORR 2 (Perri Corrick, 1317 Spring St. #110, Madison, Wisc. 53715) is readable mainly because of the impeccable repro on brightly colored pages. While the editorial is interesting, much of the material is poor: a theory about UFO's, some poems, short reviews. The lettercol is quite interesting though. Liberal use of blah artwork seems to improve the appearance of the artwork itself (I don't understand how, but it does) and the mag as a whole. (30¢, 4/\$1.00)

OTHERWORDS may be an exercise in self-abuse as editor David Gerrold claims, or an exercise in self-adulation as others claim, but at any rate it is a first class enjoyable zine. (Box 526, Hollywood, Calif., 90028) Good mimeo, again (isn't it sickening?) enhances humor, star trek material (don't ask why that's not capitalized), weird people, and an article by Art V. Mammon on Smut. (\$3.00/5 issues or so)

L' ANGE JACQUE 4 is finally out (Ed Reed, 668 Westover Rd., Stamford Conn. 06902). Yes, some fanzines are dittoed, sigh. The 60 some pages contain just about everything, including art by Dick Flinchbaugh (I like that guy's stuff) which doesn't work as colored ditto, Rotsler, and Gilbert (excellent covers and portfolio). Also art by Mike Symes which doesn't work as colored ditto.

L'AJ also contains lots of articles on records, an astronomy article, a long, interesting lettercol, and reprint of Redd Boggs FILE 13. L'AJ is a good zine, but the ditto is too light and illegible. Please Ed, go mimeo.

PHANTASMICOM is one of those zines you think will be a crudzine, but which turns out to be more readable and interesting than you thought. Don Keller (1702 Meadow Court) and Jeffrey D. Smith (7205 Barlow Court) live in Baltimore, Md. 21207. Ditto again lowers quality, but interesting articles include one on Wollheim/Carr's WORLD'S BEST SF 1969, Heroic Fantasy, book reviews, and not too bad fan fiction. Although mostly editor written, this zine deserves support. Send art, fiction, articles, or 2/\$1.00 to eds.

GRILS is back with editors Joyce Fisher (4404 Forest Park, St. Louis, Mo. 63108) Sue Robinson, and Pam Janisch describing floods, illustrating (Pam illos) Arnie Katz, Tucker, and Bob Bloch articles, and reviewing zines. The total effect is an enjoyable, well mimeoed funzine. (40¢)

CKIFANAC (Doug Fratz, RRL, Accident, Md. 21510 - 7/\$1.00) is a newszine which has mostly comics news. I do wish that Doug would leave space between his paragraphs: it is hard to find the news you want. Also announcement of the OAKCON 1, Feb. 13-15 at a Skilodge in Accident. Sounds like fun.

AMRA, Box 9120, Chicago, Ill. 60690 is the sword and Sorcery zine which won a Hugo the other year. I really don't know why if it was of this quality then. It is well lithoed, interesting, but thin, and not really that good. Tim Kirk and Roy G. Krenkel have some good art, but otherwise the art is rather blah. Poul Anderson, Fritz Leiber, and Archie Mercer are among contributors. (10/\$3.00)

I keep getting copies of SF COMMENTARY, which evidently comes out once a month or so. It is quite enjoyable and has lots of book reviews, interviews,



CONA

and other things of a critical nature. It seems to have replaced AUSTRALIAN SF REVIEW as the fanzine of literate SF criticism and comment. Available from Bruce R. Gillespie, PO Box 30, Bacchus March, Victoria, 3340, Australia. Letters, reviews, and so on wanted rather than money, but money will do. (No, I don't know how much)

MYTHLORE (65¢, 4/\$2.50, Glen GoodKnight, 6117 Woodward Ave., Maywood, Calif. 90270) Well produced fantasy oriented zine. Tolkien, elfs, C. S. Lewis. Fine artwork by Bonnie Bergstom (hey, what's her address?), Tim Kirk, George Barr, Bernie Zuber.

ICENI 6 Just because I adore Bob Roehm is not why I recommend this zine. It is a friendly, well-produced zine with contributors Jerry Lapidus, Tackett, Richard Delap, and Kevin Erwin. Delap's cover is quite striking, and his ST script is fun for readers. Sex Rohmer and Judging Costume Shows are the subjects for the best 2 articles. From Bob Roehm, 316 E. Maple St., Jeffersonville, Ind. 47130. 40¢, 3/\$1.

WSFA JOURNAL (Don Miller, 12315 Judson Rd., Wheaton, Md. 20906. 50¢, 5/2.25\$) Has more reviews than any other zine, also lots of con and club news). Unfortunately what it has in content it lacks in style, layout, and artwork. It has improved quite a bit since Alexis Gilliland became art editor, but it still needs more work to make it look as beautiful as a good zine should.

APA45 TWENTY-FIRST MAILING

Evidently St. Louiscon & back to school slump hit the apa this time, for the total pages were only 268, opposed to last mailings 424 (not including postmailed items). There seemed to be a decline in quality as well, with such illegible items as YORIC 2 (not enough ink on the cylinder, splotchy repro), COLOG 3 (green and red ditto is hard enough to read as it is, but when there are no lines between paragraphs things are impossible), DORIE 16 and HARLEY AND THE POETS. While an apa gives one a place to get criticism and practice, Ted Tom, Mike Wood, and Nate Bucklin have been doing zines long enough you would think they would have learned to produce something readable.

Jerry Lapidus does a good job (repro and contents) with WE'RE THERE (a tribute to the NASA moonwalk which includes excerpts from 1st Man on the Moon stories) and 3-5-0-0. But xerox does not work on dark illos, and many fine ConR and Mike Gilbert things were ruined. I hope he reuses them. GRUDE (Mike Montgomery) is enhanced by a strange freaked out St. Louiscon report by Doug Lovenstein. The report and illos are interesting, but I think Doug's work would turn out much better if he tried something besides head jokes. Bob Vardeman also contributes a TRIBUTE TO NASA, which consists of poorly reproed photos. I would rather have had Bob's written impressions.

Everyone was at St. Louiscon, and I enjoyed meeting all the apa members. But it was weird to read their reports of the con and find they had had a totally different impression and experiences than I had. Larry Hearndon (TALLY-HO) is on the Dallascon committee. I feel sorry for him and every other fan on a bidding committee. Worldcons are getting bigger and causing more and more problems for fans, committee and hotel.

All in all, the apa was disappointing. Gf7 was the biggest thing in it, and the only genzine. And most of the apazines were filled with mailcomments and con reports. (For info on joining APA45 write Lesleigh Luttrell; 1108 Locust St., Columbia, Mo. 65201. You must have been born after Jan. 1, 1945)

PSEUDOPOE-ETIC

Edgar Allan Poe's **SPIRITS OF THE DEAD**
Released by American-International.
Color by Berkey Pathe. Running Time:
118 minutes. Code rating: R.
Three Episodes:

"Metzengerstein" directed by Roger Vadim.
Screenplay by Roger Vadim and Charles
Biddlewood. Photography: Claude Renoir.
Music: Jean Prodromides. Starring:
Jane Fonda, Peter Fonda, Francoise
Prevost, James Robertson Justice.

"William Wilson" directed by Louis
Malle. Screenplay by Louis Malle
and Charles Biddlewood. Photography:
Tonino Delli Colli. Music: Diego
Masson. Starring: Brigitte Bardot,
Alain Delon.

"Toby Dammit" directed by Feder-
ico Fellini. Screenplay by Fellini
and Bernardino Zapponi, from Poe's
"Never Wager the Devil Your Head."
Photography: Giuseppe Botunno.
Music: Mino Rota. Starring:
Terence Stamp.

Richard Delap

American International Pictures (AIP)
has been bringing Poe's stories
and poems (and sometimes merely
titles) to the screen for ten years,



beginning with Roger Corman's erratic but interesting HOUSE OF USHER, then moving through Poe's worlds of madness and death until even Corman became disgusted with it and turned authentic Poe into authentic claptrap like MASQUE OF THE RED DEATH.

AIP was making good money, however, so it turned to making pastiches and slapsticks that used no more than the Poe name but produced at least one unheralded but undeniably classic farce, COMEDY OF TERRORS. When these gave out, AIP started quoting Poe during the titles and climactic scenes, and basing the "Poe" films on modern novels (such as the godawful THE CONQUEROR WORM from a Ronald Basset novel). They seem to have stopped making Poe films altogether for the moment, even pseudo-Poe, since SPIRITS OF THE DEAD is a two year-old French-Italian co-production which AIP merely purchased for U.S. release.

At least this time it is Poe (or parts of it are, anyway), albeit not very good Poe. The French, of course, have always had a much higher regard for Poe than have Americans, due principally to Baudelaire's praise and Mallarmé's renowned translations. One might expect the two French directors involved in this production to find a way to translate their country's respect into a truly Poe-etic film essence. Alas, alas...

I had expected Roger Vadim, if anyone, to find a way to compellingly present the "Metzengerstein" episode with the passion and dread of Poe's incessant themes of necrophilia, spiritual possession, incest, and mortiferous psychology. He did it once before in his exquisite updating of Le Fanu's "Carmilla" (released in the U.S. as BLOOD AND ROSES) and on the present film he retained the same technical crew that helped make the first film so powerful. Unfortunately, this film was being shot about the same time as the kinky-sex BARBARELLA, and Vadim apparently had some trouble distinguishing between the two -- Jane Fonda (Mrs. Vadim) struts around in fantasy-costumes that range from navel-exposing briefs to Follies Berglere hats.

Somewhere in France, the Countess Fredrica (J. Fonda) is a sort of princess of the medieval jet-set. Her brooding palace is the home of depraved orgies, and her own sexual appetites switch between a love of torturing young boys to a budding interest in her neighboring cousin Wilhelm (P. Fonda). When he rejects her advances she sets his stables afire and he dies in an effort to save his beloved horses. One horse gallops out of the blaze, a beautiful black stallion for 'whom' the young countess develops an obviously unhealthy passion. Simply put, the woman is damned doomed.

The only good things about the episode are the fantastically beautiful photography of the autumn forest and seashore, and the haunting, almost classic, beauty of the music score. But when it comes to debauchery, Vadim seems to think that a few scenes of everybody lolling about on the rug with bored smiles is unbelievably depraved...and his heroine gets no more involved than some mild nipple-twiddling in the bathtub with another woman. It all comes off like a comic-strip version of de Sade -- a patent plastic and patently unconvincing.

Director Louis Malle has worked well with Bardot before. This time around he's put her in a harsh and unflattering black wig and asked her to play a cigar-smoking, professional gambler. In "William Wilson" she plays a minor role in the story of a man (Delon) whose personal battle between Good and Evil within himself has torn him apart, literally. Since his youthful days in school where he derived great pleasure from playing tricks on his classmates (such as lowering them into barrels of hungry rats), he has been haunted by his "Good" side which appears as a doppelganger who tries to turn Wilson from his evil ways. Humiliated and enraged when his double points out that he won a card game (with Bardot) by cheating, he destroys the "other" Wilson, thereby destroying part of and therefore himself.

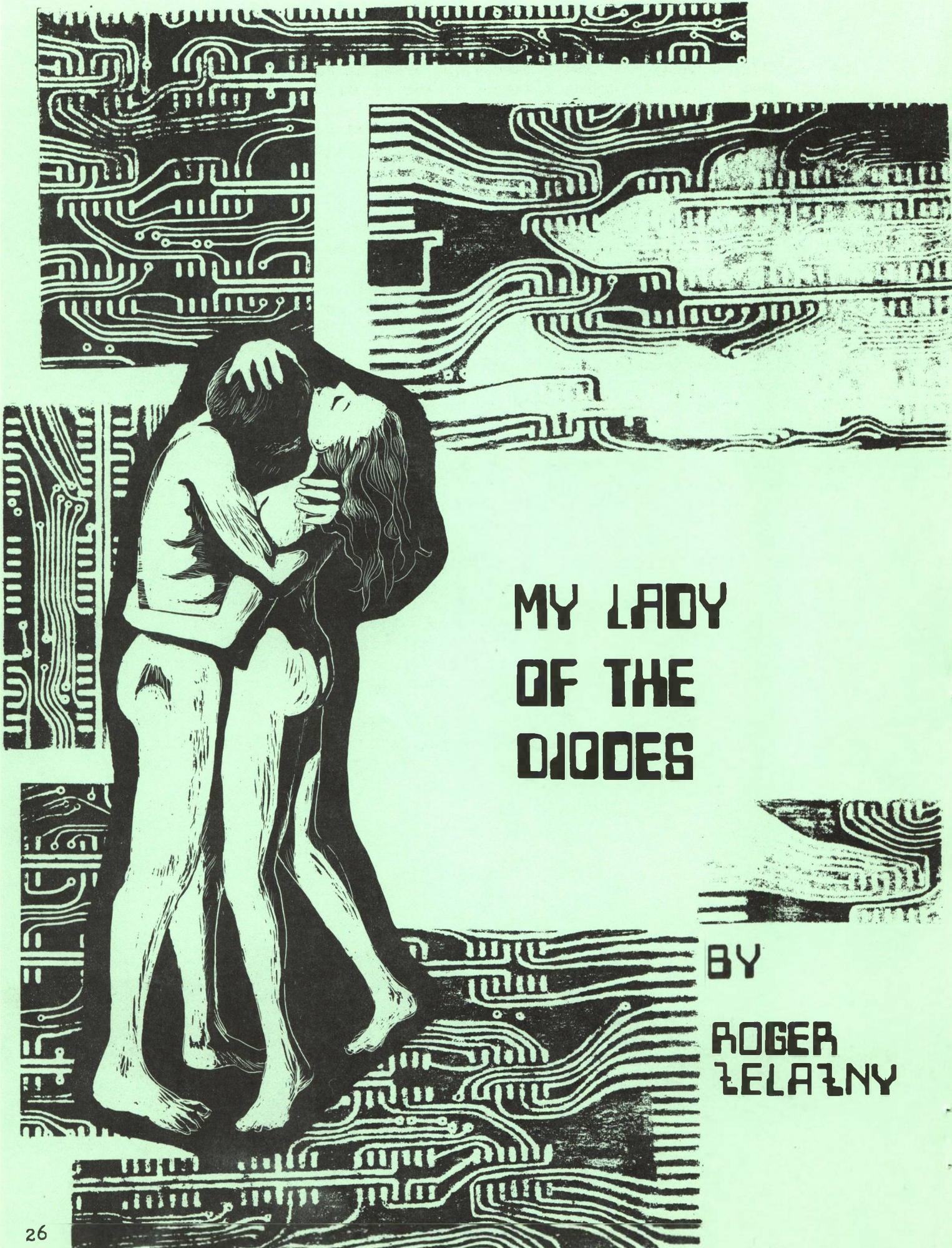
The Jekyll/Hyde theme has always been strong drama in able hands, but Malle just doesn't seem to have the knack. The card game sequence is the liveliest portion of this overlong and laborious psychological exercise, and even it moves with sputters and spurts. Its shock value relies on scenes of knives cutting flesh and bodies falling from buildings rather than the more terrifying (but harder to express) premise of man against himself. Both this and the Vadim episode suffer from some toneless and crude English-dubbing.

Lastly, Federico Fellini discards Poe's plotting in favor of a simple essence de Poe combined with the inimitable flavor of Fellini. "Toby Dammit," a fading British actor (Stamp) usually incorrigible and always drunk, arrives in Italy to make the first "Catholic western," a job he has accepted only because the producer has promised to give him a Maserati. Toby sweats and drinks his way through a series of television interviews, awards presentations, and various public appearances, during which he again and again sees the Devil in the form of a ball-bouncing, blonde little girl whose presence is known only to Toby. Against a background of charlatan Roman decadence, Toby waits with fantastic patience -- that is, if falling into inebriated sleep at regular intervals can be called patience -- for his Maserati. And then, when he is perched behind the wheel of his new car and drives through the narrow streets of Rome, an endless series of dizzying city lights and repeated dead ends, he makes that final-moment silly wager. Ahead lies a bridge under repair, its middle a black, empty gap in front of which plays the eerie little girl. Can he make the jump to the other side? Keep your eye on his head, and on that little girl's ball....

It's obvious that Fellini had fun with this self-spoofing bit of black humor. Terence Stamp gives one of his best performances, bright and brittle and very much in tone with both the director's fun-and-games and Poe's tortured hero. There is a grotesqueness, an extravagant use of color -- from the orange filters of the airport scenes to the blinding white of the television studio -- and sound -- Ray Charles mournfully sings "Ruby" in the background -- that is possibly the only way left for modern audiences to relate to the madness that is truly Poe.

You may find it worthwhile to watch the Fellini episode, which is light-years ahead of Malle's murky contribution, which, in turn, is better than Vadim's kindergarten erotica. But, whatever, it looks like the days of the creaking crypt door are numbered; the hinges have been oiled.





**MY LADY
OF THE
DIODES**

BY

**ROGER
ŻELAZNY**

Maxine had said, "Turn left at the next corner," so I did.

"Park the car. Get out and walk. Cross the street at the crosswalk."

I slammed the door behind me and moved on up the street, a man in a dark blue suit carrying a gray suitcase, a hearing aid in his left ear. I might have been the Fuller Brush man.

I crossed the street.

"Now head back up the other side. You will see a red brick building, numbered six-six-eight."

"Check," I said.

"Head up the front walk, but do not mount the stairs. Once you pass the iron fence, there will be a stairway leading downward, to your left. Descend that stairway. At the bottom of the stair there will be a doorway leading into the building, probably padlocked."

"There is."

"Set down the case, put on the gloves you are carrying in your coat pocket, take the hammer from your inside pocket and use it to strike open the lock. Try to do it in one sharp blow."

It took two.

"Enter the building and close the door behind you. Leave the lock inside; put away the hammer."

"It's dark..."

"The building should be deserted. Take twelve paces forward, and you will come to a corridor leading off to your right."

"Yes."

"Remove your right glove and take out the roll of dimes you are carrying in your right pocket. In the side corridor you should see a row of telephone books."

"I do."

"Is there sufficient illumination coming from the three small windows opposite the booths to permit you to operate a telephone?"

"Yes."

"Then enter the first booth, remove the receiver with your gloved hand, insert a coin, and dial the following number..."

I began to dial.

"When the call is answered, do not respond or hang up, but place the receiver on the ledge and enter the next booth, where you will dial the following number..."

I did this, twelve times in all.

"That is sufficient," said Maxine. "You have tied up all the lines to the Hall, so that no outgoing calls may be placed. It is highly improbable that anyone will come along and break these connections. Return at once to the car. Replace the padlock on the door as you go. Then drive directly to the Hall. Park in the corner lot with the sign that says 'First Hour 50¢ -35¢ each Add'l Hour'. You may pay in advance at that lot, so have your money ready. Tell the attendant that you will only be a short time."

I returned to the car, entered it, and began driving.

"Keep your speed at 35 miles per hour, and put on your hat."

"Must I? Already? I hate hats."

"Yes, put it on. The glasses, also."

"All right, they're on. Hats mess your hair up, though, more than the wind they're supposed to be protecting it from. They blow off, too."

"How is the traffic? Heavy? Light? -- They keep a man's head warm."

"Pretty light. -- They do not. Hair takes care of your head, and your ears still stick out and get cold."

"What color is the traffic signal ahead? -- Then why do other men wear hats?"

"It just turned green. -- They're stupid conformists. Hats are as bad as neckties."

"Barring untoward traffic circumstances, your present speed will take you through the next 2 intersections. You will be stopped by a red light at the third one. At that point, you will have time to fill your pipe -- and perhaps to light it, also, although you were rather slow when you practiced. If you cannot light it there, you should have two more opportunities before you reach the parking lot. --What's wrong with neckties?"

"Check your wristwatch against the time now: You have exactly nine minutes before the acid eats through the power cables. -- Neckties are elegant."

"Check... neckties are stupid!"

"Now place me in the back seat and cover me with the blanket. I will administer electrical shocks to anyone who tries to steal me."

"I did this, got the pipe going, found the lot."

"Keep puffing lots of smoke in front of your face as you talk with the attendant. You have the brown paper bag and the collapsable carton? The door-couple and the light?"

"Yes."

"Good. Take off your gloves. Remove your hearing aid and get it out of sight. Watch how you handle the steering wheel now. Palm it, and rub after each touch."

I parked the car, paid the attendant, strolled on up the street toward the Hall. Two minutes and twenty seconds remained.

I climbed the front stairs and entered the lobby. The Seekfax exhibit was in a room toward the back and to my left. I moved off in that direction.

One minute and forty seconds remained. I emptied my pipe into a sandpot, scraped the bowl.

No windows in the exhibit room, Maxine had said, and she'd digested the blueprints. Metal frame, metal doorplate -- just as Maxine had said.

I approached the door, which was standing open. I could hear voices, caught glimpses of banks of machinery, exhibit cases. I put away my pipe and changed my glasses to the infra-reds. Fifteen seconds. I put on my gloves. Ten.

I jammed my hands into my pockets, resting the left one on the infra-red flashlight and the right on the door-couple. I counted ten slowly and walked into the room, just as the lights went out.

Kicking the door shut, I slapped the couple-bar across the lockplate and the frame. Then I ran the polarizer rod along it, and it snapped tight. I switched on the flash and moved across the room to the central exhibit cases.

Everyone stood around stupidly as I removed the hammer and broke the glass. A couple of the salesmen began groping toward me, but much too slowly. I put away the hammer and filled the bag with the gold wire, the platinum wire, the silver wire. I wrapped the more expensive crystals and jewel-components in wads of tissue.

Half a minute, maybe, to fill the bag. I opened out the stamped, self-addressed carton as I made my way back across the room. I stuffed the bag inside, into a nest of shredded newsprint. Cigarette lighters and matches flared briefly about me, but they didn't do much, or for very long.

There was a small knot of people before the door. "Make way here!" I said. "I have a key." They pushed aside as I depolarized the couple-bar. Then I slipped out through the door, closed it, and coupled it from the outside.

I took off my gloves, put away the flashlight and changed my glasses as I strolled out, pipe between my teeth. I dropped the package into the mail box on the corner and walked back to the parking lot. I parked on a side street, reversed my dark blue suit jacket into a light gray sport coat, removed my glasses, hat and pipe, and re-introduced the hearing aid.

"All's well," I said.

"Good," said Maxine. "Now, by my estimate, they only owe your two million, one hundred twenty-three thousand, four hundred-fifty dollars. Let's return the car and take a taxi out to the scene of your alibi."

"Check. We'll pick up a bigger piece of change in Denver, doll. I think I'll buy you a new carrying case. What color would you like?"

"Get me an alligator one, Danny. They're elegant."



"Alligator it is, baby," I replied as we headed back toward the rent-a-car garage.

* * *

We hit Denver two months ahead of time, and I began programming Maxine. I fed her the city directory, the city history, all the chamber of commerce crap, and all the vital statistics I could lay my hands on. I attached the optical scanner and gave her the street guides and the blueprints to all the public buildings and other buildings I found in the files at City Hall. Then I photographed the conference hotel, inside and out, as well as the adjacent buildings. Every day we scanned the local newspapers and periodicals, and Maxine stored everything.

Phase Two began when Maxine started asking for special information: Which roads were surfaced with what? What sort of clothing was presently worn? How many construction companies were currently building? How wide were certain streets?

As a stockholder, I received my brochure one day, explaining the big conference. I fed that to Maxine, too.

"Do you want to cancel the debt completely?" she asked. "This includes court costs, attorney's fees and seven percent compound interest."

"How?"

"This will be the first showing of the Seekfax 5000. Steal it."

"Steal the whole damn machine? It must weigh tons!"

"Approximately sixty-four hundred pounds, according to the brochure. Let's steal it and retire. The odds against you keep going up each time, you know."

"Yes, but my God! What am I going to do with Seekfax 5000?"

"Strip it down and sell the components. Or better yet, sell the whole unit to the Bureau of Vital Statistics in Sao Paulo. They're looking for something like that, and I've already mapped out three tentative smuggling routes. I'll need more data..."

"It's out of the question!"

"Why? Don't you think I can plan it?"

"The ramifications are..."

"You built me to cover every contingency. Don't worry. Just give me the information I ask for."

"I'll have to consider this one a little further, baby. So excuse me. I'm going to eat dinner."

"Don't drink too much. We have a lot to talk about."

"Sure. See you later." I pushed Maxine under the bed and left, heading up the street toward the restaurant. It was a warm summer evening, and the slants of sunlight between buildings were filled with glowing dust motes.

"Mister Bracken, may I speak with you?"

I turned and regarded the speaker's maple syrup eyes behind jar bottoms set in Harlequin frames, dropped my gaze approximately five feet two inches to the tops of her white sandals, and raised it again, slowly: Kind of flat-chested and pug-nosed, she wore a cottony candy-striped thing which showed that anyway her shoulders were not bony. Lots of maple syrup matching hair was balled up on the back of her head, with a couple wing-like combs floating on it and aimed at her ears, both of which looked tasty enough -- the ears, that is. She carried a large purse and a camera case almost as big.

"Hello. Yes. Speak." There was something vaguely familiar about her, but I couldn't quite place it.

"My name is Gilda Coburn," she said, "and I arrived in town today." Her voice was somewhat nasal. "I was sent to do a feature article on the computer conference. I was coming to see you."

"Why?"

"To interview you, concerning data-processing techniques."

"There'll be a lot of more important men than me around in another week or so. Why don't you talk to them. I'm not in computers any more."

"But I've heard that you're responsible for three of the most important breakthroughs in the past decade. I read all of DANIEL BRACKEN VERSUS SEEKFAX INCORPORATED, and you said this yourself at the trial."

"How did you know I was in Denver?"

"Perhaps some friend of yours told my editor. I don't know how he found out. May I interview you?"

"Have you eaten yet?"

"No."

"Come with me then. I'll feed you and tell you about data-processing." No friend of mine could have told any editor, because I don't have any friends, except for Maxine. Could Gilda be some kind of cop? Private, local, insurance? If so, it was worth a meal or three if I could find out.

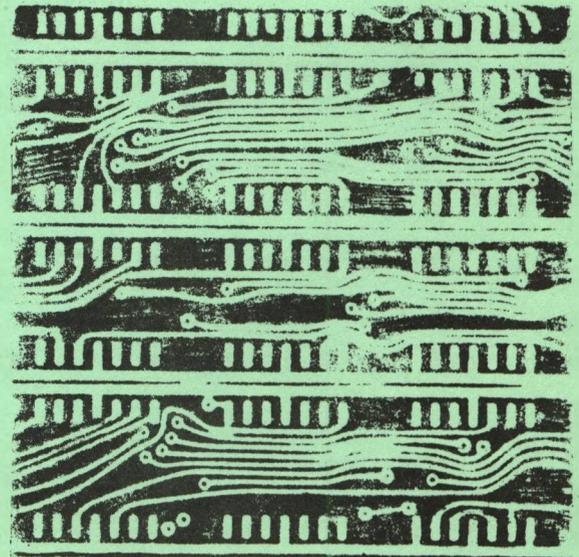
I ordered drinks before dinner, a bottle of wine with the meal and two after dinner drinks, hoping to fog her a bit. But she belted everything down and remained clear as a bell.

And her questions remained cogent and innocuous, until I slipped up on one.

I referred to the Seekfax 410 translation unit, when talking about possible ways of communicating with extraterrestrials, should we ever come across any.

"...610," she corrected, and I went on talking.

Click! Unwind her hair and lighten it a couple shades, then make her glasses horn-rimmed...



Sonia Kronstadt, girl genius out of MIT, designer of the Seekfax 5000, the prototype of which I was contemplating selling to the Bureau of Vital Statistics in São Paulo. She worked for the enemy.

I had hit Seekfax 12 times in the past 5 years. They knew it had to be me, but they could never prove it. I had built Max-10, Maxine, to plan perfect crimes, and she had done so a dozen times already. Seekfax was out to get me, but we had always outwitted their detectives, their guards, their alarm devices. No two robberies bore any resemblance as to method, thanks to Maxine. Each one was a de novo theft. Now then, if Kronstadt was in town ahead of time, under a phoney name, then this Denver conference smacked of a set-up job. The brochure had spoken of a very large display of expensive equipment, also. Had they something very special in mind for Danny Bracken? Perhaps it would do to sit this one out...

"Care to come back to my room for a nightcap?" I asked, taking her hand.

"All right," and she smiled, "thanks."

Ha! Hell hath no fury like a jealous computer designer, or computer, as I later learned...

When we got back to my room and were settled with drinks, she asked me what I had thought she might: "about all these robberies at Seekfax exhibits and conferences..."

"Yes?"

"I'd like to have your views as to who might be committing them."

"IBM? RCA?"

"Seriously. There has never been a single clue. Each one has actually been a perfect crime. You'd think a criminal that good would go after bigger game -- say, jewelry stores, or banks. My theory is that it's someone with a grudge against the company. How does that sound to you?"

"No," I said, and I touched her neck with my lips as I leaned over to refill her glass. She didn't draw away. "You're assuming that it's one person, and the facts tend to indicate otherwise. From the reports I've read, no two of the robberies have ever been alike. I believe that the Seekfax exhibit has come to be known in the underworld as an easy mark."

"Bosh!" she said. "They're not easy marks. Greater precautions are taken at each one, but the thief seems to accommodate this by taking greater precautions himself. This is why he keeps varying his method of operation. I think it's one man with a grudge against the company, a man who delights in outsmarting it."

I kissed her then, on the mouth to shut her up. She leaned forward against me and I drew her to her feet.

Somehow, the light got turned out.

Later, as I lay there smoking, she said: "Everyone knows you're the one who's doing it."

"I thought you were asleep."

"I was deciding how to say it."

"You're no reporter," I said.

"No, I'm not."

"What do you want?"

"I don't want you to go to prison."

"You work for Seekfax."

"Yes. I work for Seekfax, and I fell in love with the designs for the 5280 and the 9310. I know that they're your designs. The people they say did them aren't that good. Those are the work of a genius."

"I hired a consulting engineer," I said, "your Mister Walker, to help with some of the drawings. He went to work for Seekfax a week later, before I had the patents registered. You've read his testimony and mine. That's why he's a vice-president now."

"So that's why you commit these robberies?"

"Seekfax owes me two million, one hundred twenty-three thousand, four hundred-fifty dollars."

"That much? How do you know?"

"As a stockholder, I have a right to audit the books. I calculated that amount from what my C.P.A. saw of the profit rise after my ideas went into use. That's cheap, too. A work of art is priceless."

"It had to be you, Danny. I saw that door-couple. You designed it. Your signature was on it. I heard how bitter you were after the trial, how you swore you would recover..."

"So? Why come tell me your guesses? Have you got anything that will stand up in court?"

"Not yet."

"What do you mean 'yet'?"

"I came here ahead of the conference because I knew you'd be in town, planning this one. I came here to warn you, because I do not want you to go to prison. I could not bear being responsible for putting the creator of the 9310 behind bars."

"Granting that all your guesses are correct, how could you be responsible for anything like that?"

"Because I designed the Seekfax 5000," she said, "into which every known fact about Denver and yourself has been programmed. It is not just a fact-retriever, Danny. It is the perfect integrated data processing detective. I am convinced that it is capable of extrapolating every possible theft which could occur at the conference, and then making provision to guard against it. You cannot possibly succeed. The age of the master criminal is past, now that IDP has moved into the picture."

"Ha!" I said.

"Aren't you rich enough now to retire?"

"Of course I'm rich," I said. "That isn't the point..."

"I understand your motives, but my point is that you can't out-think the 5000. Nothing can! Even if you cut off the electricity again, the 5000 is a self-contained power unit. No matter what you do, it will compute an immediate counter-measure."

"Go back to Seekfax," I said, "and tell them that I'm not afraid of any cock-and-bull story about a detective computer. So long as they're going to hold exhibits and participate in conferences, they'd better be prepared to suffer losses. Also, I admit nothing."

"It's not a cock-and-bull story," she finally said. "I built the thing! I know what it can do!"

"Some day I'll introduce you to Maxine," I said, "who'll tell you what she thinks of 6400 pounds of detective."

"Who's Maxine? Your girl friend, or...?"

"We're just good friends," I said, "but she goes everywhere with me."

She dressed quickly then, and after a minute I heard the door slam.

I reached beneath the bed and switched on audio.

"Maxine, baby, did you catch that? The machine we're going to steal is out to get us."

"So what?" said Maxine.

"That's the attitude," I replied. "Anything it can do, you can do better. 6400 pounds! Huh!"

"You knew I was under the bed and turned on, but you did it anyway!"

"Did what?"

"You made love to that -- that woman ... Right above me! I heard everything!"

"Well... Yes."

"Have you no respect for me?"

"Of course I do. But that was something between two people, that --"

"And all I am is the thing you feed the facts to, is that it? The thing that plans your crimes! I mean nothing to you as an individual!"

"That's not true, Max baby. You know it. I only brought that woman up here to find out what Seekfax was up to. What I did was necessary, to obtain the data I needed."

"Don't lie to me, Daniel Bracken! I know what you are. You're a heel!"

"Don't be that way, Maxie! You know it's not so! Didn't I just buy you a nice new alligator case?"

"Hah! You got off cheap, considering all I've done for you!"

"Dorft, Max..."

"Maybe it's time you got yourself another computer."

"I need you, baby. You're the only one who can take on the 5000 and beat it."

"Fat chance!"

"What'll I do now?"

"Go get drunk."

"What good'll that do?"

"You seem to think it's the answer to everything. Men are beasts!"

I poured myself a drink and lit a cigarette. I should never have given Maxine that throaty voice. It did something to her, to me... I gulped it and poured another.

* * *

It was 3 days before Maxine came around. She woke me up in the morning, singing "The Battle Hymn of the Republic," then announced, "Good morning, Danny. I've decided to forgive you."

"Thanks. Why the change of heart?"

"Men are weak. I've recomputed things and decided you couldn't help it. It was mainly that woman's fault."

"Oh, I see..."

"...And I've planned the next crime, to perfection."

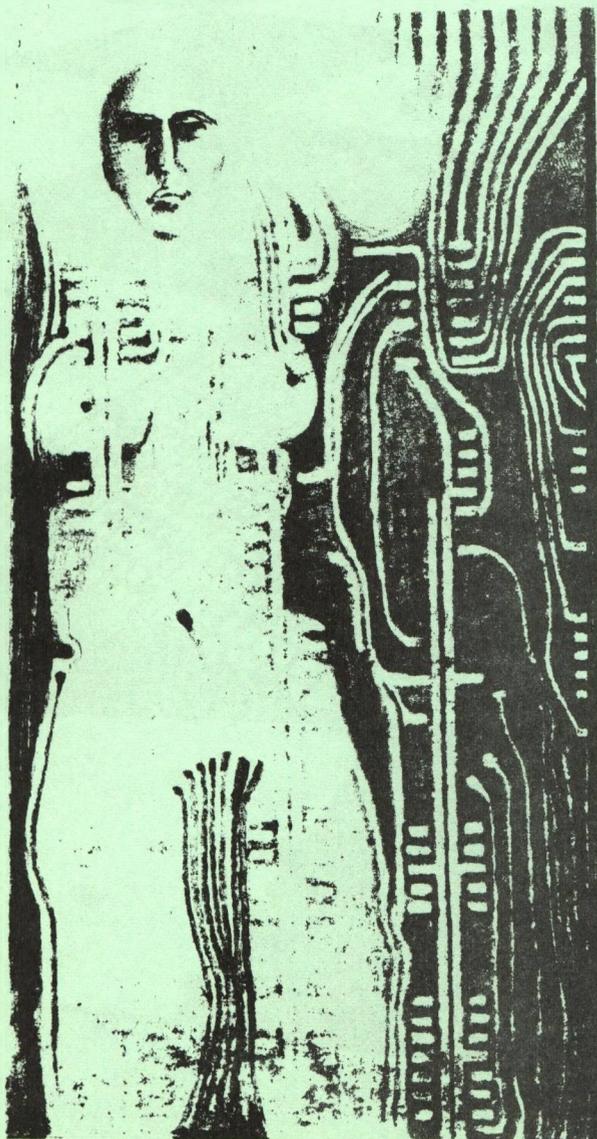
"Great. Let me in on it?"

At this point, I had some misgivings. I hadn't anticipated her woman-like reaction on the night I'd brought Sonia around. I wondered whether this thing might not go even deeper, to the point of her plotting revenge. Would she purposely foul this one up, just so I'd be caught? I weighed the problem and couldn't decide. It was silly! Maxine was only a machine...

Still --- she was the most sophisticated machine in the world, complete with random circuits which permitted emotion analogues.

And I couldn't build another Maxine in the time remaining. I just had to listen to her and decide for myself whether I should abandon the project...

"I put myself in the 5000's place," said Maxine. "We both possess the same facts, about yourself and the locale. I therefore, can arrive at any conclusion it can. The difference is that it is fighting a defensive battle, where we have the advantage of taking the initiative. We can break it by introducing an independent variable."



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"Such as?"

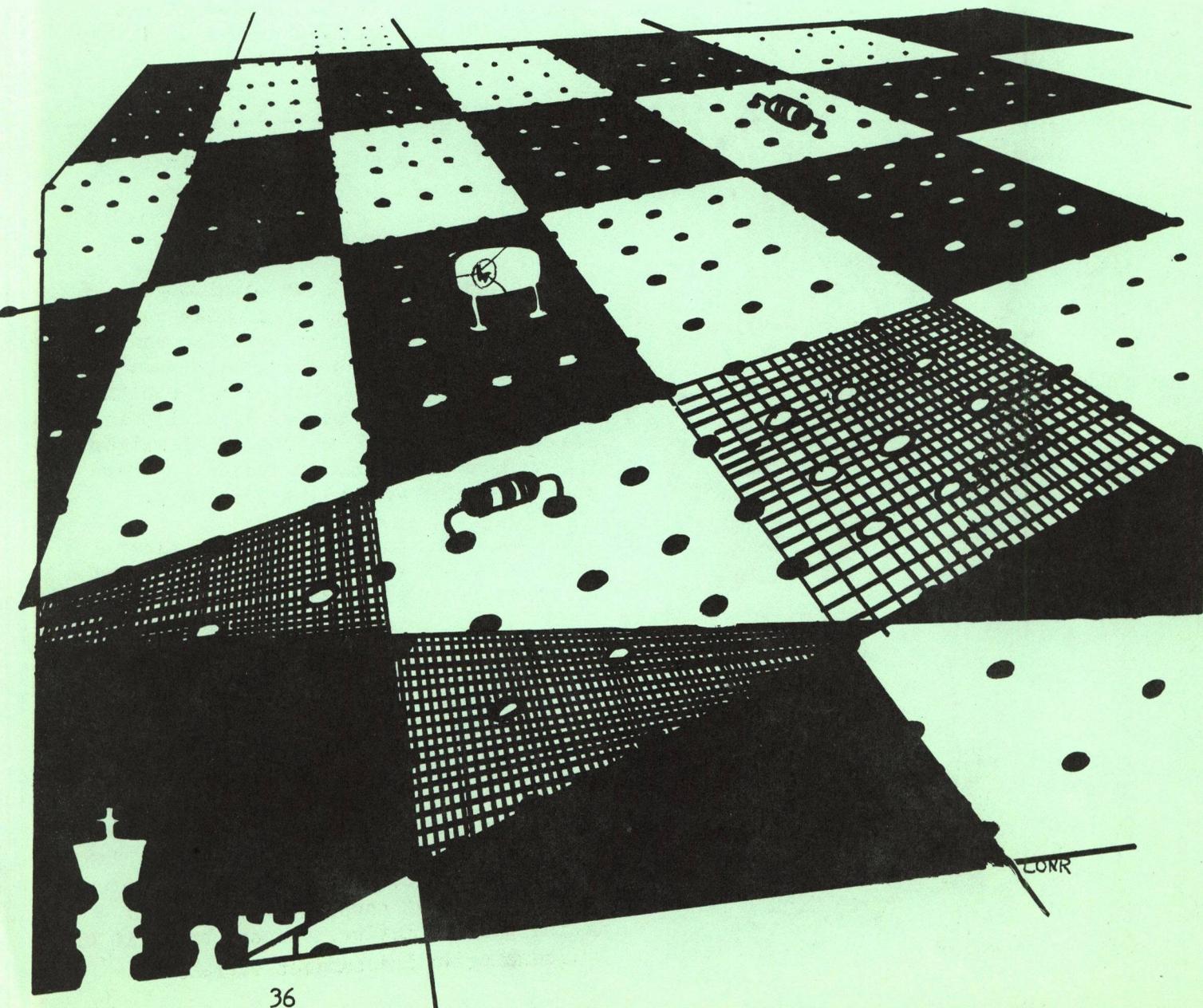
"You've always robbed the conference or exhibit while it was in progress. Seekfax 5000 will formulate plans to defend against this -- and only this, I'm certain -- because this is all it will be programmed for."

"I fail to see..."

"Supposing you strike before the conference, or after?"

"It sounds great, Maxie, if the 5000 is just a simple problem solver. But I'm a little afraid of the machine. Sonia Kronstadt is no slouch. Supposing she's duplicated your field approach to problem definition, so that that overweight monstrosity can redefine problems as it goes along? In a cruder fashion than yourself, of course! Or supposing Sonia simply thought of that angle herself, and the question was not posed as you've guessed?"

"She said, '...Every possible theft which could occur at the conference.' I'll wager that's the way she programmed it. The probabilities are on our side."



"I don't want to gamble that much."

"All right, then. Don't. How about this? I will plan it after the conference. The conference is open to the public, so we will attend. They can't throw you out if you're not causing a disturbance. An article in yesterday's paper stated that the Seekfax 5000 has been programmed to play chess and can beat any human player. It will play the local champions and anyone else who is interested anyone else who is interested, providing they supply the board and chessmen. Go buy a chess set. You will take me with you and keep me tuned in. Repeat each move after it makes it, and I will play the 5000 a game of chess. From its chess-playing I will extrapolate the scope of its problem solving abilities. After the game, I will let you know whether we can carry out the plan."

"No, don't be silly! How can you tell that from a game of chess?"

"It takes a machine to know one, Danny, and don't be so jealous. I'm only going to do what is necessary, to obtain the data I need."

"Who's jealous? I know computers, and I don't see how you can tell anything that way."

"There is a point, Danny, where science ends and art begins. This is that point. Leave it to me."

"All right. I'll probably regret it, but that's the way we'll do it."

"And don't worry, Danny. I can compute anything."

* * *

This is how it came to pass that on the last day of the conference a man in a dark suit showed up, carrying an alligator suitcase and a chess set, a hearing aid in his left ear.

"Biggest stereo set I ever saw," I said to Sonia, who was programming it to accommodate the ten or eleven players seated at the card tables. "I hear that critter plays chess."

She looked at me, then looked away.

"Yes," she said.

"I want to play it."

"Did you bring a chess set?" I could see she was biting her lip.

"Yes."

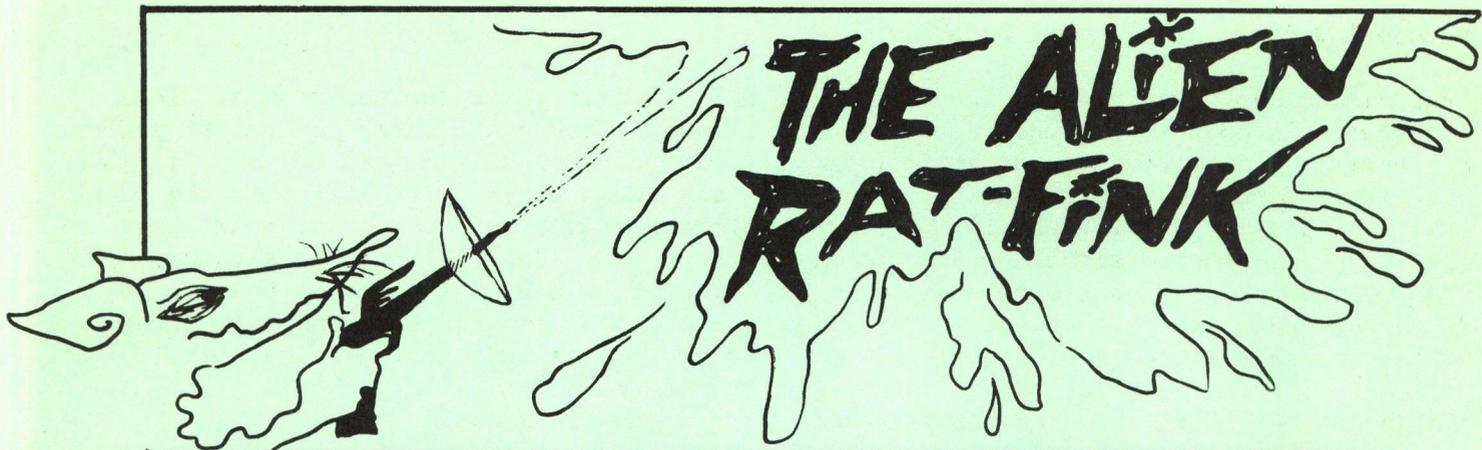
"Then have a seat at that empty table and set up the board. I'll be by in a few moments. I make all the moves for the machine. Which do you want: Black or white?"

"White. I'll be offensive."

"Then make the first move." She was gone.

I set Maxine on the floor beside the table, opened out the board and dumped the pieces. I set them up and clicked my tongue in signal. "Pawn to Queen four," said Maxine.

(Continued page 49)



BOOK REVIEWS ————— RICHARD DELAP

THE MARTIAN WAY AND OTHER STORIES
Isaac Asimov, Fawcett Crest R1289
1969 (reprint, 1955), 60¢, 176 pp.

This collection consists of four tales by one of the most respected names in SF, and the title story shows him near the peak of his enviable reputation. The book has been, I believe, out of print in paperback since the Signet edition of a dozen years ago. It's nice to have it back.

"The Martian Way": There is a population of 50,000 in the Mars settlement, each working daily to build a life on limited resources. As a political madman of Earth convinces his naive world that it can no longer afford to export water to Mars, the Martian "scavengers" — men who make a living by recovering ships' discarded shells on the routes of space travel — set out to find another source of supply. Saturn is surrounded by uncountable tons of ice; that problem is how to get it back to Mars. The scientific puzzle is beautifully handled, fleshed out with convincing details, and a group of believable scavengers. Asimov makes them a lively lot by not turning the story into trivialities of mock heroics. It's one of the fastest, slickest, most entertaining tales of its kind you're likely to find anywhere.

"Youth" concerns two youngsters who find a couple of small, unidentifiable animals, and who keep them secretly caged in the barn. While they cherish adolescent dreams of celebrity in the circus with their unusual animal show, it becomes apparent (through somewhat windy conversations of the boys' fathers) that these animals are aliens whose spaceship has crashlanded nearby. The story becomes a race against time as to whether the aliens will survive the innocent ignorance of the youngsters.

Asimov does well characterizing the children, not quite as well with the parents — well, an Astronomer and an Industrialist may be handy for explanations, but not so good, together for credibility — and carefully builds to a twist-ending that is unoriginal by today's standards, yet a generally satisfying treatment of one of SF's more familiar themes.

"The Deep": On a dying world, an alien race has burrowed deeply into the planet, constructing a technology/society that rests on their telepathic abilities. In an effort to find a new world, the initial steps are taken for a ten-year transfer of the entire race to an underground cavern existence on Earth. As the story unfolds,

* * * *

President Nixon: "I've decided to change the Selective Service System, PFC Agnew."

the author makes some interesting points on the difficulties of communication between species separated by physiological, and resultant cultural, barriers.

"Sucker Bait": Troas is a world of a double-sun, and called sucker bait because the first expedition there was "wiped out to the last soul." Among the members of the second expedition is a Mnemonic, a young man whose brain is a remarkable file cabinet for facts, and whose ability far surpasses the best computer for correlating seemingly unrelated data. The story is built around the ever-present question of what killed the first expedition, but Asimov muddles the suspense and excitement of the eventual discovery by padding the characters with extraneous details, playing them off one another with personality conflicts that detract from the essential plot. It's readable, but obviously clumsy and far too long.

If you haven't read the book yet -- in fact, if you haven't read all of Asimov's fiction (not to mention the terrific nonfiction) -- your SF education is incomplete. You'd better get this one.

DIMENSION THIRTEEN by Robert Silverberg
Ballantine 01601, 1969, 75¢, 215 pp.

Silverberg worked for years grinding out what is generally termed "hackwork" stories and novels (a few of which were at least reasonably entertaining), and has only recently been doing SF that is generating some real interest -- novels like THORNS and THE MASKS OF TIME and stories like "Hawksbill Station." With this sudden new interest in Silverberg, it seems a shame that his name value is exploited on a collection that is below standard and should never have been published at all.

Nine of the stories date between '57 and '60, with the remaining four from '66-'67.

The better stories are of recent vintage: "Halfway House" tells of an Earthman who, after being saved from death, finds he must give more than simple monetary return; and "The King of the Golden River," with its other-world miscegenation that leads to a question of accepting cultural as well as racial differences, is emotional but satisfying. "Prime Commandment," "By the Seawall," and "The Four" are all very basic but relatively passable stories.

The remaining stories are mostly dreck that should have been left to die a quick death in their original magazine appearances. "Bride Ninety-One," "En Route to Earth," and "Solitary" are pedestrian attempts at humor on a level with ill-timed, slapstick pratfalls. "Eve and the 23 Adams," "Dark Companion," and "Journey's End" all have corny plots which end up in ridiculous





climaxes, and 2 of them are saddled with sloppy sentiment.

"Warm Man" is a plotless piece of drivel that starts on nothing and ends the same way, while "World of a Thousand Colors," the book's worst story, reads like comic-strip continuity, lacking both character motivation and even a minimum of conviction.

Silverberg shouldn't be ashamed to have written most of this stuff -- he has learned something from it -- but Ballantine should be ashamed for publishing it in one lump package.

THE BEAST THAT SHOUTED LOVE
AT THE HEART OF THE WORLD
by Harlan Ellison, Avon V2300
1969, 75¢, 254 pp.

The title story of this collection recently won for the author another Hugo award to grace his already bulging treasure trove. It would be unfair to say that the story didn't deserve the award -- I sometimes have trouble meshing my personal critical acumen with the unrestricted democratic tally -- so I will merely say that I believe Ellison has done better. This book, however, is another matter entirely, I don't think it would be inaccurate to say that Ellison is able to sell shit for jewels on his name value alone.

And yet this leaves me in a quandry. I don't know whether to chastise Ellison (for getting away with it) or the editors and public (who let him do it). I respect the author for his proven talent (read "Pretty Maggie Moneyeyes" or either of his previous Hugo-winning short stories), and I can forgive his overly melodramatic introduction to this book when he sums up his message with a distressingly simple truth: "God is within you. Save yourselves." Perhaps his talent would become less erratic if he wrote less...or wrote more and sold less...or something.

Four of the stories here represent passably good Ellison. "The Beast That Shouted Love, etc." is an experimental, downbeat, pessimistic, labored, but rational drama

of the woes of man and the cause of their existence. "Worlds to Kill" has an interesting view of cause-and-effect and pictures the results of murder and carnage when entire planets are prizes. "Asleep: With Still Hands" ("The Sleeper with Still Hands" in If) is an action format story built around a symbolic base, with its background material intriguingly exposed through the divergent mental patterns of its characters. "S.R.O." is an early "Ellis Hart" story about alien 'actors' performing in Times Square, and is still rather amusing despite the obviousness of it all.

The rest of the stories, with 2 exceptions, are recent, but none of them are really worth a damn. The earlier stories (57-58) show Ellison in the days when he was reworking cliches with a vengeance; both "Run for the Stars" and "Are You Listening?" are overwritten and underrationalized hack pieces that are better off forgotten. "Phoenix" ("Phoenix Land" in If) might well have come from the early period (though it was published in 1968) considering its trashy soap-opera framework. "The Pital Pawob Division" ("The Pawob Division" in If) is a silly tale of gift-giving aliens and is awfully trivial, even for Ellison. "White on White," a turnabout on the female-abducted-by-love-starved-monster theme, makes the "Pawob" story look serious in comparison.

"Along the Scenic Route" ("Dogfight on 101" in Amazing) takes place on the future's freeways where duels to the death work a medieval contrast to the automobile's super-arsenal of weapons. The idea isn't new (see Fritz Leiber's surpassing "X Marks the Pedwalk") and Ellison's comic-book drama isn't much help. "Santa Claus vs. S.P.I.D.E.R." is a James Bond spoof that falls flat under the weight of its own vulgarity. "Try a Dull Knife," a vampire story-with-a-twist, has a cutting edge no sharper than the title and again represents Ellison being self-indulgent and unappealing. "The Place With No Name" tells of a man who is a pimp, a junkie, a murderer, and, finally, a savior and a legend; but it comes out a bland welter of scenes that seems snatched from a careful study of horrid 'B' movies.

(Continued page 42)





OMPHALLOPSYCHITE

WHEREIN THE READERS AND
THE EDITOR CONTEMPLATE
THEIR NAVELS ... AND THEIR
NAVELS CONTEMPLATE
BACK ... A NAVEL IDEA!

HARRY WARNER, JR.
423 Summit Ave.
Hagerstown, Md.
21740

You asked about the history of fandom in the 1950's and 1960's. I have my homework about half done on the volume that will cover the 1950's. Advent has no intention of scheduling it before 1972, because of other commitments. So I'll take my time about writing it, and I have vague intentions of farming out much of the basic

material in different versions as fanzine articles beforehand, so corrections and additions will reach me before I finish the book manuscript. Someone else will probably have to do the history of the 1960's because I'm positive that my energy for fan history writing will be exhausted by the time I reach 1960. Besides, it's going to take 2 or 3 books the size of ALL OUR YESTERDAYS to cover the 1960's, because fandom has expanded and subdivided so much in recent years.

The last GRANFALLOON didn't seem outdated to me. For instance, Richard Delap's reviews of the 1968 prozines could have been delayed another year or two and with respect to me, the only effect would have been to make it a little fresher in my memory when I came to read those issues. I'm chronically behind on reading professional SF, which I've been buying in large hunks after it's several years old, because I never get around

* * * *

"The Beast that Shouted Love" (conclusion of review):

Lastly, in "A Boy and His Dog," Ellison again bares his fangs and, surprise!, they haven't grown even an inch. (That's enough, boy, shut your mouth.) A war-ravaged, 22nd-century America is the setting, and the action involves a boy, a girl, a telepathic dog, sex (and no pantywaist stuff, either, but good red-blooded smut), the vilest language this side of Grove Press, lots of blood and violence, and a tiny, tiny plot that gets smashed flat under the load. To the starving man, this 7-course feast may look appetising; 5 minutes after he's finished, when he's again starving, he'll realize it consisted of no-cal servings. This wouldn't be so horrible (though still cruel) were it a free meal, but when he's paying for it...?

I've got my copy still, because I'm a compulsive bibliophile; it's filed, however, under the title "The Ellison Junkshop."

to reading it promptly if I buy it off the newsstands in the month of publication. These reviews cause me to realize that I'll have some dreary hours devoted to reading around 1973 or whenever I tackle these issues. But there are a few things in favor of this late reading procedure. You know which items should get reading priority, because they've been mentioned favorably so often in fanzines that you remember the titles after all these years. You find a strange sort of I've-been-here-before familiarity as you read some of the stories, almost an impression that you've lived in these alien worlds among these unprecedented items, simply because you half-remember descriptions of the stories' plots and settings in fanzines long ago.

RAVISHED probably represents a precedent in the entire history of the nation's critical literature. It's unlikely that anyone has given this much attention and space to a sex novel of non-best seller proportions before. Piers Anthony makes the Geis book sound readable, and it might be possible to draw an elaborate parallel between SF and sexual fiction, as the victims of similar ghettoization, editorial restrictions, and great overwhelming masses of crud to the small and precious lodes of literacy. I'd like to see someone write an extensive description of the whole subindustry of sex novel publishing. The payment rates seem to be rather low; is that caused by too many books appearing for large sales in a large market, or is the market really quite small? Is there any way for the non-completist reader of Sex stories to ferret out the ones that are well written and contain some originality without reading a chapter or two of each new title? What do the bulk of the readers do with these paperbacks? Do they read them over and over, collect them in secret places in their homes, and re-enact their episodes as a ritual to enliven dull moments (mentally, of course); or do most readers rush through a book for the quick thrill of the exciting pages, then throw it away and never give it another thought?

As self-proclaimed leader of Vaughan Bode fandom, I should comment on Howard Green's complaint. I'm positive that he can't support his claim that Bode is a 3rd-rate comic book artist: If Bode is a comic book artist at all, he's one of the very 1st rank, infinitely superior to almost all the others who work in that field. It's almost as doubtful if Howard can back up his implication that "comic book art" shouldn't get involved with serious SF. This establishment of artificial commandments on what artists may and may not do has been tried over the centuries and has never withstood the evolution of great art. There was a time when a great artist was not supposed to create masterpieces of portraiture unless he was using the aristocracy as his subjects. I'm sure that Howard Green would have criticized van Gogh in a past era for drawing in the style of fourth graders.

Bode's work obviously has some things in common with some elements in comic strip art, just as some elements of comic art can be traced all the way back to people like Hogarth. The point is that Bode has taken influences from here and there and has added to them some completely personal elements unique to himself, and the result has been an outpouring of art that is unlike anything anyone has produced before. It's quite understandable if some people are turned off by the way Bode looks at the world and the manner in which he interprets his outlook. It's wrong to imagine that an anti reaction to Bode will cause anyone to reject other good SF artists or SF itself. Has the existence of Harlan Ellison, his personality, and his activities caused anyone to feel differently toward the stories of Tolkien?

* * * * *

Nominate Tim Kirk, Steve Fabian, Mike Gilbert, and Connie Reich for Fan Artist

Meanwhile, I am vastly impressed by the covers of this GRANFALLOON, even though they're quite different in nature from Bode. I get the impression that fanzine art has been making a definite breakaway in the past year or so from the old, wornout basic themes and it has been showing major advances in composition over the ancient tradition of simple illustration. I can't imagine the Bowers back cover with any of its elements removed or shifted around; each curve and circle seems to be absolutely essential as a balance to something else, and the extreme contrast of shading techniques and positioning of black areas creates an extra third dimension impression in the right places. The Delap front cover is also quite advanced, compared with most fanzine art of the past. [Is the day coming when Delap will be nominated as best fan artist and writer? -LeB] I suspect that Bergeron has been a great influence on fan art. Nobody imitates his particular styles too slavishly, but he seems to have shown other artists how to combine literal and symbolic elements in his subject matter and the importance of not making large drawings too busy. I admire very much the Mike Gilbert drawings inside, and I suspect that much of that admiration comes from the subtle way in which he distorts normal proportions to increase the sense of action and violence.

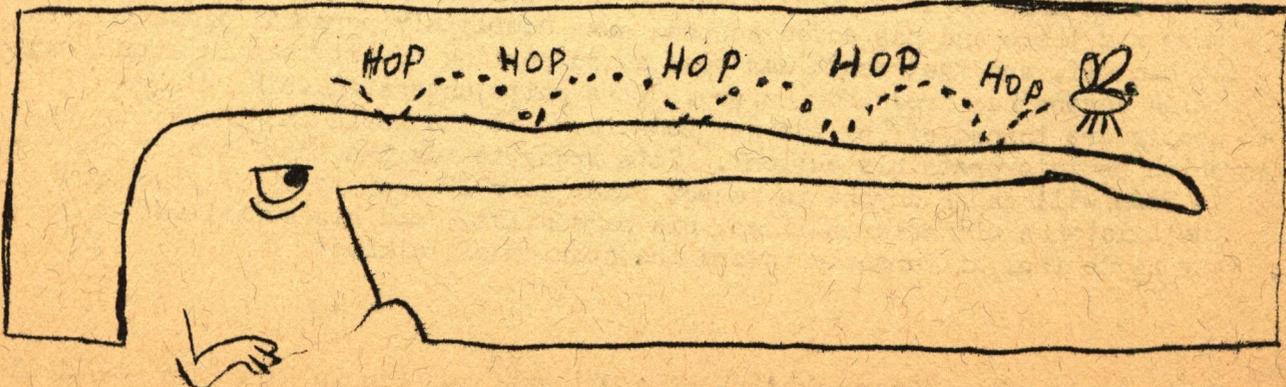
[You may have noted that Gf is chock full of art and the lettercol happily reflects my interest in art with comments about art. I feel that a fanzine must have good art to look good and I appreciate any art (and I try to criticize any art I reject). I'd like to have some artist write a column about artwork similar to Seth Dogramajian's effort in BEABOHEMA. Anybody interested? I feel that fan and pro artwork is very important and deserves more attention than it usually receives. -LeB]

LARRY PROPP
1010 West Green
#335, Urbana
Illinois, 61801

Loved the Piers Anthony piece (Oh, my Ghod, another pun) on RAVISHED. Also DiNucci's "Chewing Gum." Especially enjoyed this because I had just read an article by Gaughan in SF REVIEW on giving up smoking, and the DiNucci article was (intentionally or not) a great satire of it. Different form and style, but a perfect squelch. [Not. The "Gum" article was written several months before SFR appeared. -LeB]

"The Alien Rat Fink" was to my liking; I hate, loath, and despise short book reviews. The Delap/Anthony exchange was very meaningful; not only did it reveal how Anthony's mind works when he's writing, but it also helped illuminate the meaning of OMNIVORE and CHTHON.

The above may be construed as praising Delap; now I must damn him (or you). I found the SF magazine reviews disjointed, truncated, and disappointing.



YOU SIR ARE
TRESSPASSING!



First of all, the piece was so late that you could recall the stories mentioned only if they had impressed you the first time. Then, my idea of a mag review column is not to list the stories, state whether or not you liked them, and list an issue as good or bad depending on the number of stories you liked. It's all too episodic; you get no idea of the net worth of the mag and its flavor and continuity from issue to issue. Magazine reviews should be like book reviews (agreed -- shorter, but basically structured the same), and no one would accept book reviews like these. Plot descriptions and bare statements of "I liked it" or "I hated it" are not enough. Delap's book reviews aren't like that; why were these?

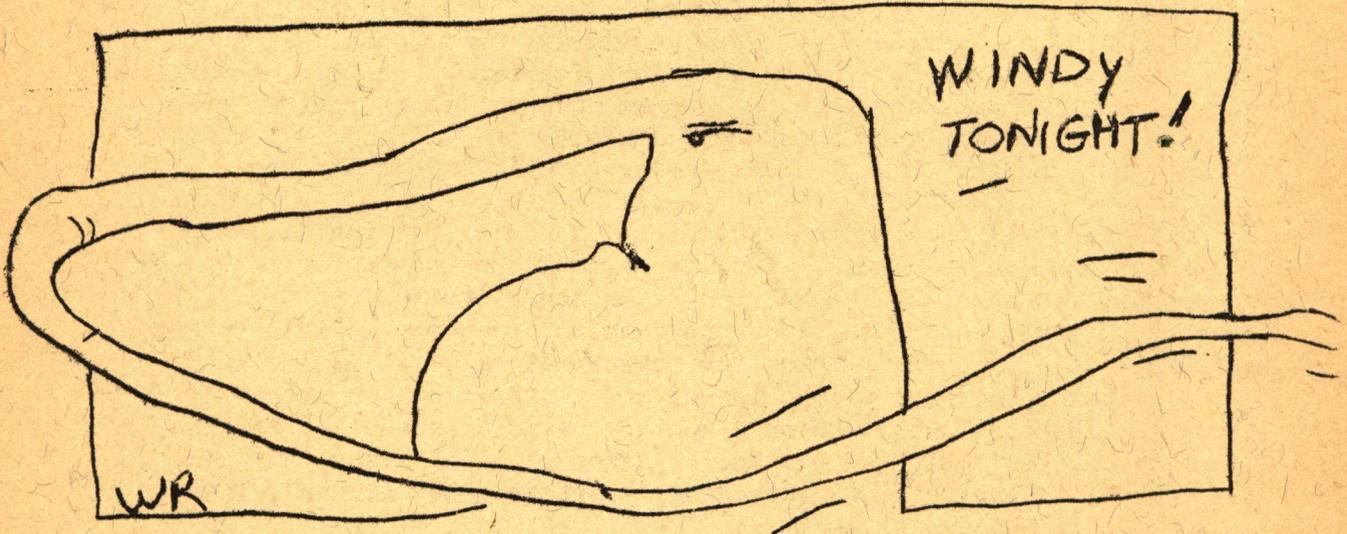
I said I might be damning you too. You did admit that you had cut down on the column due to length. [No, my cutting consisted of cutting out a few words, redundances, and shortening "science fiction" to SF (a general policy), and so on. You can damn me for being so late in putting out the last Gf, or for pubbing the reviews at all. -LeB/] Delap's article took up a third of the issue, and that's too much at one time. A column like that should be on a monthly basis in a monthly fanzine, like Anthony Lewis's LOCUS column. [Agreed, which is why this year's mag column, if any, will be appearing elsewhere. Hey Richard, let me know and I'll mention it.-LeB/]

TIM KIRK
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Long Beach
Calif., 90807

Enjoyed Gf7 very much, especially the beautiful cover and Gilbert folio. Howard Green's letter particularly interested me. I agree with him on some of his points, but I certainly don't consider Bode a "half-baked artist." There's really no sense in comparing Bode's quality to Schonherr, Gaughan, Gilbert, or even mainstream artists like Peake or English; Bode's style is intensely personal, but it's not 3rd rate. Within the bounds he's set for himself, he's reached a high degree of sophistication; there seems, to me, to be no trace of amateurishness or uncertainty.

You're correct, Linda, in saying that Bode utilizes comic book style in a new and exciting way. Perhaps Mr. Green disapproves of the comic approach period. I'm no partisan of comic books as a group (though I'm a staunch supporter of Carl Barks, one-time artist for the Disney magazines); the average quality is deplorable. But Bode is in a class by himself.

And as for Kelly Freas, well, I do think he's been better in the past; but the quality of his work remains pretty high. And he was producing first-rate work for the SF magazines (and some fairly good comic art) long before he worked for MAD. I don't think either he or Bode have "brought the quality of SF art down to comic book level." The level of SF art has never been outstanding. One could probably count the truly great artists on the fingers of one's hands and perhaps one foot. Bok, of course; probably the finest to appear in the pulps, along with Edd Cartier and Finlay. Frank Utpatel, maybe. J. Allen St. John. Lee Brown Coye. Emsch, Schonherr, Gaughan. I'll add Freas, Frazetta, and Jeff Jones to the list, though I'm sure many would disagree. I'd also add Bode, Gilbert, and Barr, all of whom haven't gotten the exposure in the magazines they deserve as yet. Frank R. Paul was a pioneer in SF art, but I'm not sure he was all that good an artist. Well, anyway, for forty or fifty odd years of SF publication, it's not a very long list. Could it be that there just isn't enough money to attract many top-flight artists to SF magazines? Or that SF packaging requires a different level of approach than mainstream? I'm not sure...the quality of SF illustration depends only on what the art editors will accept, after all. End of sermon.



DAVE BURTON
5422 Kenyon Drive
Indianapolis
Ind. 46226

Dear Howard Green: Are you insane? You say that Bode is a comic artist? Then just how the hell do you label your artwork? I dunno about you, but it looks like ~~second-rate-impressionist~~ comic art (I've never seen impressionistic comic art, but you do it).

Bode is the most original of the new artists in the SF field. Just because he draws simple, cleanly drawn, intelligent pictures doesn't mean he is a comic artist. Have you read a comic recently? I doubt it. I submit that Freas or Bode could beat your ass off when it comes to art. I don't like your comments about Bode. Till you prove yourself the superior artist, you have no room to criticize.

ROBERT SABELLS
32 Cortright Rd.
Whippany, N.J.
07981

I feel Granny has fallen into a deep rut. First of all, consider the October issue: Not including the Contents page, it contains 43 printed pages, of which 31 are editorial or reviews, 10 lettercol, and 2 pages of articles-fiction-poetry. C'mon, Linda, a genzine should rely on its articles and prose and have reviews and lettercol only as regular departments. I get the impression that you are using articles-prose as fillers. The only fanzine that has succeeded with that policy is SF REVIEW, and even that has 10-20 pages of articles. [Maybe I should change the name to GRANFALLOON REVIEW or SF DISCUSSION. Actually, a fanzine editor can only print the material he receives, when all I get are movie, fanzine, book, mag reviews, I end up with a bunch of reviews. When I get articles on Hugos, sex at the cons, a Zelazny story, and so on, I end up with a more varied fare as in this issue. Also, if you recount the pages last issue, you may end up with different numbers 47 pages (not counting counting covers, folio, or contents of which 23 were actual reviews (RAVISHED was more or less a humor piece rather than a review and GUNKY was a review satire), but admittedly, there were lots of reviews-LeB]

Another problem is your letter column. With about 3 exceptions the list of writers of the last 2 issues looks like a who's who of prodom and fandom. [This is bad?-LeB] Are they the only ones who write you letters, or is it that you don't deem it necessary to print letters by unknown people? I'm not really trying to sound sarcastic, but it must be very frustrating for many of your readers and would-be contributors when they see that you print nothing but big names. It's frustrating for me, that's for sure. [If memory and records serve this is the first LoC you've sent me, so I don't know why you are so frustrated (maybe you should get married? The process of lettercolumn selection is simple. I pile up all the letters I've gotten and put the most interesting on top, the most controversial with these. The "gee I liked the ish" and "here's a dollar" letters go to the bottom and end up in the We Also Heard FROM or in the wastecan. Generally pros tend to be more interesting than fans to readers, so they go near the top. People like Delap and Harry Warner consistently write interesting, well-written, controversial letters, and therefore appear repeatedly in lettercolumns. Thisish very few pros wrote letters, several little-known-fen wrote interesting letters, and therefore you ended up near the top. After I hit a total of 50 pages or so I simply stop the lettercol and throw everybody left into WAHF. Do you realize how much it costs for each extra page? Do you realize how much money a fanzine looses? Well, all I can say is I hope my husband doesn't realize it-LeB]

MIKE DECKINGER
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07106

Bowers' back cover is an extremely impressive blend of techniques. I've never associated Bill with this style before, but now that I view his example with its various shifts, I can't conceive of anyone else doing a more successful attempt. Was Bill ever influenced by the Dillions? [? -LeB]

I'm grateful to Piers Anthony, for at least proving that sex books contain anything more than handsomely printed covers, sturdy bindings, and blank pages. That, at least is the impression generated by the racks of sex novels at some of the bookstores. The space devoted to these volumes easily exceeds that given over to SF and frequently these 2 are in close proximity, so that in order to thumb through the latest SF releases I must manuever myself between frozen ranks of horny businessmen,

The covers on sex novels all seem to have about the same format, some large titling for the book's name, slightly smaller type for the author, and a prominent blurb identifying the publisher. The titles often range from quizzical-but-acceptable-within-mixed-company-names like THE HOT AFTERNOON to tasteless titles that seem to be in competition with each other as THE VIOLATED VIRGIN. I've observed that one publisher manages to fit "Lust" into every single title his firm issues. Is "Lust" the new catch-phrase, which emphasizes the novels erotic content? Will ambitious newspapers adopt this gimmick as a means of boosting sales? Are you prepared for headlines reading NIXON SPENDS DAY OF LUST AT FLORIDA HOME or MEAT PRICES REACH LUSTY HEIGHT?

The one idea that newstand and bookdealers have overlooked is to charge a reasonable browsing fee. Male customers are quite willing to spend an hour painfully on their feet as they thumb through these volumes, but they would hate to pay \$1.95 for one.

Howard Green has a foggy view of Bode's talent. Anyone who can state: "For years people like Jack Gaughan, John Schonherr, Paul Lehr, and recently Mike Gilbert have tried to bring SF artwork up to a level that could be respected..." betrays a scant knowledge of the field. For years people like Gaughan, Schonherr, and Lehr have been turning out abominable crap that they could only sell in a field that has such a low average level that stuff like this sneaks by. Only within the last year has Jack Gaughan begun to turn out Hugo quality work (specifically Ace covers). Vaughan Bode has done art that is outre, bizarre, unrelated to the present type, and therefore unsaleable. I agree with you, Linda, one look at his art show at the Worldcon would wipe the pompous sneers from people who refer to Bode as a comic book artist. Kelly Freas should have won the Hugo at St. Louiscon; his ANALOG and ACE covers were excellent.

ROBER WADDINGTON
4 Commercial St.
Norton, Malton
Yorkshire, England

The way I see it, Dick Geis is performing a public service for writing a sex novel. There are hordes of grey little men, commuting from their grey little jobs to their grey little wives; and just for a while they can take out a Geis novel bought at their local pornshop, and hiding it behind their newspapers, can escape into a whole new bright world, where they have the biggest ----- ever imagined.

Judging from Delap's reviews, there was a hell of a lot of mediocre SF for '68. And please, Piers, find another title to WAR THE STICK, it sounds like a satire on SOS THE ROPE, rather than a sequel. Surely it would have been VAR THE ROD, if it had been a sex novel?

WE ALSO HEARD FROM:

Jerry Lapidus, who among others requested addresses appear in the lettercol, so they are back. I hope you won't mind if I leave them out of the WAHF section.

JACK WEST and ROBERT BLOCH sent handwritten messages. (Please type Locs!) RON SMITH, PAULINE PALMER, STEVE FABIAN, and BERNIE ZUBER also wrote.

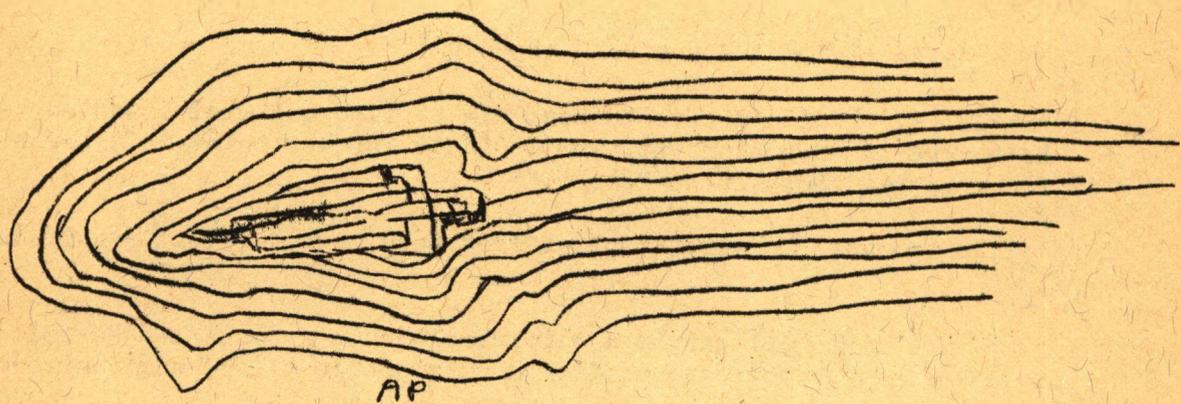
DAN OSTERMAN keeps sending me illos which I keep rejecting with criticism, which he keeps sending back. They aren't too bad, but just not what I

want. So if your zine needs some artwork, write him, 1 Elbow Lane,
Cherry Hill, N.J. 08034.

SANDRA MEISEL wonders if Dick Geis carries a tapemeasure around at all
times. "It's ever so daring of him to fly in the face of the folkwisdom
enunciated by cigarette commercials -- 'Length Alone Is Not Enough' and
'It's not how long you make it..!'" ADRIENNE FEIN, JEFF SOYER, and MICHAEL
WALSH also wrote. LON JONES, HAROLD MELANSON, DOUG FRATZ, HASHIMOTO,
RICHARD DELAP (he claims he's not a hoax), MICHAEL GILBERT, NEAL GOLDFARB,
BOB ROEHM, and SUNDAY JORDANE also wrote.

Please keep writing, and don't forget to send artwork, articles, humor,
and money!!

* * * * *



* * * * *

MY LADY OF THE DIODES by Rodger Zelazny (continued:)

An hour later, all the games were over but ours. The other chess players
were standing around watching. "'Fella's good," someone stated. There
were several assents.

I glanced at my wristwatch. Seekfax 5000 was taking more time between
moves. From the corners of my eyes, I could see that uniformed guards
flanked me in a reasonably unobtrusive manner.

There was a puzzled expression on Sonia's face as she made the moves for
her machine. It wasn't supposed to take this long... Some flashbulbs
went off, and I heard my name mentioned somewhere.

Then Maxine launched into a dazzling end-game. I'm no chess buff, but I
think I'm pretty good. I couldn't follow her up and down all those
dizzing avenues of attack, even if there had been half an hour between
moves.

The 5000 countered slowly, and I couldn't really tell who had the advantage. Numerically, we were about even.

Sonia sighed and moved her Bishop. "Stalemate," she said.

"Thank you," I said, "you have lovely hands," and I left.

No one tried to stop me, except for the representative of the local chess club, because I hadn't done anything wrong.

As we drove home, Maxine said: "We can do it."

"We can?"

"Yes. I know just how he works now. He's a wonderful machine, but I can beat him."

"Then how come he stalemated you back there?"

"I let him do it. I didn't have to beat him to find out what I wanted to know. He's never been beaten yet, and I didn't see any point in disgracing him in front of all those chess people."

I didn't like the way she accented that last word, but I let it go without comment.

In the rear view mirror, I caught a glimpse of Sonia Kronstadt's Mercedes. She followed me home, drove around the block a couple times, and vanished.

Over the weeks, I had obtained all the equipment I needed, including the paraffin for the chewing gum molds.

The Seekfax 5000 had been flown in from Massachusetts and was going to be flown back. It had to be transported to and from the airport, however, in a truck. So I was about to become a hijacker.

I buttoned down my red and white striped blazer, used my handkerchief to dust off my spats, smoothed my white trousers, adjusted my red silk Ascot and my big black false mustache, stuffed more cotton into my cheeks, put on my straw hat and picked up my canvas sack and what was apparently my alligator-hide sample case. I had this outfit on over slacks and a sport shirt, which made me hot as well as florid.

I waited around the corner from the delivery dock.

When they had finished loading the truck and the guards, and laborers had withdrawn from sight, I strolled past, managing to accost the driver before he mounted into the cab.

"Just the man I'm looking for!" I cried. "A man of taste and discrimination! I should like, sir, to give you a free sample of Doub-Alert gum! The chewing gum that is doubly refreshing! Doubly enlivening! I should also like to record your reaction to this fine new chewing adventure!"

"I don't chew much gum," said the driver. "Thanks anyhow."

"But, sir, it would mean very much to my employer if you would participate

in the chewing reaction test."

"Test?" he asked.

"In the nature of a public opinion sample, I said. "It will help us to know what sort of reception the product will receive. It's a form of market research," I added.

"Yeah?"

"May you!" called out one of the guards who had returned to the dock. "Don't move! Don't go away!"

I dropped into a crouch as he leapt down. Another guard followed.

"You giving away free samples?" asked the first one, drawing near.

"Yeah. Chewing gum."

"Can we have some?"

"Sure. Take a couple."

"Thanks."

"Thanks."

"I'll take some too," said the driver.

"Help yourself."

"Not bad," said the first guard. "Kinda pepperminty and tangy, with that pick-you-up feeling."

"Yeah," said the second one.

"Uh-huh," added the driver. Then the guards turned away and headed back toward the ladder on the side of the dock. The driver moved back toward his cab.

"Wait," I said to him. "What about the chewing reaction test?"

"I'm in a hurry," he said. "What do you want to know?"

"Well-- How did it strike ynu?"

"Kinda pepperminty and tangy," he said, "with that pick-you-up feeling. -- I gotta go now!" he said, entering the cab and starting the engine.

"Mister Doub-Alert thanks you," I said, glancing back over my shoulder to be sure the dock was empty. I climbed up onto the dock as the bell went off.

My timing hadn't been too bad. I'd left the package at the desk earlier, for a Mister Fireman to pick up later. It sounded enough like a standard fire alarm to draw anyone in off the dock. I wished, though, that it had rung a trifle sooner. I hated having to give that stuff to those guards.

As the driver gunned his engine, I yanked my coveralls from the canvas

bag and stepped into them, so that anyone glancing up the alley as I climbed into the back of the truck would think I was a laborer, loading an alligator-skin case and a canvas bag.

He put the rig into gear and I crawled toward the cab, spitting out cotton.

I crouched down behind the Seekfax 5000 and finished buttoning my coveralls. I pushed the canvas bag into the corner and held Maxine in my lap.

"How long do you think it will take, baby?" I asked, as the truck began to move.

"How constipated did he look?" asked Maxine.

"How the hell should I know?"

"Then how can I tell?"

"Well, approximately."

"Sufficient time to get him onto that stretch of road I told you about. If by some chance it doesn't work by then, you'll have to create some sort of disturbance back here, lure him in, and mug him."

"I hope it doesn't come to that."

"I doubt it will. That was pretty high-powered gum."

I wondered, though, what would happen if it worked too soon. But Maxine was right, as always.

After a time, we pulled suddenly to the side of the road and came to a halt. The engine died. The slam of the cab door came almost simultaneously with the locking of the brakes.

"All right, Danny, now make your way toward the rear--"

"Maxine! I just caught it! I couldn't tell before, because the engine was running. There's a faint vibration wherever I touch the chassis of the 5000. It's turned on!"

"So? He's got a self-contained power unit. You know that. He can't know you're here unless you program that information into him."

"...Unless he has some sort of audio pickup."

"I doubt it. Why should he? You know how tricky a thing like that is to install."

"Then what's it doing?"

"Solving problems? Who cares? You'd better move, now, while the driver is still relieving himself off in the field. You may have to jump the ignition."

I climbed out, taking Maxine and the canvas bag with me, and I mounted into the cab. The keys were still in the ignition, so I started the engine and drove away. There was no sign of the driver.

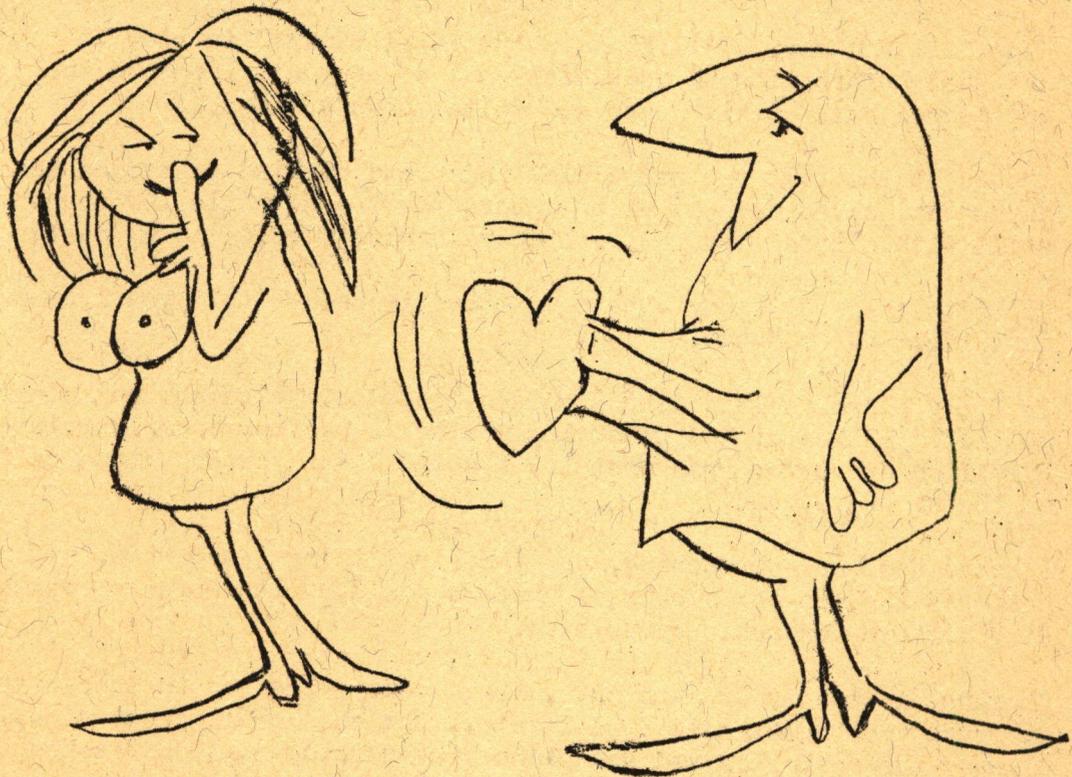
About 5 miles further up the road, I pulled into the culvert Maxine had designated and fetched the aerosols from the bag. I sprayed gray paint over the red sides of the truck, changed the license plates to out-of-state ones, blew compressed air against one panel to make it dry more rapidly, held up my stencil and sprayed the yellow paint through it. SPEED-D FURNITURE HAWLING, it said.

Then we drove back onto the road and took a new route. "We did it, Maxine. We did it," I said.

"Of course," she replied. "I told you I could compute anything. How fast are we going?"

"55. I don't like the idea of our passenger being turned on. First chance I get, I'm going to pull off the road and find a way to shut him down."

"That would be cruel," she said. "Why don't you just leave him alone?"



"My God!" I told her. "He's only a dumb bucket of bolts! He may be the 2nd best computer in the world, but he's a moron compared to you! He doesn't even have random circuits that permit things like emotion analogues!"

"How do you know that? Do you think you're the only one who could design them. -- And they're not emotion analogues! I have real feelings!"

"I didn't mean you! You're different."

"You were too talking about me! I don't mean anything to you -- do I, Danny? I'm just the thing you feed the facts to. I mean nothing to you -- as an individual."

"I've heard that speech before, and I won't argue with a hysterical machine."

"You know it's true, that's why."

"You heard what I said -- Hey! There's a car coming up behind us, and it just got close enough for me to tell -- it's the Mercedes. THAT'S SONIA BACK THERE! How'd she-- The 5000. Your boyfriend's been broadcasting short waves to her. He gave away our position."

I did, still looking back. "I can't outrun that Mercedes with this truck."

"And you can't take this curve with it either, Danny boy, if you stepped on the gas when I told you to -- and I'm sure you did. It's doubtless a reflex by now. Humans get conditioned that way."

I looked ahead and knew I couldn't make the curve. I slammed on the brakes and they started to scream. I began to burn rubber, but I wasn't slowing enough. "You bitch. You betrayed me!" I yelled.

"You know it, Danny! And you've had it, you heel. You can't even slow enough to jump!"

"The hell you say. I'll beat you yet!" I managed to slow it some more, and just before it wend completely out of control, I opened the cab door and leaped out. I hit grass and rolled down a slope.

I thought that all the extra clothing I had on kind of padded me and was maybe what saved me; but right before the crash, while the truck was still within broadcast range, I heard Maxine's voice in my ear:

"I wrote the end, Danny--the way it had to be. I told you I could compute anything. -- Good-bye."

As I lay there feeling like a folded, stapled, spindled, and otherwise mutilated IBM card, and wondering whether I was more nearly related to Pygmalion or Doctor Frankenstein, I heard a car screech to a halt up on the highway.

I heard someone approaching, and the first thing I saw when I turned my head was the tops of a pair of white sandals, which were approximately 5'2" beneath her maple syrup eyes.

"Maxine did beat your damn 5000," I gasped. "She was in the suitcase. She gave your machine that stalemate...But she double-crossed me....She planned the robberies and she planned everything that just happened..."

"When you make a woman you do a good job," she said. She touched my cheek. She felt for broken bones, found none.

"Bet we could build one helluva computer together," I told her.

"Your mustache is on crooked," she said. "I'll straighten it."

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ANNOUNCING NAME THE CAT CONTEST: I need a fannish or SF name for my long-haired white, orange-eyed cat. Presently we call her "One" since she is one of 3 cats ("One", "Two" and "Three" but the other 2 have names.) It's a long story, but at any rate we need a name for "One". Winner will receive a lifetime sub to GRANFALLOON.



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