

THE LITTLE CORPUSCLE

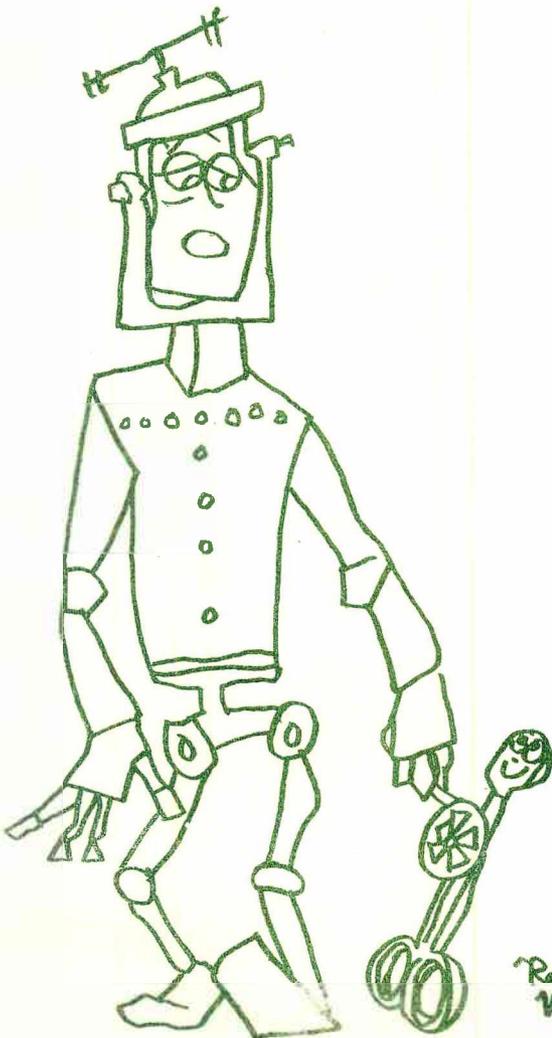
Winter 1952-53

Issue #3

TLMA's

# Stf

funzine



Ray Nelson

20¢ per copy  
Issued free to members of  
TLMA  
BSAW  
The Napoleon Fantasy Club



The Little Corsucle  
 TETA's  
 Staff Magazine  
 Winter 1952-53  
 Issue #3

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The Little Corsucle is published every now and then by Lynn A. Lichman 200 East Broad, Statesville, North Carolina. It is edited by Lynn and Circle Lichman. Issued free to members of IS A, TETA and The Napoleon Fantasy Club. This issue is also being sent free of charge to The Pauettes. 20¢ to others.

# Konner's Korner

by Wilkie Conner



One of the most colorful of TLMA's stable of writers is Battell Loomis. Mr. Loomis is a resident of Manhattan Beach, California, and is a native of Conn. and New York. He was born in Brooklyn, at the home of his maternal grandmother, located at 826 Henry Street. The year was 1889.

Loomis has been connected with writing all his life. His father was a well known writer and lecturer and Loomis presented this Korner with G. B. Loomis, Sr's, book, "Minerva's Maneuvers", a very funny and well written book. Loomis has had his work in the better magazines off and on for the last fifty years. However, he has published very little in the last decade because most of the stuff he writes is too high quality for the pulps and he refuses to "slant" for the slicks. Besides, he is one of those people who write for the pure joy of writing.

Some people complain that Loomis' writings are hard to understand. That is because he has such a wonderful amount of intelligence that he often forgets that the average Joe Bloo isn't as well read as he and so he writes on his own level. This refusal to "write down" has cost him many sales.

If Bat had the money to finance the publication of his works, especially some of his essays, he would be a famous man. This Korner has read many of his manuscripts and has found them wonderful. All Loomis needs is an editor who appreciates truly fine and great writing. His school of writing would have been appreciated in the time of Dickens or Thackery or Mark Twain. Now, his work is too scholarly to interest the average reader. There's too much competition from TV, radio, comics and movies. People just don't go for "literary" writing any more. Too bad, because Charles Battell Loomis Junior would have been one of the best.

This writer is now the Chairman of the NFFF Manuscript Bureau and if any of youse guys and dolls have some top-quality fanzine writings or drawings you'd like to find a home for, just send them to: NFFF MS. BUREAU, Wilkie Conner, 1514 Poston Circle, Gastonia, North Carolina, and if any of you people who publish fanzines would like some material just let the bureau know. We'll be glad to help you if at all possible. We would like to have a sample of your magazine, though, so we can intelligently decide just what to send you. Or, if you're planning a mag, be sure and give full details.

Few people are as enthusiastic as I over this trend toward realism in science-fiction. Though I have been reading and enjoying stf as long as I care to remember, to me it sadly lacked an element of reality. Now, for the first time, a bit of realism has crept in. Such words as virgin and sex and intercourse are permissible. Time was, when a guy could voyage all the way to Alpha cooped up in a tin can of a rocket ship all alone with a beautiful babe and never touch her. Now I ask you, would that be possible? However, if both he and she didn't remain pure as new-fallen snow all the way, the fans yelled and hollered. Now-a-days, though, the heroine and hero do just what you and I and any other normal human would do in a like circumstance. And adds greatly to the reality, and, therefore, the enjoyment of the story.

Now, don't get me wrong. I don't go for out and out pornography in stf, but if a situation calls for sex, I'm for it. (In fact, I'm for it whether a situation calls for it or not--in fact I'll even create a situation if given a chance.) I'm, again, not in favor of cussing for the sake of cussing, but like sex, cussing can have its place and if its place happens to be in a stf yarn, then put it in! All stf fans are, presumably old enough to swear and most of them know where babies come from. (I do. I've personally seen the cabbage leaf in the garden where the doctor found both of mine...and I once stole a look into his little black bag. Once, I even saw the stork.)

August Dereleth, of Arkham House, and Weird Tales, has been having a wonderful series of articles on writing in Author & Journalist. He has told everything except how I can sell a yarn. If he would do that, I'd forgive him his love of Lovecraft.

The most enjoyable book I've read in many a moon is Wilson Tucker's "City in the Sea." It is as refreshing as a drink of cool, clear mountain dew. Must reading. Wilson writes so well that it is surprising he isn't in the top slicks regularly. This book would make a great and beautiful motion picture. With Robert Taylor and a cast of thousands--and women!

Longhammer's Hammerings: Konner's yapping up there about realism reminds me of a joke...hell, space's gone. See ya next issue.





# BETWEEN US MONSTERS

There is a new science-fiction club that your editors heartily endorse. THE FANETTES. This is a stf club exclusively for the fems. A good idea that I understand was tried only once before. The first effort was more or less doomed to failure, but this one will succeed. The guiding light of the organization happens to be Marian Cox, a very good and active little monster. They have already issued the first issue of their fanzine, THE FANZINE.

For a first issue, it was excellent. All of the material from the editorial through the artwork was done exclusively by the gals. The main purpose of the club is to prove equality with the men--to prove that alone and unaided, a group of women and girls can organize a successful fan club and put out a good fanzine. I think they can and will do it. As has so often been said, never underestimate the power of a woman.

As a gesture of good will and welcome, this issue of THE LITTLE CORPUSCLE is being sent free of charge to all the members of THE FANETTES. Welcome to fandom. May you have a long and happy existance.

As most of you know, TLMA and BSAW are affiliating. We are doing this to help both clubs. Tentatively, this is the way it will work. Membership in one organization does not mean that the member is automatically a member of the other. Each member must join each organization separately. Now do not misread this--a member DOES NOT have to join each club if he does not wish to. We MAY join one and not the other. The affiliation is to help in our local chapter work. Here-after, local chapters will be known as TLMA-BSAW chapters. BSAW will handle all details of the chapter work. For information, write Hal Shapiro, 790th AG/W Squadron, Kirksville, Missouri.

Further details of the affiliation will be published in the Dec. issue of Tlma.

I have had in mind for some time, the following idea. That of printing in neat little booklet form the best of the FAN fiction. Something that you could save for your collection if you throw your fanzines away. I had thought to do this separately from TLMA and THE LITTLE CORPUSCLE, charging 20¢ per copy for the booklets. I have decided however to do it this way. Every other issue of THE LITTLE CORPUSCLE will be in Booklet form. It will contain only one or at the most, two stories. There will be no editorials or other writings in these booklets. Only fiction. We will use new and reprint fiction in these. None of it will have appeared previously in a prozine. We are already at work on the 1st one (TLMA). It will contain Wilkie Conners new story, "A Tale of Two Cuties". Let us know what reprint fiction you want. Tentively scheduled are "Draftee" by Basil Wells from TLMA and, we hope, several good stories from Manly Danisters famous magazine, THE NEKROMANTIKON. Let us know what you think of the idea.

The Editors



## METHODS OF THE PURPLE PIGMAN

by Orma McCormick

The earthman loathed their fatted, piglike shapes,  
Disporting blue-red shades of purple grapes,

Yet he was held a captive, neatly trussed,  
While his interrogation was discussed.

"He should be tortured first," said one huge pig,  
"That method never fails to change a prig."

A second member of the violet race  
Declared, "Why not just ask him to his face?"

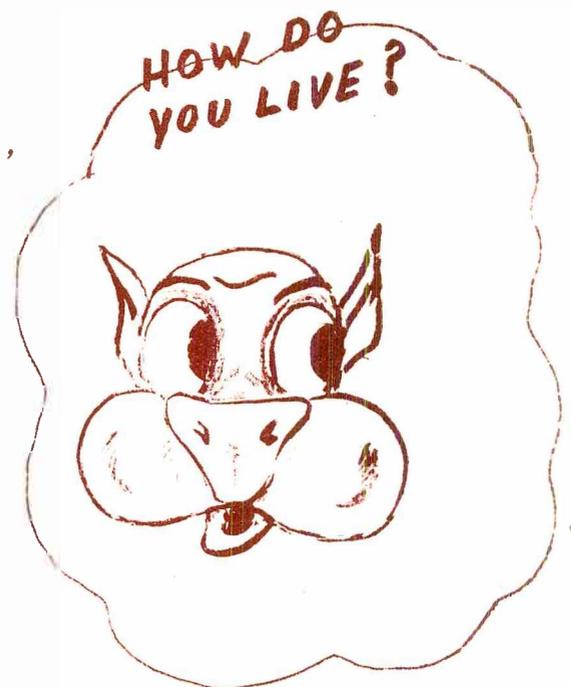
A third suggested, "Offer him a trade,  
We will not get the truth if he's afraid."

The fourth believed he should be coaxed, or led,  
And treated with a guest's respect instead.

The Ferran asked, while wishing to be free,  
"What information do you want from me?"

They hesitated, switched their tails, as though  
It was confusing what they wished to know,

"Advise us, Earthling, as you lack a snout,  
How can you use your nose to dig things out?"



Your face is flat. Behind OUR ears are gills  
With which to breathe submerged beneath our rills;

How do you live without necessities  
Such as we have? Inform us quickly please.

The earthman struggled to suppress his mirth,  
Offending, he might not get back to earth.

"For all our digging, we use metal spades,  
Because we lack your fine essential aids;

We used our under-water submarines  
Until we lost your handsome natural means."

The pigmen talked among themselves, should they  
Destroy the man, or send him on his way?

According to their values, he was not  
Worth anything as a compatriot;

"Leave here at once," they shouted impromptu,  
"If you stay here, we might become as you!"

---

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 366 Madison Ave., N.Y. 13, N.Y.  
 Mari Wolfe c/o Imagination, P.O. Box 230  
 Evanston, Ill.  
 Robert Bloch 740 N. Clankinton Ave.,  
 Milwaukee 3, Wisc.  
 Hans Steffan Santesson Unicorn Mystery Book Club  
 53 E. 77th St., N.Y. 21, N.Y.  
 Bea Mahaffey 1104 Greenwood St., Evanston, Ill.  
 Bob Krepps 6384 Jackson St., Pittsburgh 6, Penna.

*PLEASE NOTE: The following members change of  
 address*

*Richard C. Spelman Leverett K-11 Cambridge 38, Mass.*

*If any members were omitted from this list, please  
 notify me at once. If any address are listed wrong  
 please do the same.*



*Genius Loci*



# The Key



By

Fred

Chappell

No, no, not yet; keep wearing him down~~~he's getting tired. Of course, he's a good swordsman~~~all players of the game are;~~but you killed the others.

Watch it! He almost got you then.

Step back. He's getting more tired by the second. See how the sweat drips from him and falls down onto his sword blade and is thrown off in little globules to the floor.

Now, beat his blade as hard as you can!

Ah, There! He's dropped his weapon. Quick! Kick it with all your strength!

Now, get him right in the throat. Don't torture him by making him live with a painful wound longer than is necessary.

He is dead. Step over his body and go to the next room. Hmm, there are golden doors that lead into this room. Open them; the Key is probably within.

But the golden doors do not open easily. Perhaps they are reluctant to relinquish the Key and divulge the secrets...

Use your sword. Your trusty sword that cuts the hardest steel as if it were butter or cheese~~~your sword should open the doors for you.

There:

Now step through the jagged hole and into the chamber beyond.

Look! There on that silver table! There is the key,~~at least, it appears to be the Key.

Walk across the white~and~black~squared marble floor. Quickly, quickly, the Key is almost in your possession. It is easier than you thought it would be, ay?

Just one black marble square away from the table and the Key.

Whaaa...

What's this?

The black square was a trick! A trap for the unwary...and you were the unwary.

The black square has opened and you are falling. Falling..

Falling down through the thick, black darkness...

Falling...falling...down...down...

Well, you had played the Game and lost and were falling to your death.

Would you never embrace the bottom?

You stop falling. You must be suspended in the middle of the blackness. You are detained in chaos.

No, no, you have reached a surface. You are at the bottom and you are not dead or even injured.

A beam of bright light! It hurts and burns your eyes!

Even though the light is on, you cannot see. The light is hurting your eyes, and it is as if the darkness was there without a ray of light.

But you know the light is on. You feel it.

Your eyes have now grown accustomed to the light and you see that it is focussed on a silver table. And on the table is the key!

This Key is different from the one you saw above on the other silver table. This Key radiates an aura, a feeling around and you are absorbed and permeated by that feeling.

This is the Key.

Quickly, get the Key!

No!

Be cautious for this is the Key!

All is darkness around you. There is no light whatsoever, except that which is focussed on the table with the Key.

Test the surface ahead of you and between you and the Key with your foot.

Slowly, cautiously, go forward. For if another tumble into the blackness happened; you would not be so fortunate as before, for this is the real key.

The other Key was a false one, an imitation.

Ah, you are right upon the Key.

Quickly, quickly, snatch it!

Now you have it!

You have the Key! You hold it tightly in your hand.

Now that you have the Key, the brilliant light goes out. You stand in the darkness with the Key.

Your eyes have become accustomed to the darkness which surrounds you.

You stand and wait.

Look, another light! It is shining far, far away.

And this light is focussed upon the gate.

The Gate!

But there is much, much of the darkness between you and the Gate.

Now, quickly, run to the Gate! You have the Key, run to the Gate!

No!

Be careful, be cautious.

Go slowly and test with your feet, the surface before and beneath you.

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It has taken you many long hours, or maybe days, or maybe years, to reach the Gate, but you are finally here.

The Key. You have the Key. You have gripped it with all your might ever since you saw the Gate bathed in the Brilliant Light.

In the surrounding darkness, you have seen strange black-shadows and heard strange half-noises.

It is just a few feet to the Gate!

But you have to be careful.

Ah, here you are at the Gate!

Insert the Key into the lock.

No, don't fumble---you might drop the Key.

Fool! Why cannot you just insert the Key and open the Gate?

And suddenly you realize that you cannot.

The Key won't fit!

The Case of the Little Green Man

or

Apologies to Mack Reynolds

or

If You Can Think of a Better Name -- Do It Bub!!!

by Bob Keyes



The wispy little man whose name was Malcolm Davis boarded the bus at One hundred and thirty-fourth and Mill Road. He made his way to the middle of the vehicle and found a seat next to a snoring laborer.

He did not look back; he was very precise about that. He sat quite still, slumped down in the seat, and stared straight ahead. Malcolm thought:

'I'm sure he got on with me, but if I look back he may go away; then no one would believe me. They might even think I was crazy.'

So, very logically, he did not look back.

Sergeant Hiram McCauley did not feel at all well. The annual Policeman's Ball had been perpetrated the night before, and as usual Sergeant McCauley had attended and outdone himself. The fact that duty immediately preceded and followed the grand event had in no way deterred him; he wished fervently that it had.

The good Sergeant knew from the moment that Malcolm Davis entered the room that this was not to be his day. These fragile, esthetic types were always a problem; that seemed to be a standing and inflexible rule at this precinct.

"Excuse me, Captain," Malcolm said timidly.

"Sergeant," McCauley rasped, "What can I do for you?"

Malcolm hazarded a peek over his shoulder at the door through which he had just entered. There was a musty waiting room beyond it. He squared his thin shoulders and said, "Sergeant, I know this will sound rather strange, but~"

Sergeant McCauley groaned inwardly. I knew it! I'll bet there are little men after him. "Go on Mister," he said resignedly.

"Well," Malcolm said and cleared his throat, "I suppose you get these cases now and then~though mine seems somewhat extraordinary~and think they're crazy, but~"

"Get to it," McCauley snapped.

Malcolm blinked. "Well, to be frank Sergeant, I think I am being followed."

Sergeant McCauley slammed his broad palm down on the desk with startling ferocity. "I knew it!" he roared, this time distinctly aloud.

Sergeant Hiram McCauley leaned across his wide desk and glared down at the quaking Malcolm Davis. He spoke, his voice far too sweet and gentle:

"This fellow that is following you, is he rather short," he inquired.

"Yes, I~~~"

"About so high?" McCauley purred.

"Uh~~~yes."

The Sergeant smiled somewhat coolly. "And is he a bit greenish in color?"

Malcolm answered, "I really couldn't say. He wears a kind of a loose cloak, but if I remember correctly, his face is rather green."

Sergeant McCauley settled back, smiling complacently, but his eyes were snapping dangerously. "And tell me, sir;" he asked not unkindly. "Does the little fellow disappear whenever you turn to look at him?"

Malcolm felt that at last he was getting somewhere, and he said "I don't know. I'm really afraid to try. The only time I ever actually saw him was once in a mirror."

McCauley said "I see." He paused dramatically. Just once I'll fix one of these wackos, he promised himself. It was very quiet. "Where is this elf, Mac?" the Sergeant exploded. "I'll prove to you that you're nuts, and then," he continued with pointed relish, "I will personally throw you in a cell on a drunk and disorderly charge! WHERE IS HE?"

"He is in the waiting room, I think," Malcolm said shakily.

Sergeant McCauley climbed down from behind the tall desk and stalked his bulk across the small room. He reached the door, wrenched it open and shoved his shaggy head into the gloom of the waiting room. "There," he boomed triumphantly. "I told you~~~" Sergeant McCauley slammed the door and turned unsteadily to face Malcolm Davis~~~

There had been a little man, about so high, in a loose grey cloak standing in the center of the waiting room floor. And his face was pale green.

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Industrious flies  
Writing iotas,  
What, I wonder,  
Are your daily quotas?

Battell Loomis



Confessions of a Conventioneer

or

"Aren't You George O. Smith?"

or

"You Want Untrite Titles After a Convention?"

By

Jim Harmon (with an 'O')

- GEE!! THEY  
USE TA APPRECIATE  
US...



The first thing I heard upon entering the lobby of the Morrison Hotel in Chicago on that fateful night of August 29, 1952, was 'Where's Shapiro?' You'll have to admit that this is a pretty disgusting thing to hear after riding three or four hundred miles with a busload of people that sounded like a mobile asthma sanitarium. It was so bad on the bus that after a couple hundred miles of sneezing, sniffing, snoring, snuffling, wheezing, whinnying, and whimpering, one little old lady threw a heart attack just to get off the damned thing. I fed her one of my stricnyn-nitroglycerin tablets, took one myself, and tried to keep from exploding during a few more hundred miles of flickering headlights, running out of gas, and drivers who kept cutting in front of autos, that didn't dim their lights, to teach them a lesson. Naturally, hearing 'Where's Shapiro?' at that point was almost more than the inhuman mind can stand.

I faced the situation squarely. I walked right up to the character who had uttered that dreadful invocation and said, 'Did someone mention Shapiro?'

A tall character next to the short character who had spoken, beamed at me. 'So you're Hal Shapiro! Well, well, (pumping my hand vigorously) I've been wanting to meet you for a long time.' Naturally, I was getting a little sick. The floor of the Morrison looked awfully clean, but...

'He isn't Shapiro,' said the short fellow.

I felt better. 'My name's Harmon.' Blank stares. 'JIM Harmon.' Nothing. 'With an O.'

'I'm Harlan Ellison,' said the short one, 'and I'm always glad to meet neofans.'

Since he was a head and a half shorter than me, I didn't hit him because I didn't have a club. (I had a big club once, but all the members resigned.)

'Just so I'm not H L Gold,' I said. 'Is he here?'

They told me he wasn't and why he wasn't. Seriously, I felt very bad about that. I had made some wild guesses about Gold and told them to him. Unfortunately they came close to the truth in a nasty way. I felt like jumping into the nearest sewer.

Since there wasn't any sewers handy, I decided to check into the Morrison. Naturally, they couldn't find my reservations. I was given a double for seven a day to occupy as a single. Then when I asked where I could find out who was staying there, the clerk (type-casted for the part -- broad smile above stuffed shirt) said, 'Over at that desk -- but you have to ask for them by PEOPLE. You can't just ask who is here that is connected with science fiction. Remember, ASK FOR THEM BY PEOPLE.'

'Thank you,' I said sauely (no doubt). 'I planned to ask for them by number of heads.'

Leaving the clerk to think (probably justified) thoughts about smart-alec teenagers, I went to my room, 1270, with a bell boy about twice my own age.

Shortly afterwards, I found myself with a glass in my hand. In the interim, I had met Max Keasler, Gregg Calkins, and I think --- Dick Clarkson who kept talking about the room he had with Susan and inviting me to join them. (He later tried to make me think 'Susan' was the last name of a friend of his named Donald but I've been around -- I'm not as naive as I look; no sirree, boy.) I naturally refused all alcoholic beverages since I don't drink, but I did let someone give me some strawberry pop -- I think -- 'Vermouth'. Later, when I had finished all the Vermouth somebody gave me some Ginger Ale. At least, I guess it was Ginger Ale -- the label was torn almost off, I guess, because all I could see was 'Gin'.

I finally bade my life-long friends 'Goodnight' (I wish I could remember who they were) and went downstairs for some reason and phoned Shapiro's room. I had been cautioned that he had somebody in his room with him and that I shouldn't wake them up

but somehow after all that Strawberry Pop and Ginger Ale I felt reckless. It was probably that loose Susan anyway.

'Greetings, Comrade. This is Commisar Shapiro speaking. Who is?'

I wasn't sure whether the accent was false or not. After all, with a name like Shapiro, Hal could be, well, Northern Mongolian or something.

Well, I managed to reply something like 'Premier Harmon on this end,' whereupon the conversation went to the subjects of ends and their relative sizes and mine in particular which I should get on up to 908. When I did, Hal had his clothes off.

We discussed various things, and I found a glass in my hand again. Hal's binoculars tasted awful.

Shortly after, I staggered off to 1270 for about an hour of pseudo-sleep.

Apparently, the other fans weren't as resilient as me because I couldn't raise anybody Saturday morning. I had nothing to do but walk around Chicago and look at the pictures of naked women in front of the night clubs. I felt pretty sorry for myself. Where were all these fabulous fans I had dreamed of meeting? Sound asleep at seven in the morning after only being up until only four or five. Had they no fortitude at all?

Finally, I crashed 908 again. Shapiro still had his clothes off. He started getting dressed. He had a date with a girl. Apparently his glands kept functioning even at science fiction conventions. I felt myself gently kicked out of 908. I looked at the door ruefully and went down to the lobby.

There I met Jerry Hunter a young fan without a room and in need of sleep. My Machievillian mind began to function. Seven dollars a day or half of eleven. 'My boy, here is the key to my room (1270). Use it and get some sleep. I can not bear to see you suffer longer.' And then I went off to get a

hamburger at Wimpy's.

Shortly after, all hell broke loose. I came face to face with Henry Burwell and Manly Bamister among others. We went off to get nourished but the Jockey Club wasn't open so we went to get breakfast. There I met Lee Hoffman and Walt Willis.

'Walt,' I said, with a blush, 'I -- er----I-- -- well--realize I've been -- uh -- a sorehead about a lot of things.' Wich I have. I Blushed somemore.

Walt looked down. He blushed. He shrugged. He blushed. Well... He blushed.

I looked down. I blushed. I looked up. Willis was blushing. I blushed. I looked down. I looked up and my eyes met Walt's. We blushed. We looked away. Everybody looked pale.

Sometime before or after that -- I'm a bit hazy, you know -- a young man in a blue suit came up to me. 'I hope I didn't give you the idea that I was brushing you off.' I blushed. I looked up as the young man went off. Then I realized who it was. I hadn't recognized Hal Shapiro with his clothes on.

After meeting some more weird people like Shelby Vick, I had some lunch with Lee Hoffman, Walt Willis, Max Keasler, and Dave Ish. I had Chili while the others had waves of nausea watching me eat it at that early hour. As I say, no fortitude.

Somehow it was time for the first session. It was my luck to sit with a camera fiend. He sat and talked about photography for a full hour before the first session of the SCIENCE FICTION. I'll repeat that -- SCIENCE FICTION convention began.

I waited eagerly while Mel Korshak introduced the notables, but I wasn't notable enough. Others had the same complaint. Seems to me that since most fans are in fandom at least partially for egoboo, the least that could be done would be to mention their names.

Well, Ray Palmer and Willy Ley and their

Flying Saucers came and went with them me up to the con comittee's party which wasn't partying yet because Muller was still talking. I went back and listened to him some more. When I left again, he was still talking. There is a persistant rumor that he did stop sometime but I wouldn't lay odds until I looked for a bound figure under the stage of the Terrace Casino.

This time I found my way to a room containing Burwell, Hoffman, Willis, Farnham and other things. Somebody put a glass in my hand and took about 90¢ in change. I don't know. Maybe they were trying to send Shelby Vick to Ireland. God Knows, that would be worth paying for. Well, I had somemore of that funny Strawberry Pop and that Ginger Ale with the incomplete label. I was discussing some Malcolm Smith originals in the window behind me the last I remember.

I understand from my room mate Jerry Hunter that some people got drunk Saturday night. There was the sad case of a mere boy who got stinking. It seems he was sitting in a chair quietly discussing Malcom Smith originals in the window behind him when the house detective came in. This fellow leaned forward to get a better look and fell out of his chair. He grabbed Hans Stefan Santesson's pants and held on. It was indecisive which would let go first -- the grip or the pants. The grip done it. So this chap toppled to the floor and began to laugh and roll about. Somebody managed to get rid of the house dick and through a stroke of genius they figured out what to do with laughing boy. They threw him out. It seems he got down to the elevators and collapsed again. The elevator doors opened and the manager emerged. He stumbled over the prone form. In an awesome voice to inspire dread in the purest of hearts, he demanded, 'Who has been feeding drinks to fourteen year old children?' (I understand this fellow is really nineteen but looks younger) Finally, two stout fellows in more ways than one managed to carry laughing boy to his room. But it seems he just wouldn't stay on the bed. They put him on the bed. He rolled off. They caught him on the bounce until he stopped and let him sleep on the floor.

I guess I don't have to tell you I was profoundly shocked as I heard this story from Jerry Hunter as I lay there between the two beds.

For some reason I felt called upon to go around showing a sign reading: I HUMBLY APOLOGISE FOR LAST NIGHT -- to everyone I met.

Early Sunday morning, I delivered an impromptu speech before the NFFF meeting. As you may know, I am running for Director of that noble organization on a platform of sober administration.

A while later I went to the official session with my good friend Bob Farnham. I met a very nice guy Paul Bye while looking over the originals to be raffled. Somehow we didn't see Bob so were relatively to ourselves. Incidentally, I predict Paul will become one of the most important names in science fiction in a short while. So there we sat, watching the panel of editors. I saw Evelyn Paige Gold. I looked at her more intently. I rather studied her. Paul handed me a handkerchief. I wiped my mouth, rung it out, and continued to look at Mrs. Gold.

The auction passed and so did I. I didn't have enough money to buy what I wanted and I didn't want to take pot luck until they put something in the pot.

The banquet happened. I loudly applauded Hugo Gernsback, Ray Palmer and all concerned, and sloppily et roast beef probably louder. I discussed hemi-spheres, cones, and semi-cones with Martin Alger, an old nude photographer of days past. He had to give it up; he ran out of old nudes. I discussed one of my personal heros Tom Mix with radio announcer Ed Noble who knows several -- actors who have played Mix on the air, that is- Bob Farnham took pictures of Sam Mines who was highly cooperative. I looked at Evelyn Gold. Martin Alger handed me a napkin. I wiped my mouth, rung it out, and continued to look at Mrs. Gold.

The Masquerade scrunched up to happen. I grabbed my zap gun and tagged myself as one of the ABERCROMBILE SPACE STATION POLICE.

Apparently, no one there had ever read Jack Vance's story of the fat Man's paradise or else didn't think I looked the part enough.

The girl in the triple-breasted suit obviously should have won the costume competition but it seems the newspaper photographer was puritanical. He said he couldn't publish her picture so Virginia Saari in a nice double-breasted space suit took top honors.

There I met a lot of rather nice people including Gerry de la Ree, the man who was responsible for my being there. He bought the magazines that gave me the bulk of my bankroll for the convention. Word got around that he was responsible for my being there and the fans made ready to give him what he deserved for that. But we left before the tar was hot enough.

The rest of the night was uneventful. I spent some time with Lee Hoffman drawing pictures. Then I sauntered off to play guessing games with Forry Ackerman.

Somehow, I managed to sleep on the bed that night.

I got up early when nobody is alive but Harmon and Racy Higgs. We looked through all the newspapers and came up with some semi-favorable stuff in the SUN-TIMES.

I took a scimpy breakfast and showed up for the official session to meet Higgs again with Farnham. They didn't seem to be interested in the proceedings but since I was, I moved down in front and parked myself at the press table. Nobody -- certainly not the bored photographer -- objected. Moskowitz, Willis, Evans, Wood and a non-Bob chap named Tucker put on a good debate. I was so interested in agreeing with Willis and Evans that Farnham was fairly worthwhile as an activity -- not the point of the debate but bouncing boy Wood had to show his pseudo-sophistication by running something into the ground -- that I got up and talked for a couple of minutes when they asked for questions until Moskowitz shouted me down. God knows, he's the man to do it.

Somehow, I wound up with Hoffman, Willis Keasler, and Ish for the afternoon session again. After the publishers panel, Korshak, Derleth, Eshbach, Kyle, etc. had had their say, Walt, Lee, me, et al went off to a little place and had 70 feet of Happiness.

We returned refreshed and separated. I sat all by my lonesome during the fine speeches by Campbell, Bloch, Santesson, and the songs by Sturgeon and Bea Venable. And of course, the excellent Ballet. Then I won a rocket-tube-full of comic strips from Jack Williamson's BEYOND MARS. Mrs. Gold drew my ticket. Up on the stage, I looked at her while Mel Korshak explained about the original comics. He handed them to me with a handkerchief. I stopped looking at Mrs. Gold, wiped my mouth, put the strips under my arm and staggered away.

Well, time was getting on so I hunted up Walt, Lee, Max, Hal Shapiro and Bob Farnham and made my goodbyes.

I might also say at this point that I was very glad to meet all the fans I did -- and I'm sorry I couldn't have met them all and sorry that I couldn't mention all the ones I did meet. I vastly enjoyed meeting, talking to and in some cases becoming friends with those pros, who are most generally real fine type people. I include there Anthony Boucher, Howard Browne, Ted Sturgeon, Jerry Bixby, Hans Stefan Santesson, Evelyn Gold, EE Smith, Sam Mines, Ray Palmer, G. Smith, EEEvans, Forrest J Ackerman, SJ Byrne, Bill Hamling, August Derleth, L. Sprague deCamp, Lileth Lorrane, L. Eshbach, Willy Ley, Charlie Tanner, Bea Mahaffey, Rog and Mari Wolf, John W. Campbell Jr., Lester del Rey, and all the others I can't keep listing all day.

Well, I sneaked out of Chicago early in the morning of the second and rode a jolting bus to dear old Mount Carmel, Illinois managing to grab 39 or so winks between bumps and worrying where I was going to get the money for Philadelphia next year.

THE END

DEATH PASSAGE

So dark and slimy underfoot  
He trod on mischief at its root!  
So dank and whispering overhead,  
He smelt an odor of the dead!  
A dolorous shriek from far away  
Turned his cold blood to thinnest whey!

He went, that night, he knew not where.  
He slipt and floundered, nor knew why.  
His clothes were snatcht. He croucht, quite bare.  
In chill and dread he sought to die.  
A dolorous shriek from nearer sounded!  
His heart ~ a pendulum ~ rebounded!

Far off ~ upon his right ~ there sprung  
An eerie light that winkt and wrung  
New horror from his hard-prest brain.  
Again that shriek ~ it shrilled again!  
And he, who had no clothes to tear,  
Tore wildly at his graying hair.

He sagged, he slipt, the slime was vile!  
He clutcht himself and slunk along.  
The whispering sounded ~ ceased awhile.  
Whence came that sibilant, half-sung song?  
The scream! How terrible! It lingered  
In ears he crassly pawed and fingered!

A low-urged throbbing beat the ground.  
He knelt and listened ~ not a sound!  
He reared ~ and slid ~ and stole along,  
Pondering why the world was wrong.  
He winced, remembering that shriek  
That seemed to linger from last week.

And then it wailed once more ~ more near.  
The slime pitcht, slanting. He nearly fell.  
The glow re-lit the atmosphere  
With dire omens, and the yell  
of that lost soul, or beaten woman,  
Rang out anew ~ weird ~ inhuman!

"Christ!" he cried, and raised his head.  
He was, he found, as good as dead.  
Beneath his head he felt a wale  
Identified as a railroad rail!  
The shriek grew instant ~ the light intense ~  
He scrambled, gasping, and vanished hence!

And while he fled, the roaring train  
Whistled Once! Twice! Thrice! and swept  
The drizzling night with monstrous pain  
As it ~~CROSS~~ THE TIE WHERE HE HAD SLEPT.  
Weirdly its headlight passed. Went out.  
The night fell silent all about.

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METHUSELAH'S LAMENT

Thus spake Methuselah: I have come far, too far!  
Through many lives I've run.  
Can you believe it fun  
To gaze backward down the gallery  
And in each frame a different face to see,  
Recalling, with each face, a different wife?  
Then you are justified to seek long life;  
But you must know that every love will die  
Leaving ( if free to form another tie )  
Leaving you bound to ties unbroken  
When each last word of Death is spoken.  
Ties unbroken binding to broken charms  
With memories that still may move the arms  
In sleep to clasp on emptiness, or, with distaste,  
To clasp the living for the loves out-paced  
By one's exceeding vigor, that has left  
Him yearning back toward centuries bereft.

Can you regard with eager heart the thought:  
I LIVE, BUT WHENCE I CAME I DO NOT KNOW  
I LIVE, BUT WHITHER AFTERWARD I GO  
FROM ALL MY PONDERING NOT ONE HINT I'VE CAUGHT.  
Can you press onward in this aimlessness,  
Then you have strength to live, but I confess  
A mote of certainty had greatly reassured  
Me in the centuries that I've endured.

Can you, who are a horseman, give that up?  
Who love to sail, spend epochs safe ashore?  
Who would have walked, but that your feet are sore?  
Who would have drunk, were't not from a poisoned cup?  
Who ate at appetite, but now must eat by will?  
Who dare no more front heat? Nor winter's chill?  
Oh, if you can, for life, leave action out,  
You're welcome to your centuries, dumb lout.

But I, poor wandering Jew, if I could die!  
If I had died, aged fifty, in my prime,  
I'd give 900 years that I've laid by  
And, giving, give no finer gold than Time.

Battell Loomis

- \*\*\*\*\*  
MORE MEMBERS-- These came in too late to list in the Roster.  
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