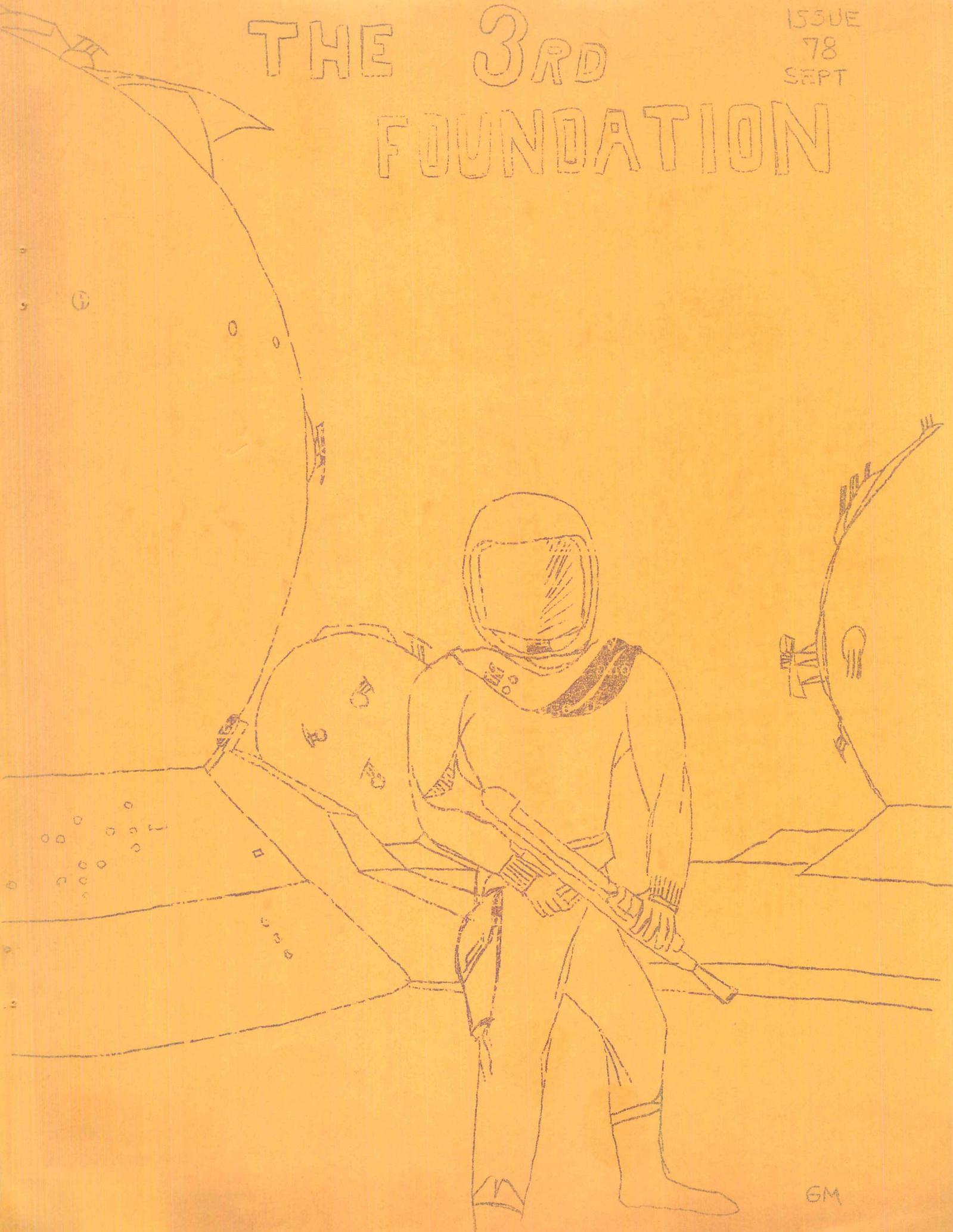


THE 3RD

ISSUE
78
SEPT

FOUNDATION



GM

THE THIRD FOUNDATION

ad astra per cogitationem

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typing by e.e. cummings' ex-secretary

Forive us our typos
as you would have others do unto you

The Third Foundation is published by the Third Foundation--
at intervals

introductory subscription rates---25¢ for 3 issues

For subscriptions or club memberships, write to

The Third Foundation
c/o Lee Klingstein
1455 So. Bundy Dr., #4
Los Angeles 90025 Calif

Any resemblance of any characters or events in this
fanzine to anything that has ever occurred or is
now occurring in this space-time continuum is
purely coincidental.

Lettercol

Who in hell is Sybly Whyte?

Jan Rodericks, Minneapolis

(A human being, we hope....Actually Sybly is a very talented ghost writer who has, we believe, succeeded in perfectly recapturing the spirit of the Lensman saga--probably with the aid of a ouija board--Ed.)

What does your motto ad astra per cogitationem mean?

Sid Jenkins, Los Angeles

(To the stars by means of thinking--or by means of fantasizing; it's a Latin pun--Ed.)

Goshwow.

After reading Heinlein's article in issue #76, I thought the least that could be done was to refrain from making any comment at all, letting the dead bury the dead, if you'll pardon a cliché, which you probably won't. However, the comment by L. Long of Glendale makes continued silence impossible. How could you ever have made such a stupid blunder as to have published Heinlein, a passé author at best. His views as expressed in that article, an article in as poor taste as any I've ever read, are not only unorthodox, heterodox, and reactionary, they border on treason, not only to the country of the United States, the American Ideals, but to the Human Race as a whole, from not only the most degraded, deluded, exploited morons, but to the highest, closest approach to the Ubermensch as envisioned by the greatest mind of all time, A. E. Van Vogt.

As for your trivial attempt to shock manifested in the story Skin Deep, what can be said? Mating frogs and humans to produce a race of water-breathing fly catchers is unoriginal to say the least. The clinical detail in which you depict the sexual intercourse between a slavering, licentious frog, and beautiful, innocent human females is dull, dull, dull. You portray only the lust of the maddened frog without giving any hint of the desire to be ravished that must lie dormant in all human females (not to mention females of other types). This wish is proved to exist by such tales as that of the prince that turns into a frog at the kiss of a good-looking chick.

As for Richard Roe's indecision in joining the hawks, doves or mugwumps, I'll see you in the slums of Interzone, fellow mugwump. Remember our motto when your faith begins to fail.

Whisky is risky, Wine is fine

Beer is dear, and honey roney.--or more to the point "happiness is where you find it."

Doomed Lensman is a dud, but not totally so in that it faithfully copies Doc Smith's style, as well as Ron E.'s conversation, with much the same effect. Sleep is usually instantaneous, with an occasional bed dream.

Answers to last issue's quiz are: 1. Harry Illiksmith in 1931, 2. Demian, 3. Longfellow was the first one, 4. 1784 (a typo on your part?), 5. Odd John and Lassie, 6. It was in print only once with a run of 55 copies; there was no subsequent demand for it, 7. Ray Bradbury, 8. He was the first modern author not banned in Boston, 9. Wrote the first editorial, was the 3rd to use "space opera" in the same, 10. "Frankenstein at the Beach Party." How could you be so consistently wrong? Especially since you composed the quiz.

D F Jones might be accused of plagiarizing Biles Goat-Boy by John Barth. How your reviewer could have missed the similarity is beyond me, unless he is very poorly read.

Yours with regrets,

John Bowman, Seattle, Washington

PS The above name is an alias. Letters and/or packages addressed to the above will not be opened until they are determined harmless.

PPS Sending explosives through the mail is a federal crime.

PPPS Reprinting an individual's letter without first correcting his grammar, punctuation, spelling, etc, as the act of a small mind.

PPPPS Reprinting letters at all is an act of folly.

Printing letters like this is an act of folly second only to writing them in the first place--ED.

* * * * *

reprinted from INTELLIGENCE, The Mensa Journal, 9-67--Personal column

Sunjammer Project. We are impatient with careful government efforts. Help us launch a space colony. Contributions and correspondence invited. Frank, Mike and Jo. A2204 Regency Terrace, Ottawa 5, Ottawa, Canada.

* * * * *

Dictionary Misdefinitions

1. Telepathy - communication of one mind with another by some means beyond what is ordinary and normal.

Random House - American College Dictionary 1951

Editor's Note--this includes communicating by microdot

2. Telepathy -- communication of one mind with another by some means beyond what is ordinary or normal.

Random House - American College Dictionary 1960

Editor's note--underlining ours

3. Telepathy - apparent communication from one mind to another otherwise than through the channels of sense.

Webster's Seventh New Collegiate Dictionary 1965

Editor's Note--What is telepathy if it isn't some form of sense-- "sense" is defined by the same dictionary as a "faculty of perception."

4. Telepathy--the supposed communication of one mind with another at a distance by other than normal sensory means.

Standard College Dictionary 1963

Editor's Note--Apparently this dictionary never heard of short-range telepathy.

The best definition by a mainstream dictionary that The Third Foundation has as yet been able to find goes as follows:

Telepathy - coined 1882 by F. W. Myers (1843-1901) English writer supposed communication between minds by some means other than the normal sensory channels; transference of thought.

Webster's New World Dictionary 1962

SCIENCE FICTION PRIMER

for beginning readers

A IS FOR ANDROID

An android is something that looks just like a human being but isn't one. Instead, an android is a special kind of robot, very different from those you see on television or in the movies. An android doesn't clank when it walks. It doesn't whirr when it thinks. And it speaks like a human being, not like a telephone operator--in sentences, not syllables.

There are many different kinds of androids but the Asimov androids are the nicest ones of all because their make-up doesn't allow them to hurt or disobey a human being. No matter how often you slap an Asimov's android's face, it will always turn the other cheek.

But some races of androids are less sweet-tempered. If you threaten them, they get scared. If you tease them, they get annoyed. And if you hit them, sometimes they hit back. Such androids are much more like human beings than the Asimov androids are--but probably much less pleasant to have around the house.

B IS FOR BEM, BIRD EYED MONSTER

A BEM is an intelligent, civilized creature that comes from another planet and doesn't look like a human being.

B BEMs come in many different shapes, sizes, colors and dispositions. Almost all BEMs written before 1940 were villains, but many of the more recent ones behave quite nicely. Some of them even are heroes. This could be because current authors are trying to show how tolerant they are. It could also be because they are bored with writing about heroic human beings. It could also be because these authors are really disguised BEMs. No one really knows for sure.

C IS FOR CYBORG, CYBERNETIC ORGANISM

A Cyborg is a computer which is part machine and part animal. Sometimes the animal part was once a dog or a mouse or a bird; sometimes it was once a human being. Ex-human Cyborgs are generally considered to be slightly superior than ex-dog Cyborgs but very few authors go into this systematically. Most Cyborgs work as efficiently as a 100% machine computer does and are much less bulky.

Most Cyborgs behave like machines, not like animals, but some still keep their old personalities and are very touchy about being Cyborgs and not ordinary machines. Many science fiction writers have the same attitude to these Cyborgs as they do to nice BEMs. These writers feel that some of their best friends are BEMs and Cyborgs, but that they would be very unhappy if their sister married one of them.

Cyborgs should always be treated with consideration and respect. Out of common courtesy, a Cyborg whose animal part was once a bird should not be called a birdbrain.

to be continued in our next issue

THE LEAK

by

STEPHEN GOLDIN

Oddly enough, it all started when Homer Phillips wanted to get away from It All.

Of course, he was blessed - or thought he was at the time - with a set of unusually favorable circumstances. He and Claudia had no children, so their separation left him freer than most men. His little business was now in such capable hands that he could afford to just sit back and take it easy. And an obscure uncle had just died, leaving him a modest twenty-four acre patch of ground in the Mojave Desert, just north of Barstow. On top of all this, his neighbor, a high-school English teacher, had just gone on a Thoreau kick and poured into Phillips' ears poetic descriptions of the beauty of Nature.

Most important, Phillips was a small-town boy in a big-city world. Sonic booms, fire-engine sirens, loud television commercials, and rock-and-roll transistor radios were slowly driving him to a well-developed neurosis. When at last he tried one of the "easy-open pull pop-top cans" of beer and wound up with shredded thumb instead, he decided to withdraw from Society.

Ah, the best laid plans, etc., etc.

The next day, Phillips went out and hired a contractor to build a little one-room cabin on his desert property. The work was completed in two weeks, and Phillips started making his plans for moving in.

The cabin itself had only the bare essentials. There was an oil lamp at either end of the room, a stone fireplace at the back wall, an old potbelly stove in the middle of the room, two old chairs, a rickety old bed in one corner, and a bearskin rug on the floor (the design showed the profound influence of an old John Wayne movie).

And Phillips looked upon his handiwork and saw that it was good.

He set out from Los Angeles for Homer's Heaven (as he called it) late one Friday afternoon and arrived there at eight-thirty that night. The sky was ominously overcast and dark as Phillips stumbled into his cabin. He struck a match to light one of the oil lamps...

...and when he came to, he found himself thirty feet away from the scene of the explosion, watching his cabin burning down to the ground.

7

The scientific debates which followed were really disproportionately passionate. After all, Nature was only conforming to the rules according to Hoyle. Phillips, it seemed, owned the Opening through which free electrons and protons came into the Universe from literally nothingness.

"What in hell," he asked one of the scientists who had come to investigate, "does all this mean?"

"Haven't you ever heard of the Steady-State Theory of the Universe?"

"No. Should I have?"

The scientist was stunned. "I thought it was common knowledge. You know, don't you, that the Universe is expanding?"

"You mean that bit about the red shift? Yeah, I read about it somewhere in the Sunday newspaper."

"Well, many astronomers and physicists started wondering about this - how could the Universe be expanding, and would it ever be completely expanded? One of the more important theories brought forth was that of Bondi, Gold, and Hoyle, who maintained that new matter is constantly being created to replace the old matter that's rushing out of the Universe. That way, the Universe will continuously remain the same - always has been this way and always will be.

"That's where you come in. It appears that you built your cabin right around the spot where free particles are somehow being created. These particles combined almost at once to form free hydrogen, and most of it was trapped in that one room, so that when you walked in there with a lighted match... well, you've heard of the Hindenburg, haven't you?"

Meanwhile, in scientific circles, furious discussions were raging. There were those (there always are) who accused poor Phillips of perpetrating some kind of hoax to gain personal advantages of one sort or another. Then there was a less conservative group who suggested that Phillips might only be the innocent dupe of fraudulent circumstances. But the majority of the scientists managed to remain calm and accepted the possibility that there might be such an Opening, although it was statistically improbable that it should be anywhere on Earth at all.

But, unaware of the improbability, protons and electrons kept right on leaking into space.

#

"Mr. Phillips?" the man in the brown business suit called.

Phillips turned. It was three weeks since the scientists had started pouring in from all points of the globe. At first, he had been rather flattered at being near the center of all this attention, but things had lately been taking on an ominous look of hustle and bustle. "Yes?" he replied.

"I'm Waldo Shifty, of the Shifty-Eisen Advertising Firm," said the brown-suited man, "and I'm here to do you a favor."

"Whatever you're selling, I don't need any."

"You don't understand. I'm here representing Sticky Peanut Butter, and I'm prepared to offer you three hundred dollars for your endorsement."

"My endorsement? Am I important?"

"Are you important? Haven't you been reading the newspapers? You're the man who holds the Creation of the Universe in his hands. You're the biggest news since Profume and our country's best propaganda source. Babies are being named after you. Grand Coulee Dam is now Phillips Dam. Will you sign with Sticky?"

Phillips was caught a bit off-guard. "But I don't like peanut butter," he said weakly.

"You don't have to like it; just say you do. We'll run it," Homer Phillips says "I like Sticky Peanut Butter."

"I never eat peanut butter."

"Have you ever tries sticky?"

"No, but--"

"I just happen to have some here spread on a cracker," said Shifty holding out a cracker spread with peanut butter. "Try it. It gives adults that young again feeling."

"It gives me a rash. That's why I haven't had any since I was seven."

"That's a very closed-minded attitude, Mr. Phillips."

"Look, I'm sorry, but I just can't bring myself to lie like that, even for three hundred dollars."

"All right then, if that's your game--four hundred."

"I don't think you understand--"

"Five hundred then, but that's my top offer. I advise you to take it."

Red whirlpools appeared before Phillips' eyes. "And I advise you to get off my property."

Shifty looked shocked. "Really, My Phillips, there's no need to be vulgar."

"Off!" Phillips screamed. "Off, off, off!" People around him stopped what they were doing and turned to stare. "That means all of you scientists, technicians, reporters, sight-seers. Everybody. I want every damn one of you off my property by six o'clock! Tonight!"

Most of the scientists who had become acquainted with Phillips in the past few weeks were inclined to feel this was just a temporary flare-up, and that their host would have forgotten all about it by evening. However, when the appointed hour passed and Phillips started demolishing invaluable equipment with a crowbar, they all got the hint and beat a rather unceremonious retreat. Not a few threats were hurled back, which Phillips tactfully ignored.

The next morning, spokesmen for the evicted scientists returned to try to placate the landlord of the Opening. They weren't quite sure what they'd done to arouse him, but the sooner this thing was settled, the sooner they could get back to work.

"You realize, we hope," they told him, "what a breakthrough this could be for all mankind. If we could find some way of duplicating the process of creating matter out of nothing, it would mean the secret of unlimited power--power to run tractors--" they saw Phillips start to weaken, "power to level mountains and cultivate deserts, power to light cities and run televisions."

"No!" Phillips said vehemently. "This land is one hundred per cent mine, and I just don't want you here. Now please get off my property."

Naturally enough, everyone was in quite an uproar about this whole business. At the beginning, Phillips was beset with entreaties of all sorts. The U. S. offered him the Congressional Medal of Honor

if he would let the scientists back. Britain offered to make him a Member of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire, placing him alongside the Beatles as a modern great. Russia volunteered to throw in the Lenin Peace Prize. The French even offered to send him a personally autographed photo of Charles DeGaulle. But Phillips stubbornly refused to budge.

Then came the threats. No doubt he would have received a lot of crank phone calls if he'd had a phone. As it was, he got so many threatening letters that for weeks he had no need of firewood. Numerous attempts were made to get a court injunction forcing him to allow the Opening to be studied, but no judge would touch such a case - especially when Phillips was getting so many congratulatory telegrams from such civic-minded, property-rights loving organizations as the Minutemen, the John Birch Society, and the America First Party. The American Civil Liberties Union kicked up such a fuss that the President strongly requested all attempts at court orders to cease.

When it was learned that all Phillips wanted was peace, quiet, and solitude, the U.S. government offered him his own, tax-free Pacific island, far from anybody or anything. But by this time, Phillips was so mad that nothing could make him leave, "not even an atomic bomb" (a possible solution that several of our more active Senators had already been quietly discussing).

As the public finally began to realize that Phillips was almost literally unmoveable, it quickly adopted the major human face-saving device - apathy. "Our scientists will find some way of duplicating that process without him," everyone except the scientists said assuredly. "And anyhow, who needs it?"

All this while, free electrons and protons, unmindful of the verbal battle centered around them, continued leaking out into space.

#

Whenever the earth has been shaken by phenomena beyond comprehension, there is one common, very human, response: reverence.

Thus it was, early one evening, that Phillips heard a knock on his door. A little curiosity and a lot of suspicion made him wonder who would have come all the way out to the desert to visit him. Strapping on the pistol that he had gotten in the habit of carrying, he opened the door.

Standing before him was a man in his late twenties. The man had a rather long brown beard, and was wearing a white bathrobe. Behind him was a group of other people whom Phillips couldn't make out in the darkness, except that they were wearing red bathrobes. They all bowed their heads as the door opened.

"Who are you?" Phillips asked.

"I am Ezekiel Light, Lord High Priest to the Society of Phillipsians," said the man in the white bathrobe.

"I gave at the office," Phillips said, and had half closed the door before the impact of those words struck him. He opened it again. "Phillipsians?"

"Yes Mr. Phillips. We know that You were just waiting for Your identity to be discovered before You revealed Your true secret."

"What identity? What secret?"

"Why, that You are God, of course. You needn't be so coy anymore, your Divine Majesty."

Many thoughts came into Phillips' mind, but most of the words got stuck in his throat. "Do I look like God to you?"

"Well, God-incarnate, naturally. We don't expect You to manifest Your infinite self in corporeal form."

"Generous of you," Phillips mumbled. "But tell me, how did you stumble onto this, er, secret of mine?"

"We figured that it must have been frustrating for You at first because nobody recognized You, so you decided to show Your power by creating the Opening. But there were skeptics who were worshipping the Opening instead of You, so You vanished everyone from this part of Your domain until the world could be made aware of You. We are but the first of the True Believers, come to pray for Your forgiveness for the infidels throughout the world."

"Oh."

"May we come in?"

"Huh? Oh, uh, sure, I guess so. Make yourselves at home."

As the group came indoors, Phillips saw that, besides Ezekiel Light, there were three men and three women in the party, all wearing the red bathrobes that probably denoted either priesthood or pilgrim status. Two of the girls were very young and very beautiful, while the third was in her late fifties and really looked it.

Everyone stared expectantly at Phillips. There was a long moment of nervous silence. "Master," Ezekiel Light said at last, "we have come to beg Your forgiveness for the infi--"

"You said that."

"Will you forgive them?"

"Oh hell, why not?" Phillips said generously. "But I am trying to tell you people that I'm not God. Look, if I were God, I'd be omnipotent, wouldn't I? I'd be able to lift any one of you with one finger—but I can't. Doesn't that prove I'm not God?"

"We realize, O Lord, that when You chose to display Yourself in human form, You would have to accept certain human weaknesses along with that form. One of my duties as Your Lord High Priest is to help you regain Your infinite powers so that You can spread Your word throughout the world."

"What about these other True Believers?"

"They are to be Your disciples. You are to teach them Your ways, so that they may bring them, in some slight way, to the rest of mankind."

"Well, I appreciate all the trouble you've gone to, but I'm afraid you've got the wrong guy. I just couldn't make you a very good God."

The whole group looked crestfallen, especially the two young girls. "Then...You are rejecting us," asked Ezekiel Light.

"Don't take it so hard," Phillips comforted. "There are plenty of other Gods around—you can take your pick."

"No, we shall remain faithful to You, even as we make our weary, footsore way back to Los Angeles."

"You mean you walked out here," Phillips asked. "Why in heaven's name did you do that?"

"To show our faith and devotion to You."

"I can't let you start walking all the way back to LA at night."

The followers' spirits rose. "Then we may stay here with You?"

"Well, for tonight at least. The scientists set up some huts that are deserted now. You can sleep there."

"Oh, thank You, Reverend Master," they all said in unison as they bowed and backed out the door.

* * *

As is usually the case, one day followed another. The Phillipians remained, not because Phillips wanted them to, but because he couldn't find a way of evicting them. Every morning he awoke thinking that today was the day he would ask them to leave, but they were so damned polite and respectful as they waited on him hand and foot that the words somehow refused to come.

Then, too, there was the matter of Sister Ellen and Sister Barbara, the two young girls. They had come to him the second day of their stay and politely requested him to sire some children for them. They explained about the honor and the glory that would come to one who had a child by God, pointing to a noted example, and expressed the wish that he would so favor them. He tried to refuse diplomatically, but they were persistent and he was (despite what they thought) only human, and at last he had given in. He was actually becoming quite fond of them.

Every other day, some of the disciples would take Phillips' car into Barstow for supplies and to attempt to convert some of the infidels. They had remarkable little success in the latter, but they did manage to acquire quite a reputation among the local gentry.

Lord High Priest Ezekiel Light, meanwhile, divided his time between trying to get Phillips to regain his former "powers" and attempting to add a new section to the Bible. In part, it read:

"And Phillips' wrath was great when He saw the hypocrisy of the disbelievers around Him. And He said unto Man, 'Lo, I do create a miracle, the light of which shall open thy lying eyes, that thou mayest learn the glory and wisdom of the Lord God, thy Creator and Salvation.' And lo, the earth trembled and the sky filled with fire as Phillips brought to Mankind the miracle of Creation for all to see and marvel at the power and the goodness of the Lord God Almighty; and He did create an Opening of wondrous nature, and pilgrims journeyed to gaze at His magnificent achievement. And Phillips looked upon His handiwork and saw that it was good.

"But among the many pilgrims were men whose eyes and ears were closed to the goodness of Phillips, and they turned their hearts unto the false prophets, Bondi, Gold, and Hoyle, and preached lies of the miracle Phillips had wrought. And Phillips heard the false preachings

was sorely angered. And He said unto these men, 'Get thee hence from this hallowed ground and be ye forever banished from the kingdom of God.'

That was about as far as he ever got, owing to Phillips' understandable reluctance to predict the fate of the world. Phillips also had little chance to cooperate, as more and more of his time was being taken up with Sisters Ellen and Barbara.

Then one day, Brother Frank and Brother Bill brought some guns back with them from town. "What are they for," Phillips asked his Lord High Priest.

"For protection," was the answer. "Ichabod Messiah was spotted coming this way."

"What is an Ichabod Messiah?"

"He's the leader of the fanatic cult of Bimbo worshippers."

"And just who the hell is Bimbo?"

"A runaway circus elephant. Messiah's car overturned, pinning him underneath, and Bimbo came along and righted it. Ever since, Messiah and a handful of cultists have worshipped Bimbo as a God. Ridiculous, isn't it?"

"But why do we need protection from him?"

"Messiah has just sworn to do away with all gods other than Bimbo. So far he's bumped off Croaker the frog-god, Hector the chimpanzee-god, and Hedondo the goldfish-god. Now he has sworn to go after You."

Phillips was about to speak when a loud trumpeting was heard in the distance. Looking up, he saw a large bull elephant charging into the camp. On its head, the elephant was wearing a bright red satin mask with two large eyeholes; its back was covered with a violet velvet blanket. Sitting astride the beast was a man, who could be none other than Ichabod Messiah, shouting encouragement to Bimbo and imprecations at Phillips.

Phillips hesitated not a moment. Leaping into his car, he jammed his foot onto the accelerator and took off toward Barstow. The elephant came rampaging through the camp, demolishing most of the buildings and scattering the Phillipsian disciples, then went after the fleeing automobile.

The road was unpaved and rather rough, which necessitated travelling at a slower speed than Phillips would have liked. The feet of the elephant were much better suited to the terrain than the wheels of the car, but the car had more power behind it and slowly gained on the beast.

Screeching to a stop in front of the Barstow Police Station, Phillips raced up the steps into the building. "There's a man on an elephant trying to kill me," he breathlessly told the desk-sergeant.

"Your name, please," was the bored reply.

"Homer Phillips, but please hurry. This nut wants to--"

"Phillips," said the desk-sergeant, looking up. "So you're the kook who thinks he's God, eh?"

"No, I--"

"And now there's a man on an elephant trying to kill you, is that it?"

"Yes, he'll be here any second. Why don't you do something?"

"Mr. Phillips, Barstow is a peaceful town. Why don't you just leave so we can keep it that way?"

"He's trying to kill me!"

"There are no laws in Barstow against deicide. I think -"

The world will probably never know what it was the desk-sergeant was thinking. For just at that moment, Binbo hit the wall of the building full force and the ceiling collapsed.

#

It was not until two days later that the police reluctantly let Phillips go. Ichabod Messiah was held liable for all the damage to the town, and was in even hotter water when it was learned that Binbo did not have an elephant license. Ezekiel Light and the Phillipstians disbanded and silently stole away, all except for Sister Ellen, who announced she would file a paternity suit, claiming Phillips had seduced her under false pretenses.

Phillips himself was a beaten man. Dejectedly, he went back to his now-despised property to get his things together and leave as soon as possible. In the morning, he could call some of the scientists and let them back on his land to study the Opening that had caused so much trouble. He wanted nothing more to do with it.

He had just finished packing his sturr and had left the cabin for the last time when he saw the Foot, not fifty feet from where he stood. It looked like a normal human foot, but was several thousand times bigger. Nearly a mile away was another Foot. The legs to which these Feet were attached rose so high that Phillips could not see their tops.

"Who..who are you?" he finally managed to say, certain as he said it that he really knew.

But he was wrong. The very earth trembled, lightning flashed across the sky, and thunder roared like a million lions as a voice proclaimed, "I am the Plumber!"

* * * * *

Where it is a duty to worship the sun, it is pretty sure to be a crime to examine the laws of heat.

John Morley 1872

* * * * *

Capsule Book Reviews

City - a story about a world gone to the dogs.

Star Shine - a brilliant set of stories. Brown obviously wrote it with a twinkle in his eye.

Planet of the Damned - a hell of a book

Synthetic Man - a jewel of a story with an acid touch at beginning and end.

What are the Alternatives?

by Barry Eissman

Most science fiction fans have by this time undoubtedly come across one of the alternate earth stories. They cover all ranges of taste, from Philip K. Dick's philosophical The Man in the High Castle to Keith Laumer's adventurous Worlds of the Imperium. I am particularly fond of this genre of science fiction. For some indefinable reason, I enjoy a glimpse of things as they are not.

What exactly is an alternate earth? It is another Terra, differentiated from our own by the historical occurrence of one or more events. It is located, not in a different time or space, but in what may be termed a fifth dimension--Possibility.

How are such earths formed? Ideas by various authors differ greatly. One school of thought, represented by Robert Heinlein in Gernsback's Frechold and L. Sprague de Camp in Lost Darkness Fall, holds that an alternate is formed by time travelling. In these two books and others like them, a time traveller becomes trapped in an earlier time; his actions change the course of history and thus cause the formation of an alternate earth. What happens to the earth from which he set out is not always made entirely clear, but generally it is assumed to softly and suddenly vanish away and never be met with again.

If this theory is true, then while many alternate worlds are possible, only one of them can ever truly exist--and the only person capable of experiencing two different earths is the time traveller whose actions kill off one and generate the other.

Isaac Asimov's theory in The End of Eternity is similarly pessimistic. In this novel, Asimov assumes that all the alternates lie waiting in a vague limbo of possibility and that only the most probable actually exists. Thus when one of the Eternal Technicians changes reality, what he actually does is manipulate the probability system in order to make one alternate world more probable than an infinity of other ones.

Most science fiction writers, however, have more optimistic theories about the existence of alternate worlds. Andie Norton in her introduction to Star Gate states that an alternate results from any historical crisis in which two results are possible. Clifford D. Simak in King around the Sun states that there is an alternate formed for every choice-point, no matter how insignificant. And Fredric Brown's What Mad Universe is based on the assumption that an incredible variety of alternates exist and that even the weirdest of them can be reached--with the aid of a providential lightning bolt.

This second school of writers seem to be assuming the existence of an Alternate Theory which states that for every attempted crucial action for which there are several possible results, all the results actually occur. Since these conflicting results cannot occur simultaneously--that is, the Allies cannot both win and lose World War II--a group of alternate earths is generated at each crucial event, each of these worlds embodying one of the possible results.

For example, by Alternate World Theory, there exists at this moment, another Terra in which Napoleon defeated Wellington at Waterloo, and his great-great-great-grandson, Napoleon V now rules Europe. The year there is also 1967 and the month is still September; only the possibility has been changed.

It would seem probable that all events, no matter how insignificant they may seem to us, would cause the formation of an alternate Earth. What is the difference to the Ultimate All if a bullet is fired at FDR, at JFK, or at John Doe; the possible results are still the same: the victim can be killed, wounded in a variety of places, or missed completely.

Suppose we assume, as Simak does in Ring around the Sun, that there is an infinite series of Earths, each separated from its fellows in possibility by the outcome of one or more actions. Actually each of these Earths must be considered to be located in its own alternate universe, so we are now dealing with an infinite series of universes. Generally, of course, the terms alternate Earth, alternate world, and alternate universe are considered practically synonymous. Actually just to make the situation more confusing, an alternate universe might have an Earth identical to that of ours—but a different Jupiter—or Alpha Centauri—or Lesser Magellanic Cloud.

An additional complication is introduced by the fact that we have been previously assuming that our own Earth is the original, and that all the others are somehow not completely real. But is this assumption justifiable? Why should we retain the geocentric theory in the Possibility dimension when we have long abandoned it in spacial reference?

We should therefore add yet another consideration to our Alternate Universe Theory: that of alternates of alternates. We should accept the fact that our earth may well be just one of these second-order alternatives.

For instance, take the case of Napoleon again. Say that he wins at Waterloo but is captured and shot two days later by a British first lieutenant. Now there are two crucial events, two events which may cause alternate worlds to be formed; and according to our alternate theory, both are equally possible. Yet, in our own Earth, the second is impossible, because it depends on the first for the conditions necessary for its existence. Thus we must now visualize our earth as one in an infinity of Earths, each also a member of an infinite series of other Earths, and each with its own universe with its own infinite number of infinite combinations of infinite possibilities. Talk about infinity cubed!

There still remains the ultimate question—will we ever know for sure whether these alternate worlds are sheer fantasy or possibly—there's that indefinable word again—real. Personally, I put alternate-universe travel just short of time travel on my impossible list. Even if there are alternate universe, by the Alternate Theory itself, there is a distinct possibility that we will never know, because we may be existing in that half of the infinity of infinities of Earths that doesn't ever find out. And yet, there is that other alternative....

REVIEWPOINT

Once again the 3rd Foundation's staff of critical amateurs become amateur critics and comment upon the new books appearing on the s.f. scene. As in the previous Reviewpoint columns the opinions expressed are those of the individual critics and do not necessarily represent the feelings of the 3rd Foundation.

Psychogeist by L. P. Davies, Doubleday & Company, Inc, 1967. hardback. 191 pages.

If I were to tell you that having a man's mind be taken over by a character out of a comic book was to be the basis for a horror-fantasy, you would probably laughright in my face. Yet that is precisely what has happened in this book. And it works!

Edward Garvey is paranoid. His paranoia takes a strange twist indeed when it leads him to actually living out the story of a science-fiction comic he read forty years ago as a child. Stranger still, this schizophrenia develops into a completely split personality, with the comic book half activating the body of a dead man, who promptly revives and begins planning the elimination of his supposed enemies....

Naturally enough, the entire story takes place in a small rural county in England, and the hero who goes out to fight the menace is a young country doctor. There is the usual good-looking girl to be rescued from the monster's clutches, a philosophical ex-schoolmaster full of dire forebodings, and a most unusual lady exorcisor.

My facetiousness so far may have given you the wrong impression of the book. It is anything but trite. In fact, Davies' premise is one of the most unusual and original that I have seen in years. The story is exceptionally well-written--except that Davies rather overdid the mysterious goings-on at the highly secret Electronics Research Establishment. The suspense starts early. By the end of Chapter One, you should be hooked.

But more than just suspense--which is considerable--makes this book worth reading. Davies deals with phenomena of the mind and the supernatural that are rarely gone into in any depth. The theme is a shade too complex to make this a straight fantasy story, yet the ends dangle just a bit too much to slap a science fiction label onto it. Like the psychogeist it deals with, the story must be relegated to a special limbo of its own, hiding within the shadowy half-realities of the human mind.

The Ghostbreaker, NBC; Norman Felton, Executive Producer.

The National Broadcasting Company, apparently in a desire to clear its shelves of unsold pilot films, aired a show that I first heard about two years ago and have been waiting to see ever since. Nor was I disappointed.

The Ghostbreaker concerns a young, handsome (aren't they all?) parapsychology prof who runs around investigating so-called supernatural phenomena and providing suitable explanations. He is accompanied in his meanderings by a pixyish telep who is, naturally, in love with him (see young and handsome, above), and a very harrassed and cynical police lieutenant who tells his suspects, "Now go home and prepare your alibis, and remember: neatness and originality count." The prof lives in a state of mutual hatred with a black cat who wandered into his home one midnight and stayed ever since. He doesn't get rid of the cat because that might seem superstitious.

The show left much to be desired as a whodunit, but the suspense and originality were high throughout. It began when Orson Bean, alone in a darkened office at night, threw a dart at a portrait of the company's founder, dead these past fifteen years. The portrait started to bleed.

Understandably, this shook Orson up a little, and when a few other similar manifestations occurred, he ran smack into an open elevator shaft and plummeted sixty-odd stories to his death.

It turns out that this was all the second (but not the last) mysterious death that was planned on the poltergeist of the founder, though actually it ~~was~~ the work of a very ingenious killer. They persuaded him to confess in a highly interesting manner, which I shan't go into.

I wish the show had been sold; it would have been interesting. Oh well, we still have Star Trek.

SG

* * * * *

Twinkle, twinkle, little quasar;
How I wonder what your ways are.
Are you near or are you far,
Galaxy or single star?
Are you coming, are you going?
Just how long have you been glowing?
What supplies your ammunition,
Is it fusion, is it fission?
Whatever your replies may be,
Just don't get too close to me.

LK



DOOMED LENSWMEN

by Sybly Whyte

Just the facts

1. Gharlane of Eddore was not destroyed in the attack on Klovia. He escaped--to a world called Nergal.
2. Kit Kinnison told Gharlane--inadvertently--all about the Arisian plan to destroy Eddore weeks before the battle took place--and Gharlane permitted the Arisian attack to succeed.

If you want the story behind the facts, get hold of a copy of the 77th issue of The Third Foundation. If you want to find out what happens next, just keep on reading.

* * * * *

Chapter Three. Kinnison Kidnapped Again

Mentor's last act before his final departure had been to restore Kim Kinnison to the arms of his loving wife. By an irony of fate, the Galactic Coordinator had been the only Lensman in existence who had not participated, even though unknowingly, in the Battle of Eddore. Only a short time before that awe-stirring clash of mentalities, he had been trapped in a hyper-spatial tube and thrown through the cosmos to a place beyond even Mentor's ability to locate him. He was found not by the Arisians but by his wife and children, combined in a sixfold linkage of love. And Lensmen everywhere rejoiced at the news that Kimball Kinnison, the Keystone of Civilization, had returned to lead the Galactic Patrol once more.

And so Kim and Clarissa happily returned home to Klovia, secure in the knowledge that even the immaterial residuum of Ploor had been destroyed. Only a week later, however, Kim received a lensed thought from Cliff Maitland, Vice Galactic Coordinator, who had been acting head of the Patrol during the last few days.

"Hello, Kim," thought Maitland, "my apologies for breaking into your homecoming like this, but something rather interesting's come up. We've received word that Planetary President Kenwood of Antigan IV has reappeared. You remember, the guy who vanished almost a year ago, probably through a hyper-spatial tube.

"QX, I remember," replied Kinnison. "We never really figured out whether he was an innocent victim of a kidnapping or a Boskonian agent. When and where did he reappear?"

"He's been back on Antigan IV for the last two days," said Maitland. "He's announced he plans to formally reassume the planetary presidency day after tomorrow. His successor doesn't seem to be too happy about the situation, but he's being graceful about it. Anyway, Kenwood's requested us to send an official representative to witness the re-inauguration. Have you got any suggestions as to who we should send?"

"Don't be ccy, Cliff," said Kinnison. "You know I want to follow this thing up. Either he's a genuine woolly white lamb who needs our protection, or else he's a low man on the Boskonian totem pole who's daring us to come and get him. Either way, I'm going to handle this mess personally."

And so it came about that the Gray and the Red Lensman parted once more. And less than a day later, Kim Kinnison disembarked once again on Antigan IV. He was met once more by Wainright, chief of the local Patrol unit.

"QX, Wainright, fill me in on the situation," Kinnison directed briskly. "When and where did the president reappear?"

"Renwood landed here at the planet's only spaceport two days ago," said the Patrol officer. "He came in a private spacecraft of unknown origin. He's already taken over the government again; the ceremony tomorrow is just a formality. When he got word of your coming, he said he wanted to tell you all about what happened to him while he was gone. He hasn't said anything about it to us as yet."

"I've got a shielded car waiting for you--with four other Patrolmen in it. Fontelray and Namby, the two Rigelian Lensmen you assigned to the planet after the President's disappearance, stayed back at the Capitol Grounds to keep watch, just in case someone tries pulling something fancy again."

"QX," said Kinnison. "Let's go join them there. I'd like to meet the President personally."

As the shielded Patrol car moved through the streets of the city to the Antigan Capitol Grounds, Kinnison noticed that the streets were practically deserted. "Why isn't there any traffic," he asked. "Is the planet panicking again?"

"No, sir," replied Wainright. "First of all, this day of the week, it's called Wunzi in the local time system, is a working day. And those people who aren't working are staying home to follow the news. Renwood is going to be delivering a State of the Planet address that's scheduled to go on in about fifteen minutes. I can arrange for reception if you want to hear him."

"Do that," said Kinnison. Then, while Wainright adjusted the receptor controls, the Gray Lensman attuned himself to the minds of the two Rigelian Lensmen stationed on Antigan. "This is Kinnison," he said curtly. "I've come to town as official Patrol delegate to the re-inauguration. Has either of you noticed anything unusual lately, particularly in reference with Renwood?"

"Welcome, Galactic Coordinator Kinnison," Fontelray responded. "As far as either I or my companion are able to perceive, President Renwood appears to be on the side of Civilization. However, we do not have sufficient data to form a definite conclusion about this or any other matter relating to this entity, since he is possessed of some screen which blocks our sense of perception at what appears to be his skin."

Kinnison did an abrupt mental double-take. He was encountering bigger game than he had expected. "I've experienced such a phenomenon only once," he told the two Rigelians. "It was in the case of Premier Fossten of Thrale, the renegade Arisian. What in the name of Klono's aluminum appendix is Renwood doing with one?"

"Perhaps," began an answering thought from Nambry, but then the Lensman's thought ceased, and Kinnison felt an indescribably agonizing mental blow that tortured every fiber of his being. Before he had fully recovered, a second such wave of anguish swept over him. And he knew with a shuddering certainty that, while in the very act of talking to him, the two Rigelian Lensmen had died. It had happened to him dozens of times before, but still Kinnison knew he would never be able to cease to respond to such an indescribable moment of utter tragedy.

Kinnison now turned his attention to Wainright, but barely had he started to inform the Patrolman of this new development when he became aware that the shielded car's progress had become marked by an ominous bumping sound. "I'm afraid," said Wainright apologetically "that we've developed a flat tire. Patrolman Van Dibble, "he said to the husky Valerian who was driving, "pull over to the curb."

Then Wainright turned to Kinnison and said respectfully, "Lensman, I'm not altogether certain this flat is purely accidental. Our course of action from here on out depends on your estimate of how much danger we're probably in right now. We can change tires and go on, but that involves someone's opening the door and leaving the car. And our screens can't function when the door's open. On the other hand, I can call back to headquarters and have them send out some more units for extra safety value. But it'll take at least five minutes for them to get here, and anything's liable to happen in the meantime. What do you think we should do, sir?"

But the Gray Lensman never answered. For, even as Wainright finished speaking, in a truck a block away, three Nergalian henchmen happily smiled as a fourth opened an ultra-relay--and a capsule carefully hidden under the front seat of the Patrol car obediently let out a jet of compressed gas which within seconds had filled the air of the vehicle with a volatile suspension of thionite.

And trapped within that drug-laden atmosphere, every man in the car stiffened into the characteristic thionite muscle-lock. Even Kim Kinnison's powers of concentration were utterly dissipated by the effects of the drug, as the entranced Lensman suddenly realized that he had attained the ultimate satisfaction of all his desires.

By this time, the Nergalian truck had pulled up alongside of the Patrol car. Using a portable tractor beam, the leading henchman easily yanked open the car's door, dragged Kinnison's passive body out into the street, and then hurriedly dumped the Lensman into a specially prepared, dureau-lined compartment in the trunk of the truck.

Meanwhile, two of the other Nergalians had gotten out of the truck and were amusing themselves by raving off the heads of the Patrolmen, who were too locked in ecstasy to recognize that they were being murdered, let alone to defend themselves against the attack.

Now the fourth zwilnik called impatiently from the truck, "Come on, you imbeciles, we've got a deadline to meet." The three hurriedly got back into the truck, which did a rapid U-turn and headed at a furious rate back to the spaceport.

And inside the speeding vehicle's trunk, Kim Kinnison finally emerged from the ecstatic thionite trance. Resolutely, he forced himself to ignore both his humiliation at having been so easily captured and his body's insistent demand for more of the indescribably degrading joy he had just experienced. Instead, Kinnison doggedly concentrated on finding some loophole of escape from his present trap.

In vain. The trunk compartment was lined, as has been mentioned before, with dureau, that unbelievably strong synthetic metal which is the only known substance that can fully exist both in normal space and in the pseudo-space of the hyper-spatial tube. Kinnison's Delameters were unable to even heat up the compartment's lock mechanism, let alone melt it. And worse still, the compartment was solidly screened. Kinnison's sense of perception was stopped a full inch away from the dureau lining. The telepathic spectrum was also impenetrably blocked. Try as he would, the Gray Lensman was unable to drive a thought beyond the imprisoning dureau.

Suddenly there came a squeal of brakes, and the shock of the car's deceleration flung Kinnison against the back of the compartment and knocked him into momentary unconsciousness. When he recovered, the scene had greatly changed. He was still in the same cubiette, but now the air that he breathed was dense and viscous. And his body again experienced the starkly indescribable nausea characteristic of inter-dimensional acceleration.

"This makes the third time this year I've been trapped in a hyper-spatial tube," the Gray Lensman thought disgustedly. "By Klon's lithium liver, this is getting monotonous." He rubbed his sore head, then crawled into the most comfortable corner of the compartment and prepared to wait until his captors decided to investigate him further.

And so Kinnison waited, while the inter-dimensional acceleration died away and then after several hours was replaced by the equally indescribably sickening sensation of inter-dimensional deceleration. Finally that torture too ceased, the air became normal once more, and Kim Kinnison drew a deep sigh of relief. Surely he would not have to wait much longer.

But still no one came to inspect the captive, and after a few more minutes, Kinnison felt himself pressed tight to the floor of the compartment as if it were speedily accelerating upward. Then this motion too seemed to cease, and gravity became normal again. But it was not until an hour later that the compartment was finally opened, and Kinnison could sense the outer world again.

He drew his Delameters, but they were instantly yanked out of his hands by tractor beams. He tried to make use of the worsel-Thornadyke projector of life-destroying vibrations, but found, as he had half-expected, that it was of no more use than it had been

against the beings he had encountered in the hyper-spatial tube he had entered on Radelix nearly a year ago. He tried to move forward to attack his captors with his bare hands, but found himself unable to move either forward or back, helplessly caught in a tractor zone.

And then a cold voice reached his ears, "I have permitted you these few minutes of folly to show you the futility of attempting to attack me or in any other way to resist my will. I trust you are now convinced."

"Who are you," asked Kinnison angrily.

"You may call me President Renwood," answered the other. "And I am most gratified to meet you. I am only sorry that I am now unable to welcome you to Antigan IV, but two circumstances prevent me. First, we are not present on that planet but in space. And second, strictly speaking, Antigan IV no longer exists. That is, Antigan IV is now what used to be Antigan V. In short, Mr. Galactic Coordinator, one of your planets is missing."

Kinnison's mind raced furiously. This ape looked exactly like Renwood down to twenty decimal places. But that proved exactly nothing, when there was a skin-level screen against his sense of perception. Could he be a Flooran who'd been off-planet when his home-world was destroyed? (Kinnison was never to know that the being he now confronted was in reality, Zilch, the chief of Nergal's corps of interstellar secret agents, a fiendishly clever master of stealth and disguise.) All Kinnison knew was that his only chance of escape lay in putting this self-styled Renwood off his guard. With intentional naivete, he demanded, "President Renwood, are you trying to tell me you blow up your own planet?"

"Not at all," replied the other, "merely removed it—via hyper-spatial tube, of course. However, the planet is now without any effective source of solar heat and illumination. Also, its inhabitants are incapable of leaving it, because a rather large quoder bomb totally destroyed the spaceport a few minutes after this snip's departure. In fact, even if I took no further action, most of the planetary population would probably be quite dead before the end of the day."



Caught in a Tractor Zone

"No more incredulous comments, Lensman," he asked sardonically. "Well, suppose I tell you then what's going to happen next." The Argalian glanced at his wrist chronometer. "Or better still, suppose I show you." He turned to one of the side walls, which was totally featureless, except for a gray visiscreen. "Computer," he said quietly, "indicate the current progress of Operation K...the K, of course," he explained to the Lensman, "stands for Klovio. The first step in this operation has already been completed. You have been decoyed off-planet."

By this time, the visiscreen had sprung into life. Zilch turned to one of his subordinates. "Explain the screen's symbolic system to the Lensman here, Borkie."

"Yes, sir," the man responded. "The screen is now focused on the Klovian solar system and adjoining space. Our receptor is focused along the plane of the ecliptic, which is why the picture appears to be two-dimensional. The white dot represents the Klovian sun, and the black dot is Klovio itself. The green dots indicate the Patrol's seventy-six defensive establishments--and their ships. Patrol-controlled planets and nebspheres are indicated by blue dots.

"Most of our forces are not currently on the screen. When they appear, pink dots will represent our planets. The two red cylinders now on the screen which extend past the area of focus are our two hyper-spatial tubes. They have not yet entered normal space, and so are impossible for the Patrol with its limited equipment to detect. Their entrance into normal space will be indicated by the appearance of a tip of purple at their front ends."

Borkie turned to the visiscreen and asked, "What stage is the operation now at, Computer?" A coldly unemotional voice from the visiscreen announced, "Step Two completed. Step Three in progress--to be completed in 310 seconds."

"That means," said Borkie to the Lensman, "that our fleets have already begun moving into the hyper-spatial tubes. In approximately five minutes, the first of them should reach the mouths of the tubes. Three seconds before that happens, the tubes will emerge into normal space. We expect to give Klovio quite a series of surprises. Tube A now will be carrying over a hundred planets, and the Computer estimates that at least thirty of them should get through before your Patrol is able to destroy the Tube."

"You seem to have left something out of your calculations," Kinnison said grimly. "Even if we don't stop your fleet of planets from emerging into normal space, we still have our sunbeam."

"Ah yes, the sunbeam," Zilch smiled. "We call it the astrobeam incidentally. A most fascinating weapon, enormously destructive, but really quite incapable of being rapidly maneuvered. A very unyielding means of defense.

"In any case, we don't greatly care what becomes of those planets. Most of them are merely cosmic clutter, totally useless except for purposes of destruction. There is, however, one exception. One of the planets is the ex-Antigon IV, and your

Patrolmen will soon destroy it, either by blasting it with the astrobeam or else by destroying it within the hyper-spatial tube." The Nergalian chuckled at the thought of forcing the Patrol of Civilization to destroy one of their own planets, then became impassively quiet, watching the visiscreen.

Time crawled by. The Lensman raged inwardly to be thus trapped at a time when Boskonian threatened Klovia itself, the center of Civilization, the world on which he had lived so happily for over twenty years. And he was unable to do anything to stop it.

He scanned the room frantically to see if there was any unshielded being that he could work through--a pet, a spider, a worm, even a fly. But the room was void of such life forms. Nergalians are too unsentimental to own pets and far too efficient to permit pests on board their spacecraft.

Finally on the visiscreen, the red cylinder which Borkle had called Tube A acquired a purple tip, and instants later there emerged through it a series of pink dots--planets--all heading directly towards Klovia. After what seemed an eternity to the helpless Kinnison, three of the green Patrol outposts swung towards the mouth of the tube, and seconds later the tube vanished from the visiscreen. But still the line of pink dots remained, rapidly advancing towards Klovia. Then suddenly the white dot which was Klovia's sun elongated itself, put forth a thin line which reach out towards the invading planets.

"The sun beam," Kinnison cried in triumph. "Your attack has failed."

"Not at all," replied Zilch coldly. "You have apparently not noticed that our second tube emerged into normal space some time ago, about ten seconds after the first was destroyed. Already some of its cargo of planets have advanced within the orbit of the outermost planet of this solar system. The tube itself will soon be destroyed, but the planets will get through. Your sunbeam is far too unmaneuverable to be able to complete a 180° turn in the few seconds left before the planets reach their target."

And, as Kinnison watched with horror, what the Nergalian had predicted came to pass. As the first of the massive planets struck the black dot which was Klovia, the Lensman felt an aching sense of loss in every fiber of his being and knew that the Boskonian had spoken truly. Hitherto he had tried to console himself with the thought that all of this might be a hoax, a delusion intended to break his spirit. But he knew that this overpowering sense of grief and deprivation which he now felt could have only one cause. Mac, Clarissa, the Red Lensman, his wife for over twenty years had just died. Not all the thought screens in the cosmos would have been able to prevent him from sharing with her the agony of that moment of her death.

"And so Klovia is finally destroyed," observed Zilch. "The last seconds of its inhabitants must indeed have been interesting to experience. The shock as that first planet struck home created

a blast of pure energy, vibrating on all levels of the spectrum. Probably the last sensation that the inhabitants of Klovia experienced was that of a blinding flash and a deafening report.

"But I should not waste time with these irrelevant details. Let us get back to business. Lensman Kinnison, your moment of death has come." Zilch turned to Borkle, "Ray him down."

Borkle smilingly picked up Kinnison's own Delaneters and turned them on the helpless Lensman. Two torrents of man-made lightning leapt forward from the two hand-projectors, and moments later Kinnison's charred body lay on the cold duxium floor. Yet a spark of vitality still remained within the Tellurian's rugged frame. Softly the Gray Lensman muttered his last words, "Not a chance... all alone now...not even...a spider...to help." And so Kimball Kinnison, Second Stage Lensman, Galactic Coordinator of Civilization died.

"Vaporize the corpse, Borkle, while you're at it," said Zilch briskly. "We don't want any mess aboard ship." And while Borkle impassively destroyed the final fragments of what had once been Kim Kinnison, Zilch contentedly removed the Kenwood disguise he had been wearing.

Then, with what for a Nergalian approximated light-heartedness, he went to the intercom and contacted the pilot. "Set course at once for Nergal," he ordered. "We've accomplished our mission here in full. And I have a pressing engagement to keep once we get back home."

Chapter Four. Alarums & Incursions

The destruction of Klovia plunged Civilization into a state of demoralized chaos. For over twenty years, people had been told that Klovia was the most securely guarded planet in the Two Galaxies. If it had now been obliterated, then no other world could be considered safe.

Nor was there much the Galactic Patrol could do to bolster morale. Indeed, the Patrol was itself the chief victim of the attack. At one fell stroke, it had lost its prime headquarters, its central bureaucracy--and its top officers. Its Galactic Coordinator, Kim Kinnison, was missing--along with the entire planet of Antigian IV. And Vice-Coordinator Maitland had died in the annihilation of Klovia. In fact, the Patrol's entire chain of command had been beheaded.

It was indeed a tribute to the courage, self-reliance, and initiative of the surviving Patrolmen that utter chaos did not immediately result. In that hour of need, each Lensman, each Patrolman, continued to do his best for Civilization--but the central, driving force that had previously coordinated those efforts was gone.

To the five young Kinnisons, the news came like a nightmarish bolt of lightning from a clear summer sky. They had spent the last

week on Arisia, now totally deserted, yet still a beautiful world. Kit with the aid of his sisters had spent the first few days on Arisia preparing transcripts of a history of that last momentous year of galactic intrigue. These transcripts were encased in containers of force which only a third level mind could open and which radiated their presence on bands of thought that only a third-level mind could hear. Aside from this relatively minor task, the Five had done little those first few days, taking the time as a well deserved vacation from the tensions of the last year.

And so on the seventh day after the Battle of Eddore, the Five went to the beach--to the eastern equatorial shore of Arisia's one ocean, to be exact. The air was warm, the water pleasantly cool, and the hours passed quickly. Constance had just finished ducking Kit's head under water for some fancied insult, when Kathryn pointedly remarked, "Children, I believe it's time for lunch." Gayly the five young redheads stepped up the shore. Then suddenly Kit became aware that Tregonsee was trying to lens him.

"Hello, Uncle Trig," called Kit. "What's up?" But at first there came no answer, only a strong wave of grief and sympathy. Then Tregonsee mastered himself and related, as concisely as possible, the tragic events of the last few days.

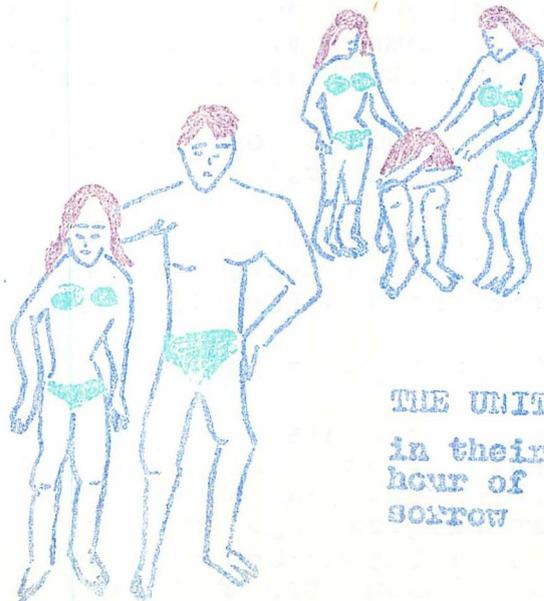
Every fiber of Kit's being shook with shock at that dreadful news. Karen stood stunned. Canilla suddenly sat down on the damp sand and buried her head in her hands. Kathryn closed her eyes for a moment as if fighting against tears, then resolutely opened them and thought to Kit, "If they've touched one hair on Dad's head, I'll..."

"Kat," her brother interjected quickly, "we have to face facts. Mom's dead. And Dad may be too. I hope like anything he's not. But we'll have to assume that he is until we get some proof to the contrary."

Kathryn answered defiantly, "And I'm going to assume he's alive until we get some proof to the contrary. Dad had plenty of jets going for him." She abruptly screened off her thoughts from the rest and retreated to the inner fastness of her own mind.

"It's not fair," cried Constance. "We were told all the danger was over," and then the traumatized girl broke into hysterical tears.

In that hour of sorrow, Kit Kinnison truly displayed his new maturity of viewpoint. He resolutely stifled his own grief, and walked over to his weeping sister and held her in his arms. "Don't cry, Con," he said gently. "We don't have time to cry. We've got to hurry and find out just who were the zwilniks that did these things--and then we'll have to destroy them. Otherwise..."



THE UNIT
in their
hour of
sorrow

they aren't going to give us time to mourn for Mom and Dad. They'll just go ahead and destroy us."

Tregonsee's thought broke in again. "I am glad to see that you are able to think so maturely. I have no doubt, Christopher, that this must be Civilization's hour of greatest danger. I believe it would be wise for us surviving high-level Lensmen to have a conference about what our course of action must now be....Shall we meet together in thought again in an hour's time?"

Kit assented, then after Tregonsee had broken off contact, turned to his four sisters. "What I said just now to Coa applies to all of us," he said grimly. "We've got no time for private griefs. We've got two galaxies to take care of."

Constance said rebelliously, "we didn't do a perfect job of it before--or this wouldn't have happened. And that was when we had help. Now we're all alone. Even Mentor's gone. And Dad's...disappeared."

"That's right," Kit said somberly. "We're the only Guardians that Civilization's got left--and we've got to live up to the responsibility. It's Lensman's Burden."

He looked down tenderly at Constance's tear-stained face. "Done crying, sis," he asked. She nodded mutely. He absent-mindedly reached for a handkerchief toward his swim trunks, then shrugged and kissed each of her wet eyelids briskly. Then he grasped her by the hand and pulled her up the sandy beach to where stood the other three Children of the Lens.

"Ox, kids," he said. "We've got less than an hour 'till that conference with Worsel, Tregonsee, and Nadreck. Now suppose we start thinking about what exactly went wrong and about what exactly we're going to do about it. Any first-order conclusions, anybody?"

There was a long pause, then Karen said slowly, "The first thing we've got to face is that Mentor's whole scheme of visuââization was somehow dead wrong. Remember his last words to us were that Dad and the Patrol could easily handle all of Eddore's leftover organization. Somehow, some way, someone must have managed to trick even him, to hide some vital fact from him."

"And," added Constance, "that's the someone that it's now up to us to outmaneuver."

Kit nodded glumly, then said, "Well, first things first. Which one of our Second-Stage Lensmen should we persuade to take over the Galactic Coordinatorship?"

"Aren't you going to do it," asked Kathryn.

Kit shook his red-thatched head vigorously. "No. And for two reasons. First of all, I'm going to have no time for that kind of paperwork job. And second, it may have slipped your mind, Kat, but my chronological age is barely twenty-two. The Lensmen wouldn't mind a bit if I became Coordinator. The Patrol as a whole could probably take it without too much grumbling. But how do you think the average citizen would feel at the thought of a Galactic Coordinator barely old

enough to vote. No, it's got to be one of the Second-Stage Lensmen. The only question is, which one."

"Not Worsel," said Constance regretfully. "He's more human than most people--and a whole lot smarter--but he isn't detached enough to be a good administrator. He's a one-man fighter, not really a group director; he's a leader, not an administrator."

Kit looked inquiringly at Karen. "Not Nadreck," she said. "He's detached enough. Too detached. He doesn't have the scope of viewpoint to handle the job. Remember when he destroyed Kandron. He didn't find out what Kandron knew about the upper echelons--because it was out of his project focus."

She turned to Camilla. "Cam, I hate to say it but it's got to be Tregonsee. He's the only one left who can handle the job the way it's got to be done."

Camilla nodded vigorously and added, "The very fact that he was the one the other two asked to notify us clinches it. It proves they'll be willing to work under him."

"QX," said Kit, "Tregonsee it is. Now who for Vice-Coordinator?"

"Better take a humanoid," said Karen. "Why not Port Admiral LaForge. He was off Klovia when..." she suddenly fell silent.

"Good idea," Kit hastily interjected into the dead silence. "Question number three, what action do we five take?"

"First," said Kathryn, "let's clarify what we're going to be acting against. Our enemy out there--whatever he is--favors the direct approach. So far he hasn't used any hallucinations like an Overlord would have, or any of that wheels within wheels approach that Kandron was so fond of. When this boy wants to destroy something, he strikes directly at it. And his targets so far have been Galactic Patrol centers--and Second-Stage Lensmen."

"Then maybe we should go back to our earlier strategy," said Constance. "One girl riding herd on each Second-Stage Lensman."

"QX," said Camilla, "but that still leaves two of us unaccounted for, Kat and Kit."

"Not really," Kit said confidently. "Listen--Con, Cam and Kay--you three tag after those Second-Stage proteges of yours as near as you can get without making them nervous. Guard them as close as is absolutely possible. Meanwhile, Kathryn--you and I will be keeping watch on the rest of the Two Galaxies. I'll take Galaxy Two," he said grimly, "since that's where the last attack was. Kat, you take the First Galaxy and concentrate on Earth. If Klovia can be taken, then Tellus can too. And we can't let that happen. That's my plan. QX, everyone?" Four red-thatched heads nodded approval, and the Five prepared themselves to subtly insinuate their plans into the minds of Worsel, Tregonsee and Nadreck at the forthcoming conference.

And only a few hours later, the five Children of the Lens left Arisia and once more took up their tasks as Guardians of Civilization. Their five speedsters flew out through the void, each with its own special mission, its own destination. They left behind a deserted planet, guarded only by mechanical screens, now that its former inhabitants had voluntarily chosen to forsake it for the next plane of existence.

But Arisia did not stay deserted for long. Once, millennia before, the Eddorians had come into the Arisian space-time continuum from a radically different plenum. The Arisians had summoned all their power and ingenuity to combat the Eddorian menace, and they would indeed have totally succeeded had it not been for the duplicity of Charlane.

Now, only days after all but one of the Eddorians had been destroyed, by an ironic twist of fate, the plenum was invaded anew, this time not by a race of beings but by a single entity. Yet that worthy was in his own way as egocentric, as power hungry, as hostile to the basic tenets of Civilization as any Eddorian. Nor was his mind potentially inferior in power to that of Charlane himself.

This being entered the space-time continuum on the outskirts of the First Galaxy. However, soon after his arrival, he became aware of the third-level emanations proceeding from the force field transcript containers on Arisia. He immediately drove his ship toward that distant world and, easily making his way through the unmanned screens, landed on the planet, the first being neither an Arisian nor a Lensman ever to do so. He then made his way to the transcript containers, and soon had one open.

And as the interloper impassively scanned the contents of the transcript, trouble was already also brewing elsewhere in the nearby cosmos. On the desolate planet of Zabriska, a conference had just begun between Zagan, planetary dictator of Nergal, and Surgat, the ranking survivor of those Floorans who had by various quirks of fate been off-planet at the time of the destruction of their home world. Surgat thus officially controlled what was left of the Beskonian organization, a force much diminished in power, yet still one to be reckoned with. For the Galactic Patrol's policy of striking at the top of the enemy totem pole had left literally hundreds of lower-echelon operations completely untouched.

"Greetings, Zagan," began Surgat. "I am delighted to meet with you once again. Tell me, how are your plans progressing for overthrowing and destroying Charlane?"

Without bothering to acknowledge the Flooran's salutation or his question, Zagan brusquely demanded, "Why did you call me and ask me to meet you here? Don't you know how difficult it is for me to keep that Eddorian and his underlings from suspecting me? I'm certain Zilch has planted dozens of spies on me. Just exactly what came up that's so important that our normal communications arrangements aren't secure enough?"

"My news," said Surgat furiously, "is that our operatives are crossing each other up all over both galaxies. If our Flooran-Nergolian plan to conquer the Macrocosmic All is to succeed, we must have better

coordination of efforts. For example, just five days ago, at a thionite auction, one of your agents and one of mine started bidding against one another for the drug 'till the price went up sky high. I believe it was my agent who ended up buying it, but regardless--such incidents indicate the present extremely inefficient state of our alliance.

"Then, only three days ago, two of my Black Lensmen, Eichdur and Michwright, spent over an hour destroying what they assumed was a fleet of attacking Patrol ships before they accidentally found out that the fleet was really manned by one of your pawn-races. I'm afraid only a few hundred of the ships survived. Another costly blunder due to lack of coordination.

"Worse yet, one of my humanoid subordinates, a being by the name of Kartong, spent five years work getting the position of planetary vice-president on Antigan IV. He had just spent the last year slowly shaking the planet's faith in the Patrol, and was just about to maneuver it into being the first world to secede voluntarily from the ranks of the Lens-dominated Civilization. And then your accursed Zilch spoiled the whole plan by disguising himself as Kenwood and kidnapping the whole planet to use it to bombard Klovia--destroying my agent Kartong in the process. Zagan, something must be done to prevent instances like these from recurring."

The Nergalian nodded grimly, then said, "I agree wholeheartedly. When I get back to Nergal, I shall certainly speak severely to Zilch about his actions." He turned to go back to his spaceship.

"Don't leave quite so quickly," said Surgat. "You still haven't answered my question--how are you planning on disposing of Gharlane. You know that we two can never become Joint Lords of the Cosmic All as long as he continues to exist."

Zagan's always present suspicions about the Flooran's trustworthiness suddenly sharpened. This matter of Flooran and Nergalian forces unintentionally sabotaging each other was only a routine problem, scarcely as urgent as Surgat's earlier coded message had implied. And the Flooran's curiosity about Zagan's plans for Gharlane seemed somewhat excessive.

And so Zagan replied evasively, "I've been perfecting my plans for destroying Gharlane for over the last twenty years, and I guarantee it'll be successful. Why do you ask? Was there any helpful suggestion you wished to contribute?"

Surgat said, "Not at all. In fact, I admire your planning ability immensely. The way you maneuvered Kinnison, for instance, off of Klovia and into such a weak position that he was capable of being killed by his own hand weapons. Magnificent."

Zagan's countenance--and more important, his outer thoughts--remained impassive, but his inner mind raced furiously at that remark. No one could know how Kim Kinnison had been slain except for himself. Zilch and the crewman who had killed the Lensman. Zilch was too expert a psychologist to permit his crew to be infiltrated. Ergo, Surgat's

information came either directly from Zilch or with Zilch's knowledge.

Could Surgat have become a double agent, working with Zagan only as a counterspy for Zilch and Charlane? If that were the case, then this all too flimsily justified conference was in reality merely a pretext to get him away from Nergal while Charlane arranged for his successor, probably Zilch, to take office. Surgat's now all too obvious attempt to delay him here on Zabriska was probably intended to trap him into remaining on the planet while some entity--Lensman, Flooran or Nergalian--arranged for his execution.

All these thoughts--so laborious to detail--flushed through the Nergalian's mind in less than a second, and it was with seemingly perfect composure that Zagan responded to Surgat's remark about Kinnison's death. "Yes, that was indeed a fitting end for such a perfidious creature as that hated Lensman. He was such an aberrant entity too. Always disguising himself as something. One of my psychiatric men has theorized he was probably subconsciously bored with his own personality.

"And now," Zagan continued with apparent nonchalance, "let us return to the matter at hand. I deplore our lack of coordinated effort as deeply as you do. Furthermore," the Nergalian added with a calculated appearance of weakness, "I shall be pleased to consider any suggestions you may have for overcoming this situation. Meanwhile, I shall do my best to see that Nergalian forces will never again inadvertently attack Flooran ones. I will return to Nergal immediately and see that no further such incidents ever occur. Farewell for now, O Surgat," and Zagan left the conference spot and returned to his one-man speedster.

Once safely out in deep space again, Zagan turned his thoughts to his next problem--where to go. Nergal was definitely out. Not only had he told Surgat he was going there, but Charlane had probably already determined to have him immediately killed on his return. Nor could he count on his former subordinates' loyalty against the Edoorian. For such entities as Nergalians, loyalty is given only to the powerful. It is axiomatic that the weak are the betrayed.

Where then could he go? In former days, he might have considered becoming a renegade and joining the forces of Civilization. But now, thanks to the plans that he himself had helped devise, he knew that Civilization would not endure long enough to protect him from Charlane's wrath. Nor were the uncommitted worlds a possible haven. Zagan knew only too well how easy it was to terrorize such a world into abject submission--particularly when the price for freedom from fear was merely the life of a worthless alien.

No, there was only one place in the Two Galaxies where he might be safe, safe because it was the one place Charlane would not dream of looking for him at. With trembling fingers, Zagan drove his speedster at maximum speed--straight toward Arisia.

And in a relatively short time, the former Nergalian potentate had reached the region of space in which Arisia lay. Conquering a shudder of dread at his closeness to the planet which had

frustrated, tortured and destroyed so many of his co-ideologists, Zagan cautiously drove his ship forward, meeting relatively little resistance from the mechanical screens.

Finally Zagan landed the ship and heaved a deep sigh of relief. He was at last temporarily safe from pursuit. Slowly he got up from the control board chair, stretched luxuriously, and then froze stark still. Suddenly, before his very eyes, a humanoid had materialized into the empty air of the control room.

Zagan rubbed his eyes but found that the impossible sight had not disappeared. The stranger's appearance was indeed unforgettable. The being was tall and powerfully built, his heavily bearded saturnine face surmounted by thick, intensely black hair. And the stranger's equally intensely black eyes radiated a sneering contempt for the flustered Nergalian.

Not even Zagan's worst enemy would ever have termed him a coward, yet even that worthy's arrogant spirit was shaken as he turned to the new arrival and demanded, "Tell me quickly your identity and your purpose in invading my ship; otherwise I will be forced to destroy you."

The newcomer smiled coldly. "None of your weapons, whatever they may be," he replied, "could have any effect on me. What you see before you is not my actual body but merely a sixth-level projection, a phenomenon I have recently learned that your plenum is totally unfamiliar with. Now, you tell me--what is your name and what brings you here?"

The Nergalian did not reply but snatched his DeLameter and fired point blank at the intruder. He felt shaken to the very core of his being to see that the weapon's deadly rays had absolutely no effect on the figure before him. The man, in fact, was actually laughing at the attack.

When his mirth died down, he spoke again. "As you now realize, you are totally powerless to destroy me. Nevertheless, I will be charitable enough to answer your questions. My purpose in entering your ship is to find out just which faction you belong to in this space-time continuum's political jigsaw puzzle. As for my identity--at the present my name would have no significance to any inhabitant of this plenum--although I plan to alter that situation before not very long. In fact," and the man's sardonic smile grew even broader, "you may congratulate yourself on being the very first being in this space-time continuum to make the acquaintance of Dr. Marc C. Duquesne.

to be continued in our next issue

There have been many attempts to concoct The Shortest Horror Story. One of the most frequently quoted is "The last man on Earth sat alone in a room. There was a knock on the door." Another, less well-known, but equally memorable one is "The last man on Earth sat alone in a room. There was a lock on the door." Now, The Third Foundation, presents the true contest winner--

The last fan sat in a room. There was nothing to read--
anywhere.

MUSIC OF THE SPHERES

Four songs from the new hit revue Judge Crater, I Presume, now playing at the Moonshiner Hotel in Lunaport. Lyrics by Omer Hacarstein; music by Roger Richards. That for the first song slightly resembles the tune of "A Wonderful Guy," the second the tune of "Bali Ha'i," the third the tune of "We Ain't Got Dances," and the fourth the tune of "You've got to be Taught."

A Lovely E-t

I'm as starry as galaxy center,
High as the moon when it's at apogee.
No more a crass spaceman upper class
I have found me a lovely e-t.

My heart is so light that it seems I'm in freefall,
Tumbling around in a state of null-gee,
And sometimes I feel that I'm not sure she's real
When I think of that lovely e-t.

I'm as happy and gay as a Lunan at play,
A cliche' none too strong;
I'm as dazzlingly bright as the clear Lunar sight
Of a night two weeks long.

I'm as starry as galaxy center,
Warm as the sun when it's at perigee.
If you'll ~~use~~ an expression I use,
I'm in love--I'm in love--I'm in love--I'm in love
I'm in love with a lovely e-t.

Lunaport

Most people live down on crowded Terra,
Where there's no room but beneath the sea.
Most people long for someplace like Luna:
One where they know there is land for free.

Lunaport may call you,
Any night, any day.
In your heart, you'll hear her whisper,
Come away, come away.

Lunaport will beckon
'Mid the beams of the stars,
Here am I, your special worldlet,
Much closer than Mars.

Your own special hopes,
Your own ecstasies,
Wait in the craters,
And in the dry seas.

If you try, you'll reach me;
It's not far to the moon.
Listen, Terrans, Luna's calling,
Hurry soon, hurry soon.
Lunaport! Lunaport! Lunaport!

There is Nothing like Earth Air

We've got sunlight in the day,
That's a day that lasts two weeks,
We've got Earthlight in the nighttime
Shining on the crater peaks,
We've got hydroponic flowers,
And we've even got some beer.
What ain't we got?
No atmosphere.

We get packages from home, we get movies, we get snows,
We get daily calisthenics when we have to touch our toes.
We get lectures from our skipper; we get dizzy from low-gee.
What don't we get? -- It's plain to see.

We have nothing we can go outside and--inhale.
Sometimes Lunaport's seems just like being--in jail.

There is nothing like Earth air,
Nothing in the spheres;
There is nothing anywhere
That is anything like Earth air.

We feel restless, we feel blue; we feel ready to cause scenes;
We feel all the feelings proper to a group of canned sardines;
We feel edgy as a Lunan in a Martian neighborhood.
What don't we feel? -- we don't feel good.

Lots of things in life are wonderful, but brother
There is one particular thing that is nothing whatsoever
in its moisture, weight or scent like any other.

There is nothing like Earth air,
Nothing in the spheres;
There is nothing anywhere
That is anything like Earth air.

So suppose Earth air gets rain
Or suppose Earth air gets fog
Or suppose Earth air gets humid
Or suppose Earth air gets smog.
It's a waste of time to worry
Over faults that are so small;
Be thankful that it's there at all.

There is nothing like Earth air.
Nothing in the spheres.
There is nothing anywhere
That is anything like Earth air.
There is absolutely nothing to compare with Earth air.

.....

There will supposedly be an eclipse of the moon Oct 18 about
2.45 am PDT. Also visible should be the start of the Orionid
meteor shower--toward the east. The meteors will keep on coming
for a few more days but will be hard to see because of the full moon.

The Space Engineer's Ballad

It's hard to become an engineer.
You've got to be taught from year to year.
It's got to be drummed in your poor little ear.
You've got to be carefully taught.

You've got to be taught before it's too late.
You've got to be taught to calculate.
You've got to be taught to astrogate.
You've got to be carefully taught.

You've got to be taught to understand
The ways that spaceships can get out of hand
From the time they take off till the time that they land.
You've got to be carefully taught---
You've got to be carefully taught.

* * * * *

Nietzsche as a science fiction writer - from Thus Spoke Zarathustra

Alas, the time is coming when man will no longer give birth to a star. Alas, the time of the most despicable man is coming: he that is no longer able to despise himself. Behold, I show you the last man.

"What is love? What is creation? What is longing? What is a star?" thus asks the last man and he blinks.

The earth has become small, and on it hops the last man, who makes everything small. His race is as ineradicable as the flea-beetle; the last man lives longest.

"We have invented happiness," say the last men, and they blink. They have left the regions where it was hard to live, for one needs warmth. One still loves one's neighbor and rubs against him, for one needs warmth.

Becoming sick and harboring suspicion are sinful to them; one proceeds carefully. A fool, whoever still stumbles over stones or human beings! A little poison now and then; that makes for agreeable dreams. And much poison in the end, for an agreeable death.

One still works, for work is a form of entertainment. But one is careful lest the entertainment be too harrowing. One no longer becomes poor or rich: both require too much exertion. Who still wants to rule? Who obey? Both require too much exertion.

No shepherd and one herd. Everybody wants the same, everybody is the same; whoever feels different goes voluntarily into a madhouse. "Formerly all the world was mad," say the most refined, and they blink.

One is clever and knows everything that has ever happened; so there is no end of derision. One still quarrels, but one is soon reconciled--else it might spoil the digestion.

One has one's little pleasure for the day and one's little pleasure for the night; but one has a regard for health.

"We have invented happiness," say the last men, and they blink.

Blurbicles

Paper back blurbs are weird and wonderful things, often with little relation to the books they are supposedly referring to. For example:

The classic chronicle-novel about a future civilization helped and menaced by complex servomechanisms.

That sounds like a good blurb for The Humanoids but it's actually for Asimov's I, Robot. Apparently the publisher never got around to reading the Three Laws of Robotics.

Working from blurbs obviously adds an extra element of challenge to the routine task of trying to supply the author and title of a book from hearing the basic plot. Anybody who gets all ten of the following blurbs in less than fifteen minutes ranks as an honorary member of The Third Foundation.

1. In the second atomic age, mankind has sunk into a new Dark Age, in which a constant war rages between priests and witches, angels and devils, the rulers and the ruled.
2. They have the minds of men--but not the bodies. Planted on the planets centuries ago in order to conquer the galaxy, these men-mutations have gradually gained control of space. Now they are looking for new worlds to settle. And in their search, it is only natural that they turn...to EARTH.
3. He was catapulted into the midst of the death struggle between the planets when he sought revenge against those who refused to save him from death in a space ship. But he did not know he held the key to winning that war, and both sides would stop at nothing to get it.
4. They were feared as witches and demons. They possessed super-human powers. They could read minds, free objects from gravity, fly through the air. They lived alone and outcaste in an isolated canyon.
5. The theme of this modern Iliad is the great war between the Demons and the Witches. Here are battles on sea and land, perilous journeys, base treacheries and mighty deeds performed by authentic heroes and majestic villains.
6. He was sent to make war against another planet, to terrorize and destroy it--singlehanded.
7. He was the first child to be born on Earth for at least ten million years. And because he was so different from the others around him, he sought to prove what they all denied...that life existed elsewhere on their fabulous planet.
8. He had no name, no language, no friends. He had not been born, and he could not multiply. He had floated free in space for billions of years, and for all he knew it was the only living thing in the Universe. So when he met three human beings wrangling and bickering in their funny-looking space ship, his whole life was changed. Because he suddenly knew that he could make them do anything he wanted.
9. The intriguing novel of a future Earth when science and technology have solved all problems--except the "why" of life.

10. He was a twentieth century man who by a freak of chance survived to see an age in which working had become a social disgrace; an age in which culture and the arts reigned supreme; an age of mannered ladies and gentlemen, perfectly waited on and cared for by androids--the manlike creations of their own genius. For the first time in history, man had completely freed himself from the problems of living. Except ...when perfect machines, with perfect performance, are made to perfectly resemble man--who needs man?

* * * * *

Answers to last issue's symbol quiz

1. C-Fe. Carbon-iron. Human-robot cooperation. Asimov. Caves of Steel.
2. F-IW. Freedom-I Won't. Ghandian slogan. Russell. And Then There Were None.
3. CC. Central Control. used as synonym for OK. Norton. Star Rangers (or The Lost Planet).
4. IMT. Interstellar Master Traders. A buidlestiff city in Hlish's Earthman, Come Home.
5. DBDG. physiological symbol for humanoid in White's Hospital, M.I.I.A and Star Surgeon.
6. Z9M9Z--the Directrix, command ship in Smith's later Lensman books.
7. FOE--Free on Earth. Money which reaches Earth itself. Cordwainer Smith. The Planet Swer (or The Boy who bought Old Earth).
8. Ingsoe. English Socialism. Orwell. 1984.
9. PyRE. A pyrophoric alloy which emits pure energy when exploded by psychokinesis. Bester. The Stars My Destination.
10. GML. Gorman Moffatt Lavin Bobble Women. Phil & Korneluth. Bladiator at Law.

* * * * *

Answer to Lensman Puzzle from last issue

KLONE MAC
 INV...A
 THE FLOOR
 JILL NG EP
 LYRANB J
 T...EROD
 E...PACE
 ...A...ORY

There always have been men who have gone about despairing of the future, and when the future arrives it says nice, superior things about their having acted according to their lights. It is dreadful to think that other people's grand-children may one day rise up and call one amiable.

E H Munro 1904



Miss Universe
 2167

