



trumpet JUNE 1967

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our stuff

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SPECIAL UNINTENTIONAL FICTION ISSUE

TRUMPET is published three or four times a year at 2508 17th Street, Plano, Texas 75074. Prices are 60e per copy or \$2.50 for a five issue subscription. Free to contributors and worthy allies. PRINTED letters of comment are considered contributions. Also available for trade.

If you've noticed, there have been some changes made on the editorial staff. Al Jackson has been promoted and Alex Eisenstein has become a full-fledged Trumpet editor—whatever that means. As Al is in Houston and Alex is in Germany, I'm still doing all the work and it may take a while for everything to sort itself out. But if Al and Alex are going to get to pay their share of the money, then they have to do their share of the work.

I told Alex the deadline for this issue and asked if he wished to write an editorial. I haven't received one, so he either didn't want to or didn't believe that this issue would appear as soon as scheduled. It was probably the latter. The same is true of The Compost Heap. I never got around to asking Al for an editorial; as a matter of fact, I never got around to telling him he was an editor instead of an associate editor. Hey, Al. Surprise!

The Pong situation is still up in the air, I suppose. I haven't heard anything new lately. Either the opposition wasn't strong enough or the NyCon Committee plans to bull it through anyway. According to Ted's letter in this issue, nothing has changed.

Recently John Trimble published a fanzine devoted exclusively to the Hugo. The first issue was composed primarily of a longish letter from Ted explaining the Committee's decision to change the award. Among all the verbiage I was unable to find a single substantial reason for the change. It all ended with a petulant cry of, we are right and you are wrong so why are you fighting us? It's all rather sad, really.

The most stultifying movie ever imagined came through Dallas recently. The title was "The Chelsea Girls" (though it could have been anything or nothing) and was made by the demagoque (and card-carrying put-on) of the underground film-makers, Andy Warhol. The first thing you notice about the film is that it is seven hours long. Or, at least, it is supposed to be. The film is composed of an uncountable number of short episodes (about twenty minutes each) and the Dallas theater showed them two at a time-one on each side of the screen, I'm sure it wasn't meant to be shown this way because they could only have the sound on one side at a time, It was still three and a half hours

long.
You have to see it to believe it.
Each episode is shot without a break
until the film runs out. You see the little
dots flickering on the screen and the
scene ends—no matter what is happening. The action is all improvisation and
some of the actors are really quite good.

The most...er...memorable scene concerned two male homosexuals (I assume) in bed. One is wearing a bathrobe but the other is wearing only jockey shorts (Fruit of the Loom, no doubt). Two girls enter and sit on the bed. I have no idea what was happening because the sound was on the other side. But they all keep pulling at the guy's jockey shorts. The suspense is unbearable until they finally pull them off and the camera zooms in for a close-up

PRETENSIONS Œ Ш IHO DITORIA



of his penis! That pretty well sets the tone for the whole evening.

This same group, plus two more men, return in another sequence (this time with sound). I was right, they are homosexuals. The same guy gets his shorts pulled off again but this time off camera. The camera is focused for about the last ten minutes on the face of one of the guys who is eating a grape-fruit. But the off-camera dialogue would curl your hair. Earlier in this scene one of the girls digs into the front of the man's bathrobe and shouts, "Bring the tweezers and the magnifying glass!" I ask you.

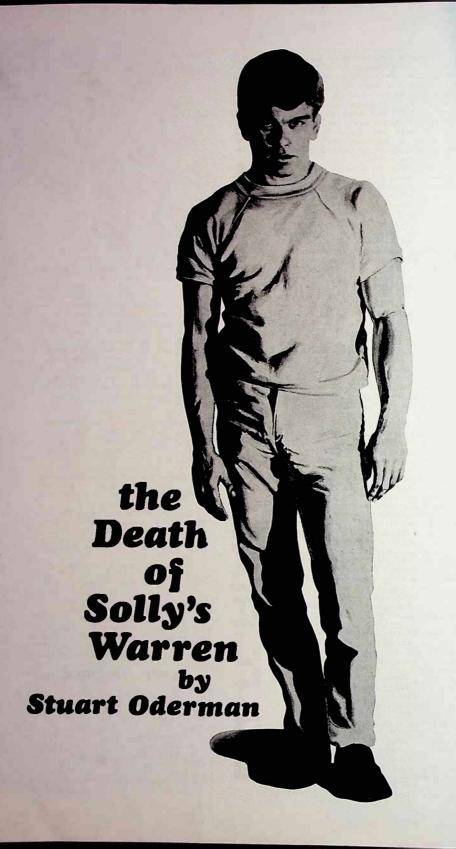
Another episode, probably the most interesting one, has only one character, a young man obviously on dope (for real). He tells how he feels, what he thinks, and his philosophy in general. Of course, he removes his clothes during the scene and discusses his sex organs, while modestly hiding them. The color is extremely good in this one and Warhol leaves the camera alone and concentrates on the man.

Another shows a girl just sitting, doing nothing. And that's it. The camera jiggles, the zoom lens zooms—and zooms, the focus goes in and out, the light changes color and pattern constant—ly, etc.

ly, etc. There are many more, some I've meroifully forgotten. One of the strange things you notice about the film is, while several men remove their clothes, none of the women do. Or, for that fact, are any of them wearing particularly revealing costumes. Practically all of them, men and women, are extremely attractive and they manage to use every four letter word that was considered too hot for "Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?"

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Monday, January 17.

The telephone rang several times before his mother was able to pick it up. She was not yet fully awake and she was in the bathroom. As she entered the kitchen she wiped her face with the green towel she brought with her. Maybe Warren would have picked it up. But no. She had long realized that this would never happen. He was afraid of telephones. Black things, he called them.

I'm coming. I'm coming. The phone still rang.

God-damn phone. I'll rip it the hell off the wall and be done with it. She lifted the receiver and spoke. Hello? She paused a moment while the other party identified himself. She looked in the direction of her son's room. The door was closed. Yes, she said. He's up...No, I was in the bathroom. I was only drying my face. I had some soap in my eyes and I thought he would have answered this time. She laughed to herself. The other party waited. I couldn't see where the phone was. I had soap in...

She put her hand over the phone and called into the closed door.

Warren? It's Solly. Are you up?

You want me? The door was still closed,

It's Solly from the store.

What about him?

What about him, she repeated. A fine way to talk. She spoke into the receiver. I'm talking to my son. And then to the closed door:

Solly's on the other end. Are you dressed?

The closed door opened slowly and he entered the kitchen.

Yes, he pointed to himself. I'm dressed.

He's dressed, she said.

Tell him I'm dressed.

Of course I believe him, Solly, Why

shouldn't I believe him? He's right next to me.

I'll be down right away.

He says he'll be down right away. He'll be right down. It won't happen again.

She replaced the receiver on the hook. The green towel was still on the kitchen table. She lit the gas and placed a pot of water on the stove.

I had to take another towel, he said. Really? And what's wrong with this

I couldn't find it.

Did you bother to look for it?
I looked in the bathroom. It wasn't

Did you look in the kitchen? You don't keep bathtowels in the kitchen.

Then you didn't look for it.

Why should I look in the kitchen? You should look in the kitchen because I just might put it there. Where was I supposed to put the towel when the phone was ringing?

You could have left it in the bath-

And how could I dry my face with the towel in the bathroom?

Take a different towel.

You just took the towel. A towel here, a towel there.

You don't think, Warren. Twentytwo years old and you don't think. Last night you forgot to turn off the television

You turned it off, didn't you? Yes, but you were watching it.

I forgot to turn it off.

He phoned again. Do you know that? Why didn't you wake me up? Why didn't I wake you up?

Last night! was watching this movie and it was a western and Gary Cooper was walking down the street and—

And I had to make excuses for you again.

I fell asleep when he was walking

down the street and the music was playing Do not forsake me and I fell asleep.

You shouldn't be late.

If you knew ! was late why didn't you wake me up?

You have an alarm clock.

It's your fault. What's my fault?

He was walking down the street-

He doesn't like it, Warren.

I was looking for my towel— You shouldn't be late like yesterday. He doesn't like it when you come

in late. You know how mad Solly gets.

But I couldn't find the—

He doesn't like it Werran Why

He doesn't like it, Warren. Why should he have to open the store all by himself?

Where the Hell was my towel?
It isn't right for him to keep phoning
ere everyday you're late. I have to

here everyday you're late. I have to answer the phone and I know what he's going to say. 'Where is Warren, Eva?' And I'll have to lie to him again. Why do I have to lie for you all my life?

The towel wasn't anyplace. Why didn't you leave the towel on the rod?

He says if you're late one more time he'll fire you.

Did he fire me last time? Why should he fire me this time?

Don't fight with me, Warren. I'm only telling you what he said. You think I'm lying to you? The man phoned me and said 'Eva, if he's late one more time, I'll have to let him go.' Is that what you want? You have no sense of responsibility. She said it again. No sense of responsibility.

You hid the towel on purpose. How long are you working for Sol-

Six years.

And you still need your Mama to pick up after you.

I don't need you. I don't need anyone. She gave him the towel. Take it back. I can't reason with you. You're a fool.

He left the room.

Hang it up straight, she called after

She took the pot of boiling water from the stove and poured two cups of

Stupid, she mumbled to herself. All my life I have to pick up after him. Do for him. Think for him.

She called to the closed bathroom

door.

Warren, what's going to happen to you after I'm dead? Will you be able to do for yourself? Or will you just sit around until your turn comes?

The door opened and he walked through the kitchen and into his bedroom. The door was closed and then he came to her. He was wearing his red and white checkboard coat. The snow had fallen last night.

I'm not hungry.

Why don't you stay and have break-

I said I wasn't hungry.

It's just a little tea. It'll warm up your belly.

How can I eat when I'm late? You said he phoned and I'm late.

She poured the cup of tea into the sink. Okay then starve. Being late is being late, You could just as well walk in at two in the afternoon.

But you said he doesn't like it when

I'm late.

He'll do without you for a few extra minutes. She took a sip of the warm orange liquid and let it slowly down her throat. She sighed loudly and stared at him silently for a moment. Then,

You make me sick.

I'm leaving right now, Ma.

Twenty-two years old and all you do is carry soup cans for that man. You carry soup cans from the cellar to the shelf. From the shelf to the cellar. From the cellar to the shelf.

Stop talking like that.

How do you think I feel? Six years and that's all you do. You carry soup back and forth like a monkey. Monkey. You do a monkey's work. And then you put your money in buying magazines. And you can't even read. Or you enter contests? What is it this time? Two weeks in Rome?

Contest: the mere mention of it brought a smile.

I don't think I'll win that one. He felt his pants for his wallet. But I'll win the contest at the movie theatre. I took five chances. He opened his wallet and produced five stubs. I can win fivehundred dollars. See my numbers? He held the stubs in front of her face. Fourteen-thirty-two. Fourteen-thirtythree. Fourteen-thirty-four. Fourteenthirty-five. Fourteen-thirty-six. All in a row. See what it says? First prize in money!

She waved the stubs away.

You'll never win.

I've got just as good a chance as anyone else.

Contests are for fools and empty headed dreamers. Only fools enter contests. She pushed the chair away from the table and took the cracked rosed and branched cup to the sink. Go dream. It's a stupid life you lead. Rot in your vomit. Go. Go to work, Get out of my house.

Don't tell me what to do, I don't tell you what to do. He put the tickets back in his wallet. You clean other people's houses. I don't pick up after other people. I don't crawl under their beds or clean their toilets. You have to clean their dirt. And you wear dirty clothes and walk around like a pig.

You show some respect, Warren.

I'm telling you the truth.

You always make fun of me. You're not satisfied with me.

The truth is, Warren, you have no friends. Stupid. That's why your father left me. He left me because you were so stupid.

He's dead, Warren cried out. Everyone says he's dead.

She laughed, Dead? He's not dead, Who told you he was dead?

The people in town said he was dead.

Don't believe them, Warren, He left me.

Warren turned away from her.

You turn around and face me, Warren, I'm talking to you.

He headed for the door.

I SAID YOU TURN AROUND AND FACE ME!

She went to him and spoke softly. I'm your mother, Warren and I'm all that you have in the world. I'm the one who's looking after you. I'm putting the roof over your head. They're lying to you, my baby. They put wrong ideas in your head. They're trying to poison you. She embraced him but his face was not near hers. You stay away from those people in town. They're no good. Stay away from those people,

But he pushed her away and walked out into the Monday morning towards the store. He never looked back.

Thursday, January 20: Excerpt from a filmed television interview with Eva Sabinsky, mother of the deceased Warren.

It's not entirely my fault. You have to believe me. I did the best I could. What more is a person capable of doing? If there are any mothers listening out there, I'll appeal directly to you. I swear what I say is the truth.

I wanted the best for my Warren, but I realized it was a foolish dream. I always daydreamed whenever I thought of him. I had to give up everything, I had to realize that it was impossible for him to do anymore than he was doing.

I know it's hard to face. You keep kidding yourself that God is testing

When he was born, his father left. I hated to take him outside in the carriage. People always wanted to look at him. Before I would leave I cried that nobody should see me. Nobody should stop me. Nobody should say, 'Oh, Eva, what a lovely boy.' 'Oh, Eva, lift him up and let me hold him."

Whenever I did take him outside. I used to hide him beneath blankets. But they still kept coming over. They made me remove all the blankets and they held him. I couldn't refuse, could!? He didn't laugh. His lips were sealed like there was glue on them.

They put him back into the carriage

and smiled and walked away. I wanted to ask them why he didn't show any sign of emotion. Why he sat in the carriage and never uttered a sound ...

I had to lie to everyone. I said it was his throat. My son has a sore throat. The poor baby has a sore throat and he can't laugh. It hurts him to laugh. AND PEOPLE BELIEVED ME. .

They started to tell me how to cure it. I had to stand there and smile and pretend that I was grateful for their interest. But then they stopped coming over to me and I had to face up to it ...

I had to face the fact that my son who sat in the carriage was limited. He had no potential. A mother can't help avoiding it, can she?

Do you understand what I'm telling vou?

Love? Why do you speak about love? You don't love a Warren. I had to do my best to tolerate him. I had to accept him for what he was. That's why his death, no matter how horrible it may be, is so... natural with his character. He just wouldn't have it any other way ...

Monday, January 17.

The store had grown since it was opened by his father many years ago. It was a small business, but it was the only grocery store in town and the people had to patronize it. They opened at eight in the morning and closed at six in the evening.

And then Solly offered the butcher next door a partnership, which only existed on paper. Solly ran the store. Solly ordered the meat. Solly determined the prices.

The vegetable store was next. He went with the butcher to the vegetable store and told him that he was planning on enlarging and the vegetable man would be a damned fool not to jump in.

So he jumped in.

Solly owned three stores knocked down the walls between them. Now he owned the entire block. And he had a long neon sign installed: Solly's. And you could see it whenever you passed through: Solly's.

He started to shave in the morning. And he stopped wearing his white apron. Now he wore a shirt and a tie and he stayed in the front of the store. People who stopped to look at the fresh fruit or the printed signs about the tender beef would see him sitting on a metal stool next to the cash register.

A girl started to work the other register, Nobody knew from where she came. But she was young and very attractive and very white skinned. And people started talking about the young girl and Solly.

Not that anyone ever saw them together, Quite the contrary.

She lived in a rooming house at the far end of town and she paid the rent on the day it was due. There must have been men, the landlady said. She was never in her room. She always saw her leave at eight in the evening and didn't stay up for her return.

And then it was decided that maybe Solly did feel towards her. Not a love instinct, for nobody could ever imagine

him in love with anyone-even though he was married to a frail Dorothy.

He just liked to look at the girl. That was all there was to it. He just sat and looked

Once they fought.

He was closing for the night and she had waited until he was about to leave when she asked him for more money. He started to gesture with his hands that it was practically impossible when she took the hand and placed it on her breast. It remained there for a moment and neither spoke.

Is that all it is with you, Solly? she asked looking down at the still resting hand. You could do more than that if you want. Go ahead, she whispered. And she moved back against the wall so that he would have to pin her. And then she laughed, finally realizing that this childless man was incapable of anything relating to the body.

She left the next day and the town never saw her or asked Solly of her whereabouts.

It was Solly's problem, not theirs. I had to phone home again, Warren, Solly said as the boy entered.

My mother told me, Solly.

She wasn't too happy when I phoned. I know she wasn't happy. She told me.

I phoned last week.

Don't phone me anymore.

But if I don't phone, you'll come in even later, I can't run a store like that. You have to report on time.

I forgot to set the alarm clock.

You said that last time.

My mother broke the clock. She came into my room and threw it on the

He knew Warren was lying.

What time is it, Warren?

I don't know.

He held his watch in front of him. Read my watch.

The big hand is on the three and the little hand is on the nine.

What time is it? I can't tell. The other line is always moving. I can't see the numbers.

Don't read the second hand.

What's the second hand?

Just read the big and little hands. He looked at the watch and than at Solly.

can't read it.

You should have set your alarm clock.

forgot to set the clock.

Didn't you tell me that your mother broke the clock?

I didn't say that.

You just said that your mother came into your room and took the clock and threw it on the floor.

I won't be late again. I'm sorry. It's going on nine-thirty, he said.

What time should you be here? I should be here at eight o'clock.

When do I come here?

You come here at eight o'clock. We both come together.

We both come together, Warren repeated.

We open the store together.

We open the store together.

We work together.

We work together.

I give the orders.

You give the orders. And you follow them. And I follow them.

I had to phone last week, Solly said. And the week before that.

Warren nodded sheepishly.

Do you see that case at your feet? Yes.

What do you think is in that case? Soup, Warren answered, knowing what was coming next.

That you're supposed to put on the shelf.

You didn't start, did you, Solly? But he didn't hear him and was starting to calculate.

Three times late at ten cents a

Don't take away my money! Should be thirty cents.

Please, Solly, he pleaded. My mother will kill me.

But I'll make a bargain with you. What kind of bargain?

Ten cents a call. Today is a special. Three calls for a quarter.

I don't want to pay anything.

You save a nickel.

Warren walked away from the front of the store. He ripped open the case of soup cans at his feet and started to place them on the shelves, being very careful that the labels show.

Look, Solly, how fast I work.

Solly watched Warren a moment and then noticed a customer. Warren stepped back to view the shelf. Some of the labels were not showing. Solly would not like this. He tried to straighten all of the cans individually, but this was too much for him. In frustration he knocked the cans on the floor.

Is anything wrong back there, War-

Nothing is wrong, Solly.

He placed each fallen can on the shelves with great care. The shelf is a showcase for himself: a proof that no matter what people say, he is able to be neat. He can do creditable work.

One shelf has been filled. He was on his hands and knees as he started to count the number of cans on the shelf. He counted aloud: one, two, three, four, five, seven, to fourteen. He repeated the number fourteen, shouting it into the shelf.

Fourteen, Fourteen,

He ran his fingers over the remaining cans, knowing that there were more than fourteen.

Fourteen. Fourteen.

Warren, is everything okay? I'm almost finished, Solly. How many cans did you fit on? But he mumbled to himself the same

answer: fourteen, fourteen.

Solly walked over to him. Fourteen, Fourteen...

Thursday, January 20: Excerpt from a filmed television interview with Solomon Davis, the employer of the deceased Warren.

I'm not responsible for what hap-pened to him. It's not right of you to involve me in this. Nobody in town knew what was in his mind when it took place...

During the day while he was in the store, I would walk over to him and ask him what he was thinking about. I

wanted to have a little talk and I knew about his home life, how terrible it was. But you can't get inside someone's head if he isn't normal. He just wasn't normal. You people are making a mountain out of nothing. He's not worth so much attention and discussion...

What people offered him a job? The druggist? He ate there everyday. Of course I don't think he knew that I paid his bill at the end of the week, but ! did. Did he ever offer him a job? How about the movie-man? He could have been a ticket collector. Those jobs don't require much effort and all he would have to do is stand there. And he would meet people and not be tied down to a shelf of vegetable soup like he was here.

Six years he worked for me. I took him in at sixteen when everybody pretended he didn't exist. I liked him as I liked my own son. Everybody knew I liked him. People associated him with me. He was Solly's Warren ...

Don't bring up his salary. Do you think I actually needed him? His work? You could laugh at his work. Whatever I paid him was enough. He couldn't wait on people. He couldn't work the cash register because he didn't know numbers. He couldn't take phone calls...

You know I had to pay him in single dollars? He liked plenty of money. Maybe I should have paid him in pen-nies. Then he would have been in financial ecstacy.

Monday, January 17.

He had finished the first row. The labels on the cans of soup were plainly visible. Warren grabbed the edge of the shelf and lifted himself from the floor where he had been sitting. time had passed quickly. Nobody had bothered him although he could see that customers were coming in and shopping.

The snow hadn't hurt Solly's business. Solly liked snow, It meant that he could sell more groceries. True, it meant that he would keep a pot of coffee on the portable stove in the front window and a large supply of plastic cups next to it, but the small outlay always yielded the extra dividend.

They would see the coffee and maybe drink some, but he always had a cup with them. It was the home touch, he called it. And the women always loved to talk about their homes.

Warren didn't see her when she entered but his eyes fell on her boots when he had stood up. She must have come around when he had closed his eyes that one moment he lifted himself.

He didn't like her: the over-friendly, bell-ringing tones. Her shopping basket was always filled to the top and she always smelled of perfume.

Hello, Warren.

He did not answer, but stared straight into her eyes.

I said hello you, Warren. Didn't you hear me?

He grunted a sound of recognition and started to go towards the front of the store and Solly when she placed her black glove on his bare wrist and gently urged him back to her.

I don't want to bother you. You could go on with your work.

I'm working hard.

You certainly do good work.

She ran her hand over the row of soup cans and smiled at him. He saw her neck and noticed that she wasn't wearing a scarf.

Is it okay?

She didn't answer his question.

Isn't it easier back here, Warren? she asked.

What's easier?

Working back here, she answered.

Isn't it easier for you?

He shrugged his shoulders and grinned, hoping that this would please But she continued her line of questions.

I mean, she paused and then finally said it, you couldn't very well...you couldn't count out the money at the cash register. Aren't you glad you were transfered?

What's 'transfered?'

Put back. And then she quickly corrected herself. I mean 'changed.'

Changed?

Well, you know what I mean. You were taken out of one place and put into another

He wiped his hands on his apron. I used to work in the front.

And now you work back here, She stopped speaking and started to turn her cart in the direction of the front. She did this slowly, aware that his eyes were still watching every movement. The perfume was very strong and perhaps she could sense a stirring in his groin.

Maybe I should go back where the

people are, Warren.

She completed her turn and had taken one step forward when he finally whispered in desparation what she had hoped to hear.

Don't leave me alone, Mrs. Gilles-

pie. Stay and talk to me.

She smiled. But, Warren, I have

Maybe he'll put me up front again. Now, Warren, you know you'll never go back. You couldn't count out

Yes I could, he stammered, I could count. It was easy to count. One, two, three, four, five, six, seven ... He saw she wasn't paying attention and his voice and enthusiasm died.

Could you count out change?

I counted out change.

But it was the wrong amount of change.

I counted change, he repeated.

But you did it wrong, she answered. You made mistakes.

Nobody showed me. Solly never told me about change. He never told me anything.

Does Solly have to show you every-

thing?

He showed me how to put the cans on the shelf so that the labels showed. You can't do anything without Solly,

can you? Solly showed me how to pack the

cans. She had started to walk and he was

following her. She stopped abruptly and faced him, the challenger. Let's count out change, Warren.

You tell me how much change I'm supposed to get.

He let the words fall on him and

started to walk back to the cans of soup, but she stepped in front of him.

Let's find out right here.

But I don't work at the cash register, Mrs. Gillespie. You know that.

You should know how to count change, shouldn't you, Warren?

I just told you that I don't work up front

I'm not playing with you anymore, Warren, I'm not playing. She waited and started the problem for him: Now suppose someone came in and bought some proceries for two dollars.

What did they buy?

Two dollars worth of groceries Warren. They bought two dollars worth of groceries.

He snapped the solution: They gave me two dollars.

No, they didn't, Warren. She saw his face sadden. They didn't have two dollars. This person only had a five dollar bill. She paused again. They gave you a five dollar bill, a five dollar bill, she repeated, for two dollars worth of groceries.

But the food only cost two dollars. How much change do they get back? They would pay Solly.

But suppose Solly isn't here.

Solly would never leave the store. Warren answered.

He heard his voice from the front of the store: Warren, I'm going out for a minute. Take care of the place.

He wanted to tell him that a customer was still inside, but at that precise moment the front door was about to close, she had placed her finger over her lips and shook her head no.

I'd call Solly, he repeated slowly, and he would give me change.

But suppose Solly can't come She stepped forward and almost pinned him against the shelf. The smell of the perfume was very strong and the first buttons of her flaming red coat had undone. She was breathing heavily and he watched her run her tongue over her lips.

How much? she asked. How much? There was no answer. It was quiet in the store. He could hear the buzzing sound of the flourescent lighting. The labels he had never really noticed were becoming screamingly intense. It was almost an audience. She lifted his hand and brushed it along her cheek. He could not look at her.

How much? she whispered.

She ran her hand down his chest

I have work to do. You'll have to excuse me.

Suddenly she was angry and he was not ready for it.

How much change do I get, she pulled him around. Two dollars from five dollars? Two dollars from five dollars? It was almost a litany. Don't you snub me. How much do I get?

Leave me alone. I have work to do. You just don't know, Warren. You

just don't know.

Let me finish my work. His eyes searched for Solly, for anyone.

You think you're better than anyone else, don't you?

I have to get back. He pushed her away. You're getting me all mixed up! GET AWAY FROM ME!

He knocked a can of peas on the floor. The noise seemed louder than it was. She bent down and picked it up and placed it quietly back on the shelf.

Warren, she said sweetly, I have a problem. Could you help me?

He turned around. Do you want my help?

Could you tell me where I could find the soup?

Reach out and grab it, he said.

He did not look or even care if she had followed his suggestion. He walked to the front of the store and took a donut from the box next to the coffee.

Thursday, January 20: Excerpt from a filmed television interview with Mary Gillespie, customer of the store where the deceased Warren was employed.

How could you say that to me?
Why are you questioning me? What do you hope to achieve? The boy was clearly an idiot. Any person in his right senses could tell you that. The boy was arrogant. He thought he was better than anyone else. He had no respect for anyone.

The one time I really took an interest in him, he tried to ... touch me. I don't want to say anymore than that . . .

According to him the world owed him a living. I asked him where the soup was and he spoke freshly to me. I knew where the soup was. I wanted him to feel that he was needed. He wasn't as dumb as we think. I swear he would laugh behind our backs. We had to descend to his level to help him. We had to speak his language. We were the fools to try to communicate with him.

A death is a death and that's all. It's just the sensationalism that appeals to vou.

Monday, January 17.

Warren entered the drug-store, as was his custom at the noon hour. He had been carrying the morning newspaper which he gave to Johnson at the same time he sat at the fountain.

Thank you, Warren.

Any news? About what?

About anything.

It's going to rain tonight.

I'm going to the movies tonight, Mr. Johnson.

Is tonight the drawing for the money? I can hardly wait.

What's playing?

I forgot. Last week they said what was playing in the 'tractions.

He corrected him. Not tractions, Warren. Say the coming attractions.

The 'tractions.

The coming attractions.

I saw them last week. I think it's a western.

Do you like cowboys?

I love cowboys.

How about lunch, Warren?

Did you pack it for me?

He handed Warren a package. Same thing. Then he said: Do you think you'll win the contest?

Five hundred dollars is good money. Suppose you do win? Then what?

Oh, I don't know. I'll just go somewhere.

Any particular place?

I've got five-hundred dollars, don't 1? What about California? Johnson suggested

Yeah, California,

Did you ever go to California? I never left town. I wouldn't know

where California is.

Well, said Johnson, let me tell you about California, Warren, He took a geography book from beneath the counter. It's my daughter's. He opened the book to the map of the United Statesthe centerfold. This is where you are. He pointed to the East. And this, he pointed westward, is California. And there's sunshine day and night. And laughter. And love. And happiness. And there's something for-

He stopped speaking.

Why are you so nice to me, Mr. Johnson?

You're a good boy, Warren, he answered. You're sincere.

What's sincere?

You nevertell lies, he explained. A sincere person is one who tells the truth. You could do me a favor, can't you, Warren?

I'll do anything for you. Mr. John-

Would you take this prescription bottle to Solly?

Is he sick?

He handed a small paper bag to him. No, the pills are for his wife,

He took the pills and put them in his pocket.

Are you telling me the truth?

Why should I lie to you? She's not dying, is she?

Take the pills to Solly. They will help her.

You mean she's okay?

Everything is alive to you, Warren, as long as you have a heart.
A heart?

A heart, Warren, It only takes a heart.

Love you, Mr. Johnson. You're so nice to me. I really love you.

He walked to the door and waved goodby as he crossed the snow-covered street to Solly's.

California, California.

Thursday, January 20: From a filmed television interview with William Johnson.

I never had any words with him. The only time I came in contact with him was at lunch. He always gave me the paper and I would thank him and give him his lunch. Solly always paid for Warren's lunch . .

I think Warren and I had a good relationship. The other people didn't get along with him. They elevated themselves at his expense, I knew about his home life and I never asked any questions about it. He had to cope with his mo-

She isn't all there either. He never knew his father and she won't talk about it. I know she says he died. But some of us know what really happened:

He was some farmhand and she worked there in the summertime. He knew her because she cooked for all the help. He hung around the kitchen until she started to wash the dishes and then it was one, two, three ...

She was finally able to scream and the others had to pull him off her but it was too late. He must've really been ... You can't tell her son that his father was an idiot, can you? And you can't take a child away from his mother, can you?

I mean what's the good of having parents if we don't acknowledge them?...

The sins of the parents ...

Have you seen the body yet?

All that blood ...

My God, who would think that that would ever happen here?

Monday, January 17.

ge had crossed the street and Solly told him that his mother had left a few minutes before.

I threw her out, he said.

I don't want her in the store. She makes fun of me.

He removed his coat,

Do you have the pills, Warren? Is your wife sick? He gave the pa-

per had to him

She'll be better. He waited and said, Warren you can take the afternoon off. There won't be anyone else coming in.

Where can I go? I don't want to go home to an empty house,

Come over here, I'll show you something.

He went to him.

Do you want a girl? he asked softly. Stop talking like that.

I'm not joking, Warren, I could fix you up with a nice girl. But you've got to be able to come across.

I'll come across, he said eagerly, You'll really do the job?

Without waiting for an answer, he took a magazine from behind the cash register and opened it. He showed it to Warren.

A girl in a magazine? But, Solly-Solly's eyes grew larger.

Isn't she lovely? Doesn't she make

She's not wearing anything but long stockings and black boots.

Isn't she the greatest? Look at those fronts.

Come on, Solly, Put that book away.

I'd like to get my hands on those fronts, wouldn't you?

Put that book away ... Please.

You mean she gets to you, huh. It makes me feel funny, if that's what vou mean.

It should make you feel good, he said. It makes my day. I could look at this girl for hours. He put the book away. Just let me know when you want to borrow it.

Borrow what?

Borrow what? he repeated. What the Hell do you think I'm talking about? Soup? He opened the front door. Go on. Get home. I'll see you tomorrow.

He walked to the door,

Solly?

Now what? Do I have a heart?

Everyone has a heart.

Where's my heart?

Solly pointed, It's over there.

Warren felt the top of his body, I don't have a heart.

Yes, you do. He placed his hand over Warren's heart. It's where my heart is. He placed Warren's hand over

I feel something, said Warren,

A thum-thum is what you feel.
A thum-thum? he questioned. What's a

When you put your finger on this spot and you hear a thum-thum against that spot then your thum tells you you're alive .

How will I know when I'm not alive? When I'm dead, Warren.

The door was still open and Warren left, holding his hand over his heart. Thum-thum.

Thursday, January 20: Except from a filmed in-terview with William Johnson.

California.

Fliked Warren. He seemed pretty quiet the day of his death. I saw something was wrong when he came in that afternoon, I asked him if he had any personal problem, but he said he was okay. I sent him on an errand and he never returned. It was a small favor. I needed some stamps from the post office and Warren always bought stamps for me.

I gave him one dollar and told him to get some air-letter sheets.

I wish people would stop taking pictures.

Thursday, January 20: Excerpt from a filmed in-terview with Mary Gillespie.

Hate? Hate? Warren doesn't know hate.' It's not part of his vocabulary. He doesn't know how to hate. He doesn't know what hate is. Warren just knew love. Despite what everyone is saying about me, I really respected Warren. He was arrogant but he kept his point of view. He had love in his heart.

He was like that movie. Yes, he was like that sailor in that movie. What was the name of it? Don't tell me ...

I know: Warren was a regular Billy Budd.

Monday, January 17.

Evening: save for three corner barrooms that catered to the Negroes who worked in the steaming restaurant kitchens, the town, with its rooming house-yellow bulbs shining through the space between the withered windowshades and rotting windowsills, was at peace. Traffic lights clicked to a silent white street. Then the music from the bars chanted Dance and the dimes would clink into the slots and the neon blue signs would scream for happiness.

I'm ready to go to the movies with you, Warren.

I'm going alone.

She fumbled in her handbag.

Look, Warren. I have tickets too. He looked up from the soup. The soup from the store,

When did you get them?

Tony sold them to me this after-

Is that where you worked today? I only scrubbed the poster windows. Nobody even saw me. Tony had extra tickets for the contest and he sold them

tickets for the contest and he sold them to me. Maybe I'll win. Wouldn't it be wonderful if I won?

He thought of California.

No, it wouldn't.

Why not? I have as much right to the money as you.

You have no right at all. I don't

want you to win.

Suppose nobody wins. Then what? But he didn't want to hear that. Someone will win, It'll have to be me, I bought five tickets.

Well, Warren, I got five tickets this afternoon. And I was the last person. So mine will be on top.

You can't win that contest. I won't let you. Give me those tickets.

No, you can't have them. The tickets are mine. You can't have them.

He knocked the bowl of soup on the floor, the soup from the store, and advanced toward her.

He grabbed her arm and twisted it. She screamed in pain but Warren did not release her. They scream at each other, the two of them and the room.

He released her and ran toward the bedroom, emerging later with his red and white checked coat. She was bending over the table in obvious pain. She saw him and tried to grab her pocketbook which held the tickets. He turned it upside-down and shook the entire contents onto the floor. He fell on his hands and knees searching for the tickets.

He found some of the tickets and began ripping them in half. Eva tried to grab the remaining ones but he was too fast for her. He stepped on her arm, the same one he had just twisted. At his touch on her flesh, she dropped the tickets from her tight fist. He bent down and tore them up.

She got up from the floor as he was about to leave.

Where are you going, my contestwinner?

I'm leaving this house. I hate you.

I hate you for everything.

You think you're normal? You think they don't talk about you? You think they don't talk about you? You think they don't laugh at you behind your back? They stop me and say how smart! am and how sorry they feel for me because my son is stupid, stupid. They think I'm worth something. Me, the woman who cleans the toilets. After tonight, I want no part of you. I'll be free of you and your stupid ways. I'll be pure again. I'll be the same way I was before your idiot father found me in the kitchen. I'll throw you away like dirt.

titchen. I'll throw you away like dirt. Your father was dirt. They made no effort to find him. They just let him run wild. They don't care how much of his filth is spread. You're nothing but his filth. But that's over and done with. Mother and son it'll be. Saddle me with an idie did will her Saddle me.

an idiot child, will you, God?
The door slammed and she was

Go ahead. Run away all your life, baby. You'll come back. You'll always come back. This is the only life you know. Warren. You're like a dog, Warren. If you keep kicking a dog long enough, the dog will think that the kicks

are a form of love. And the dog will look forward to being kicked. He'll want to be kicked because the kicks will be the only attention he'll ever get. Nothing but kicks. And he will relish those wounds. I hope you die.

I won't pay full price if I can't see a full movie, she said to the woman at the box-office. I'm not paying for anything. You're out to get me because my son is stupid.

The next show starts in two hours if you care to wait.

She waited beneath the yellow and red neon lights in the freezing cold for a few minutes. The snow had started to fall again. First a few flakes. Then a few more. Within a matter of minutes the road had renewed its blanket of snow. The road she had started to walk upon towards her house.

The woman threw herself into the white blanket and spectacularly, with the black of night as her witness, rubbed her face in the white. It would cleanse her soul. It would clear her of the ungodly wrath of her son.

I'm free now, she said to the house. Free from your stupid ways. I'm all white. I can face everyone and throw you away. I'm tired of making excuses for you. Now people will not think of us as one. We are two now. Mother and son. Mother first, because I am smarter. That's how it will always be.

Thursday, January 20: Solly.

had to fire him. When you hire someone to work for you, you naturally expect that person to do his job. How much did that contest really mean to him? Did he really expect to win? I think he wanted to win very much. But then he came in late on Tuesday and I couldn't take it anymore. I called him over and told him he wasn't working for me anymore.

He just stood there and said nothing. I wanted some kind of reaction. A tear, A protest. Anything. I just wanted to scare him, to wake him into reality. But when he stood there and said nothing, I had to follow through with it and really let him go. You can't go back on your word, can you?

Later in the afternoon before I closed the store, I went to the back to clean up the butcher knives. That was one of my jobs. I rubbed them clean and put them back in their holder. I thought I had misplaced a long one...

Warren never cleaned them. He couldn't bear to look at them. In fact whenever I would tell him to hand one to me, he would cry. But when I fired him he asked if he could clean one of the knives.

I took the gesture as a sort of sacrifice. Yes, it was kind of a sacrifice. He was doing what he most hated to do. He thought it would please me...

At the end of the day, I went back to check on everything. One of the knives was missing. HE STOLE A KNIFE.

I would have hired him back the next day. In fact, I was going to ask him back. But to steal a knife! I wouldn't have taken any money from him. He was like my own son. He was Solly's Warren.

But I had to fire him for that Tuesday he was late. He had to atone for his sins. But that kid went and stole a knife. Why not money?

Tuesday, January 18.

Warren removed his coat. The long knife fell to the floor. He saw it and walked around it, fascinated by the shine it gave. He removed his shirt and ran his right hand along his left arm, searching for a suitable section to receive the first gash.

Then he bent down and picked up the knife. He moved very slowly, almost ritualistically. He turned his back to his mother's bedroom mirror and watched the steel pierce the flesh. He pushed the knife into his arm and then drew a red X across his chest.

He turned around and faced himself: red in the mirror's reflection. He remembered his heart and jabbed the knife straight through so that the point of the blade could be seen emerging behind him. His flesh was a red harvest as he fell forward.

The telephone rang. The ringing seemed louder, it disturbed the silence, it rang several times before Eva had opened the door and took down the receiver.

Hello? Hello? Who is this?...Solly?
I can't hear you. Don't get so excited.
Speak slower...Yes, I understand you
...What knife? She looked in the direction of her bedroom. The door was
closed. She continued to talk to Solly.

Who fired my son? Why? No, I didn't see him. I was out for the day. I had a house to clean. When he comes in, I'll tell him you phoned... You want to see him tomorrow, she repeated to be sure of the message. A raise in pay? Thank you. And thank you for my son.

She replaced the phone on the hook and removed her coat.

Warren? Warren, are you home? Come out and answer something. I know you're here.

There was no answer.

So what if you were fired, It's not the first time and it won't be the last. You know Solly likes you.

She hung her coat in the closet and continued to speak to the empty room.

I forgot all about last night, Warren. I won't laugh anymore at you. Let's go. I'll fix supper. What do you want?

She stood at the bedroom door and knocked.

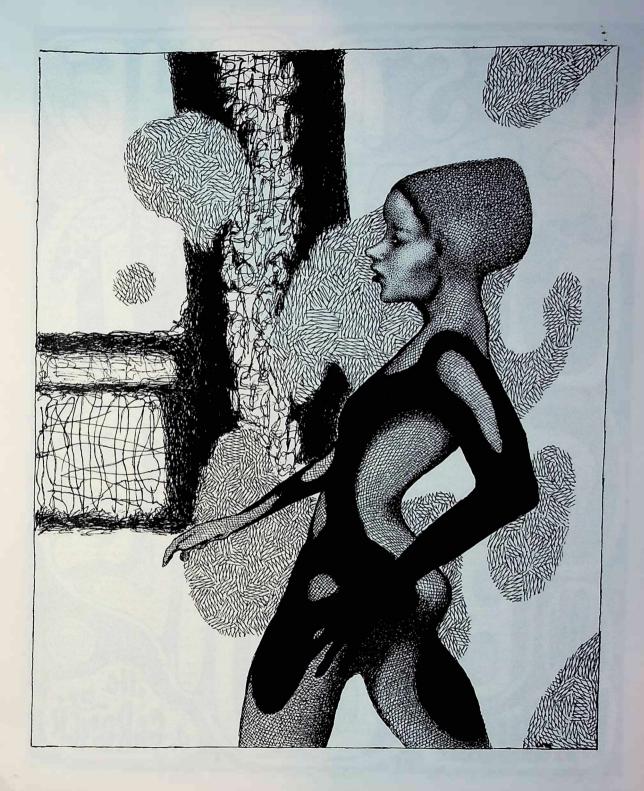
I said | promise not to laugh at you, Warren. Warren. WARREN?

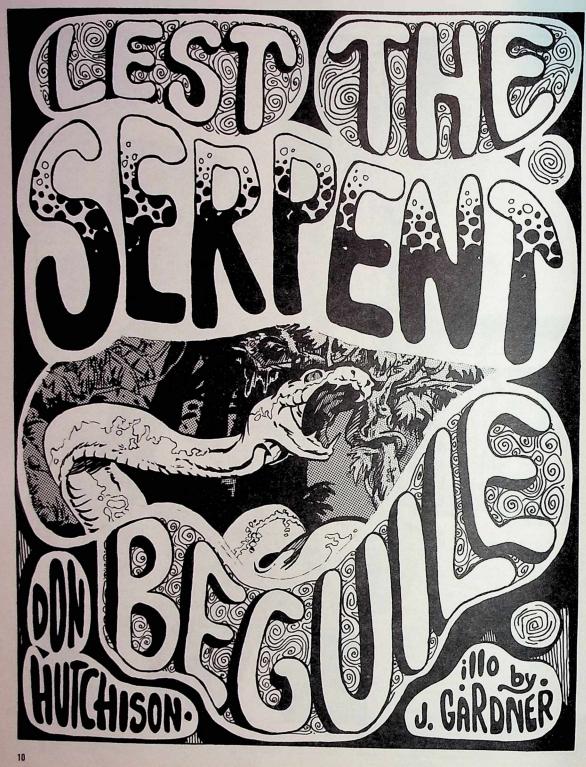
She threw open the bedroom door. The shades were drawn and her eyes fell immediately on the red and white mass on the floor. His eyes stared at her.

She ran her tongue across her lips and entered the room. She walked to the drawn shades and raised them. She raised the window. The light from outside hit directly at the knife in his chest.

Standing over the body she screamed, This is another one of your ways to get back at me!

She sat next to him and ran her hand across his face.





t didn't look like a trap. It looked like what it was: a second-class planet whirling around a yellow sun on the rim of nowhere. But it was a trap.

The trap sprung pain-sudden, racking pain. In the pain, a wave of in-

tolerable noise; then silence.

Ben Flint opened his eyes. Light flooded through the landing module's visiplate; not the blaze of the planet's sun, but a bottle-green effulgence. The ship lay on its side on the jungle floor. There were gashes in the belly where its air had gushed out.

With a start, Flint heard his wife's voice moan through the communicator in his headpiece. Turning, he saw her struggling dezedly in her twisted her-

ness.
"You OK?" he whispered.
There were Ketty nodded. There were bruises on her forehead, but she asked anxiously, "Is the ship badly damaged?"
"I'm afraid so."

"Oh, Ben!"

Flint leaned over and mimed a kiss through layers of plexiglass. "It could be worse, honey. We're still alive, and-" rucfully "-this place seems like home compared to all the worlds we've

"Yes, the jungle! When I saw that thing down there, I- What do you make of it?"

Flint began unhitching "Looks like a road," he said. "Some kind of path through the underbrush." Later, he helped her climb through the gash in the underside of the wrecked ship. A wall of foliage reared before

As if she had been reading his thoughts, Ketty said: "Why, it's lovely, Ben! The jungle all soft and green, the road twisting through it ... It reminds

Quite suddenly she opened her mouth in a silent scream.

There was a rustling shimmer on the jungle floor-a hissing scrape-and a long gliding Thing oozed into the clearing. It was thirty feet in length, as thick in the middle as a grown man.

Pushing Ketty aside, Flint grabbed at their laser rifle. He snickered the safety bolt. He stopped breathing. Maybe it hadn't seen them.

It had. The beast uncoiled and slithered toward them; in the glinty morning sun it looked like a rubber hose turned ugly. Squinting, Flint drew a bead. He knew the laser beam could kill it. One squeeze of the trigger and-

He blinked once. In that split-second the serpent disappeared.

Flint gasped. Waves of jungle heat shimmered insanely before his eyes. Where the creature had been was a chubby little man with florid cheeks and a wide smile. Despite his girth, the man strode toward them with a briskness that spoke of muscle. Flint's finger tensed on the trigger.

"No!" Ketty screamed, "Ben, don't shoot!"

"Give me one good reason why I shouldn't!"

"I'll give you a reason," the stran-

ger said, walking up. "My name's John Prosper. I'm a neighbor of yours."

"Neighbor?"

"Yes. My own ship crashed here some time ago." He motioned vaquely. "Back along that stretch of road." Then, as an afterthought: "Sorry if I frightened you. That was just a little trick of mine: luse it to frighten wild animals."

"Trick?" Flint was shouting. "What

kind of trick was that?"

Prosper smiled. He jiggled a pack off his back and dropped it at their boots. "You folks might as well climb out of those monkey suits, unhitch the fishbowls. The air's OK and there's a change of clothes in here."

"For God's sake. Now wait a minute!" Ben waved the rifle; he felt goose-bumps. They'd travelled so far, seen so many strange things. But this ... It was preposterous. He said so.

Prosper shrugged. "Funny, that's what all the others said ... at first."

"Others?"

The fat man nodded. "You don't think you're the only exploring spacers who ever crashed here? Every ship that tries to land crashes."

"But--"

"Something to do with the magnetic field," he explained hastily. "Now please. Climb into these clothes. You'll find them much more comfortable for the trip ahead."

Flint was breathing heavily. He pushed his gun at the man's ample bel-ly. "Mister," he said, speaking clearly, "we're not going on any trip. Not now, not ever, and especially not with you.

"What? Rubbish! Of course you are." "I repeat: we are staying right here, Our expedition recon ship orbits in twenty hours. We'll be here when it comes."

Prosper sighed. "Well, that's just fine," he said sarcastically. "That's excellent. You folks spend the night in the jungle. And tomorrow, when the other ship comes and crashes, they can give your bones a decent burial." He continued in a quieter voice, "But if you really value your hides you'll come with me-to Hannibal."

"Who's Hannibal?"

The little man clucked his tongue, "Friends, you do exasperate me," he said wearily. "I told you there were many of us. Hannibal's our town. I run a little establishment there." He flicked out a card; it read:

> WHISTLE STOP INN J. Prosper, prop.

Flint lowered the rifle; his mouth slacked open. "Ketty," he said, "pinch me. I know I'm still unconscious. dreaming."

But Ketty didn't move. Her eyes were shiny. "Ben," she whispered.
"A town." And then: "Where? How far?" Prosper grinned. "Not far, ma'am.

Five miles-ten. We can make it in a few hours."

He tossed her a shirt and a pair of trousers the color of plowed earth. "Slip these on. I'll turn my back."

They came to a high escarpment and looked out over tangled woods and winding streams that flashed in sunlight.

"The jungle ends here," Prosper declared. "Down there is Hannibal." He pointed to where the road wound down the cliff like string.

Flint was sweating. He felt uncomfortable in the clumsy trousers, the coarse shirt. Why? he demanded of himself. Why had they followed the odd little man? Even Flint wasn't sure. Perhaps it was the look in Ketty's eyes, the knowledge of what a town might mean to her after the long loneliness of

They had hiked steadily uphill for three hours, and there had been no signs of human life. Flint could not shake his memory of the snake-thing: the way it had slithered into their jungle clearing, and how, when he had it pinned to his rifle sights, it had turned into a plump, grinning earthman.

Query: which was bonafide-the little man...or the serpent? Heads or tails? He flipped an imaginary coin, It came up tails. The tails wiggled.

He hurried on.

Late afternoon. The sun stretched their shadows.

They came into a narrow meadow full of red and yellow flowers. The sky was azure, the air scented with growing things. A river trickled out of the forest, made a boomerang curve, then followed the twisting road down into the gentle valley.

Ketty's eyes sparkled with tears. Ben felt the blood singing in his veins, but he sensed a chill that wasn't in the air, and said quietly, "It just isn't possible. We orbited this whole planet. Why didn't we see -- ?"

He stopped in mute astonishment. Ahead, he saw a freshly-painted frame house. Further on, other dwellings poked from beneath oaks and elms: gabled, frescoed homes with high turrets and girdling porches; the kind of homes earthmen built when wood and land were plentiful.

Flint shut his eyes. He pinched himself. When he blinked his eyelids open, the town was still there. walked along its main street, passing homes and stores that drowsed in afternoon silence.

Prosper motioned to a large brown building with mullioned windows of colored glass. A sign rocked gently in the breeze:

WHISTLE-STOP INN

YOUR HOME AWAY FROM HOME

"Here we are," he said, grinning. He pushed the door open for them. Inside, several customers looked up as the bell clattered. They were all smiling, their faces plump, their cheeks like summer tomatoes. There was a smell of home-cooking in the place, and leather, and old, polished wood. But the customers seemed mute, their faces like smiling masks; and beneath the familier, homey odors there was something else again: the murky smell of deep jungles.

Prosper said, "I don't know about you good folks, but I'm bear-hungry.

What do you say we go eat?"

Flint looked at Ketty. "Uh-if it's all the same to you, I'd like to wash up."

"Oh, Ben, we don't have to—" She stopped as Flint tapped her ankle with his boot

Prosper grinned. "Bosh," he said.
"Nobody pretties up to eat in my place.
But if you really have to, there's a
washroom along the hallway. In the
meantime, your wife and I can go on
into the dining room. We'll meet you
there." Still smiling, he placed his hand
on Kety's elbow, guiding her.

Flint shivered. Watching Ketty and the stranger walk away, he felt suddenly cold; tired, vaguely ill, and very, very

cold.

Wearily, he pushed through the door marked GENTS. Inside, he turned and drew the bolt. He touched the locks on his trail bag and removed a camera the size of a cigarette lighter. He set the camera on the washbowl. He touched a button. Instantly, a wall began to tremble; it achromatized into a sun-like burst and then the jungle washed to life, complete in three-dimensional detail.

Flint squinted into the blaze of sunlight. There were two people on the trail ahead. Correction: there was only one person—Ketty. The other was a long, gliding Thing that cozed along beside her. It was thirty feet in length and the scales of its body glistened with the blue-black sheen of gun metal.

Flint clicked off the projector. His hands trembled. We saw a man, he thought, but the camera wasn't fooled, it saw the snake.

Inside the dining room, plump ladies with steamy faces bustled from the kitchen with dishes of hot soup, platters of roast meats, and mugs of scalding coffee.

Approaching the table, Flint looked straight at Ketty; her cheeks were flushed, her eyes shining. She was in animated conversation with the little innkepper.

As Flint sat down, Prosper glanced up and looked at him with a speculative glint in his eyes. He looked at Ketty and then back at Flint.

"Mind a suggestion?" he asked.

"Of course not."

"I was just thinking—remember that little house on the outskirts, the one we passed coming in? Old Dick Wilton used to live there. He got married last summer and built himself a bigger place out by the crosspoads."

Prosper licked his lips. His eyes glinted. "Ben, why don't you and Ketty move in? He wouldn't mind, and you'd be real comfortable there."

Flint shook his head. "Thank you,

"But why?"

Flint hesitated. "We still have a job to do," he said lamely. "When the ship comes tomorrow, we'll make repairs and try to get out of here."

"Oh, Ben, they don't need to find us," Ketty pleaded. "It's like paradise here. We could lose ourselves."

"That's right," Prosper said. "When your ship crashed your cord with earth was broken. Who's going to find you here? You could live like—"

"No."

"What? But why?"

Flint stared into the man's eyes. Words came back to him. Strange yet familiar words from a past that seemed as many years as miles removed...

Now the serpent was more subtle than any

beast of the field.

Groping in his mind, he sifted through the memory shards of a strict fundamentalist upbringing. Aloud he said, "It shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel."

"Beg pardon?"

"Nothing. I was just--"

"Ah, here we are," Prosper said as glasses of red wine were set before them. "Here's to pleasant times."

Flint picked up his glass. He was about to raise it to his lips when, reminded by his train of thought, he glanced at Ketty with a surprised expression. His mouth had been opened to say something and he snapped it shut.

"-so delicious," Ketty was saying.

"Like nothing I've ever-"

Hurriedly, Flint reached down and drew a marker from his trail bag. He printed on a napkin: DON'T DRINK OR EAT—ANYTHING. He underlined the 'anything', then folded the paper into squares and passed it beneath the table.

Ketty was talking to Prosper. Her face was perspiring and she kept moving her tongue across her lips.

She finished her wine.

She ate her salad.

Flint waited for her to open the note.

He waited another minute.
Then she unfolded the napkin, blotted her face with it, and let it drop

limply to the floor.

Ketty, he thought, Ketty, what is this that thou hast done?

The scrpent beguiled me, and I did eat.

The rest of the meal passed like a prolonged nightmare. Several times Flint refused food and each time Prosper insisted, until at last the earthman relented. When they had finished, the innkeeper rose wiping pink dessert from his chins.

"Your pardons," he said effusively,
"you folks have had a long, tiring day.
You must be ready for bed." He winked. "I'll show you to your room."

They scraped their chairs back and followed him up a flight of wooden stairs. He swung a door that opened into a room with flowered wallpaper and a tall, canopied bed. The room appeared homey enough but there was a strong smell of musk, of something moldy. Prosper crossed to the fireplace and puffed up a crackling fire.

"There," he said, grinning, the flames throwing his face into strong shadows. "In the evening, it turns cool here."

At the door he turned and said

goodnight, adding, "No need to stir from your room. There's a bell-pull beside your bed. If you need something, just ring." As soon as the door closed Flint turned and slid the inside bolt noiselessly.

Coming into his arms, Ketty said, "Ben, it's so charming here. Such a pleasant change after all those terrible worlds." She was smiling, but Flint saw the hunger in her eyes; beneath the hunger he saw something else-a hurt so deep that it would take a lot of joy to cover over. He thought bitterly: Ketty, what have I done to you? belong in a home with children and neighbors, not in some alien snare a thousand light-years from earth. For a moment he found himself speechless, but the moment passed, the realization was over, and he said quietly, "Don't, Ketty."

His hands on her arms were squeezing into fists; he knew they were hurting her, but her smile remained fixed. "Don't what, Ben?"

"Don't fool yourself. Don't let yourself be carried away by this. Ketty, I lied about wanting to wash up. I wanted to talk to you—alone. I wanted to warn you."

The smile was still on her face; a thin wispy thing like something started long ago and then forgotten.

Flint said, "This town, these people—they're all lies...illusions..." He stopped. Her look of pained astonishment made him tense.

"Oh, Ben...

He felt the weight of her body pulling. A shadow seemed to cross her face. He plunged on recklessly. "Ketty, don't you see? They've picked our brains, stolen our thoughts. They've built a card house out of a pack of dreams—our dreams—to use against us." He waved his arms at the wallpaper flowers. "I don't know how they do it—telepathy, hypnosis, suggestion—but I know it's a kind of crazy trap."

Ketty pushed against the wall. Tears were forming in her eyes. Awkwardly he stroked her hair, more to comfort himself than to help her. "Please, dear. I know how it's been. We're both spaceweary, home-hungry. But we have to be careful. Keep our eyes open. I know there's something wrong here. Something—"

"Let me alone. Go away. You and your feelings! You always have to go and ruin everything" And then: "Oh, Ben, I didn't mean it. It's just that—" She turned and sprawled on the bed, her face in the pillow, her shoulders shaking.

Flint leaned over and stroked the side of her head. He had proof of what he said, but he knew now that he dare not use it. He thought: She needs to believe in something simple—something earth-like and cozy—something like a little town and friendly neighbors. They've used that need to lure us here.

Then he asked himself the question to which he had no answer: Why?

Midnight. The lights of the town were all out, the streets black. The sky was a glitter of strange stars.

Inside their room there was only the sputter of the fire, the sound of a clock ticking. In the silence Ben moved in

stockinged feet toward the windows. He stood beside them, out of range of anyone or any Thing outside. Ketty was in the bed, the covers pulled up to her

Flint strained to hear. When he did hear, he wished he hadn't. Something out there, he thought. Under the eaves somewhere ... a sibilant rustling in blackness ... shadows lost in shadow ... Only an inch from the window latch, his hands trembled. His body was cold, his heart

Why? Why had they waited for nightfall? What did they plan to do? It was the waiting that unravelled his nerves,

the not knowing.

Again the sound, much closer now. Not yet, he told himself. He faced the windows, hands tightened on the laser rifle. He moistened his lips. Something brushed across the pane. Now...now...now.

He flung open the windows.

But only the wind soughed past him, kicking sparks from the fireplace. "What is it ...?" asked Ketty.

"Nothing. I thought-"

There

Listen!

The sound came again. It issued from another direction.

Standing motionless, he heard noises along the hallway-slitherings, heavy scrapings, bumps. Something's going to happen, he thought; they're preparing for something, waiting-

Ketty stared out over the bunched-up blankets. She had the stricken look of a fright-numbed person.

Ben," she whimpered. "I feel-

In the semi-darkness Flint saw the glint of her eyes, the shocking pallor of her face. He crossed toward her. She clutched his arms with the grip of a drowning swimmer. Her hands trembled; they felt like small vibrators.

"It'll be all right," he whispered.
"It'll be all right, Ketty, Just—"

"No! It's not that. I feel-"

"What? Are you sick?"

"I don't know. Yes, I do. Ben, I feel funny-like I've never felt before. I don't understand. ! -"

"There now," he said, easing her back. "Lie still, Ketty. Just lie and rest now."

He saw her eyelids close like weighted things. The house lay silent. Only the wind made noises; it tapped the panes and whispered down the chimney. Flint stoked the fire. Rifle in hand, he eased himself into the soft armchair.

The chair was comfortable—perhaps too comfortable—but he hesitated to stir for fear of waking Ketty. His throat was dry, his stomach queasy. He felt the burden of his own eyelids, the numbness of his mind. Perhaps they had both been poisoned, the corruptions stealing even now against their bodily defenses. But what could he do? Until Ketty felt better escape was impossible.

He found it difficult even to keep awake. Once or twice his jaw snapped as a flutter of alarm sounded in his mind. But gradually, imperceptibly, a wave of stupor drowned his thoughts. From somewhere, as if from a great distance, he imagined sounds of movement: writhings, stirrings, heavy rumblings. But he knew the door was bolted, the windows fastened. The fire was cozy, his chair so deep ...

He slept.

It seemed only a heart-beat later when he felt the touch of something soft. He jerked awake, his eyes straining into darkness. The room was black, the embers on the hearth not even

There was an odor in the room. A powerful, musky aroma. Outside, the sounds had become louder, bolder, There were heavy movements in the corridor, bumpings against the door.

Flint sat bolt upright, nerves taught,

heart hammering in his chest.

He remembered the gun. His hands were now empty but he had dozed clutching his rifle. In the darkness he groped for it wildly. He found it on the floor at his feet; but his relief was shattered by new scrabbling sounds outside the windows.

Even in darkness he knew that the room was blocked by a wall of twisting bodies-he knew it because he could hear them-and even in darkness he had the feeling that he was being watched. He was aware that something strange had happened in the room...some terrible, nameless change.

Quite suddenly he was out of his chair and moving blindly across the room. There was a trail bag beside the hearth. He should have thought of it before-his small lumitorch. Groping, he found it. He pointed the lamp and pressed the button. The light bounced crazily off the dresser mirror.

His mind reeled. For seconds he stared without moving except to tighten his grip on the rifle. His fingers were numb, his palms soaked with perspira-

Even as he stared the dark patterns in the mirror shifted and changed, writhing like shadows cast by a moving light. Then the rifle dropped from his rapidly mutating hands. Something moved behind him-a slithering sound.

"Ketty?" he whimpered.

When the reconnaissance ship came knifing down out of the blue sky it went into a prompt axial spin, did several flips, then crashed. A hatch popped open, the crewmen tumbled out. They gulped clean air. They patted the long

Quite suddenly one of them pointed. 'My God, look at that!"

With a clatter the men unholstered their pistols. One of them let out a long, clean whistle. He said: "What are they?"

"Damned if I know."

"Looks like snakes." "Yes, two snakes as big as sewer pipes!"

Long seconds passed. The earthmen's fingers trembled on their triggers but still they didn't fire. Then-as if in concert-they drew their breath in a long organ sigh. They stood there, jaws unhinged, arms slack, their pistols dropping numbly from their finger-

The air trembled.

The sun beat down.

Smiling, the man and the woman walked through the green grass toward them.

Isolated. From life and death, In a capsule, Under the sea. As legend goes, As time's scar shows, He's been there all eternity. The oldest man alive. If his breathing hadn't stopped, His mind hadn't dropped. The secret of perpetual time,

Of immortal life, Or etemal death. Would he step out. To a long awaited journey. A journey into life, Or remain in the floating

tomb? The oldest form of man emerged,

In a silken tent. His tent of life. His cover from the outside world.

The tent disengaged. Uncovering his body, The body of an ape, The mind of man. The secret of all eternity, Locked in his brain. With a key not yet discovered.

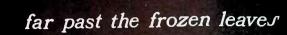






ancient empty streets too dead for dreamin'

the foggy ruins of time



yes to dance beneath the diamond sky...





Double, Double, Toil & Trouble

ohn, there's a very important matter come up, and I'm afraid you'll have to handle it personally. No one else is able to make any headway with it,"

The Mayor of New York looked up from a cluttered desk as his principal henchman, Bob Hench, entered his office. "Can't it wait, Bob? This strike threat is going to turn the city upside down unless we get it settled now."

"Which strike threat? The nurses, the librarians, the ferryboat captains, the cab drivers, the teachers, or the newspapers?"

"None of them. But three hundred priests have organized and are threatening to walk out unless the Archbishop cancels 6 A.M. masses."

"Well, I've got everyone here in the waiting room." Hench replied, "and they all insist that this has to be settled now. "All right," the Mayor sighed.

Hench opened the door, and eight men filed in and took seats. The first was a short, grim-faced Negro in a black turban and robe. Next came a man whom the Mayor recognized vaquely as a leader of the Reform Democrats. He was followed by the voluble young conservative Bill Buckboard, editor of National Reaction who had run against the Mayor on the Reactionary Party ticket in the last election. Next came a short. bald man chewing nervously on a cigar stub. He was followed by what appeared to be two sets of twins; a pair of tall, handsome blond youths and two wiry young Negroes. These last two were the only ones of the newcomers who looked at all relaxed; they made an elaborate show of deferring to each other until the bald man grabbed them and hauled them through the door together.

"Mr. Mayor," said Hench, "I'd like you to meet Mr. Elixah Mohamfed of the Xu Xlux Xlan, Mr. Franklin Roosevelt Schwartz of the Americans for Mildly Liberal Action-Mr. Buckboard you already know-"

Yes, indeed," said Buckboard. showing the most artificial smile outside the "Hullabaloo" show, "Why, we were at Yale together."

The Mayor indeed remembered Bill Buckboard from Yale, Buckboard had been a freshman during his own senior year, and had achieved campus-wide notoriety as a loud-mouthed professor-They still told how he had held up a history lecture for thirty-five minutes trying to persuade the instructor that the Protestant Reformation was part of the same historical movement as the Russian Revolution. The succeeding years had given him a better debating and writing style, but had not changed his basic character.

"And this gentleman," Hench continued, indicating the bald man, "is Mr.

Garrick Burbage, who is a director in the Central Park Shakespeare Theater."

"Garrick Burhage?" Buckboard asked languidly. "Surely, are we expected to believe that?"

"Okay, so it was originally Gershon Bernstein! Burbace snapped. "You want to make a federal case out of it?"

"Perhaps Mr. Burbage should introduce our other quests," Hench continued

"Certainly, Mr. Mayor," the director replied, "I'd like you to meet Paul and Stanley Oswiak, and Jerry and Larry Singletary."

"No, he's Jerry and I'm Larry,"

one of the Negroes said.

"I'm Jerry? I thought you were Jerry." the other returned.

"No, you put on my shirt this morning." Larry said.

"Boys, please, stop the clowning," Burbage groaned. "This is a serious huginess

"Mr. Mayor, | protest!" Mohamfed shouted, "This Burbage called these black men 'boys'."

"That's what this whole business is about " Hench said hastily, before Burbage could reply. "Suppose you explain, Mr. Burbage."

The director spread his hands. "Mr. Mayor, I've been with the non-professional stage since the Federal Theater Project thirty years ago. I've played or directed Jonson, Congreve, Ibsen, Shaw, and Becket, But, first and foremost, I'm a Shakespeare man, I've been with the Central Park Shakespeare Theater for five years, and I'm sure you've seen some of my productions."

"Certainly," the Mayor said, relieved to find a familiar point of reference in the confusion. "Didn't you direct Richard II last year? My wife and I enjoyed it very much."

"Thank you, Mr. Mayor. Now the problem is this. Next summer we're going to do The Comedy of Errors. So when I sent out the casting call-- "

"That's the play where these two pairs of twins keep confusing each other and everyone else." The Mayor looked at the two pairs of men. "I see, Mr. Burbage, But why-

"This is why," continued Burbage. "Shakespeare wrote The Comedy of Errors in the early 1590's. It's been a good, solid favorite ever since. But, to the best of my knowledge, Mr. Mayor, it has never been presented with two pairs of real twins in the roles of the Antipholus brothers and the Dromio brothers. Once, in the 19th century, it was staged in England with one set of twins. But never two. Never.

"So I issue the casting call. And look who comes in!" He waved his cigar at the Oswiaks and the Singletarys. At first I don't get my hopes up. Maybe, I says to myself, I've got two pairs of duds on my hands.

"So I give them the parts. Can

they act? It seems these Oswiak boys have been acting in C.Y.O. shows since they were nine. And Jerry and Larry are always acting, whether you want them to or not. So I cast Paul and Stan as the Antipholus brothers, and Jerry and Larry as the Dromios."

"This is extremely interesting." the Mayor said slowly, "and it should make a good show, if they're as good as you say. But why bring it to me?"

"I'll tell you why, Mr. Mayor," Mohamfed said, "I've read the play, The part they want to give these two black men is a servant's part-or two servente listen to this." He drew a piece

of paper from his pocket and read aloud: "That very hour, and in the selfgame inn

A meaner woman was delivered Of such a burden, male twins, both

alike. Those -for their parents were exceedingly poor . -

I bought, and brought up to attend my sons.

"Slavery, Mr. Mayor," he condluded. "If this play goes on with these two black men in the Dromio roles, ten thousand members of the Xu Xlux Xlan will picket the Central Park Shakespeare Theater."

"The Xu Xlux Xlan-" the Mayor

"No, Mr. Mayor. The 'X' sound is the click in our ancestral Bantu language. The Xu Xlux Xlan-or X.X.X. as we call ourselves for short—is dedicated to recovering for the black man his original African heritage. I refer you to our weekly newspaper, Mohamfed Xnears.

"Really, Mr. Mayor," said Buckboard, "there is no need for all this turmoil. I can refer you to any number of commentaries on The Comedy of Errors which will assure you that Dromio should be played as white. The Dromios, and for that matter the Antipholoi-"

"Antipholusses?" suggested Burbage. "The proper Greek plural of this Hellenic name would be 'Antipholoi', " Buckboard replied condescendingly. "As I was saving, the principal characters of this play are represented as being Syracusan, from Sicily. It would therefore be contrary to the intent of Shakespeare to portray them as Nigras. If these boys go on as the Dromios, I can assure you that the Central Park Shakespeare Theater will be picketed by the Reactionary Party, the Young Americans for Feudalism, the Intercollegiate Phalanx of Individualists, and the John Booth Society!"

"Which amounts to nine people," Schwartz said laconically.

"Furthermore," Buckboard went on, "altogether too many Nigras have already appeared in the Central Park Shakespeare Theater. There are only two Nigra roles in all of Shakespeare -Othello, which shows the folly of interracial marriage, and Aaron in Titus Andreweus, which develops in the Bard's own inimitable fashion the basic savage-

ry of the Nigra race."

Mohamfed, Schwartz, and Burbage all burst out talking at once. While they shouled at one another, Jerry leaped to Larry's shoulder and prodded Stan's

Looks like a nice healthy one!" houted, "How about a rib roast for tonight?"

Carry slapped Stan's buttocks. "Too stringy," he replied. "How about e haunch from that well-fed Yalie?"

shall break that merry sconce of

That stands on tricks when I am

mdispos'd," Stan responded. Did you hear that?" Mohamfed said.

the threatened them!" I's a line from the play, you Phil-

Burbage rejoined.

"m not a Philistine!" Mohamfed and indignantly. "It can be shown, by proper study of the Bible, that the Philwere whites who persecuted the

black people of Israel."

"Mr. Mayor," Buckboard said uncwously, "I think we've seen quite enough. if these savages show so few manners in this office, they cannot be trusted to de justice to the immortal words of the Pard. If Mr. -ah-Burbage wishes to Nigras in his play, certainly he as stevedores."

We'll carry the case to the Supreme Court if Negroes are excluded from lead "Schwartz protested. "Mr. Mayor, is his manner I represent the Americans to Mildly Liberal Action, the John Kennoiv-Robert Kennedy-Edward Ken-Reform Democrat Club, and the League to Defend the Civil Liberties of Non-Controversial Persons. Three year's ago we discussed this matter with Mr. Burbage, and got him to cast a Negro as a soldier in the army of Hen-

"In 15th-century England!" Buckboard scoffed. "Were you also respon-

sible for the Nigra Macbeth last year?"
"The theater is universal," said Schwartz. "It knows no color, no re-

"No coherence, no sense, and no history, if you have your way," Buckboard snapped back.

"We will not permit black slavery to come to Central Park!" Mohamfed said. "Too often black actors have been given servile roles. The American theater-goer thinks of black men as clowns, servants, or loafers. The X. X.X. wants black actors given lead rolus-not the parts of slaves."

Jerry raised Larry's arm. "What um I bid, lay-dees and gentleman, for this strong and willing boy? He will pick cotton, shoe horses, stand at stud for all your wenches, and he'p your wife move the piano while all the white

gemp'muns are gone to town."
Paul fell into the act, "Cunnel Wo'thingham, does yo'-all think that black boy is wo'th a thousand dollahs?"

"Ah'll bid eight hundred," Stan said. "Eight hundred-eight hundred-do I hear nine hundred?" Jerry shouted.
"Nine hundred," Paul said.

"Boys, please," Burbage said.

They subsided, slowly, while the May-or took an aspirin and Mohamfed tried to sell Schwartz a copy of Mohamfed

"Mr. Mayor," Burbage went on, "I appeal to you as a fellow-lover of Shakespeare. For the first time in almost four hundred years, two real pairs of twins will be cast in The Comedy of Errors. The Central Park Shakespeare Theater will make theatrical history. Don't let these two-bit politicians mess it up."

"Perhaps we can reach an agree-ment on this," Mohamfed said. "The X.X.X. wishes to put black actors in lead roles, rather than servile ones. Now if these two white actors took the Dromio roles, and the Singletary brothers played the Antipholus parts-"

"Look at them!" Burbage exploded. "The Dromios are clowns. Jerry and Larry Singletary are the finest pair of natural clowns I've seen in thirty years. The Antipholoi —" he sneered at Buckboard "-are wealthy merchants, solid citizens. Stan and Paul are ideal for the roles."

"I have an idea!" said Schwartz. "It would be a compromise that we could all get together on, without going to either extreme." The others quieted. "Now if we cast one white and one Negro as the Antipholus brothers, and one white and one Negro as the Dromios--"

Chaos reigned. Buckboard began to quote something in Italian from Ezra Pound. Mohamfed leaped from his seat and threw fifteen copies of Mohamfed Xpeaxs into the air, Burbage sprang for Schwartz's throat and had to be restrained by Hench and the Oswiaks, and the Singletarys began to play the scene between Hamlet and Osric in the last act of Hamles.

"-'tis very cold; the wind is northerly."

"But yet methinks it is very sultry and hot for my complexion.

"Exceedingly, my lord; it is very sultry, as 'twere, I cannot tell how.' "How about this plan?" Larry said,

breaking up the scene. "We put on

"But there's only one Negro part in Othella "

"No, we do it in blackface, it takes place in medieval Ghana, and all the players are Negroes except for the hero, who is an Irish mercenary named Patrick Michael O'Thello!"

"A foine broth of a boy!"

"Especially when they make soup out of him in the last scene!"

While the others shouted at each other, Burbage broke loose from the fray and rounded up his actors. "Look, boys," he whispered. "For two years I've had a standing offer from the Stratford Theater."

"Connecticut?" "Ontario?" Paul and Stan asked simultaneously.

"England!" Burbage said. "You four come with me and we'll give them a Comedy of Errors that'll knock their eyes

The last thing they saw as they tiptoed out of the office was Mohamfed threatening a Xu Xlux Xlan picket line entirely around Central Park, while Buckboard tried to sell Schwartz a copy of National Reaction.

Poul Anderson's

the **BROKEN** SWORD

PART 2

adaptation by Tom Reamy ART BY GEORGE BARR



THE NOVEL COPYRIGHT 1954 BY POUL ANDERSON



FOR NINE HUNDRED YEARS THE TROLL-WOMAN HAD BEEN IMRIC'S CAPTIVE, AND SHE WASMAD



















QUICKLY, BECAUSE HE LIKED NOT THE SLIPPY CLAMMY COLD OF HER FLESH, IMRIC DID WHAT WAS NEEDFUL.



HE WALKED NINE TIMES WIDERSHINS ABOUT HER, SINGING A SONG NO HUMAN THROAT COULD HAVE FORMED, A SONG WHICH CERTAIN BEINGS HAD SUNG ONCE, SHAMBLING ABOUT A STRANGELY CARVED MONOLITH, TO BRING FORTH THE FRUITS OF A QUAKING STEAMY WORLD.



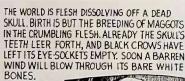










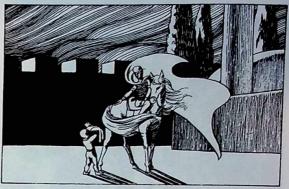




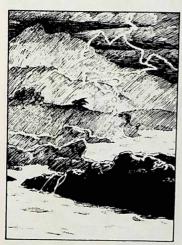
HE IS WAITING FOR ME, HE IS WAITING ON THE HILL WHERE THE MIST BLOWS RAGGED ON THE WIND, FOR NINE HUNDRED YEARS HAS HE WAITED. THE BLACK COCK CROWS....





















SHE COULD NOT SEE IN THAT TER-RIBLE FLARE AND THE THUNDER THAT WENT WITH IT WAS LIKE A HAMMER BLOW.

BUT SHE FELT THE BABY FALL FROM HER ARMS. SHE SNATCHED FOR HIM AND THEN FELT THE DEAR WEIGHT AGAIN AS IF IT HAD BEEN LAID THERE.





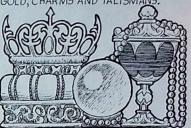


CHILD, AND GAVE HIM TO HIS SISTER LEEA TO NURSE. SHE WAS AS BEAUTIFUL AS HER BROTHER AND WHEN SHE DANCED IN THE MOONLIGHT IT WAS AS A RIPPLE OF LIGHT AND MADNESS TO THOSE WHO WATCHED. SHE SMILED AT SKAFLOC WITH PALE FULL LIPS, AND HER MILK WAS SWEET FIRE IN HIS MOUTH AND VEINS.

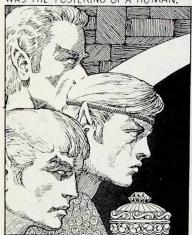




ANY GREAT LORDS OF ALFHEIM
CAME TO THE NAMING OF THE CHILD,
AND THEY BROUGHT GOODLY GIFTS:
CUNNINGLY WROUGHT GOBLETS AND RINGS,
DWARF - FORGED SWORDS AND AXES,
BYRNIES AND HELMS AND SHIELDS, GARMENTS OF SILK AND SATIN AND CLOTH-OFGOLD, CHARMS AND TALISMANS.



SINCE ELVES, LIKE GODS AND GIANTS AND TROLLS AND OTHERS OF THAT SORT, KNOW NOT OLD AGE, THEY HAD FEW CHILDREN, PERHAPS CENTURIES APART, AND THE BIRTH OF ONE WAS A GREAT EVENT; STILL MORE PORTENTOUS TO ELVES WAS THE FOSTERING OF A HUMAN.







ASTHE FEAST WAS IN PROGRESS, THERE CAME ATREMENDOUS CLATTER OF HOOFS OUTSIDE ELFHEUGH, UNTILL THE WALLS TREMBLED AND THE BRAZEN GATES SANG IN ANSWER.









I BEAR A NAMING-GIFT FOR YOUR FOSTER-SON, IMRIC. GUARD WELL THIS GLAIVE, AND WHEN HE IS OLD ENOUGH TO SWING IT TELL HIM THE GIANT BÖLVERK WHO FORGED IT CAN MAKE IT WHOLE AGAIN. THE DAY WILL COME WHEN SKAFLOC STANDS IN SORE NEED OF A GOOD BLADE, AND THIS IS THE AESIR'S GIFT AGAINST THAT TIME.







NONE OF THE ELVES COULD TOUCH IRON, BUT IMRIC SHOUTED FOR HIS DWARF THRALLS AND HAD THEM PICK UP THE OLD WEAPON. UNDER HIS DIRECTION THEY BORE IT DOWN TO THE INMOST DUNGEONS AND WALLED IT INTO A NICHE NEAR GORA'S LONELY CELL. IMRIC WARDED THE SPOT WITH RUME SIGNS, AND THEN LEFT IT AND AVOIDED THE PLACE FOR A LONG TIME.



NOW SOME YEAR'S WEN'T BY AND NAUGHT WAS HEARD FROM THE GODS, SKAFLOC GREW APACE, AND A BONNY BOY HE WAS, BIG AND GAY, WITH GREAT BLUE EYES, AND HAIR LIKE SPUN GOLD IN THE SUNSHINE. HE WAS NOISIERTHAN THE ELF CHILDREN, AND GREW SO MUCH SWIFTER THAT HE WAS A MAN WHEN THEY WERE STILL UNCHANGED.



IT WAS NOT THE WAY OF THE ELVES TO SHOW O'ER-MUCH FONDNESS FOR THEIR YOUNG, BUT LEEA OFTEN MADE MUCH OF SKAFLOC, SINGING HIM TO SLEEP WITH WILD ANCIENT LAYS THAT WERE VOICES OF SEA AND WIND AND SOUGHING FOREST.



SHE TAUGHT HIM THE COURTLY MANNERS



.... AND ALSO THEIR CORYBANTIC DANCES WHEN THEY WERE OUT IN THE NIGHT, BAREFOOT IN THE DEW AND DRUNK WITH STREAMING MOONLIGHT.



MUCH OF WHAT WIZARD KNOWLEDGE HE HAD CAME FROM HER, SONGS WHICH COULD BLIND AND DAZZLE AND ENCHANT, SONGS WHICH THE ROCKS AND TREES SANG BACK IN SHIVERING ECHOES, SONGS WITHOUT VOICE TO WHICH THE AURORAS DANCED ON WINTER NIGHTS.



THERE WERE SPRITES DANCING AND WHIRLING IN THE RAIN BOWED MISTS ABOUT CATARACTS TUMBLING INTO THE DELLS. MUCH COULD THE SPRITES TELL, OF FLOWING RIVERS AND THE QUICK SILVERY GLEAM OF FISH IN THEM, OF THE FROG AND OTTER AND THE KINGFISHER AND WHAT THOSE HAD TO SAY TO EACH OTHER, OF SUNLIT PEBBLY BOTTOMS AND OF SECRET PLACES WHERE THE WATER WAS STILL AND GREEN AND ALIVE WITH PRESENCES.



THERE WERE A FEW GOBLINS ABOUT. ONCE THEY HAD BEEN POWERFUL IN THE LAND, BUT IMRIC HAD ENTERED WITH FIRE AND SWORD AND THOSE WHO HAD NOT BEEN SLAIN OR DRIVEN OUT HAD BEEN BROKEN OF THEIR MIGHT. THEY WERE FURTIVE CAVE DWELLERS NOW, BUT SKAFLOC MANAGED TO BEFRIEND ONE AND FROM HAD COLUMN ACCURATE.



ONCE THE BOY HEARD A PIPING FAR OFF IN THE FOREST, AND HE THRILLED TO ITS EERIE ENCHANTAIENT AND HASTENED THROUGH THE TWILLT TREES TO THE GLEN FROM WHICH IT

OTHER WATERY PLACES THERE WERE FROM WHICH SKAFLOC WAS WARNED AWAY, CERTAIN QUAKING BOGS AND SILENT DARK TARNS FOR THE DWELLERS THERE WERE NOT GOOD.



WHILE YET A CHILD, SKAFLOC HAD A MERRY TIME. MANY WERE THE PRESENCES HAUNTING THE HILLS AND GLENS OF THAT WILD LAND; IT WAS A PLACE OF SORCERY AND THE MEN AND BEASTS WHO WANDERED INTO IT ARRELY RETURNED. NOT ALL THE DWELLERS WERE SAFE OR FRIENDLY, BUT IMRIC ALWAYS HAD SOME WARRIOR OF HIS GUARD FOLLOWING SKAFLOC ABOUT.



OFTEN HE WOULD BE OUT IN THE FOREST TO SPEAK WITH THE LITTLE OLD FOLK WHO LIVED THERE, THE HUMBLE GNOMES AND BROWNIES. THEY WIRE GLAD TO SEE THE ELF CHILDREN, BUT THEY FEARED THE GROWN ELVES, AND THOUGHT IT WELL THAT THEY WERE SO SMALL NONE OF THESE COURSE HE HAD SHRUNK TO THEIR SIZE, WHICH NONE OF THE HAUGHTY ELF LORDS CARED TO DO.











I CAME FROM THE LANDS OF THE SOUTH, AFTER GREAT PAN WAS DEAD AND THE NEW GOD WHOSE NAME I CANNOT SPEAK WAS COME TO HELLAS. THERE WAS NO MORE PLACE FOR THE OLD GODS AND THE OLD BEINGS WHO HAUNTED THE LAND. THE PRIESTS CUT DOWN THE SACRED GROVE AND BUILT A CHURCH --- OH, I REMEMBER THE DRYADS' SCREAMS QUIVERING VOICELESS IN THE STILL, HOT AIR AND SEEMING TO HANG THERE FOREVER. THEY RING YET IN MY EARS THEY ALWAYS WILL.



I FLED NORTH, BUT I WONDER IF THOSE OF MY ANCIENT COMRADES WHO STAYED AND FOUGHT AND WERE SLAIN WITH EXORCISMS WERE NOT WISER, LONG AND LONG HAS IT BEEN, ELF-BOY, AND LONLIER THAN IT WAS LONG.



THE NYMPHS AND THE FAUNS AND THE VERY GODS ARE DEAD, DUST BLOWING ON DESOLATE WINDS THE TEMPLES STANDEMPTY, WHITE UNDER THE SKY, AND SLOWLY THEY TOPPLE TO RUIN. AND I, I WANDER ALONE IN A FOREIGN LAND, SCORNED BY ITS GODS AND SHUNNED BY ITS PEOPLE. IT IS A LAND OF MIST AND RAIN AND SOUL-FREEZING IRON WINTERS, ANGRY GREY SEAS AND SAPPHIRE OCEAN, CREAMY WHITE IN ITS GENTLE SWELLS, NO MORE OF THE LITTLE ROCKY ISLANDS AND THE DEAR WARM GROVES WHERE THE WHITE NYMPHS WAITED FOR US, NO MORE OF GRAPES HANG-ING FROM ANCIENT VINES AND FIG-TREES HEAVY WITH FRUIT, NO MORE OF THE STATELY GODS ON HIGH OLYMPUS -





SKAFLOC LUCKED AROUND AND SAW THE ELF-GUARD APPROACHING TO TAKE HIM HOME



TO BE CONTINUED

SOCIETY & FANDOM by Stephen Pickering

andom, particularly that au-dacious, neuscating group of naivete known as "fannish" fandom, often is intolerable. One must wade through the cataleptic headache powders of Ben Solon in order to find powders of Ben Solon in order to find an article of note in Niztas. The syrupy supernaturalism of Al Andrews' Iscand obscures the fact that free-thought publications do appear, however infrequently. And the above two examples incessantly assure one that one's blood pressure will not be elevated, nor one's colon agitated, or a large term and the solon are sure to find a series of the solon are sure to find a series of the series of t

sure will not be elevated, nor one's do-lon agitated, or, as is more prevalent, one's intellectual capacities or social conscience activated.

However, there are basically two types of society in fandom. One would think there were more, and would point think there were not to the various religious groups which occasionally proliferate through fan magazines, the many political organisations, etc. Howards, O' occasionally differential occasionation bytes of easily differential and industrial, according to Herbert Spencer's definitions; a society beaution southers that an order status, according to Sin Henry Maine: Fendinand Tonnies extrapolated fendinship (community) from festiliship (coinciple); the French anthropologist-sociologist, Emile Durkheim stressed sociologist, Emile Durkheim stressed sociologist, chies based upon mechanical additionary Describ segments") of terminated o There is the state of the state Robert Redfield uses the ideasofarals

And yet, none of the above-cited exemptor will explicitly define an open of the collection of the col sociclesy, we would list such ode-gorite ion the ideal type, i.e., in which hoursite concests which allow one to

heur the concepts which allow one to query into selevance. As corone ife-tioneary, by focusing one's attention upon particular facets of a given phenomenon. Like most political philosophies, ideal groups in fandom are, basically, endeavoring to say the same philosophy—the only differences being the ways in which one says something, and appeal to the same cultural and social backgrounds. Hence, in sociology, we find the terms communal and associational socialise, and can be extrapolated in fandom's thought to entail social relationships, role and status applications, social organization, social groups, and institutions.

Communal fan societies are relatively common; they may represent conservative elements, i.e., those groups which are governed by a carefully nurtured system of custom. This behaviourial pattern, moreover, extends itself into the way one is expected to write, how one is expected to "think," etc., in efforts to insure a comfortable, familiar

groove. Unwritten-laws-e.g., the fierce anti-intellectualism existent in most fannish groups-eradicate the need for formal, stated laws. Such laws are hardly necessary: the contents of the megazines reflect the fans' anti-intellectual sentiments. However, in a communal society, one is "not a sort of automaton in which custom is the main-spring... Within the limits set by custom there is invitation to excell in performthere is invitation to excell in performance. There is lively competition, a sense of opportunity, and a feeling that what the culture moves one to do is well worth doing" (Robert Redfield, "The Folk Society," in William Kolb's Society and Analysis, Harcourt 1949, page

Thus, we could say that the com-munal fan society will, often, vehemently reject change or innovation; each "gen-eration" of fans will, thus, pass care-fully nurtured codes of behaviour on to the next. (Some may be lost—e.g., the fluctuations of interest in sociological

solidated, however, with standards taking the place of any carefully defined obligatory role.

To receptulate, then, we can say that fan societies based upon communal relationships are, in turn, based on tradition. Any patterns of behaviour possible in this matrix are limited by this tradition. Social roles are inclusive, and relationships more personal. And, to quote one sociologist, a communal society is "small, isolated... and homogenuous, with a strong sense of group solidarity." (In large communal societies, nonliteracy is a factor, but since fannish fans can, one would assume, read and precariously manage to "write," then one would have to say that nonintellectualism is the important factor in fan communal societies.)

Sercon societies are not particularly communal as they are associational although, like any other group, variations among members exist. And sercon magazines, being more mature, epitomise the associational intellectual. Here tradition, time and again in one's

Here tradition, time and again in one's

culture, has been incessently eradicated; and any uniformity of thought, is replaced with infinite variety of thought. replaced with infinite variety of nought.

Rew beliefs, values, or standards of
basic behaviour are universally conformed to, and even within these diffusion and acculturation have weakened
the norms prevalent among the mores.

the norms prevalent among the mores. In other words, change is repid, often sanctioned. The fannish society is closely organised in its manifestations of anti-intellectualism, etc., but the more mature sercon society, being associational, is loosely constructed and exticulated—a virility is created.

Whatever benefits the clerics of fannish fandom cleim to have, as a sociologist this writer can ascertain, that though sencon fandom does not have a cohesiveness, it does have advantages. Religious fanalicism, so prevalent among magazines of middle-class editors (religion may be an insignificant mong magazines of middle-class edi-tors (religion may be an insignificant discussion point—if discussion is the word for worthless trash—but such statement is not necessary: religious fanaticism can be clinically discerned and analyzed), is relegated among ser-

statement is not necessary: religious fanaticism can be clinically discerned and analysed), is relegated among sercon magazines to its correct position analogous to mythical promulgations and thical standards. Social roles are never delegated to certain individuals, but are always proliferated throughout the vast structure of a society. And such social structure, one must understand, is much more complex than that of the fannish world: its virtually what we sociologists would call a "metropolis" in structure and function. For example, in the social structure, a sercon fan can be a writer of Catholic, Jewish, or Moslem (i.e., loosely Zen etc.), with no direct relevance to what one writes, with minor exceptions. Hence, social relationships—"fun," beer, etc.—are merely superficial, of the associational sercon world. Individuals in a science fiction setting associate for limited purposes—"limited" is an extremely tenuous adjective, but hardly as maudin as the "purposes" of the fannish world. To use an analogy, we shall quote a sociologist, Robin Williams, from American Society (Knopf, 1951): "The prototype is the narrowly contractual relation of buyer and seller in an open market exchange transaction, in which everything is formally irrelevant to the relation except considerations of price, quantity, and quality of the goods being exchanged. The rights and obligations of the parties are specific occasion—and the establishment of any particular associational relation does not important, save merely as the advancing foundations of ideas, the ends to which they can bring one to. Hence, in an intellectual relationship in sercon fandom, emotionalism is tempered with the strong, meturity of primary relationships based upon the scientific method of sociological science-fiction.



nce uponce a time an imaginative fellow served out a dull tour with British intelligence in War Two, during the course of which he lost his—he lost badly in a gambling casino. After the war he attempted to get even and recoup his self-respect by writing a novel about a very unsecret superspy who

played a baddy for big money and won money, girl, and a set of flogged testicles. The superspy, a professional murderer and lover, possessed a hokey license to kill (which any corner flatfoot has, really), along with other hokum. The first girl set the pace for others bearing Kerry Drake names; hers was Vesper. The novel was ended bitter-sweetly with the girl's death and a homosexually-oriented last line just in case a sequel could be sold.

A friend with a publishing connection read the novel, advised that it would sell, and further advised the writer to begin another one at once, lest he be discouraged when the critics destroyed him.

The writer did. The first novel was published, then the second. The critics wrote their Killers. They did not destroy it, of course; they hadn't the power.

The novel and several sequels knocked around several years, selling pretty well. Every time the writer underwent a new experience or visited a new place, place and experience found their way into a new novel, with fascinating results. Realism existed paradoxically amid nonsense. Then an apotheosized colonial leader happened to mention a fondness for the books. Sales orbited instantly. Reprints rushed. Movie rights were bought. Copycats began cranking out superspy novels.

Parodies appeared, some of them good, many of them bad. Strange phenomenon; the movies themselves were parodies, although whether deliberately or not has not been established. Of course the novels themselves were parodies. The superspy was a snotty know-it-all who even went so far as to tell bartenders how to mix drinks and the like and generally called attention to himself every moment of his unsecret existence.

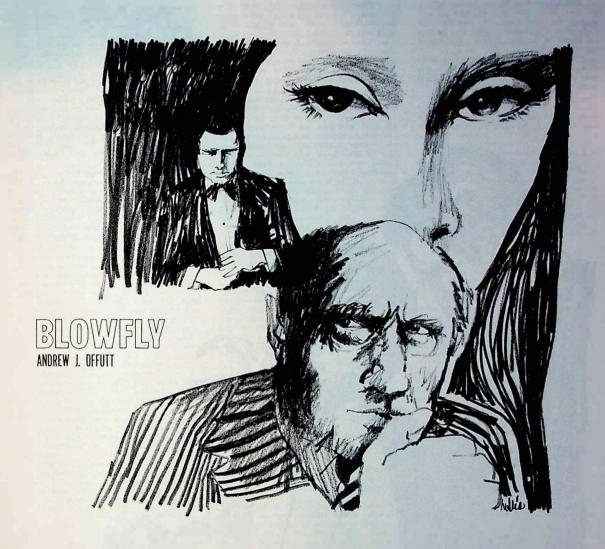
(He was also one of the most fascinating characters ever to occupy the pages of some of the most fascinating books ever to keep one awake until 3 AM.) Among the best of the spinoffs was a series about a sex-researchist named Steve Victor; among the worst was a monstrosity about a future society with guns in bra-cups.

One creature actually wrote three novels parodying the parody. The first was both interesting and fun, for the first three or four thousand words. All three were sold to an impressionable publisher and the "writer" made a great deal of money. Which indicates just how a dead man's work can be milked to the benefit of others. And how far parodies can go.

They are still going, or coming, or something. TRUMPET is proud to present, as a public disservice, the parody to end all Bond parodies. And good riddance.

^{1.} Killer: A killer review is one written for the express purpose of slamming the work in question. It is a frequently-utilized and unfortunately legal form of murder. Obviously if a book is bad, to say so is gratuitous. If it is good, to say so is superfluous. (RC pls note)

^{2.} Critic: a form of life ranking just below the crustaceans. They are secondhanders who spend their time making up clever little phrases, which they use in pretending to review the work of a Creator. This makes them feel almost as if they were valuable to human existence; as if they were creative. Suicide, while not prevalent (strangely), should be encouraged.



"Cigarette smuggling," Y said. "Dirty business. Coming in from Outer Pleiades, we think. S.P.O.O.K., possibly." He leaned back and traced a complicated and invisible design with his finger on the orange baize of his desktop. He peered closely at lan Bean. "Suppose you check into it?"

pose you check into it?"

Bean frowned, "Cigarettes? Real tobacco? Gracious!"

"Save your naughty language for les girls, Bean. Just get out there and stope that operation!" He extracted a pipe from his waistoat pocket and pulled the big Sevres cannister of To-Bak-Sub from the corner of his desk and commenced filling the pipe. He looked up. "Well?"

"My license expired yesterday, Sir."
"Oh." The pleasant old father-image
left off filling the pipe long enough to
pull open the center drawer of the big
Sears desk. He slapped the small
square of 3M Plastee-Papr down on the
orange baize between them. "Here.
Came in yesterday. You got five last
year; this year's quota's been upped to
seven. Congratulations...and good
luck." He poked the pipe in his mouth,
then draw it out and pointed it at Bean,

then drew it out and pointed it at Bean.
"Oh, and look, Bean, try and do
something about those persnickety habits
of yours, will you? I don't mind the
womanizing, but clothes...food, drinks
...you're the most unsecret agent I've
qot."

Bean was examining the little document with the familiar fleur-de-lis spaceship symbol of Terra Alta Imperate at its top.

KNOW that on this 12 day of Existence in the year 2271 the bearer has been duly invested by Earth High Command with the absolute right to

not less than (1/4) nor more than I men in the ensuing thirteen months. By my hand and sand, I make the comptroller-General, TAI. (This license void unless signed by the bearer and may be revoked at any time without notice. Failure to exercise the privileges herein described shall cause this license to cease and determine without renewal, on (1/21/21/272).

Signed_

Bean took his silver Cross XKE-53 pen from his plastall jacket and signed the document. He checked the charge of Glissenite in the pen before replacing it in his pocket. He picked up the license and rose.

"Try to stay away from the girls this time, Bean," Y said, with a paternal wink as his best agent left. First closing the door, Bean sneered.

"Up yours."

"I beg your pardon!"

"Sorry, Pennypincher," Bean said, pinching Y's secretary's plastic-enhanced bosom. She giggled and wriggled and he handed her the license.

"Oh, wonderful," she cooed, leaning into his hand. "You get to do in seven this year! That raises your code number, you know." She was inserting the license in the Xerox 22rx cop-

ier.
"Oh? What's it?" He leaned toward her, twisting his arm to maintain his grip on her, ah, penny.

"Two more zeroes, scptuple -0 six," she said, motioning him to stand close to the machine. She writhed a little. "Darn! You'll have to let go now, lan. But my lunch-hour starts in twelve minutes, and that couch in the Employee's Lounge..."

"Septuple-0 six," he muttered, ig-noring her invitation. "Nice alliteration." He fingered the scar on his cheek, a souvenir of a previous case-amatory, not business-as the machine indelibly imprinted his new license on his chest. It would fade away in exactly thirteen months, he knew. Well, by then he'd have earned a new one, and with a

Ignoring Pennypincher's panting, Bean left the big orange baize headquarters of the Associated Union to Negate Tyranny, Injustice and Evil and headed for his car. Cigarette smuggling, he thought. This was big! Smuggling illicit tobacco into the system could wipe out all mankind, protected as it



had been for nearly two centuries from the evils of tobacco, alcohol, foreign movies, magazines, and cerebration. He was thrilled at the prospect; his last case had involved only the destruction of a few planets, and he was bored with penny-ante assignments.

He had to get there fast, find the master-genius behind the plot, and de-

stroy him.

With, preferably, at least six of his

underlings.

His Stephens Excalibur SSd-70 sat where he had left it, its rear tyre on the kerb. Disdainfully he jerked the parking ticket from the viewscreen and deposited it in the big orange baize LittrBug buzzing along the sidewalk. He slid into the car and started the engines and the six Paxton Superchargers. He thumbed a switch. Instantly raw energy lashed out of his left headlamp and vaporized the LittrBug.

Bug. "Damn! Got to memorize these sillyass buttons!" he growled, and engaged the wood-plated GO lever and took the machine straight up to 31,000 feet before cutting in the spacedrive.

Not until then did he turn to the girl decorating the red Aston-Martian leather seat beside him. Steel arms had leaped automatically from her seat to imprison her, as he had opened his door. Now the stilleto in his pocket comb probed the tip of one jiggly breast. She yipped and his eyebrows rose. She felt it! Good grief, all this and she wasn't plastically-enhanced?

"Who're you?" he demanded.

"Angelus Early, Ouch!"

"Mm. Funny name." He patted her —with exuberance—for weapons, then drew up her skirt and inspected her thigh, pursing his lips. His expert eye detected a small amount of injected plastic at once. Well, he was used to that; not a girl in the world had that untidy little triangle of light between her thighs anymore.

"My daddy loved the noonday bells," she explained, peering down at the deadly little comb. "Always said if he had a boy he'd name him Angelus.

Had me instead."

"Tsk. Naughty daddy. But tell that to your psychiatrist, not me. Hadn't he ever heard of the name 'Angela'?" He shook his head. "'Noonday bells'...that tells me you're from the Outer Pleiades, the Christian Colony." He had pocketed the comb and was setting course, not looking at her.

"You're right. And no, I guess daddy'd never heard of the name Angela. He was just an uneducated farmer,

a Whitman."

"Best kind," he muttered, then, locking the controls, turned toward her again. "Famet? What kind of farmer?" The raw edge of business was in his voice.

She nodded. "Tobacco," she said. Then: "Look, I admit they're very effective and all that, but are these steel straps your idea of a seatbelt? And how long do I have to wear them?"

"Oh. Sorry." He gazed down at the controls, then stabbed a finger at a button. Instantly the ship began deceleration. "Oh damn!" He slapped the button again, considered and tried another. The restraints slipped back into their hidden recesses in her seat. She sighed and rubbed her arms, then her eyes widened as he turned toward her again.

"Better get you secure," he said, fumbling with her scatbelt. Her superstructure got in the way more than somewhat.

"How—cooch!—come you have the old-fashioned—ummmm!—cover-the-shoulders—and-down—the-front Rallye seatbelts?" she asked, writhing and

panting all over him.

"More fun," he told her with the cryptic terseness of a professional secret agent. He managed to secure the buckles despite the spasmodic moving of her lush bosom, rising and falling rapidly now with her excited breathing. The leather straps creaked. Bean was an expert seathelt fastener. He finished the job in less than fifteen minutes and gave each buckle a final pat before turning back to the controls. She swayed sensuously in the seat, her eyes hooded.

Bean pushed over a lever and the ship shuddered as the big Deusenberg Mark XXVIII engines cut in. The force of acceleration hit them, and Bean noticed with interest that even four gees had very little flattening effect on her bosom. He reached—slowly, his hand heavy—for one of the filtertip Tō-Bak-Subs made for him by Lorillard's of Louisville in the building with the three gold bands. He knew she was impressed by his strength and lack of concern, taking out a cigarette during acceleration.

"So you decided to hitch a ride home, eh, Angelus Early? I suppose you're prepared to pay your way."

you're prepared to pay your way."

"Oh yes," she said, nodding. Even belted into her seat she managed to rub his leg with one of the most pneumatic thighs he had ever felt. "More than that, lan Bean. Yes, I know you: you're the very best A.U.N.T.I.E. agent. And I'd bet you're on the Pleiades tobacco case. My father raised tobacco on Pleiades 28, lan. They killed him."

"Mmm. Bad business. Who's they?" He glanced at the moon in passing.

"The people you want. AiNst StarRo

"Blowfly? That Venusian fiend! I'll be glad to get another crack at him! He killed my wife last week, on our wedding day." He ground his teeth. Then he checked the Timax Solr-Pal strapped to his wrist just below the needle-derringer. He slapped a relay before him and heard her whoosh of breath as the ship ceased accelerating.

His hand was on her leg, kneading warm and incredibly ripe flesh. "Well, the ship does the rest. In three days

we'll be there."

"Too bad this isn't one of those Nash Starramblers, "she said dreamily. "What? That thing? All it has to recommend it are seats that make into

beds!" Bean's voice was angry; he loved his ship, and she had mentioned one of the scummy little compacts.

"I know," Angelus Early said. She was reaching for her seatbelts.

"Here," he said, leaning toward her. "I'll undo you—you unfasten mine." "I've always wanted to be undone," she said.

"Uh-huh. Surely you've noticed

this's a custom ship...guess where I got the seats?"

She was fumbling with his straps, her hands slipping off now and again. "Uh—Nash Starrambler?"

"Right!"

For the next three days lan Bean explored the depths of (according to his report) space.

A bright-eyed girl and a tiredlooking man with a scar on his cheek sat at a ReelWood table in Harry's New York Bar on Pleiades 28. The waitress wobbled over.

"Somethin-fer-va?"

Bean's eyes traveled her up and down, smokily. "Uh-huh, later. Right now..." He turned to Angelus. "What about two Silver Kirsches with Bresse chicken au gratin de Toulouse Lautrec, and some bauf-acheter des chevrolettes coupe'es topped off by escargote Bardot a' la mode root e tout? Oh, and some Chassagne-Montrachet 2081?"

"Crazy," she said, her eyes containing more stars than the sky. "And after that a little sex, please."

He patted her head and turned to the furiously-writing waitress. "Got that? Good. Now as to the aperitife. Instead of a half-ounce of lemon juice in the Kirsches, I want—"

She popped her Isdgum. "Aw, one of those. Just a minute, sir. I'll send Roger." She jerked her head in Bean's direction as she passed the bartender. He came over to the little table, wiping his hands on his Cannon XKE-61 apron with the three gold rings.

"We want two Silver Kirsches," Bean said, "but instead of a half-ounce of lemon juice, I want 3/4s, strained through a piece of clean white muslin two inches square. And leave out those yuhky eggwhites. Add an extra third-of-a-teaspoonful of Sucrosub to compensate for the extra lemon, and add one drop of anisette to the Positano before you mix it with the Kirsche, which should be Gaulle's. And be sure the glasses are properly chilled to 40°. Got that?"

Roger stared at him, tears in his eyes, his face a mask of carefully-restrained indignation and insult. "Yes, sir. Centigrade or Fahrenheit?"

"Clever fellow!" Bean looked at him dangerously. "Fahrenheit. Oh—and would you serve the drinks in Jovian martini glasses rather than Old-Fashioneds, please? More esthetically pleasing."

The bartender bowed low, hands folded beneath his apron. When he straightened he held an FN-Browning CCf 7.69 mm automatic dartgun, loaded with solid-fueled Nosler darts. It was leveled at Bean.

"This time you've gone too far, you know—it—all!" he screamed, tears streaming down his cheeks, and he blew Bean's head off.

The girl shot to her feet, knuckles to teeth. "You...you must be...Blowfly. with S.P.O.O.K! You recognized him by his persnickety habits, didn't you?"

"Nah, lady, I'm Roger Grenouille, the bartender, and I'm with P.A.B.S.T., the Professional Association of Bartenders to Stop Troublemakers. Us bartenders'd rather fight than switch drinks, and we HATE smartalecks who try to tell us our business!"

THE VIEW FROM OP HERE DAN BATES

This first film "column", as such, is going to ramble considerably, as, I suppose, will its successors inevitably, so please bear with me.

One recent Friday night, I drave the thirty-odd miles from my home on Long Island to New York City to catch a private screening by a small, cooperative film society there of both Universal pseudo-adaptations of Poe's The Black Cat, the 1934 Edgar G. Ulmer-directed masterpiece with Karloff and Lugosi, and the 1941 Albert S. Rogell-directed slapstick murder mystery with Broderick Crawford and Hugh Herbert looking for all the world like some last minute substitutes for Abbott and Costello.

Anyway, aside from getting the rare chance to see Ulmer's splendidly composed horror classic (not to use either of the last two words loosely) complete and without annoying TV commercial interruptions, what struck me most about the screening was the strange lot of people, including, I guess, myself, who attended it.

To make my observations as brief and, admittedly, offensive as possible, what a peculiar lot science-fiction and horror movie addicts must be! One wonders what kind of home lives they lead. if any. First, though, some scientific notations: What hit me first of all, glancing over the less than a dozen persons present for the screening (which, incidentally, at the last moment, was turned into a triple feature: Someone had heppened to lay hands just that day on a rare print of the 1933 chestnut, Night of Tenor, a terribly stagey opus played in grandstanding style by Lugosi, Marshall, Wallace Ford, Matt McHugh (as the kind of cop to whom everyone else is a "mugg," no matter how distinctive his physical appearance) and the rest, which, except for a hilariously dated last scene in which the mad killer who's been stalking the rest of the cast through most of the picture until dis-patched by Ford gets up off the floor from where he was left, supposedly stone dead, and warns the viewer not to reveal the surprise (hardly!) ending "or I'll steal into your bedroom one night when you least suspect it and tear you limb from limb" or something like that, I could have done just as well without). was, with one exception, the total absence of women. As a friend, the publisher-editor of a New Jersey based monster-movie-fan magazine (quite possibly the finest of its crude kind in this country today), remarked to me, "It's a man's world."

Is it? Depends on how you define the word, "man." Now don't blow your cool: I'm not saying there's something perverse at work here. Maybe, but that's not what bothers me. What does bother me is the overall sadness of a life that is, apparently, so devoid of other interests—love, sex, politics, religion, what have you-that, even at past middle-age, which at least half of the audience were, this kind of thing forms its prime avocation. I mean, granted Ulmer's film is a masterpiece of the genre, but, compared to works of the same period, genre-less classics like, say, Jean Renoir's Boudy Saved From Drowning with Michel Simon, the 1934 Black Cat is pure trash. Intelligent, splendidly accomplished trash, as James Agee might say, fascinating in its intricate cat-and-mouse game between Karloff and Lugosi; outstanding when, in the last scenes of Lugosi and the wounded Harry Cording strapping a writhing Karloff up for torture, it smacks unmistakably of Caligari. But trash, all the same. And not worth dwelling upon, For it fails to edify. It only excites superficially, like, to cite a more contemporary film, one genre-less but overrated all the same, Antonioni's Blow-Up. Pictorially, it is rich. But, once below the surface, there is little or nothing. It is not a great movie! Not so, however, the Renoir.

But, to hear the men at the screening talk about it, you'd think it was one of the greatest achievements in man's history. It, and everything else Universal subsequently cranked out in the over-weaning commercial era that followed. It's a lost cause, trying to be reasonable with guys like these. For Thirties science-fiction and horror movies are, in the literal sense, and this is what is most pathetic, their very lives. All that is left for one to do is sit back and, as Harry Golden says, "Enjoy! Enjoy!" the best one can.

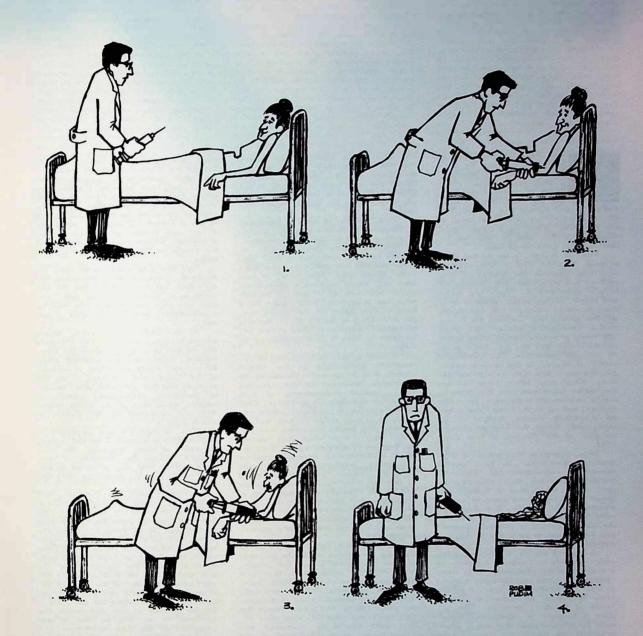
Fortunately, with beautiful works like The Black Cat (Ulmer's, not Rogell's), it's easy as pie to do this. Painless, like Goldfinger, and full of pictorial riches and the fruits of an unencumbered imagination. I don't know what happened to Ulmer after this. He's one of several great directors of the Thirties who went downhill aesthetically with amazing speed (some others, E.A. Dupont, also German, and Edward Cahn, who, aside from an absolutely great little weatern called Law and Order, with Walter Huston

and Harry Carey, hasn't made a single film even worthy of mention!). Why? Money? Of course. And, possibly, the general critical attitude toward films like The Black Cat at the time of its original release. Had it been acclaimed justly, as it deserved, perhaps Ulmer could have avoided subsequent embarassments like The Daughter of Dr. Jekyll. Perhaps not, of course. Trouble is, we'll never know.

More generally, the best English language film I've seen in quite a while is Joseph Losey's masterpiece, Accident. The film is a classic of visual and verbal economy, a factor I'm becoming quite a fan of. It may be my journalistic training, but I'm coming to adore things short and sweet, like Luis Bunuel's 42-minute Simon of the Desert, or Nathanael West's 99-page (in the Avon paperback) Miss Lonelyhearts, or The Beatles' two-minute, eleven-second Eleanor Rigby, which says more and sounds better than anything this remarkable group has ever done! Accident is no short subject, but it demonstrates superbly another kind of economy: that of no wasted motion. The viewer is credited with a good deal of intelligence; consequently, perhaps, you can't approach this film as mere entertainment as you might, say, a Modesty Blaise (and, while we're on the subject, it is well nigh impossible for me to believe that the perpetrator of that atrocity is the same man responsible for Accident).

What's Accident about? I'm not going to give even a hint. I will only say, see it, and from the beginning. I will also say that it's a kind of statement on the complex, intertwining nature of human relationships. It also features some of the most exciting color camera-work I've ever seen. It's exquisite! But there is a great deal more of the iceberg below the surface, and you really have to dig for it. I will also say this, and I'm really sticking my neck out this time: Losey's Accident, in which Dirk Bogarde is the best he's ever been, takes a couple of recent, over-rated sensations called Blow-Upand Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?, chews them up and spits them out.

Impossible? See Accident and see. Closing note: G.P. Putnam's Sons recently published An Illustrated History of the Iloror Film, by Carlos Clarens, a hardback selling retail for \$6.95. It's well worth it, despite occasional lapses by Films in Review - contributor Clarens into Henry Hart-type critical overkills. And it's a far cry from another recent book, florror! by Drake Douglas, which was a •



THE BOHEMIAN TORY S JERRY POURNELLE



was recently privileged to hear an address by Dr. Thomas Molnar of Brooklyn College on the subject of the future of democracy; and I can only wish that it was he

and not myself writing this column. The future of democracy is problematical, to say the least. There is a rather good chance that this century will see the last of it for quite some time.

That, of course, is not all that surprising. Anyone with a few minutes! time can examine the history of this century and determine that democracy hardly dominates it. There are fewer and fewer nations which practice anything we could rationally call democratic as the means for deciding the fundamental questions of society, and there are more and more people living under dictatorships; and this has been going on for quite some time. The Communist world, of course, is the obvious example; but there are also the African nations, which may never have had democracies but at least once had governments responsible to someone; the Asian nations; and so forth. Even France has an interesting regime, marked by, among other things, the first government defiance of the Conseil d' Etat since 1848.

Now, everyone likes to call his government "democratic". We have "guided democracy".—Sukarno and Nassar—people's democracy, democratic centralism, and a whole host of military regimes which rule in the name of a non-existent public opinion. But there are very few "democracies" in the sense of the term I learned in political science, and there look to be fewer in the next decade.

A democracy is a political entity which submits the crucial questions to a majority of the inhabitants, or to some reasonably large and definable sub-set of them. Literally, of course, it means "rule by wards" as opposed to rule by heads of families, or kings. This implies a number of conditions. There must be a constitution that states which questions are outside the jurisdiction of politics and thus immune to submission to a vote. There must be such a workable constitution, or the losers of an election will be fearful of their loss, and contest the issue not with the sword only but the battleaxe. After all, the primary requirement for a workable democracy is that the losing side be willing to lose the election, and before they will do that, they have to feel that their lives, families, property, and religions are safe from tampering by the winner. When they don't believe that any longer, then the whole regime collapses.

This, I think, is what is happening to democracies in this century. Ideologies have come to dominate elections, so that the losers don't feel safe, or feel so strongly committed to their ideology that they just don't care what happened at the polls. After that, all factions are happy to have a government which will end strife and get on with what has to be done. John Stuart Mill's Essay on Liberty points out that unless people are willing to submit their problems to rational discussion, they should feel fortunate to have a Charlemange or an Akbar.

Something else is happening to democracy, particularly in the United States: it is being made ridiculous by its friends. Insistence on "one man, one vote", radical restructuring of houses of legislative assemblies, Civil Rights acts which register voters regardless of their ability to read, and insistence that people exercise their pa-triotic duty to vote when they haven't the foggiest understanding or even interest in the election, have not endeared democratic institutions to the more thoughtful. These "reforms", instituted in defiance of the constitution, are justified on the principle that "democracy is legitimate, and nothing else is." And of course, if democracy is the only legitimate ruling institution, then constitutions which do not provide for it must be overthrown.

All very well. But this can only be done by swallowing whole the principle of "vox populi, vox Dei." The people, Yes! What the people want, they must have, regardless of constitutions, laws, traditions, contracts. Still all very well. Except along come the same idealogues. the same courts, and tell the people that they can't have what they want after all. You can't convict the murderer, because the policeman didn't touch second base and bow reverently to the photograph of Earl Warren before arresting him; you can't hold a Bible class in that schoolroom because the Constitution erects a wall of separation between church and state; you may pay taxes to support schools and universities because everyone has a right to education. Never

mind that the Constitution Framers thought the First Amendment reserved the whole problem of religion to the States, and even provided that the Congress could not disestablish the state churches by law established, or that the right of education seems difficult to find in the document. There are principles of law and justice which must be implemented, without regard to the will of the people or the words of the Constitution.

And this makes the whole thing ridiculous. Exercise your franchise and civic duty, but keep in mind that the last word as to whether or not your vote gets you what you want will be said by a non-elected body, responsible to none.

At this point, I can hardly blame anyone for being confused. The People's Will doesn't govern, nor does the Constitution, considered as a contract. When the majority wants something in defiance of the Constitution, it gets it on the grounds that the document was intended to implement democracy; except, of course, when the majority wants something not approved by the Court, in which case...

Well, at least we are governed by high-minded principles. Law and justice, or justice at least, triumphs. No convictions without due process of law. Never mind that due process meant, until very recently, something very different...

Do you expect that the result will be that The People will begin to believe the theory that they are sovereign? That they will begin to insist on having their way in their newly responsible legislatures, and insist that when their legislative bodies demand something in their name, they better get it or else? It has, after all, happened before. And the next step is that all restraints are off; after which the loser of the election decides that he would really rather not have lost, and reaches for the rifle ... Or the parents of the girl decide that fair trial or no, that so and so isn't going to walk out of the courtroom alive ... Or the policeman decides that "killed resisting arrest" is a lot easier on everyone than a trial in which convictions can never be obtained...Or...
But of course it can't happen here.

But of course it can't happen here.
The United States is an exception to
John Adam's dictum: "There never was
a democracy that didn't commit suicide."
But it is not unthinkable that it would

happen here; we just don't believe it because, well, because we have so many traditions. And there's so much going for us. Common language, traditional respect for law and order, deference to superiors, concern for others, generosity, peaceful nature... We don't wonder, though, or shouldn't, that others without our sterling virtues don't manage to keep their Republics long.

Then, there are those haunting questions. How are we going to keep the people from doing as they will? The Army? That's the obvious solution, particularly for the recalcitrant South. Of course, the army is a very unreliable instrument to use against the populace, being made up from it, but we can professionalize the Army. That does, it is true, create a new problem: What makes the possessors of the means of violence respect the votes of the people?

I must confess that I see trouble coming. Not, you will understand, that the general problems I have sketched above are particularly new. They were discussed rather endlessly in the Convention of 1787, with the result that the Philadelphia Constitution was a rather interesting document which most certainly did not enact any set of principles, but rather defined instruments of government. The Framers, at least, did not think that it would be sufficient to state "due process of law", select a Court by appointment, and let the Justices work out all the details. It is only our century of Progress which has done this; such simple schemes were roundly rejected at Philadelphia.

But, then, they were only farmers. They couldn't understand the complexities of the Twentieth Century. To be sure, they seemed uncommonly well informed about the failures of self-government up to 1787, better informed than almost anyone I know today, but they didn't know the Twentieth Century. We shall doubtless have the opportunity of correcting their mistakes soon: it appears we are headed for a new convention.

You might, for your amusement, make a list of men, say three from each state, who could attend the new convention. Qualifications? Well, popular enough to get selected by the state legislatures. Intelligent enough to compromise. Courageous enough to hold closed sessions. Informed enough to know what won't work. Bold enough to try something new, but conservative enough to distrust what they try. I haven't managed to find any names for my list yet, outside of the obvious choice of myself, but it is an interesting game. Unfortunately, I don't meet my criteria, because the legislature won't send me. It will probably send-well, you fill it in.

I have just listened to another address, by a typical bureaucrat telling us the powers his department will need in order to get social justice. The people, it seems, won't do right voluntarily, so must be forced. Since he also favors separation of church and state, and rejects private morality, I am at a loss to understand to just what he appeals for his right to this power; but then he isn't very unusual. The United States

today seems to be in a crisis of confusion as to just what gives anyone the right to power. It isn't the will of the people anymore: the people want all kinds of things, such as discrimination in housing, lower taxes, the beatniks thrown out of the Universities, purges of the faculties of the public schools and Universities, convictions of criminals. winning the war, trials in which guilt and innocence are determined rether then the brilliance of attorneys and a lot of other things which for one reason or another they can't have. But it isn't the Will of God either: God's commandments extend to such matters as adultery, sexual practices and homosexuality, covetous desires, and other aspects of our private lives, and those who clamor for reforms certainly want no truck with interference in private lives. It isn't the Constitution anymore. either, because that's a contract which gives States the right to do all kinds of things we don't approve of, and besides it's outdated. Strike the Constitution. It isn't defense of the West and Western Civilization-that's pure chauvinism, and maybe even McCarthyism. We sure aren't left with much.

Ah—Liberty. We can act to maximize liberty. Let's see, what is liberty? Absence of restraint? Non-interference? No, hardly, because we must make people do right by the underprivileged. Maximization of individual power? Equality? Ah. that will do it.

Unfortunately, that won't do it. Liberty, whether you like it or not, is either the absence of restraint, in which case everyone not in chains or a jail cell has abundant liberty (he may suffer consequences from exercising

it, as he would suffer consequences from jumping off a high place, but he has liberty to do as he wishes, including li-berty to steal and murder); or liberty is nower to do as one wishes without consequences, in which case you mean you want restraints applied to someone else-restrictions on someone else's liberty. And that means you need a state willing to use force to restrain othere from interfering with you, in which case the state has to survive, in which case it must protect itself, even from vou. in which case... no, pure liberty doesn't come off too well as an imperative to action. Not only that, it isn't even a very appealing imperative: why should I be concerned with anyone's liberties but my own?

Aha. Now we have it. Self interest. The self interested state. I worry about your liberty because that way I can protect mine. Hmmm. Who decides which liberties I can retain and which I can give up? Me? No, that won't work: I wish to retain the liberty to do all kinds of things which you don't care for at all. The majority then? There we are, back to the will of the people, and we've already seen that the people want to do unacceptable things. Judges? Why them?

No wonder democracy is on the way out. And until we can come up with some kind of concensus about the right to power, and the moral imperatives to action, democracy will continue its de-

cline.

But, no doubt, this generation, being so very much wiser than the last, will have no difficulty solving the problems which have eluded men for all time. All it takes is a little rational thought...





PERSIFLAGE

FRED LERNER 98-B The Boulevard East Paterson, N.J. 07407

Jerry Pournelle's proposed model of political systems is an excellent one: as a Libertarian, I have noticed many of the phenomena which he discusses. It is interesting to note that, on a diagram drawn according to Pournelle's essay, the "Right" (as commonly discussed in America today) runs on a 45° slant to the two axes on which the chart is plotted, from NW to SE; while the "Left" is perpendicular, running from NE to SW.

The "Right" certainly believes in hanging together: I have been enthusiastically welcomed at meetings of hardline, God-and-Country conservatives, who have recommended to me Libertarian publications and organizations advocating policies that are the antithesis of their own views. Yet this tendency is not as completely reciprocated: The New Individualist Review has printed some scathing attacks upon both Ayn Rand and the National Review.

Your letter column seems a bit uneven; while most of the letters are quite serious discussions of material in earlier issues, there are a few that are mere name-calling. Editorial integrity does not require that every signed critical letter be printed. ((They aren't)) I haven't yet had time to read all of TRUMPET: the life of an Army Officer Candidate is a hurried one. ((I know. My younger brother is in OCS at the moment at Ft. Benning, Georgia.)) But what I've read so far, both fiction and non-fiction, has given me a lot of pleasure; and I spent several very enjoyable moments puzzling out which New York fans EEEvers was Tuckerising in "The Fan Who Lost Things." But the lead character could be so many neonle!

Up Hugos! Down Pongs!

HARRY WARNER, JR. 423 Summit Avenue Hagerstown, Maryland 21740

The photograph on your inside front cover could be a poor fan's guide to abnormal psychology, if enough readers come right out and say what it meant to them. I found it ambivalent, ambiguous, and half-revealing as one of those Rohrachach inkblot tests. Is the half-visible figure in the background worshipping or threatening the robust young lady, and is that figure actually a male as my instincts hastily assured me? ((It's Steve Tolliver)) Is the girl about to utter some profound revelation in a prophetic trance, after removing her garments in order to be distracted by no secular possessions at this impor-

tant moment, or is she about to play an important role in a sacrificial drama? What's the pole doing, sticking up there beside her left ear, and do the fingers wrapped around it belong to the girl or to the shadowy person in the background? Where did the shadow come from that makes one part of the face look so much more mature and serious than the remainder of her charmingly chubby physiognomy? I assume that the original photograph reveals more shadow detail than the engraving. But deliberate or accidental, the total impression is commendably exciting.

Iliked very much the pages of Tricon pictures. I suppose it would cost
more to crop the photographs by enlarging them in order to make the important area take up most of each cut.
Just head and shoulders would have
been best for half of these pictures,
those in which the hands aren't doing
anything expressive and the midriff is
not looking its best.

CPCC reads as if it might have been aimed originally at some professional market or other. However, the nostalgia it imparts and the engaging way in which the nostalgia is evoked more than makes up for the fact that this is a twice-told tale to most readers of Trumpet. Of course, Rick Sneary is still very much locatable, not lavishing all

his energies on fandom as he once did, but still creating the image of his wonderful personality on the rare occasions when a correspondent or a fanzine is lucky enough to receive a letter from him. His health continues to be a problem, and in fact forced him to turn down a chance to tour British fandom under the same arrangements that brought Ella Parker and Walt Willis to the United States.

The Fan Who Lost Things is the best faan fiction I've seen in months. It meets all the tests that I apply to this type of fiction: Its plot would not work in another hobby without distortions beyond reason; the major part of it does not consist of references to actual fans and events in an effort to lend verisiantilitude; and it does not consist in its entirety of the description of an argu-

ment at a con.

Elkay Productions tells of an activity that interests me more all the time, I've just recently started to acquire some old movies in 8mm form, to buy some books about professional movies, and to promise myself that I'll resume any day now my own fumbling efforts with my old movie camera (so incredibly ancient that it has a turret with three lenses, none of which zooms!) But even though I'd like to participate in amateur moviemaking, I don't think I'd be happy with the types of films usually produced by these groups. Almost always, they're either story-telling movies or extremely far-out experimental efforts. My thought is that the amateur movie-makers can do so much in documentary and semi-documentary films, conveying messages that are more powerful than the fictional movies usually carry, and utilizing themes which are not suitable for the documentaries you see on television or the propaganda that goes into films for big corporations to lend out, Instead of a story about Union and Rebel forces in the Civil War, I would like to make a film that showed one Civil War soldier, his uniform too tattered to reveal his loyalty, walking away from a battle. I think it would be possible to put into ten or twelve minutes of this soldier trudging across fields and down paths some of the hatred and distrust that I feel toward war and my suspicion that there has neverbeen a war whose beneficial effects wouldn't have been greatly improved on, if men had handled the matter peacefully.

I hate to let all those pages by Richard Hodgens pass without long comments. They had to be very well written to hold my interest, because I've seen none of the films under discussion. But this in turn makes it very difficult to say relevant things about the reviews. It seems so much like grasping at straws, to snatch at some stray paragraph and begin a lengthy dissertation on that. For instance, I could dive into the quotation from Gore Vidal and emerge with the reflection that however much trouble adults may find in keeping the right outlook on political conventions after viewing The Best Man, children are generally able to distinguish between a and b even when b follows immediately after a. To assume that the child will distrust everything he sees on the television set, as soon as he learns that commercials

are not wholly trustworthy, is to fall into the same trap that has ensuared the child psychologists who want to ban Santa Claus or comic book violence. No matter how logically they theorize, the fact remains that children do grow up to lead happy lives after they've been fooled by their parents about Santa and some who read pre-Wertham comic books did not begin to behave with equal violence. The parent should be able to save his child from this Vidalian inferno by telling him that the commercials are exaggerations in an effort to sell. I think the child will understand it as readily as he comprehends that real rabbits do not talk in the manner of Bugs Bunny.

I'm afraid that Saturday movies didn't have such a key role in my life as they did for this particular young man (or more precisely, they didn't symbolize my own particular status in life through my thoughts and behavior at them). For one thing, it was most improbable that a girl would enter the theater, much less try to seduce me, during those long-ago Saturdays, because the audi-



ence at the westerns was almost exclusively male. Besides, the pace that kids were forced to maintain those Saturdays would have made a mere girl too listless and exhausted to serve as a force for exposing anyone's inadequacies. I've been amusing myself by looking up some advertisements of Saturday movie schedules in Hagerstown during the 1930's. One typical day consisted of a Ken Maynard feature, a Buck Jones serial, a Laurel and Hardy comedy, a cartoon, a stage show devoted to local juvenile talent, and free chocolate milk, all for a dime. I haven't had the heart yet to examine the real marathons a little later when double features began on Saturdays at local theaters. ((Mr. Oderman is in his middle twenties, so probably is writing from experiences of a much later vintage. Being not too much older than that myself, I know from personal observation that girls do go to Saturday matinees. Of course

nowadays there is usually a triple feature.))

Once again I have the utmost admiration for all the pictures, whether filler or cartoon or strip or photograph. You somehow succeed in making the wildest assortment of styles seem to belong between the same pair of covers, by matching the style with the text suited to it. ((Tom Reamy and his eclectic fanzine)) And I should have commended you at the very start for the front cover. If you achieved the trickery by the hand of an artist, you did it so skillfully that I thought at first someone had gone ahead and constructed the head and horn for the sake of the photograph. Now I'm inclined to the theory that it's a retouch job, but I wouldn't want to risk money on a wager on the matter. ((You've found me out, It's retouched))

(TED WHITE) NyCon 3 Box 367, Gracie Sq. Station New York, N.Y. 10028

In tallying the nomination ballots for this year's Achievement Awards, we find that TRUMPET will place as one of seven fanzines nominated for the final Awards ballot.

In view of your repeated statements to the effect that you will not accept a Fan Achievement Award should you win one, we are uncertain as to whether you would desire inclusion on the ballot for TRUMPET.

If you are unwilling to see TRUM-PET enter the competition for this award, please notify us within the month (May), and we will remove its name from among those contending.

((You must have me confused with several other people, Ted. It's true that I oppose the Pong but I have never, repeat ne-ver, said that I would refuse it should Trumpet win. I expect that I would accept were the award a chocolate-covered doughnut.))

andrew j. affutt Box 115 Morehead, Kentucky 40351

WHERE THE HELL IS THE BROKEN SWORD?!?!?

Thanks for those interesting pictures. Now i know what those two famous editors, Ben Solon and John Campbell look like. That sure aint the way i pictured JWC!

Re the picture next to John Trimble: sure, i recognize the back and the suit and the ear, but who's the funnylooking cat with the sweater and the glasses and the mean look?

Thanks to j gardner for the SU-PERB illustration for cpcc. Funny thing is it's better than Bergey!

OG?

Yes, reamy knows what flopped means, all right.

I have just read EEEvers' story (?) in T-no-i-wouldnt-believe-15. It is good. Damned good. I am enthusiastic for two reasons: (1) i think Evers has found his niche; his best writing style, and (2) it is the first thing by him i've ever read which i thought worth a damn. (i thought both Bliss short-shorts were pretty bad news. Cute and overwritten.)

PERSIFLAGE: Hm. You seem to have attracted a few lunatic-fringers this time. No, tom, most ayn rand disciples are, like most of fans, of surpassing intelligence. She would disavow that one. Let him die in a ditch, maybe. Best thing about Maggie Thompson's letter was when she said "we dont buy" (this and that books) "because ... not good for people." Whew! Boy, it sure is nice to know that someone, someplace, is really thinking of me and doing whats good for me! Gosh! I was beginning to think the CDL was the only such force in the country. Jerry Pournelle writes a good letter. But the primary purpose of a college, obviously, is the distribution of union cards as rewards for four years of apprenticing. And he is one of those who, at a black period in his life, perpetrated a doctoral dissertation in order to obtain the ultimate union card to teach. The best thing about having been graduated ten (good lord! Ive been out TWELVE years!!) years ago is that since then i have had time to study and learn things. At the time i was in college i had time only to go about the business of obtaining a degree. I've been making up for the waste ever since.

Bravo for David Szurek: anyone, anywhere, who criticizes any reviewer ((heah, now!)) cant be all bad! And he's democratic, too; at the end of his letter he magnanimously extends to me the right of my own opinions! Oh joy,

not to mention

subhanallah!
"If i really was a man, would i have to prove it!" (sic).

Uh...hey tom, how many other girls do you know named davidil?

Aside from David Szurek, whom i look forward to meeting, it is amazing how many people seemed not to have the foggiest notion what i said in that beard article. Guestion, mistofer editor: were YOU with me? ((Well, I knew what you were talking about and you may have been right in many cases, but I personally do not think a beard is sexy nor do!think it improves anyone's looks—unless they look like Andy Gump.))

I am advising that goshdarned Robert Coulson in a separate letter that he has my permission—as if he needed/wanted it—to cut me up any time he wishes, provided he does it as intelligently and wittily and charmingly as he does in t5. I thought i mentioned itching; only for the first 3-4 days. After that, negative. Dandruff would be a problem, though. Incidentally most of R.C. is points are invalid. And non-valid, too.

Re Baptist Ministers: Have you ever experienced the onslaught of those who know so little about the ancient Judaic god they worship they cannot even spell his name? Jehovah's Witnesses, i mean.

As you know their specialties are (1) peddling a magazine (if you won't give them a dime they will give it to you; LBJ must be one), and (2) quoting the bible out of context. Look, i cant give you chapter and verse on these, but someone with nothing better to do than memorize biblical references and chapter and line no doubt will:

"Judas went out and hanged him-

self..."

"Go you and do likewise."
"What you do, do quickly."

But last time one visited me i made a bargain with her. I led her into the house and showed her my books. Some forty deal with religion, including a couple of bibles, a torah (the only one in the county; our county is too small to afford jews), and assorted works by men who were outengebooted from the RC Church as soon as they published, thereby establishing their competence as scholars. The bargain:

"I will read anything you give me, on a reciprocal basis. You choose what you want me to read, and i will choose one for you. First i will loan you ernest renan's JESUS."

She declined and has not returned. Inclosing, i leave you with the words of the immoral chinese philosopher,

WHERE THE HAPPY HELL IS THE BROKEN SWORD YOU SOB? ((Read on, luv.))



GEORGE BARR 2480 So. 5th East St. Salt Lake City, Utah 84106

Nothing makes one realize just how late one is, so much as finding that plans have proceeded without one. First, let me say I am STILL enthusiastic. Never more so. This, in fact, is the biggest part of the problem. If THE BROKEN SWORD were something I cared little about, I could dash off something in a few minutes and it would look like it. But I care so very much about it that I cannot rush what I feel should be done carefully, and even lovingly. If THE BROKEN SWORD were my living of course I would work (out of a feeling of obligation) day and night to meet the deadline, no matter how tired I got. But since it is largely a labor of love I have taken and am taking far longer than I ever would or could for a paid professional assignment. But I hope the results will be worth it. You and the readers will have to decide that. So many times I've sat down to write you an explanation of why I was taking so long, and each time I stopped, feeling that if I had time to write, the time could so much better be used on the strip.

What makes me feel worst is that you are going to get (if you haven't already) lots of letters saying: I could have told you so ... He'll never finish it ... We want our money back . . . He's undependable ... And what's worse, you'll believe them. ((No I won't)) And I wouldn't blame you. Tom, believe me, and this definitely IS for publication, I want to do THE BROKEN SWORD as much as I've ever wanted to do anything. I WILL finish it! There may be times when, as happened this time, an issue will have to appear without it, but it will be finished, as long as I am alive and physically capable. I don't mean this to sound overly dramatic, but I want you to be assured. It IS work, but it's work that I enjoy. It's an opportunity to do something that I want to do, and that I feel is worth doing.

One thing that has taken so long this time is the slightly erotic content of this episode. The conception and birth of the changeling are the most difficult things I've ever had to do. I've drawn and redrawn them and am still not satisfied with the results. At first I had them as realistic and graphic as possible. I felt it was the best way to put across the absolute horror and obscenity of the mating of the elf and the troll. The results were exactly what I wanted, Rather than being prurient, it was almost sickening. The slim delicate handsomeness of the elf contrasted against the bloated muscularity of the troll-woman was as good as anything I've ever done. But believe me, the world isn't quite ready for it. To avoid the temptation to say To Hell with the world, and send it anyway, I destroyed the original sketches. ((Well, there's something for fandom to eat its heart out about.))! didn't even show them to my closest friends. That hurts. To know that something is good, but to know at the same time that I could probably be jailed for it, is frustrating. So I did it again, shadowy suggestions, leaving everything up to the imagination. But it was too vague. If one had not read the book, he wouldn't have known what was going So I discarded that too. The version I've decided on must stand as is, a disappointing cross between the two. No one should be offended unless the sight of a droopy troll breast or two is objectionable. And after seeing the inside front cover of no.5, I'm not too worried about that. What IS offensive is that I've all too obviously avoided the issue. The facts are there, the pornography is gone, but so is the horror. But then I guess that one who didn't know what it might have been, might not care that it's no more than it is ... if that makes sense.

I haven't read much of this issue yet, but I loved andy offutt's c.p.c.c. as usual. And I'd have been very disappointed if you hadn't included one of those carnivorous cartoons. Love them. And what happened to Natalie Wood? ((Old Nat has been retired. You and Dan Bates are the only ones who seemed to catch the joke and only a very few people recognized the little girl in 14 as she. Okay, all of you who have been fretting about the future of THE BROKEN SWORD can relax, especially andy offutt.))





