

WHAT'S IT

#9



HAVE AT YOU
A T O
V U
E

is really the title of my mcs., but this time around there will be no mcs.,

I'm sorry that there will be very little of my own writing in this issue... its not that I think my writing is very good, etc., but I feel that OMPA should be as much personal work as possible.... but I've been, and will be for a couple of months, very busy.

At present I'm trying to get 6 GCEs so (if I pass 5) that I can get into a Teachers Training College. If I get in that means another busy 3 years...but probably I'll be able to make a couple of mailings a year.

So, you'll understand how important this is to me, and excuse my lack of proper activity, when I mention that I've hooked up with a nice gal and intend to make it permanent, god willing, in a couple of years. However, my new love doesn't exclude my old love, of mattering ...in fact maybe the reverse. Anem, since

I've Reformed I look on life with rather different eyes...wether this is good or bad .. well, who knows. I think its good, but I'm biased.

We had a sort of engagement party at my place the other weekend...in true fannish tradition Wendy, (me affianced) wasn't present, being away at college...but that didn't interfete much.

Actually events started on the saturday..Archie turned up, having had a lift as far as Worcester with the Walshes, and rather than spend an evening at my place watching telly I suggested we go see Beryl and watch here telly... besides. Doreen and Daphne might have arrived.

So we belted off in Blodven, my green mini, to Redditch...where, of course we found Beryl and the two aforementioned ~~bin~~ ladies drinking tea...or maybe just sitting around..idle snover they are, these winmin...and conversing.

Pausing only to remove my foot from Beryls head, (the poor gal is so enthusiastic), we entered, flopped onto a couch and meshed.(hmmmm). After a while pub opening time crawls around so we decide we'll go find some nice quite pub and while away the evening there... and this is where the story really begins...

Doreen & Daff had come across from Peterborough in Doreens car. The heap had given some trouble already...and when she tried to start it the thing just refused to go. Well. We rolled the darn thing down the hill, but it wouldn't have it. So we rolled it up the hill....and down again...so Archie (after a desperate search by Dorren) get lumbered with the starting handle



and shoved round to the front of the vehicle. Hmm. we'd better pass over the events, comments and suggestions that filled the next ten minutes, suffice to say that poor Archie was reduced to a panting wreck, Beryl to a giggling idiot. hnm...reduced?..or well. and certain ladies indulged in unladylike complaints ejaculations and threats...this didn't move the car either. So, we decide to shove the car back up the hill...ah, what a heroic decision that was, the hill was very steep...and park the thing on the grass verge...and ride off in my van. Ah,

We push the car up the hill. We turn the wheel and push it towards the grass verge...hcccccaave...it up the pavement and onto the grass... "now put the handbrake on" I, or someone said. "I can't" wailed Doreen, as she scrambled desperately through the window of the car...and the car rolled on...Archie holding the left side, Doreen being dragged along as she felt frantic-ally for the hand brake...me first ploughing furrows in the ground with my heel-s.. then being dragged over, falling on my back, being dragged along behind the runaway vehicle...hanging desperately onto the door handle...across the road...the windows of the front room...Beryl's neighbour...were lit..."We'll be with you in a second" I thought...but..thankgod. the damn car finally stopped...Archie, Doreen and me still clinging to it... Daff having hysterics, and that wit Beryl polling on the ground laughing her silly head off.

In the end..when we recovered..we did get the thing back up the hill and onto the verge in safety. There we left it. We all piled into my mini.. poor Archie, buried under a pile of females...hnm...hnm...so thats why he volunteered to travel in the back..and I thought he was being a gentleman... anyhow we got to this pub and nattered all night over a couple of drinks... very pleasant evening but I can't remember what we were on about...and eventually I took the....ladies...back to Beryl's and Archie home with me.

Next day Beryl, Doreen and Daphne came over to Stourbridge. Of the adventures that occurred that day I will only mention a little. The ladies were late coming, so Archie and I drove over to Redditch to see if Doreen's car was playing nar up again...when we got there we found we'd missed them by 20 minutes..."We must have passed them on the way" quoth I...er..or Archie. And so we had...they'd seen us, but we missed them.. anyhow they were waiting when we got back to number 18. Half-a-dozen Brummies also turned up eventually, Roger, Chas, Al, Ed, Cliff...and Tony & Simone Walsh. I had quite an enjoyable evening. Doreen and Daphne left about 9, they had to get back to Peterborough, and Chas, Cliff & Ed begged a lift back to Brum...I had horrible visions of the poor overloaded car sliding backwards down Lucklows hill...anyway, we learned later that the Brummies got home OK, but poor Doreen and Daphne spent the night...it was freezing cold too...in the car when it broke down between... Warwick and Rugby I think she said. Sheesh. Meanwhile the "party" at my place developed into 3 groups, sitting around talking like mad...just like a room party at a con. after hours of this the thing finally broke up, Roger and Al to hitch back to Brum, The Walshes and Archie south to Bristol and Bridgewater, and I carted the Peril back to Redditch. Was quite a night that. anyhow...I mustn't go on too long, I have to get all the stencils run off yet.

Many thanks to Mike Higgs for the fabulous cover. 'be all. Ken

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by... Ken Cheslin,
18 New Farm Road, (A CRINGEBINDER PUBLICATION)
Stourbridge, Wores.,

Merry Christmass.

"THE FOLLOWING LETTER AND COLUMN ARE TO BE
CREDITED TO THE ACTIVITY OF DON STUDEBAKER.

September 20th, 1964
Berkeley, California
United States of America

Ken M.P. Cheslin, Esq.
18 New Farm Road,
Stourbridge, Worcs, England.

Dear Mr. Cheslin,

The manuscript I am sending you with this letter was given to me by Don Studebaker a few months ago just before I left ship at the Canary Islands. You see, I was a seaman on the yacht (the Sturmflieger Drei) on which he was working as a cook (as he mentions on the last page of this Naked Artichoke thing). We became good friends although, confidentially, I think he was a little bit nuts.

Anyhow, when I left the Sturmflieger at the Canaries to try and get passage around the Cape to the West Coast of the United States, Don was already starting to have doubts about whether Herr Schmith and his wife were really going to Miami, so he gave me the original of this manuscript, along with a couple of letters, and asked me to mail them for him if I didn't hear from him in a couple of months (I had given him my mail drop here on the west coast). I just got back this last week or so ago, and it's been the two months and more, and there's no word from or about him, so here this thing is just as he asked me to send it.

Now the reason I'm writing this letter instead of just sending the thing along is this. As Don knows, I was planning to leave the Sea when I got back to California, and this I have done. I am starting a Ship's Rest and Restaurant herein California. Now while I was still with Don on board the Sturmflieger he gave me the recipe for his Baked Alaska - which is simply terrific. But somewhere during my trip (which was pretty

long and involved, as I had to go the long way around, via the Cape of Good Hope, Sidney, Honolulu and here), I lost it.

So I am writing to you in the hope that you might know where he is, or can get in touch with him somehow, and tell him to write me and let me have the recipe. Also, see if you can get him to come out here and go into partnership with me as chief cook. Aside from the Baked Alaska, his cooking is lousy but I figure we can call it "genuine ship's fare" and give it real snob appeal.

I am kind of afraid you might not have heard from or of him either, though, because of two things. One is that I haven't heard anything about the Sturmflieger docking in Miami at all, and I had a friend of mine at Port control there check the registry for me for the last three months. The other thing is the sailor I met in Sidney.

This sailor said that he had seen the Sturmflieger in Rio a couple of months back while he was stranded there, and had gone aboard her to ask for a berth. Well, they didn't have any spare berths (she's a small ship, the Sturmflieger, and a taut one), but while he was aboard her he got talking with a couple of the hands, and from what they said, she was shipping out in a couple of days for Argentina. Now he left Rio the next day on a tanker for Melbourne and Sidney, where I met him, so he doesn't know what became of her, but the thing that really bothers me is, he said there wasn't an American aboard her, and that he'd met the cook, who was a big Turk named Ali.

So that was all the guy knew, and that is all I know. Please, Mr. Cheslin, if you know where he is either tell him to write me, or tell me where he is so I can get in touch with him, because I really want that Baked Alaska recipe and I'd like him to come into partnership with me.

And please forgive the typing; I'm not a typist, but I thought this would look better than my scribbling.

Yours truly,

Signed.

James O'Neal.

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Don Studebaker
somewhere in
the middle of
the gawdforsaken
Atlantic.
Seasick.

THE NAKED ARTICHOKE
BECOMES A
WALLFLOWER

by

Don Studebaker.

The Stewardess was interesting, but alas, not interested. We landed at Frankfurt, changed to a Pan American flight to Berlin, and landed at the Zentralflughafen Tempelhof. Tempelhof what I never found out.

I strode from the plane on wobbling knees, my confidence shattered by the ~~propertious~~ traumatic experience of being rejected. A large German, dressed in a uniform (which is not at all unusual in Germany) appeared out of the darkness.

"Are you Herr Naked Artichoke?" he asked.

Unsure where he had heard this euphemism, and observing that his uniform bore more merit badges than Chris Moskowitz at a D.A.R. convention, I came to the conclusion that he was

- (a) The Chief of Police
- (b) The Russian Commander of East Berlin.
- (c) The head of Willy Brandt's not-so-secret service.

I allowed myself to be led into the blackness.

The blackness took on the outlines of a 1937 Mercedes limousine, the door of which opened ominously. I slid into the unlit interior and felt the cold leather upholstery slowly settle into a contour more in keeping with mine. The man in the uniform shut the door with a thunk and went around to the other side of the car. When his door opened, the light went on.

My agent was sitting on the seat next to me. Had they got him too, I thought?

I guess I must have dozed, or something, because I remember waking with Ulrich pouring Kummel down my throat. I hate Kummel with a frigid passion, and managed to spill it all over poor Ulrich's black suit. (Perhaps I have not made clear that Ulrich Vogel (of Vogel, Vogel, Vogel und Vogel und Söhne, one of those big German family enterprises) is my European Agent. (plug plug). When some colour had returned to my cheeks, he explained the mysterious reception.

"I borrowed the driver from a friend of mine," he said. "Or rather - he loaned it, er him, to me with the car. They have a mania for uniforms here. If it weren't for the diversity of uniforms, the uniformity would get you down."

Urlich explained that we were not going to a hotel, but to the home of the car's owner, who was largely responsible for my poems being performed with the Vergun music.

"He wants to meet you immediately," said Urlich. "He's Chairman of the Board of Directors."

"Off what?" I asked, innocently. "Practically everything!" said Urlich. "He saw that REFLECTIONS IN A BOWL OF CHILI in some funny little magazine and decided that Berlin must have a performance."

"What funny little magazine?"

"I don't know, really. He has some things sent to him under an assumed name at a New York post office box. Gets all kinds of things that way."

"Why does he have them sent to him under an assumed name?"

"Because it would not be seemly for one of his station to receive that sort of things. If the public knew it might hurt his image."

"His station?"

"Oh! That's right! I forgot to tell you who he is. Its von Höflichkeit."

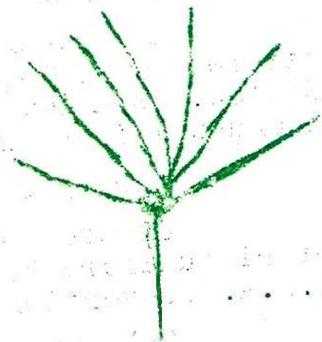
"von Who?"

"That's right. von Höflichkeit. He lives out in Teufelsburg.. But don't misunderstand. He doesn't have to live there. He just likes gazing at the mountain."

"Mountain?"

"The one they built from the rubble of the bombed out city. He likes to think of the good old days, when it used to be his father's. Of course, he still owns the land, which is to say, he owns all the new buildings on it, which is to say, downtown Berlin. But somehow, its just not the same."

* We went through a gate and followed a driveway through several acres of - landscaped forest? Pulling up before what looked like a smaller edition of the Schöneberg Palace (for all I knew it could have been the Schöneberg Palace) the driver leaped from his seat, ran around the car, opened the door and snapped to attention with such vigah that I feared I might have to reset his spine on the spot. We proceeded up a broad marble staircase to the front door, were admitted by the door man, then by the doorman to the antechamber, then by a butler who escorted



us through the first hall, and gave us into the keeping ofyet another butler. This one took us through a maze of Louis the fourteenth, Henry the Fifteenth, and Paul the 26th, living rooms, dining rooms, and a Henry the eighth bedchamber. He left us in a comfortable little den furnished in Danish modern. Over the fire place hung a self portrait of Paul Klee. - Or maybe it was a persian carpet done by a very square turk.

The door opened and a young man walked in. He was perhaps, twenty-eight, blonde, rather nordic, but in a soft, comfortable sort of way, with a neat, clipped moustache and startling hazel eyes with yellow coronas. He wore tight grey slacks, open toed sandels, and an "Ich Liebe Beethoven" sweat-shirt.

Vögel burst into a torrent of florid German, the only words I could understand were my name, 'Herr Naked Artichoke', and dumbkopf. The man in the sweatshirt nodded slightly in my direction. Vögel then turned to me and said;

"Herr Fredegar, this is Der Graf Seigfreid X. von Höflichkeit."

I got to know der Graf rather well. Well enough to understand why he hid behind the facade of his palace. I slept in the Henry the eighth room when there was nothing to keep me awake, which was not often. He spent a lot of time crawling from one American G.I. bar to another, or playing games with the Vopos along the Wall. Seigfreid confided one day that he could not abide antique furniture; but the palace had come furnished. He slept in

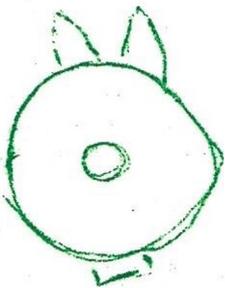
a small room with a wall to wall mattress (there was a standing order that no peas were allowed in this part of the house) and a single calder mobile.

Der Graf is somewhat of a poet. He latched on to the REFLECTIONS as a suitable item for testing his ability to translate obscure English into obscure Deutsch. (According to Der Graf, the REFLECTIONS is even more obscure in Deutsch than in English.) This was the ulterior motive that led him to produce the Vergun music with my poems.

Three days of luxury, then the bomb fell. In Berlin this must always be prepared for.

I had been brought across the fierce Atlantic not merely to coach the singers in the difficult quarter-tone progressions and sprech-stimme of the Second and Fifth Images, but, once I had absorbed enough Deutsc to make it possible, I was to sing in the damn thing myself! In German, fer'gawdsake! You might say I had been grafted into the production.

Fine!



So I tried to learn German. This required someone on whom to practise, so Seigfreid was kind enough to lend me his chauffeur once more. This was nice: the Chauffeur was an ex-patriot Russian. He claimed that his name was Ivan Ivanovich Romanof, and on his off days he insisted that he was Anastasia in a clever plastic disguise. Aside from this one small quirk, he was really a sweatshirt-wearer himself. In addition to which, he had all sorts of connection inside East Berlin. This led to the Matter of the Vopos.

You see, in the early hours of one fine Berlin morning, we decided to steal the wall. - Or as much of it as we could fit in a Microbus.

There was to be a break the next morning, about two a.m. The plan was to drive an armoured truck through the Wall at Friedrichstrasse. With good timing, Ivan thought we could hi-jack enough of the shards to start a small tourist trade.

We talked the matter over with Seigfreid. Although he was somewhat taken with the idea, he could hardly be expected to give official approval on the thing. However, he made it clear in a muddled sort of way, that he would not be using his specially-built microbus that night. Further, that if we wished to go souvenir hunting in the middle of the night, he would see that we had a man to drive the 'bus, as it was equipped with a Corvair Monza engine and full Spyder equipment, and could be ticklish to handle.

Ivan and I left instructions that the driver should come dressed completely in black, as we would be. Ivan then procured some black nylong stockings to go over our heads, though from what source he did not say. At two the next morning, Ivan, the driver, and I were crouched in our galloping micro-bus near the planned break-through point.

Suddenly the searchlights went on behind the Wall, there was a din of machine guns and whistles, and an armoured truck erupted through the wall, ripped through the barbed wire, and went careering down Friedrichstrasse. Instantly the microbus leaped forward and screeched to a halt beside the infamous Wall. Springing from the bus, Ivan, the driver, and I, yanked open the side doors and began tossing in chunks of rock and barbed wire.

As we tossed we could hear yells, curses and assorted foiled agains from behind the Wall where a wasps nest had been stirred up by this brutal shtick. Then a shout of another caliber notified us that we had been spotted, and a fusilade of shouts (plus a few bullets and some more pieces of rock) came hurtling at us, followed in the distance by a hoarde of Vopos pouring through the gash in the Wall. Ivan grapped a few of the

choice items so thoughtfully hurled at us, but our driver engendered the most fury among our noble opponants when he stooped down and picked up the flattened lead remains of one of the bullets. Then indeed it was time to leave, so we jumped in the microbus and went speeding down Friedrichstrasse in the general direction followed by the truck. The still morning air was completely shattered then, as our driver let out a savage Hojotoho! in fine, resonant baritone.

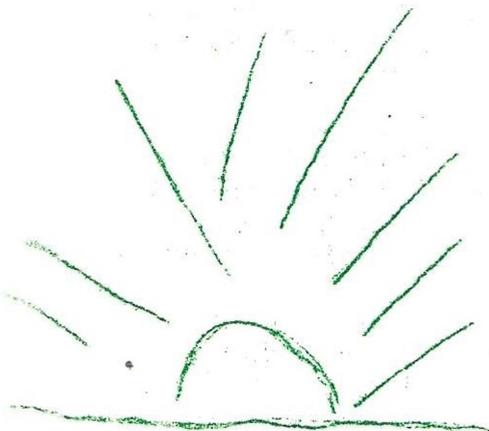
-But that wasn't quite the end of it. The next night, while the poor Vopos were repairing the wall (under the watchful eye of that Russian at the back of the picture) we returned with a new piece of equipment. A large metal slingshot, bolted securely to the floor of the bus and 15 dozen day old custard pies. They shot at us again, but what can one do, how can one aim a rifle, when one is being bombarded with custard pies and laughter? It was this second jape that revealed to us our driver's marked resemblance to a certain sweatshirt-wearer with a Title.

Don't get the wrong idea about Seigfreid, fellow OMPAns. He is not the stuffy sort that English nobility, alas, prove to be. Titles don't mean much in Germany today. Its money that counts. And Seigfreid has lots of that. Underneath it all, you must understand, he is really just an average guy with a billion Deutschmarks.

There was the time we were bar-crawling up near Reichskanzlerplatz, in the British sector. We were in a small Bathskeller when a couple of drunken Heidelberg students started to annoy one of the bar maids. When Siegfried told them to shut up and leave, they left. Two minutes later they were back waving sabres, Sharp sabres. With points. Sharp points.

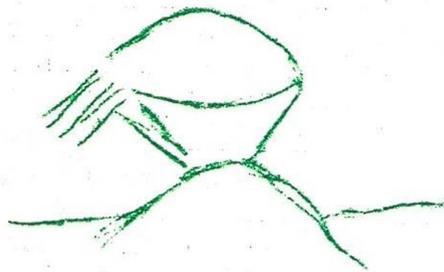
With a nonchalant glance in their direction Siegfried reached up and disengaged an old dueling sabre from its honored place on the wall. Dropping into en garde position, he engaged the young Kameraden.

The fight moved out of the bar in a matter of seconds, and the duel proceeded down the cobblestone street. At the head of the street a crowd gathered to watch the show. Among the crowd I noticed two confused looking German policemen, nervously fingering their pistols and wondering what to do. The poor gentlemen were not forced to worry too long. Seigfried forced the two students through the door of a brewery, up a stair, and into a vat of beer. We left them there sitting in the beer and admiring their new scars.



We departed in the souped up microbus, somewhat rapidly, rather happily and brandishing all three swords as the crowd took up a mocking chorus of "Heidelberg, Heidelberg, unter alles".

It was a shame about the concert. Even with Sieggy's money and influence it proved impossible to find a tuba that would play quarter-tones -And no German orchestra would ever play anything without at least five tuba's.



Seriously though, Siegfried was called away on business, (to Argentina, I think) and without his presence, nothing could be achieved. For one thing, I argued incessantly with the conductor Manfred Brütchen, who couldn't stand my voice. Not even in speech. Not even in the next room.

Ivan finally convinced a small political sect (there are lots of them in Germany) that he really is Anastasia. When I left they were running him for mayor of Berlin on a reform ticket.

Without Ivan, my German lessons ceased. Soon thereafter, so did my German, paltry as it was. Gretchen didn't talk much. (I guess I didn't mention her; did I?).

Ulrich had spent a good deal of time with the soprano Mariana Dratsenkova, during rehearsals. Too much, because he eloped with her to the Soviet Union, where she enjoys some prestige as a Peoples Artist of the Republic.

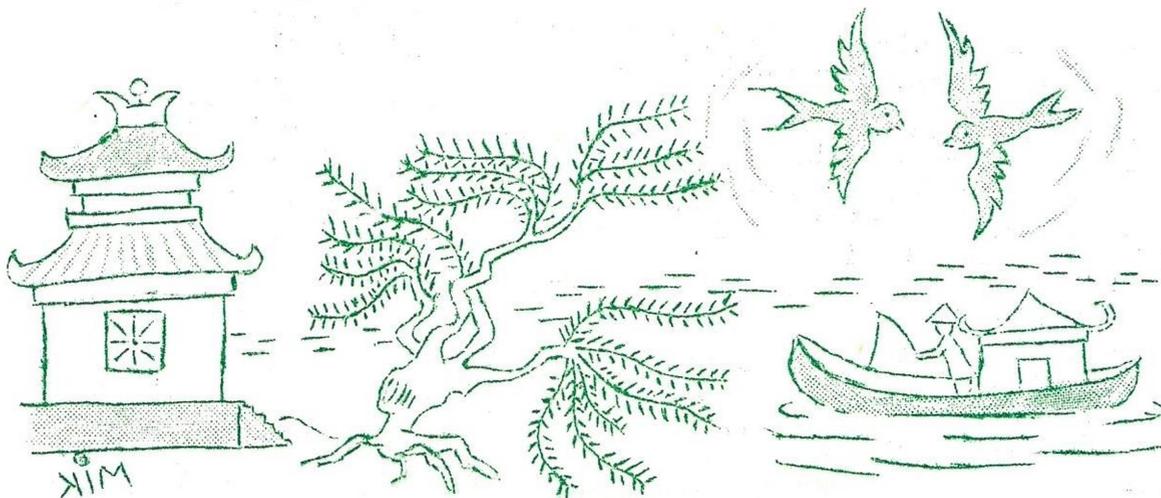
You can understand why, when the rehearsal hall was condemned, we gave up the project as a bad job. Siegfried had thoughtfully provided me with return tickets to the U.S. but these proved impractical in use. He bought them from a strange little fly-by-night (pardon the pun) outfit called Flying Tiger Airlines Inc., which, try as I might, I could not find. They had just crashed their last plan, or so I was told.

I left all my possessions at von Höflichkeit's place, including a manuscript for this column, and instructions that it was to be sent to Ken Cheslin. After that, I bummed my way to Bremerhave, getting out of Berlin by car with an American service man.

In Bremerhaven I found a job as a cook on a private yacht sailing within the week for Miami, and aside from Herr Schmidt's intense dislike for my Baked Alaska (which is the only thing I cook really well) things seem to be looking up for this tired traveller. I will see the States hence some OMPA mailings, soon, and I confess they will be a welcome sight. Though I shall always have fond memories of Berlin and its charming architecture. The only thing that worries me now is that Herr Schmidt and his wife Anita, spend a lot of time practising their Spanish.

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Don Studebaker. Mid Atlantic 1964 dec.



T O K Y O L E T T E R

November 26th 1963

Now let's talk about Obake (ghost). Nowadays no one seems to believe in obake, and it's natural in this age of rocket. However, if one looks for it very carefully, there seems to be Obake or ghost near at our hands. Like Human beings, Obake has become so clever, and they won't show up where they are supposed to be seen appear, and as they haunt at the place like the seat in the street car or such, no one could be aware of it.

The one of Obake I knew was in such a strange place. He was, my! on a shelf of a super-market next to the canned juice. I was so surprised when I took one of the cans to find that it was light, so light that it seemed to me as if it were empty, comparing with the other ones, and when I shook it, it sounded like small stones in the can.

"Please don't shake me so roughly" rattling sound seemed to talk to me. "My! What is it?" I stared at the can, so frightened. It seemed there was nothing different with it from ordinary ones. Only one thing that its different from others was that it was soooo light. One can't imagine that the canning factory should make such a mistake and one can hardly imagine such light can should be put sold on the shop without being checked by any one either.

I bought, from curiosity, that strange can, together with others, and after coming home again I tried to shake it near to my ear, and again there sounded the strange voice, "I told you not to shake me like that!"

"Who are you?" I asked, and after a short time, the strange voice answered, "You know me well, don't you?"

"Hum" I smiled. One, with a face of horse, with 36 legs if there be a creature like that, no doubt it must be an Cbake, yes, the answer of this riddle is Cbake. It surely must be one. So, to answer the question "What is one who chatters in a can of juice" of course it is Cbake.

"So you're Cbake, aren't you?"

"That's right".

"Then I'll leave you as before" I said. I remembered the story of Cbake who was spurt up in a bottle or pot. If one release them carelessly, a great disaster may happen to him at any time.

"You ought to". "I crept into here after a long and hard effort. You don't know what would happen if you open it" he said. Hearing him saying so, I suddenly came to be caught by an idea to open it. I brought a can opener and put it to the edge of the can.

"Stop it" Cbake was crying in the can.

"For heaven's sake, please don't open it"!

So I drew the can opener back. "Well I won't open it any more, but will you tell me the story of Cbake?"

"I will, of course I will" he promised, almost crying. And I shut up the canned Cbake into the drawer of my desk.

It's still being kept there, in my drawer and sometimes I take it up and enjoy listening to his story and the story goes like.....I'll tell you the story sometime.

On 8th December we SF fans in Tokyo had a party or meeting of Uchujin club at the Movie Studio of Posamu Tezuka, a most famous cartoonist of Japan, whose annual income amounts to 10,000,000 yen or 280,000\$ and whose films have now been exported to US and other countries, formerly was a doctor, a graduate of Ceake University, my Alma Mater. Most of his cartoons are of SF and his "TETU-WAK-ATCM" Atom, the iron arms, are liked by most of Japanese children.

27 persons showed up, including 7 young ladies and enjoyed looking around the studio where around 170 artists were busy working, drawing the pictures and we watched how the cartoon movies were made. Yumiko Kakayama, a pen pal of Beth Johnson was present, who was a famous Japanese dancer and teaching dancing yet so young and beautiful, about 22 or 23 I think, wearing always Japanese kimono, so gay all the time. A High school student, a boy, asked me to give me "Yandro" a US fanzine edited by Robert and Juanita Coulson, and I promised to send it to him. WE had really a nice time chattering about SF, and got home very late at night.

Some of them asked to to introduce to them some US SF stories not yet translated in Japanese yet and I'd like to. Will some of you be so kind as to let me know some new and nice SF



stories that are very romantic or fantastic? If you can, I think I could introduce them in our fanzine Uchujin. Or perhaps it may be quite well to tell me what are the most popular and loved in US and England. S.F. enthusiasm in Japan has been greatly increased these days and we have some writers of our own. The SF movie "Submarine Battleships" is now shown in the theatre of Tokyo now. Even some SF essays appeared in the Papers too., and the readers are always hungry for SF and more than 100 paper backs have been issued, almost all of them translations of old and new SF stories of US, England and USSR, including Asimov, Heinlein, Bradbury and others. Even the classical ones like Wells are still loved and read.

By the way, shouldn't we ask to the God to gain our life reversely? Like winding clocks back, can't we begin our lives from the end? When we are born, man begins his life from the end, and without the help of any medicine or any hospital, every year he becomes young and healthy and active. A man may be born from under the wheel of a damp car that had run over him, he may recover from his heavy wound very soon, and he comes home quite all right, like Lilion. The drowned from the river. And there begins their new lives. First he is old of course, but soon he becomes young, to his middle ages and he or she found one's jobs interesting, his or her friends flock to them and his life become so active. His wife or her husband become soon young and beautiful too, and finally they become to love each other so tenderly, or first see each other, and soon they part, then they enter in the universities and they gradually come to forget what they know. Then they become so young boys or girls, Only difference between they and ordinary children is that their dreams are all frozen into the remembrances but even the dreams come to solve into the pure and transparent ones, and they become so nice and lovely day by day and they come not to be able to stand or walk and they crawl on the floor. The loss of memory means no bad phenomenon, but the sign of quite a nice health.

The best thing is that they soon forget every word. No literature at such time! The last word left for them "Papa, Mamma" soon decodes from their memory and that means their end of life is coming nearer. No poverty and no disease. Solitude is the product of the present people, and one of them feel lonely and solitude. All they have in their lives are the rich full feeling of life. And soon they become no human beings. Just like a rocket shot into space or a lost star or if they were on Earth, no one could find them using finest microscope. Thousands millions of them are near at hand but they aren't aware of it.

And that is the death. The first cry of the new born baby remain in the air and that's all. No coffins, no sanscrit, no flowers and tombstones are necessary for them, even the weeping of their family.

But the present is quite the other way. If the time goes on counterclockwise, all the disease are to be cured and all the quarrel between husband and wife are sure to be settled in love, all the collums of the consultant in the papers would say, "Do leave it. That's quite all right. Time cures it" ---

Have you every read the play of that beautiful "Alt Heiderberg"? It is one of my favorite book and I first read it more than 20 years ago, when I was a high school student. The writer is Wilhelm Mayerhelster, and it is such a romantic story of love between a young Prince and a pretty girl of an inn, (and their names are Karl Heinrich and Ketty). The story tells how beautiful the one's youth are, and how quickly they pass. And there is a German restaurant at Roppongi, where my office is located, named Alt Heiderberg. And I'm planning to have a small party inviting two young people there. They are my secretary, a very beautiful girl called Miss Department of the Army, and a young Lieutenant, one of my men and a graduate of the Defence Academy. He is now studying English in Army Language School, where I graduated 3 years ago, preparing for visiting US. I introduced them to each other last month and soon they come to love deeply each other and promised to marry. Now they are at the best time of the life enjoying date every weekend, but they don't seem to know what to do from now on. So I planned to have him give her an engage ring and I chose Alt Heiderberg as the place where he gives it to her. It is supposed to be next Saturday afternoon. I plan to invite them there and we, my wife Sumiko, my boy Mototosh of 3 years old and I, together with the young lovers, have a nice dinner there, at the table lit by candle light, and then he will give the loving girl his ring, and love too, and soon we'll disappear, and they'd feel the true happiness of life, and perhaps never forget that day. It's quite a nice beautiful place, and they always sheds soft and very nice music, and dishes are wonderful. She is a nice girl and she used to go and buy me stamps and I can send them to Mrs. Esther Richardson to exchange for US ones. Thank you very much Seth for your stamps for her. Her brother is now in New York and if they get married perhaps they may visit US together and may call on you someday. She was so much pleased to have that stamp of Mrs. Roosevelt for it was the first time that she was presented from foreigner. She's not good at English so can't write a letter of thanks but she sends her best regards and thanks to you. And you'll get her picture together with ours enclosed.



I think at the time when you get this letter you are in Xmas or the Xmas season might have finished already, and how was it? Did you enjoy your Xmas season? In Japan, Xmas isn't the Xmas in its true meaning and there are a great much sale of goods in all the cities, towns and villages. They have Xmas sales, Xmas dance parties and Viking dishes. There are many Christians in Japan, but not so much as your countries and few people celebrate it in your ways. So I am very interested in knowing what you did or had at the Xmas. As for me I sent Xmas cards to some of my dear old friends overseas and some American officers staying in Japan and bought little Christmas tree for my boy, and hang on it many decorations including little toy tiger Esther kindly sent to Mototosh last year and took a box of wooden block with holes for children to hit with a wooden hammer to connect them, and Sumiko invites 3 children living in our neighbourhood to have a decoration cake with our boy and play. I myself am always, every year, very busy in this season having conferences with the Government officials of Treasury Dept. to make Army Budget for FY 64 (you know our FY begins in April) and every Xmas eve I came home very late at night.

Last Saturday we had too many accidents of traffic confusion and 53 people were killed and it was the record of the year. Every street on Tokyo is so much crowded by the cars and trucks and it's terrible and dangerous for the old and the weak and too young even to cross the road. The other day I happened to meet an American Navy Officer in the streetcar and he told me, answering to my question, that he takes tram car instead of riding his own car as it seemed to him difficult to get through among these huge flood of a great many cars, and it would surely take a lot of time to get to his office. Now Tokyo is preparing to widen most of its streets for the Olympic Games.



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TOKYO LETTER 5



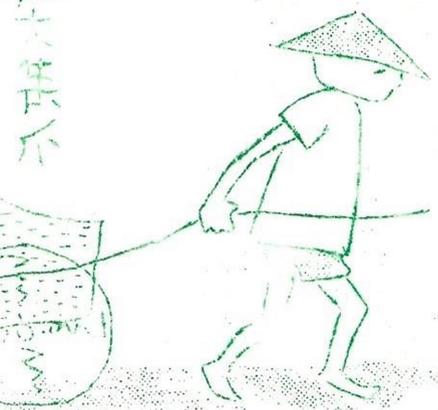
1. Excuse me of my long silence. Since the Tokyo 4, I think I have made some progress in my typewriting skill, and the mistakes have come to lessen, and the speed is slowly increasing, and I hope soon I could send more and longer letters to you, dear friends. And now it is 7th of February, and a soft draft is blowing in this sky of Tokyo.

2. From 27 January to 3 Feb. I had been travelling in Hokkaido on Official job, and I was very lucky to have 2 American ladies' friends there, whom I had an honor to guide through the city of Sappolo to see the famous Snow Festival. One of them was my teacher of English conversation at Kosei-Nenkin Kaikan Hall, and she is a very nice lady with so beautiful white hair. A week before we were in the classroom discussing telepasy or something and she told me that she was going to visit Hokkaido to see the Snow Festival. And I told her that I was heading there too, and we promised to see again there and enjoy the festival.

Mrs. Cardwell was her name, and she is so sweet and kind and excellent lady, and whenever I see her I always remind of my dear Esther Richardson, my best friend. She had the same beautiful white hair, and such a nice kind, loving lady that all of my family loves her very much, and, although we had never seen her yet, even the little Mototosi of 4 years old calls her his "Auntie in America" and whenever he sees an lady of foreign country on the street he asks me if she isn't our Auntie in America. So the image of this wonderful lady has come to mix up into the same nice lady, Mrs. Cardwell, and I, even myself cannot tell which is which now. As Esther has so long been my pen pal and we have had so nice a time telling many things each other in our many letters, and I got her pictures, I feel now I have seen her actually many times, and as Mrs. Cardwell is very like her, and I love them both, it seemed for me as if I had travelled with these two ladies together.

Besides I had another nice American lady, very young and beautiful, named Miss Marya Morton from Calif. She got to Japan in Jan. only a month ahead, and left for New York this morning. She was studying color, and I hope she could reap the fruitful harvest in Japan during her journey. Hokkaido is located to the north of Japan mainland, a biggest island it is, and we can enjoy ski-ing or other winter sports there. And once a year they have a big festival of snow, when they elect many huge snow statues at the big park in Sappolo city, the capital of Hokkaido. For example the statue of Sphynx is more than 20 metres or 70 feet high, built by the hands of the Self Defence Force (Army) soldiers. All the traffics were stopped and a great many peoples got together to see the festival on that day. Night views were specially wonderful, and we three went around the park, taking care of ourselves not to slip, holding arms together. And the next day, I borrowed a car from my friend and showed them all around the city, and saw them off at the station who were heading for the grand Noboribetu Spa. We know that the white snow, that fantastic nature, often makes us feel so mysterious, and it often purifies the Human heart, like in the story of Xmas Carol of Dickens. And so it was, and I got back to Tokyo, this huge metropolis, with a very purified heart like that of a child ---- (I was happy to have had an opportunity of seeing Miss Morton again before she left for the States on Feb 6, when Mrs. Cardwell invited me to the preshow of new Switzerland movies by the Swiss Embassy and we had a nice time again).

3. On fourth of Feb. I was happy to have a ringcall from Mr. Robert Brown, a sf fan, of Calif. who is an communication officer of a US ship "Aloha States", one of my penpals who often kindly sent me picture post cards from some ports of the world (Seth Johnson gave my name to him together with Mrs. Esther Richardson and Takumi Sivano. Thanks very much Seth) Robert had called me once before last year when his ship dropped in Yokohama but I was sorry we couldn't see each other then. So I immediately give a ring to Takumi and he to some of our group and Mr. Mori, a young and ambitious assistant editor of our only one sf progine, named SF MAGAZINE, Mr. Tuchiya, a teacher and a HAM, Mr. K. Noda, a TV manager and Takumi and I went to Yokohama at 7 o'clock in the evening (since his boat was supposed to sail at 3 A.M. we didn't have enough time to invite him to Tokyo). And we saw the second American sf fan in Japan under the Marine tower, at the parlour of the Seamen's Club. He was a nice looking gentleman and I thought he was somewhat like Dr. Keynes of England, a famous economist. We were very happy and notwithstanding of the language balocade there seemed to be a friendly feeling that connected us. He took us to the China town and we had a nice talking each other on every subjects. It was our great regret that Mr. N. Ito and Mr. Toyota weren't there, both of them are promising young writer



of sf (Norio Ito has a pile of stock of his American paperback sf stories that US GI left when they left Japan, and Aritune Toyoda has written enormous fantastic sf novels on Uchujin, our fanzine. They were both very busy having their (graduation) final exam that day. Time flyed really like an arrow and it was already time when we had to say goodbye. Robert wanted to take us to his ship to show one and we just wanted to. But as it was already time to go back we took a taxi and at the front of the station we parted.

4. 6th of this month we Army had a big maneuver exhibition and I invited 10 sf fans of Uchujin to come to see it. I couldn't attend there (the outskirts of Mt. Fuji) but Shibano told me that they had a big experience to see how the modern battles are fought by airplanes, tanks, and guns and helicopters. It was said that Noda, of Fuji TV, our friend, always very brave in everything, put on the Army helmet, wanted to see the battle more closely and jumped in front of the tank, when it suddenly fired its 90 m.m. gun, he was greatly astonished and fell down on the ground, his face quite turned pale Anyhow they had a nice experience really.

I got two letters from Ken today and they contained many interesting remarks of him. I can well see the surroundings where he is in, that beautiful old rural England that I once read in the Irving's sketch book. I am especially much interested in what he told about Arranged Marriage and Love Marriage. And I would like to have some of our young boys and girls about your opinion some day. I myself quite agree with you Ken that you can't imagine parents who love their son or daughter would deliberately arrange a marriage which would make their child unhappy.

Takumi Sibano advised me to introduce our sf activities in Japan in my Tokyo Letter as to what kind of sf are popular among our readers, what conferences we had recently here in Japan, and who published his new zines or so. As you Americans and English people doesn't read Japanese language we have no ways to contact personally with you and to exchange comments and opinions with foreign fans will no doubt be quite helpful for us he said, and I agreed with him, and so from next Letter you'll hear more about what are running about in Japanese fandom, through my rather poor English. And in that letter, perhaps some interesting illos would be set all drawn by Mik, a friend of Ken, who has never seen me or Japan, so the pictures are all of imagination and fantasy.

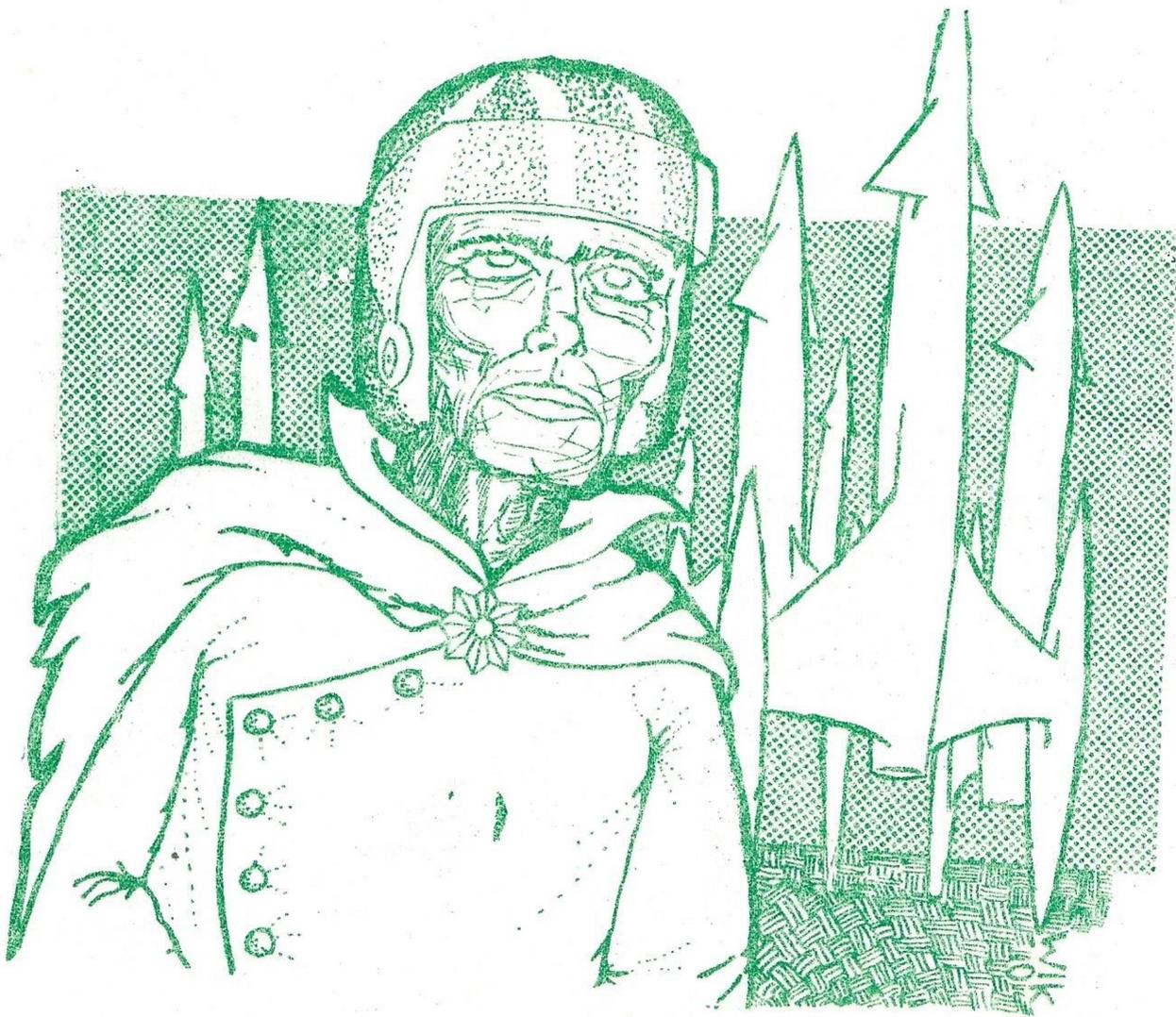
Ken kindly told me to send them, so if I could recopy the illos skillfully I think you'll enjoy them. First I'd like him to draw my picture (a portrait) by imagination and after that I'll send you my picture and you may understand who it is like.

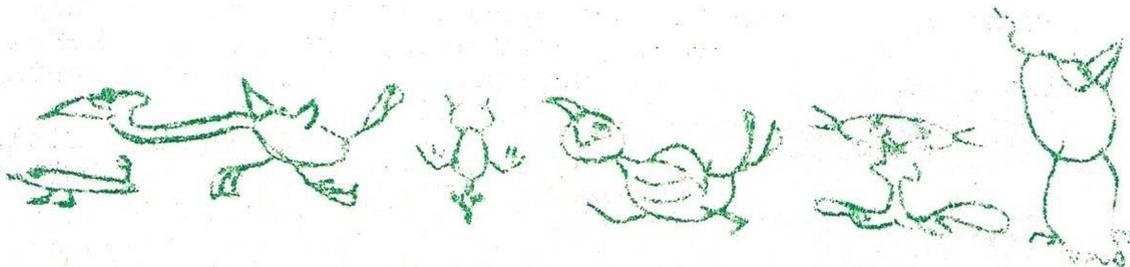
5. Do you know Ken, that we Japanese people have come to like Viking dishes more and more recently? They are quite like Jin-gi-thkhan dishes in China, and I hear that is originated from your country in very olden times. Vikings were the pirates that were very brave in olden days (I have often seen their pictures on TV) and I think much mutton is used in these dishes. They are very delicious and nice, and cheap so we can enjoy them even before the paydays -----

6. Ken, you like to know the parity of exchange between the United Kingdom and Japan, and it is; £1 equals about 1,000 yen and 1 \$ equals about 360 yen. And perhaps you may want to know how much are the prices of our goods and services cost, well we can buy a 30 cm LP record at 1,500 to 2,000 yen and we can have our hair cut at the cost of 300 yen. If you come to Japan Ken, and you made a very nice girl friend and you liked to take her to the first class restaurant you must pay about 700 yen for each, without drinks (of course we have other nice restaurants in Tokyo that are moderate, not so expensive and in that case you'll pay 400 to 500 yen) if magazine costs 180 yen and the newspaper 350 yen a month. So when you have 3000 in your purse you may think you are well off today, if you are interested in the prices of other goods please let me know. Oh, I've forgot to tell you how much foreign teacher of English earn in Tokyo. A man from New Zealand, who teaches us English at Koseinenkai gets around 180,000 yen a month and he is living very happily, he says, we are going to have Olympic games held in Japan this year you know, so the enthusiasm for English is now coming to its peak. Really, everyone seems to have begun studying English conversation and British and American teachers are very busy now. I'm afraid, however, if many people would continue studying it after the Olympiads are over

7. Dear Ken, I'd like to know if Mac'ormack, a famous singer, was an Englishman. I listened to his record of folksongs the other day and it was so fine and beautifully sung, tears came out into my eyes. I heard that he was dead years ago, but his voice is still remaining in our hearts, however, his way of singing was a little old fashioned. And I love English folksongs as well as American ones. London Delee, Love's old sweet song, Home sweet home, and the Blue bells of Scotland, and the Last rose of summer. Are these songs still loved and sung in your country?

8. Now the days are becoming longer day by day. These three days we had so-called snain but it stopped to rain and today we had a light sunshine slanting through the office windows. Now the beginning of early Spring? In Tokyo we have not so many flowers in the field as it is a huge metropolis. All the flowers we see are in the windows of the florists and that is the big city-life. However, we can enjoy the flowers of the season in some parks and gardens. They are usually arranged so nicely but doesn't seem like the same one as we have in the fields. From the windows of the streetcar every morning I look at the signboard of a florist saying, "Say it with flowers", and I think it's very beautiful.





HOKKAIDO LETTER (1)

Dear friends,

It's about 3 months since I sent you my Tokyo Letter. And now I'm going to write you from Hokkaido, a pretty large island at the north of Japan main land. I was transferred from the Ground Staff Office (Dept. of the Army) to this Depot in March and arrived here with my family, Sumiko, my wife and Mototosi, my son. So you'll hear from now on me chattering in Hokkaido.

I should have written to you as soon as I got here, but when I arrived at my office there were so big pile of document waiting me on my desk, and I had first to struggle to chase all these vouchers and things away at the end of the fiscal year (FY) 1963. (You know our government FY continues from April to March so all the finance officers are busy in this season, especially for newcomers.)

In Hokkaido, things are much different from Japan mainland. And as it is for the first time that I live in Hokkaido it's very interesting for me to know about the customs and ways of living in this Northern country.

I left Tokyo on 19 March and crossed the Channel the next day. And when we got off the train at the station we found it was a blizzard there (it was rather a warm and sultry night in Tokyo) and the snow was thick, about 50 inches on the ground. Some of my men were waiting for us and they took us to an inn (only one inn in Shimamatu) and we found a stove was burning in our room in which very big logs were hot burning.) The next morning we went to see our new residence and Sumiko was glad that the house was larger than one in Tokyo, and it had a wide garden. At the time we settled the ground was covered thick with snow, but soon in April when it has become warmer, numerous plants came out of the ground under the

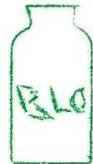
thick snow, and many flowers opened at one time and they were so beautiful; crocus, daffodils, sweet peas, cherries, tulips (I found its red color, and its yellow are unearthly vivid and fresh here in Hokkaido) wistaria, roses and spring chrysanthemums, And at the vast training field near here a great many so called "Lilies of the Valley" are blooming, almost burying the valleys and hills, and it's unearthly cheerful to lie down on the flower covered hills, surrounded by those fragrant small flowers shaped tiny white bells. Many people came to visit Shimamatu in this season to pick them and wild bracken, coltsfoot, udo (do you eat these?*) from Sappolo, the capital of Hokkaido. Because of the scanty traffic (city bus), however, those rich eatable wild vegetables are wasted or limited to those who have their own cars or are earnest enough to walk a long way to the field. And it takes about an hour to Sappolo from Shimamatsu by train, and it stops at some station for 17 minutes to wait the down train, as the rail is single track. So Sumiko wanted to learn how to drive and have her own car (the number of the motor car has rapidly increased these days in Japan, but new cars are still expensive, so she wants to buy very old one, second or third hand) and she attended a motor school for a month and had the exam for driving licence and at the third time she could finally get it. She's now preparing for the traffic laws and maintenance test. (As I type this letter she is reading text books and says that the structures of the car are very complicated and hard for her to understand).

Shimamatu is located near Chitose, where the American Army is stationed, and on 16th last month, the U.S. 3 Forces Day, Col. Kisi and I were invited to the baseball match between U.S. Army and us and given a silver trophy. They also held volley ball match, and so called "Taking up Arms" match. In this game a pair of U.S. soldier and our man, hand in hand, run and take shoes, put them on, take and put knapsacks on, take guns, helmets and run, and we enjoyed it. I took the daughter of Col. Kisi with us, named Keiko Kisi (the same name to the famous actress) and she also enjoyed it. At the theater many Japanese children were invited and watched the movie "101 Dalmasian Dogs of Walt Disney Production".

Now I'm going to tell you what happened these days in our country. La Venus de Milo was carried in from Italy, thanks to the good will of the Italian Government and Embassy, and a great many Japanese people could watch it and moved at this great Greek Statue. It's a regret that I can't see it in Tokyo, but I could watch it through T.V. from many angles and Miss Nakayama, my former secretary, kindly send its photograph she bought when she visited the museum. 3 girls having their jobs in G.S.O. in Tokyo including her are planning to travel through Hokkaido in this June as Hokkaido has become very popular recently of its cool summer and the grand sight, and many noted people are beginning to buy or build

their villas in Hokkaido. Some people say Hokkaido is somewhat like America, as its population is rather small comparing to Japan mainland, and the roads are wide, and there are many big farms and ranches. Even sheeps are raised here. There are many silos which roofs are painted in fresh green or red and they are so beautiful to look at. About 70 years ago, Dr. Clerk, an American from Massachusettes came to Hokkaido, He was invited as to be the Principal of the Hokkaido Agricultural school (Now it's Hokkaido Imperial University) and many years he taught young people there and all loved, respected and admired him. When time came that he had to return to America, Japanese students missed him so much and they came, sending him off, to Shimamatu on foot, more than 20 miles from Sappolo, and they parted. And Dr. Clerk, on horseback, waving his hand, left his last message, to those young Japanese people, "Boys, be ambitious", and they what he said, 'Boys be where they parted, now monument is elected and people visiting Hokkaido Shimamatu to see the Hokkaido people especially one of Americans named kindly taught us in the development of Hokkaido.

Mr. Takumi me to introduce our to you so I'd like first I'd like to tell Uchujin, our only one monthly I issued. Takumi of this zine.

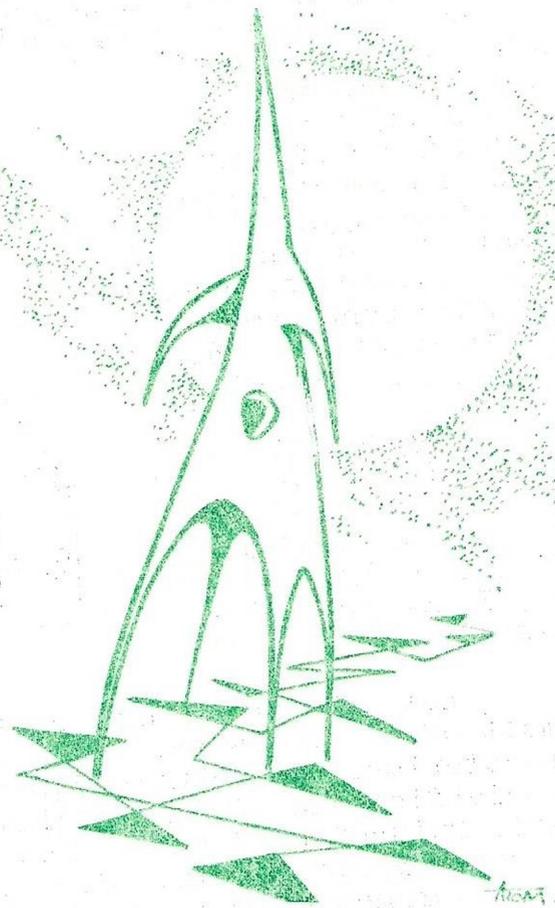


"Boys, be never forget ambitious! a stone most of the like to visit monument. And love Americans as Dr. Clerk so early days of

Sibano wanted Japanese fandom to do it, and you about sf fanzine is the editor

What Uchujin is different from those American ones is that most of its pages are occupied by science ficitions written by its coteries. In Uchujin 79, published in May, there are 2 long serialfictions, "Gray cardinal point" by Kusakawa, and "Fantastic Future" by Tutui. The former goes like this: In future society every young folks have a mental and physical test and the government choose their spouse and send them the cards of their partners. The story begins on a girl who lost all her memories 3 years ago by an accident. One days she goes to the park and picks a leaf of a tree out of the ground, as she looks at the leaf in her room she thinks that she had once seen the leaf somewhere and she seems to remember somebody who calls her name in her dream. And then there comes an inspector (in that age after the big nuclear war man must live strictly equal and even having a leaf of a tree is a crime) and he finds out the leaf she has. But he gives it to her and leaves. And she thinks that she have seen him somewhere before. And she begins wondering if she had been punished and erased all her memories

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by the court by some reasons..... And when the "marriage card" was sent to her and she opened it, she found the photo of that inspector on it her future husband .. "Fantastic Future" refers to the future living creatures, some of which have two bodies born tightly together, those "m" type and "f" type, hermaphrodite creature. And some philosophic discussion are talked between this creature and "single" one.

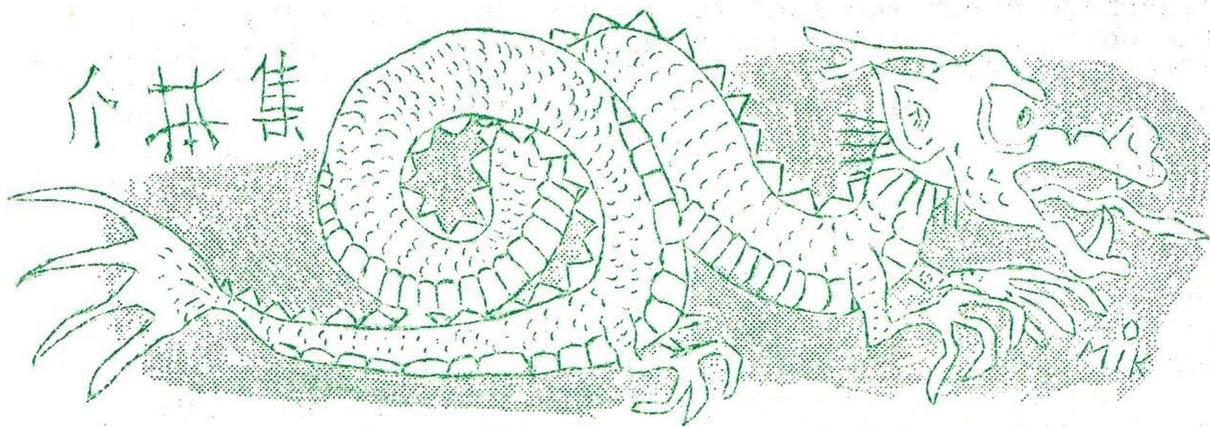
Roy Tackett's Dynatron is introduced in this Uchujin 79, how he found Japanese fandom while staying in Japan as a sergeant of Marine. "Writing in the sand" (essays of the editor) and chattering of Chrystal Gazing, Mrs. Roy Tackett, The endless Stream (Comment of Fangines) and Feedback, the letters from other fans etc. Next comes the 4 pages of translation of the "Swordman of Vernis" by Clive Jackson translated by Asakura. Short fiction "What he lost on snowy evening" by Yamano is a fiction of a man who is suffered by a man who has his face. All his happiness is destroyed by the man who has his face but finally he remembers that he himself was a man from other planet despatched to scout the earth The editor says Kusakawa and Yamano will be the new hope of Japanese sf circles this year. In the May issue of the professional sf Magazine, Shecrey's, "Fool's Mate," Wyndham's, "Time to Rest", Reinber's, "Mutant Brother", Bester's, "Disappearing Act", Clark's, "Nine Billion Names of God", Donieprov's, "Human Formula", Hunter's, "First Captive " are translated.

(continues)



the
SHUDDER
fanZine

A MiKtoons Publication by Mike Higgs, 138, Barrows Rd., Sparkhill, Birmingham 11, Warwickshire, England.



A SLIP OF THE TONG

by K.M.P. CHESLIN

I was feeling in a debonair mood that day, I remember chuckling with delight as I read the pathetically grateful letter the PM had sent me in connection with the high Tor affair, and as we cleaned up the cellar in preparation for the next orgy, I resolved that we'd do something different to mark the occasion.

"We'll eat out today, Dave" I enthused. "There's a rather decent Chinese restuarant in the village I've been meaning to visit. They give you a good nosh-up for only five bob..and" I added cunningly, "You won't have to do the washing up afterwards".

So it came to pass that the noon hour found us ensconsed in a secluded alcove in a dim corner of the Ying-Tong, an attentive Oriental hovering near at hand.

"Neat that", says Dave, indicating the leviating waiter.

I ignored him. Everyone knows its all done with mirrors anyhow. "What would you like" I asked Dave...."Some Chow Mein?; Chop Suey? er..some Y'tang H'loypui?".

The correct pronunciation of that last dish is Yt'an'gi Hoi'oi puy" assets Dave.... "An no," I correct him, "Possibly in Hong kong, but in Cantonese the right accenuation sounds like this: Y'tang H'loypui".

"Well" says Dave, reaching for a waiter, "We'll see".

Dave addresses the quivering waiter "Yt'an'gi Hoi'oi puy" he said firmly. "Y'tang H'loypui" I countered, with equal determination.

The waiter turned a sort of mottled blue and use a Chinese word not often heard in polite company, meanwhile producing a large revolver from some secret recess of his jacket. holding the revolver under his napkin the waiter pointed it in our general direction. "Into the kitchen foreign devils". He nissed. And, well, one tries to oblige, so we did as he urged.

Once in the kitchen we were surrounded by a milling horde of gun-toting waiters and ushered into the resence of a gentleman whom I took to be the manager. Our conductor burst into a torrent of Chinese, gesticulating in our direction every now and again. I tried not to stare of course, but he was making rather a scene.

After a few minutes, the manager, for thus he proved to be, came over to us. "Perhaps, gentlemen" he said, "You would care to explain?".

"Certainly" I replied warning to this genteel approach. "We merely came into your establishment to take refreshment. When we ordered one of the dishes on your menu, we were conducted hither with more haste than grace.

The manager nodded slowly. A waiter came forward and handed him a menu and one to Dave and to me. "Demonstrate, please" requested the manager.

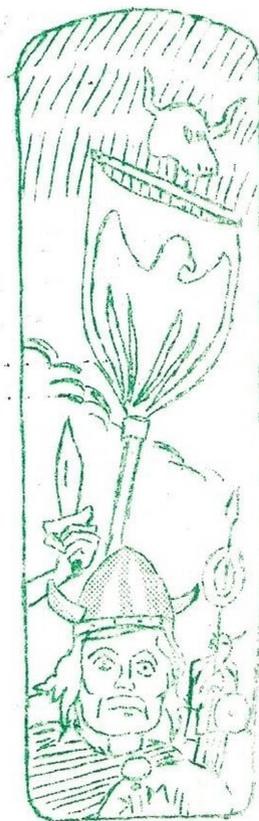
"Yt'an'gi Hol'oi pay" pronounced Dave confidently. "Y'tang H'loypui" I quoth assuredly.

The manager regarded us intently for a long moment. Then he signed and shook his head. "You inscrutable Occidentals" he murmured admiringly.

A flick of his hand and the waiters moved forward, before we realised what had happened, we were both handcuffed to a steel girder, the thickness of which indicated that it was a main support of the building we were in.

Meanwhile, all was hustle and bustle. Chinese waiters hurried too and fro. Some I heard ushering the customers out of the restuarant, some were hastily changing into civvies and others were dragging suitcases out in the middle of the floor and packing them. No-one took much notice of us. I began to feel that we might never get served.

After a while the crowd grew thinner and eventually only the manager



and two waiters, in street clothes, were left. They proceeded to drag filing case drawers out of the Manager's office into the kitchen, where they dumped the contents into the red hot coals of the steak grill, where they were quickly consumed.

Co-relating my observations, I tentatively formed a theory that something was not quite as it should be, reastuarantwise.

"If you haven't got Y'tang H'loypui" I volunteered, "We would manage very well with Chow Mein".

At this the Manager, a very obliging fellow to be sure, came across. "Do not be impatient, Capitalistic spies" he said in tones of great agitation, "We will serve you out soon enough".

Thus reassured, I was content to wait a while longer.

The last of the papers from the filing cabinets were flung onto the fire. The Manager brought out a small, but heavy black box and set it near our feet. The box emitted a curious michanon sound. "No doubt very pleasant to the Oriental ear", I thought, "But Chinese music is just so much ding donging to me" however, I smiled my gratitude to the manager, as was the polite thing to do.

The manager and the two waiters left the kitchen and a few minutes later, we heard a car start up and drive away.

"I have a feeling" said Dave, "That we have had it as far as that Chinese meal is concerned".

"I'm inclined to agree with you, Dave I said feeling a bit disgruntled, "They all seem to have left".

"In that case" says Dave, opening our handcuffs with a neat twist of a hairpin (he dislikes keys), "We may as well leave".

As we left the building there was a hooshing sound and the whole place went up in a sheet of flames.

We turned to watch the blaze. "Peculiar enappies, these Chinese" I observed. "But then" put in Dave graciously, "They're not British".

"True, true" I replied. "And now how about something to eat.....I believe there's a very good Indian place just up the road....."

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