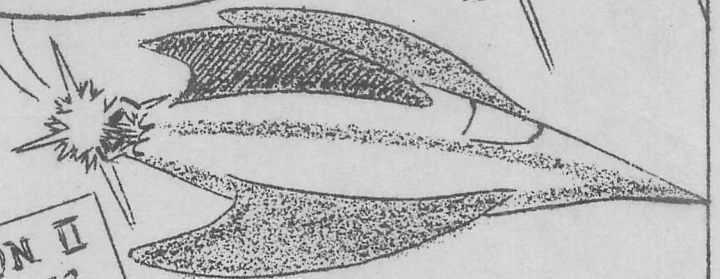
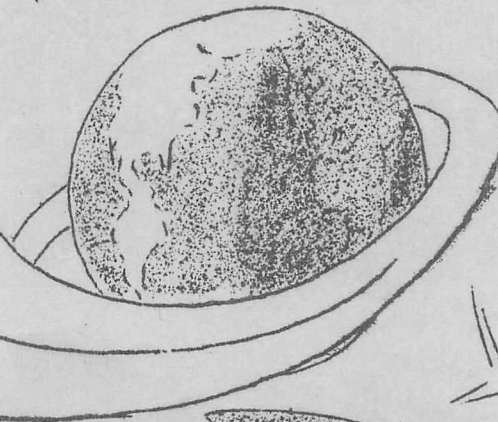


# PREVIEW CONFUSION

AFSF  
SCIENCE FICTION  
FANZINE

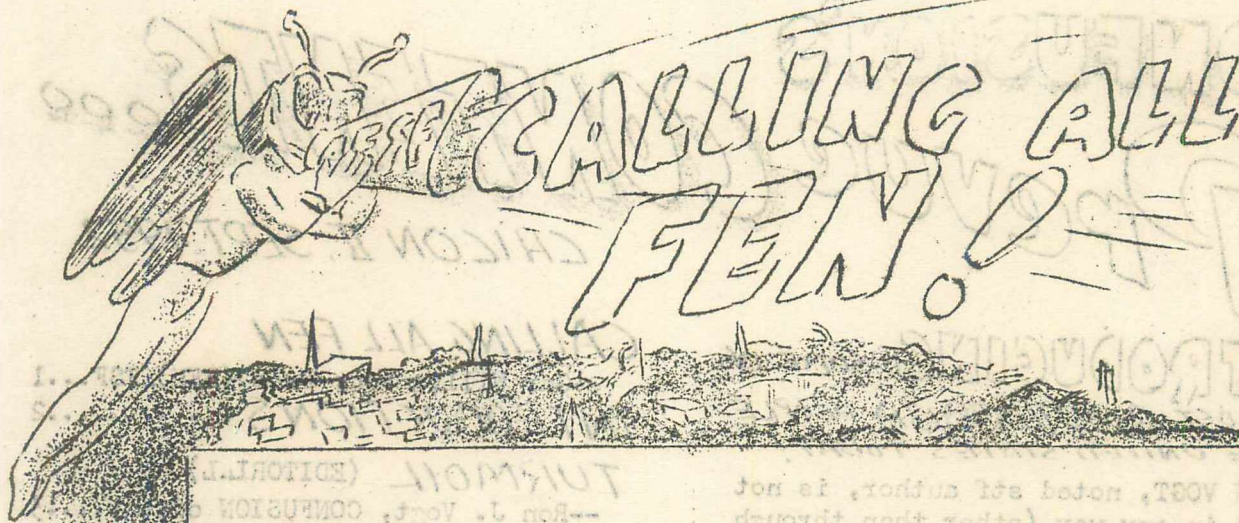


CHICON II  
SEPT., 1952

JACK LADDME







Follow Ron  
Chicon II, Morrison Hotel  
Chicago, U.S.A.

This is a double barreled issue; it's a rush preview pushed through to make the Chicon, and (don't tell anyone) it's bait. We hope this preview draws enough fire and story contributions to make the first official issue of CONFUSION a real fanzine. Armed Forces Science Fiction, the organization sponsoring this zine, is looking for new members. The only requirement is that you have some interest in science fiction. If any fans on other bases are planning a club, how about making it a chapter of AFSF? We stand ready to give moral support and pages in CONFUSION.

In case you're wondering about the strings attached to AFSF chapters, you can stop--there are none. The sole concrete tie between chapters is a common agreement to honor each other's membership cards. CONFUSION is to be the binding force supplying a common meeting ground for the different chapters. We're even planning a missionary program--present members shipping to other bases and organizing chapters along the way. We hope to maintain our boast that AFSF is the fastest growing fan club in existence.

Contributions to CONFUSION will be duly acknowledged and if accepted, published in the earliest possible issue. Payment consists of membership, two extra copies of CONFUSION, and a dozen proofs of your story or article as it appeared in CONFUSION. Letters--the more the merrier!

Confused? We are. CONFUSION will become whatever you make it. AFSF is primarily a service organization, for men and women in the armed forces. Nevertheless, we realize that we need the confused co-operation of civilian fans. But should you fans in the service sit back and take a "let's wait and see" attitude the zine will degenerate into a poor step-brother of the regular pro-zines. No authors! Here's your chance to be published (!)!

Yours for greater CONFUSION,

GAR WILLIAMSON, BEM



# CONFUSION'S PREVUE CONTENTS

CHICON II, SEPT. 1952

## INTRODUCING SOME OF THE MOST CONFUSED PEOPLE IN THE UNITED STATES TODAY!

A.E.VAN VOGT, noted stf author, is not related in any way (other than through stf) to our star contributor, RON J. VOGT, born 20 years ago in Cincinnati, O. We can't see any significance in this, but some people like to know where stf authors are born. When six weeks old, Ron uttered his first complete sentence: "I wanna be a writer!" Then he went back to contemplating his navel, which has fascinated him ever since. Nineteen years later, after having discovered stf, he joined the Air Force and is now stationed at Keesler AFB, hip deep in Mississippi mosquitoes. P.S.--We think he can write. Our proof: THE GAME.

GARFIELD WILLIAMSON, erstwhile president (colloquially--BEM) of AFSF. Born? Yes. Where? Terra. (Research reveals that it was Jersey City, where he was adopted by a family of people.) Gar has conscientiously dedicated his life to avoiding work/ A charist of sorts, Gar has also been a merchant seaman, but he's presently an airman, deeply (?) engrossed in Uncle's electronics. One of those rare actifans who make little attempt at writing the stuff, he has a marked preference for good scotch and accurate science in his fiction.

JACK JARDINE, the Michigander who dreamed up CONFUSION at the NOLA CON last year, teaches electronics for Uncle at Keesler. He splits his time between reading and writing stf, and boring people with card tricks. Jack did the cover plates for CONFUSION--a striking 3-color combination you should watch for.

W.W. (Woody) AYERS, the only confessed semanticist-noxialist in the crowd, under whose inspired leadership AFSF fell apart and put itself back together again as a more efficient, close-knit group, will be at the Chicon II trying to secure members and publicity for AFSF.

## CALLING ALL FEN

--Gar Williamson, Pres.(BEM)AFSF...1

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## WILL DIANETICS SURVIVE?

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PREVUE TO CONFUSION, PUBBED  
BY ARMED FORCES SCIENCE FICTION,  
EDITED BY RON J. VOGT, DISTRIBUTED  
AT CHICON II, CHICAGO, ILL. SEPT. 1952

LARRY MADDOCK, civilian and honorary member, wandered into a club meeting with a manuscript in his pocket once, and has been coming back ever since. For this Chicon CONFUSION prevue, we're including a Maddock creation called THE SERMON. Larry, by the way, is 23, has been doodling with a typewriter for 8 or 9 years, was discovered by Forrie Ackerman, who is currently trying to collect his commission on several Maddock yarns.

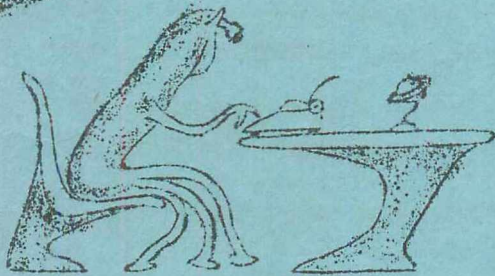
BOB (R.M.) RHODES, who claims entire responsibility for AMEN (page 6), was one of the first founding fathers of this fan-wise free-for-all, having held office as BEM in charge of funds. Bob is a relative newcomer to the field, but keep your eyes peeled for two of his creations, BIRTHRIGHT and KEEP OUR SECRET WELL, which should appear on the newsstands in the not-too-far-distant future.

TEX RUNNELS, best described as a lanky, intellectual drawl from Texas, in addition to being a cybernetics fiend and a radar technician, likes to mix praise with his criticism, as in DIANETICS? (page 13)



# TURMOIL

## THE EDITORIAL



Before we progress any further into this editorial we would like to explain the purpose of this issue of Confusion.

This is a revue issue designed to acquaint you with the actual first issue, which will appear later, and to give readers an idea of the structure of the organization behind the 'zine.

Confusion is a fiction-fact mag containing stories of SF and fantasy from the higher levels of amateur writing. Along with the stories are fact articles intended to keep you readers informed of what goes on in the world of science.

The official issue of Confusion will be digest size and the cover which is reproduced on the cover of this revue ish will be a three color affair! The stuff holding the covers apart will be mimiced but, later, we hope to have an all printed mag.

Well, that takes care of the dope on Confusion, so now we will hand out some info about us bems backing it.

Our happy horde of hopeful halfwits is unique, we believe, in that it consists solely of servicemen. The club, fan type by nature, carries the official title of Armed Forces Science Fiction or A. F. S.F. for short. Although the club is open to all branches of the service the Air Farce seems to be running things at present.

The A.F.S.F. headquarters are located here at Keesler Air Farce Base, the electronics center of the Air Farce (advertisement.) Geographical location is Biloxi, Mississippi, a very nice little town on the Gulf. Nice that is if you don't mind the host of Vulcan and hummingbird-size mosquitos!

Well, we have used up enough time giving you some background information (besides, these damn rebel mosquitos have almost penetrated our space armor) so we will bring to a termination this sad excuse for an editorial.

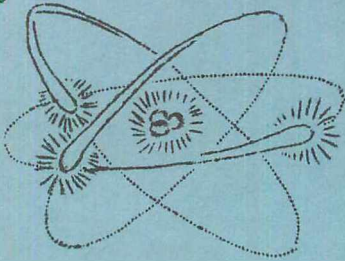
Oh, yes, if after you read this issue and have any nasty remarks, threats, or poisoned-pen letters, our address is 4/3c Ronald J. Vogt AF15474420, 3403 Sta. Sq., Box 312 Keesler AFB, Biloxi, Mississippi

.....RJW



# THE SERMON

BY LARRY MADDOCK...



THE CATHEDRAL was a mammoth place, arching upwards towards infinity. Entering it, a man felt dwarfed and insignificant compared to the glory and wonder and perfection that was Mankind.

A feeling of awesome spaciousness and naked power pervaded the place. Inside, curving blue walls melted into a dome whose inner surface seemed to be miles away. At the epitome of that receding monument to architectural perfection hung a radiant nucleus, around which orbited slowly moving replicas of tiny electrons, glowing softly with a quiet inner fire. The molecular motif was repeated inside the transparent rostrum on the white marbelized speakers platform. The slowly moving molecule was a tribute to Technology (the Father); the carved figures at the back of the platform symbolized Sociology (the Son); and the physical beauty of the place combined with the muted bits of musical tribute to give proper honor to Thought, the third facet of the Human Trinity.

The electronic organ filled the Cathedral with the magnificent chords of Shostakovich, the moods of Gershwin, and the majesty of other great composers' tributes to the Omnipotence of Man.

The auditorium slowly filled with people, their voices hushed by the majesty of this shrine to the Mind of Man.

A man, attired in the flowing robes of the Humanist Ministry, ascended the podium. The music faded slowly into nothingness. The congregation sat in quiet attention

after the first ripple of recognition whispered across the great auditorium.

His voice was rich, mellow, intimately friendly as it filled every cubic inch of the Cathedral, its smooth, confident tones picked up by ultra-sensitive microphones.

"We shall sing of the Glory of Man," he said simply. On the tiny screens in front of each listener flashed the words and music of a time-honored hymn.

The electronic organ led into the introduction, and at a signal from their pastor, the congregation rose, and music poured forth from their throats. Soul-stirring music, glorifying Man as the Highest.

And when the song was over, the congregation reclined in their chairs, ready now for the Sermon.

It was a short sermon, and as sermons go, fairly impressive. In it, the pastor brought out the following points:

1. Man is the highest form of life ever to have developed, and should be duly honored and revered as such.

2. No man should kill a fellow human being, as that is depriving the race of the benefits that could have come from the murdered one.

3. No other creations, creatures, objects or doctrines should be set up before Man, as Man is all-powerful, perfect, and the only true being that exists.

4. The world should be cleansed of the heathen concepts of Gods, Devils, Spirits and all other crude superstitions.

5. Only true believers in the Perfection, Wisdom, and Omnipotency of Man were eligible for the free spiritual happiness and peace that comes with understanding.

This was, in effect, the sum total of the Humanist doctrine. Man is Everything. Man created Everything. Man is perfect.

"Before we offer the hand of Fellowship," the pastor was saying,



(THE SERMON, con't)

"I want to tell this story for the benefit of those in my congregation who have not yet accepted Man as the Ultimate.

"Several years ago I believed in superstition. I was born into a family that had great faith in what they called God. It was a crude, contradictory concept of a supreme being--horribly jealous, infinitely kind, loving, terrifying and just--but it was all my people had to fall back on. They had not yet come to accept the Truth--and my mother never did--that Man is Everything. They prayed to this ideal they had conjured up in their minds, and received a certain amount of satisfaction. And I was taught since childhood that this God had the power to forgive my sins--the injustices I committed--and that I should look forward to everlasting life after death (If you can conceive of such a primitive idea!). This concept my childish mind clung to for a long time, even after I was married.

"But then one day a crisis arose, and I was shown just how shallow my childhood beliefs actually were! My wife was stricken with a horrible illness. One day she was strong, robust, healthy; the next she was in bed, fighting with a fever that left her pale and weak. I was afraid that she was going to die, so I prayed to my God, and asked Him to save her, and make her well. And the God didn't answer. My wife's condition was becoming worse by the moment. I even called in some local witch-doctors to perform incantations and appease the God I was sure was taking her wantonly from me, but it was all to no avail.

"Finally, in desperation, I turned to Man, and Man's science. Medical science, the product of the Mind of Man, the research of hundreds of years, was applied to the sickness that threatened to kill my wife--and she was cured! It is an experience I shall never forget.

"I threw out the false superstitions of Gods, and recognized Man as the Supreme Power, a Power far superior to all the Gods and Devils and Demons and Spirits that superstitious minds can conceive!"

Tears streamed from the pastor's eyes now. His voice rang with fervent conviction, quavered with the enormity of the Truth.

"So now, friends, I extend the Hand of Fellowship with a glorious joy in my heart that I have known Man, and Man has proved himself to me for all time! I extend the invitation to you who have not yet seen and known the glory of the accomplishments of Man, that you can come closer to Perfection. I invite you to publicly accept Man as the only power that can save you from ignorance, and to dedicate at least a part of your lives--here, today--to the improvement of Mankind! And I hope that you will never have to be shown, the way I was, the folly of belief in Gods." He paused dramatically. "We will stand and sing."

The electronic organ softly led into the invitational hymn, and the pastor looked out over his congregation. The shining light of Humanist Fellowship flowed out over the people as he said, "Those of you who feel the call, at any time during this invitational, please come forward. I will be waiting at the foot of the altar to greet you and welcome you to the fold."

The organ music swelled with the strains on an ancient melody, and the congregation sang the words:

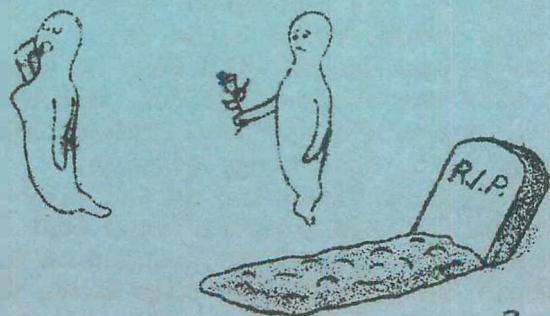
"Believe in the Truth and the Glory of Man,

And be saved from the folly of fools--

Have faith in the Power and Majesty there,

And live by the Humanist rules!"

-the end-



"Drop dead!"

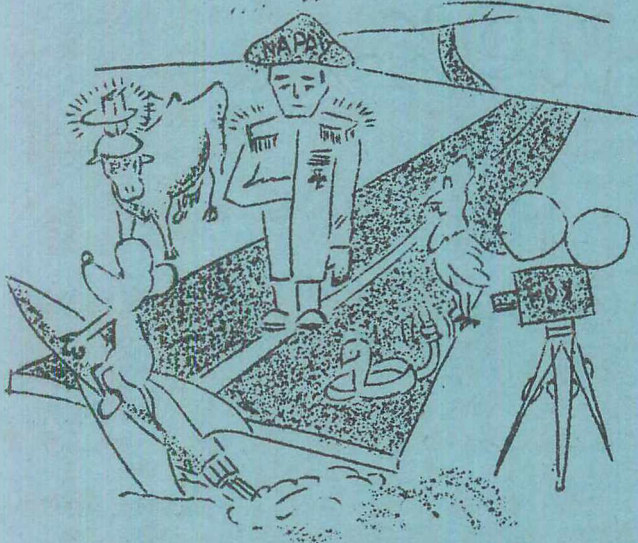
R



WITH APOLOGIES TO FRED ERWIN WE BRING YOU  
A CLASSIC IN STE SHAGGY-DOGDOM ---

# Amen

BY R.M. RHODES...



He was running blindly into the night. The muffled sounds of explosions spurred him onward to the limit of endurance. The cave. He must reach the cave. There he'd be safe. Safe from the booming destruction that was exploding around the world.

He tried to remember the location of the cave as he searched frantically in the boulders on the hillside. He looked desperately for landmarks, rummaging into his childhood memories for the clue that would save him. He knew the cave was nearby.

The explosions and the man-made flashes of lightning were coming closer and closer. His childhood retreat was the only sanctuary he could think of. Wild eyed and crazed with fear he stumbled over the rough hillside. His breath came in gasps and his head jerked this way and that, searching, seeking.

A blinding flash lit up the city behind him. Before he realized what had happened a booming sound pounded at his eardrums and he felt his body leave the

ground. His head struck a rock as the shock wave deposited him against the side of the hill. A trickle of warm blood oozed from the wound and ran down his left cheek. He raised himself off the ground, leaning on his arms, and found himself staring into the mouth of the cave. Desperately he crawled towards the opening. Another flash and he was hurled inside. His arm snapped as he crumpled against the granite floor, but he didn't feel it. The blood on his face slowly thickened and at last stopped running.

The pain in his arm woke him. The sun was high and the cave was deep in shadow. He groaned softly and stirred on the hard bed of rock. His head was throbbing in rhythm with his pain-wracked arm. Slowly full consciousness returned. He tried to push himself upright, but failed. His broken arm buckled beneath his weight. A sudden piercing pain shot along his ragged nerves.

At last he managed to sit up. His blood was pounding in his brain. A horrible pain coursed through his arm and he clutched it to him with his good hand. His eyes stared down in disbelief at the jagged white bone that protruded from his skin. The realization of his plight dawned on him the instant his mind began functioning correctly. With a muffled scream he pulled the broken limb and fainted with pain as the bone slid back into place.

When he awoke for the second time night had come. The cavern was still and silent, like a tomb. His arm felt like a burning torch. He was careful this time and managed to keep the bone in place. He rose dizzily to his feet and leaned against the cool rock wall. By touch he found a hardy bush growing at the mouth of the cave and snapped a stiff limb from it. His shirt tore easily between his teeth and one hand and he bound up the swollen arm as best he could, using pieces of the branch as splints. The rock was hard but he was exhausted. The darkness spun wildly before his eyes, and imaginary colors danced in his head. He lay down again.

He awoke with a start. There was a soft noise coming from the back of the cave. His whole being alerted itself. He lay quite still, fearful of taking a breath, waiting and listening for the noise to come again.



It did.

He could even hear a faint echo as the sound died away. It sounded like something that was breathing hard. In an other minute or so he heard a scratching sound from the same direction. The hairs on the nape of his neck bristled with fear.

What sort of animal lurked in the blackness? He knew the hills were full of mountain lions. The scratching sounded like claws being sharpened on a rock. He thought he heard a low growl. A soft stirring, like that of padded feet, reached his ears.

He realized that the wind was blowing through the mouth of the cave, straight back into the darkness. He could feel the odor of his body drifting away from him and floating along with the breeze. His heart beat furiously. His flesh felt alive with crawling things. His eyes were glazed as they tried to penetrate the solid blackness. Slowly, silently, he began to inch toward the sound. There was no use running anymore.

He remembered that the cave widened into a sort of a room. Whatever it was making those sounds was back there. Perhaps it was more frightened than he was.

His hand brushed a small stone. It clattered noisily down a hollow in the rock floor. The thing back there in the dark heard it too. The noises stopped. All was silent for a moment and then the something moved. It slid across the cave....away from him. It was frightened.

Suddenly he thought of the cigarette lighter in his pocket. He drew up into a crouch, feeling through his trousers. Wild beasts fear fire. "I'll make a torch," he said to himself.

The lighter was there and so was his wallet. He laid the wallet on the ground and leaned on it with his knee, managing to extract a piece of paper. He slipped the paper between the first and second fingers of his useless hand, leaving the end protruding.

The lighter sparked vainly and a scuttling sound came from the darkness behind him. A second turn of the spark wheel and it lit. He never burned the paper.

She was cringing against the back wall of the cave. Her eyes were wide with terror. He stared in amazement at the beauty before him. He saw where her blouse had been torn apart in the front and clicked his lighter shut.

"It's all right," he said. She sank to the floor in a faint.

A week later they walked hand in hand through the rubble in the streets of the City. Not even an animal stirred to welcome them. Death was all around. The beginnings of a new life had not yet pushed through the remnants of man.

Dave took careful note of the twisted sign that said, "Walnut St."

"We're almost there," he whispered in the stillness. "The place is only about a block away."

Tears welled up in Edna's eyes. She felt sentimental and yet foolish at the same time. With a tender gesture Dave brushed at the tears with the finger tips of his good arm.

"Don't feel that way," he whispered. "If we're going to live together for the rest of our lives we should do it up right, even though there's no reason to do so."

"I know," her voice was tender and wistful. "It just seems so strange, so odd, not like I dreamed it would be. There'll be no one crying and no one laughing. The whole thing will be still and solemn as it should be. No parties, no heddlers, no....nothing."

They turned from the street and walked in silence up some crumbled stairs and stood in the ruins of the church. They turned to the spot where the altar had been and stood there for a while, deep in thought, viewed only by the smiling sun and the blue eye of the sky. Not a breeze rustled at their clothes. Not a sound disturbed their reverie. Dave turned, clasped her left hand tightly in his. He released her and fished in his pocket and brought out a tiny golden ring that was blackened on one side by the fire.

"I take thee Edna..." he said and slipped it on the proper finger. She smiled up at him and leaned forward. They embraced.

Silently, again, they walked slowly back through the fallen doorway and down the ruined steps. The wind rose like a gentle hand and caressed them all the way back to the cave.

The cave had changed since the day they had found each other. Kerosine lamps hung from spikes on the walls, illuminating everything but the deepest recesses. On a level spot on the floor a double bed and mattress stood. Dave had built a chest



# Armed Forced SCIENCE FICTION

INVITES **YOU** \*



WHETHER ARMY, NAVY,  
AIR FORCE, MARINES, COAST  
GUARD, SPACE PATROL OR  
WHAT HAVE YOU—YOU'RE  
INVITED...

TO JOIN  
**AFSE**  
RECEIVE AND  
CONTRIBUTE TO  
CONFUSION

MERELY DROP A CARD TO AFSE,  
9% BEACH U.S.O. CLUB, BILOXI,  
MISSISSIPPI, FOR FULL DETAILS.  
(\*MILITARY OR CIVILIAN)

and closet out of old packing crates, and they had managed to scrape up enough clothes to fill them. A crude iron cook stove stood in one corner, and beside it lay a pile of knotty wood from the hills. A bookcase-like affair was next to the wook, filled to overflowing with cans of food. A rifle was propped against the wall. Way in the back, almost out of reach of the light, were the rest of their stores. Gallon drums of kerosine, a pile of ragged and soiled books, along with odds and ends that might someday be useful.

"I'm going to town to see if I can root out some more things we can use." Dave looked at her lovingly. "Want to come along?"

"It...it's a pretty tough climb," said Edna, shyly. "I don't know."

"You don't know? You've done it many times and it hasn't bothered you a bit. We might even be able to dig up a pair of booties."

Edna blushed. She smiled with satisfaction and looked down at the roundness that showed under her dress.

"The frontier women used to have 'em one day and go chop down trees the next morning. Where's your pioneer spirit?"

"I doubt if your new son will complain about the long walk," she laughed back at him. He took her hand and they went out.

The city was slowly vanishing under masses of growing things. They hunted around for several hours and found a small electric generator, some more rifle shells, a store of canned goods that looked usable, and a slightly singed layette.

Towards evening they were struggling back up the hillside with their load. Dave was straining under the weight of the generator and canned goods, and Edna was managing as best she could with the rest of the stuff. They were nearing the cave when the earth shook.

David screamed as the ground rocked beneath him and the pathway dropped from under him.

Edna turned at his frantic scream and saw his body rolling over and over as it tumbled down the rough side of the hill. She dropped the things in her arms and ran as fast as she could after him. The bushes and stunted trees tore at her flesh and the vibrating earth threw her roughly to the ground, but she kept going until she reached the spot where Dave lay still.

"Dave! Dave! Dave!" She knelt beside him and tried to rouse him. His stoney eyes stared up at her and his lips made



no attempt to answer.

Cuddled closely against the inert form, Edna cried.

The night was long and still. The world seemed dead. The only indication of life was Edna's sobbing and the occasional stirring of new life within her body. Even the moon stayed away. Towards morning a weary creature fell into a fitful slumber and gales of wind rose, carrying storm clouds over the country. The sun tried to push its way into the day, but failed, leaving the howling wind and the pulsating rain to have full reign in the shadowy darkness.

Occasionally the earth would shudder violently and then lie still. The shelf of food toppled over in the cave and the kerosine lamps jumped from the walls to tinkle on the floor. Edna sat up in bed with a start. A trickle of loose sand poured into her lap. She jumped quickly from the bed and ran out into the day-night. The ground rumbled and quivered and shook. A booming crash echoed from the cave. Her home was gone.

"The city!" her fear ridden mind thought. "If only I could reach the city. Surely there is a shelter of some sort there."

She scurried over the quivering pathway that led out of the hills. She carefully sidetracked the gaping hole that had dropped from the ground when Dave was killed. The rain bit fiercely at her and the brush tore the clothes from her body. Gasping, and terrified she reached the outskirts of town and ran into the city. She could still feel the vibrations in the ground and the rain stung as it pelted her raw, bruised skin.

A sudden violent upheaval of the earth hurled her down, but she rose quickly and ran on, propelled by fear, driven by wild emotions. She stumbled several times but managed to right herself. What was left of the crumbling ruins danced around her in a mad frenzy. The sky vomited fire and boomed thunder.

A mass of growing vine twisted itself around her leg and she fought frantically to free herself. Tearing and biting she broke loose and continued her wild flight. The rumble in the

ground followed her as she ran.

Occasionally a bit of stone whipped from the broken masonry and bit into her raw flesh. Her body was numb to pain. A tangled wire blew into her path and she tripped. She sprawled to the ground and lay there exhausted. Her breath came in rasping gasps. Her arms clawed at the surging earth. Her legs twitched uncontrollably.

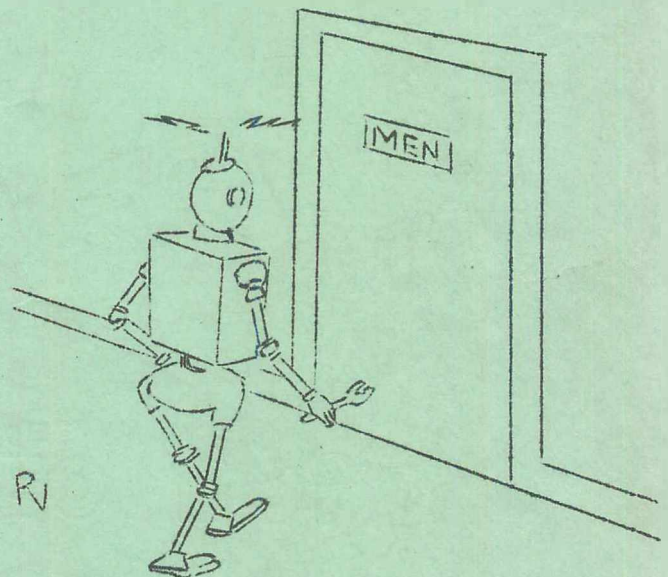
The turbulence of nature swept on.

The sun rose over the bleak landscape and smiled at no one in particular. A few fleecy clouds drifted through the air. The morning was warm and bright and peaceful.

A body lay in the streets of the city. The bulge of pregnancy stirred occasionally, but the woman did not move.

The last man on Earth lay alone..... in a womb.

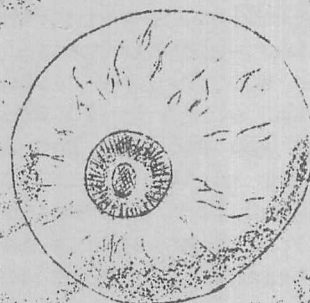
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ARMED FORCES  
SCIENCE FICTION  
IS WILLING TO DO SOME  
SWAPPING —

CONFUSION FOR YOUR ZONE

# THE Game



They were not solid; not something physical that you could touch, or even see, unless they willed it so.

They were not matter, nor could they be considered energy. They were not actually beings, even in a general sense.

The only applicable term is.....entity.

"Ho Garth, how is yours progressing?"

"Poorly, very poorly, Tregg. It seems I have produced an exceptionally faulty set this time."

"Be of higher spirits, Garth. All is not yet lost."

BY  
**RON J. VOGT**

ILLUSTRATED BY PAT NOLAN





"No, but it may well be. Mine advances in rapid surges, true, but to what avail? A peak is reached; from that point there is an almost sudden degeneration and it is again at the beginning."

"But it cannot continue like that forever. It may fall backward at times, but soon it will sock onto one of those surges and continue upward. And where would that then place me? For as you can see, mine advances but slowly."

"It will never produce a continued ascension, for the degeneration has been too cyclic. Agreed, Tregg, your set progresses slowly, but it moves steadily. That is what matters."

"Let it continue awhile longer, Garth, none of your sets have been that bad. I am certain it will correct itself."

"I remain inclined to disagree with you, Tregg. I just have a defective set, probably made so because I wasn't concentrating as I should have been when I produced it. I should dissolve it."

"Stay your hasty action, Garth. We shall observe it awhile longer and then decide who is correct. I am certain it will change."

They closed around the whirling spheres, watching.

"We shall see," intoned Garth, "We shall see."

He sat behind a curved metal desk. Through the wall-sized window at his back could be seen the white dome of an important looking building.

The man himself wore a light grey suit, almost matching the iron-grey hair at his temples. The deep rug was grey; even his desk was grey.

Conformity.

To anyone entering this room it suggested power. And power he had, but men in certain other parts of the world had the same type of power.

He wondered, however, did their power equal his? Or, more seriously, did his equal theirs?

Gently, neatly, he laid the papers he had been studying on the desk. The reports were not good: hints, rumors, actual happenings; they led to but one conclusion.

Someone had to move first, suddenly.

He reached out, paused with his finger on the intercom switch.....

"There you witness the same repetition, Tregg. It is no use continuing, I shall concede to you."

"I ask you to hold but a moment longer, Garth, for did you not notice him pause at the switch?"

"All right, but for this last time only. If the pattern does not change, then I shall dissolve my set."

"Come, let us watch."

The finger was still poised on the switch. Then it began to depress the lever slowly, slowly. Then as if by sudden decision the finger jerked quickly and the lever changed position.

The finger's owner, the man in grey, spoke several words into the plastic box before him. Once again the finger moved, this time flicking the lever in the opposite direction.

As though very weary the man in grey sank back in his chair, then swiveled slowly until he was looking directly out of the huge window.

Suddenly the scene was split at various angles by yellow-orange streamers of flame, streaking majestically upward.

The brilliant streamers died.....disappeared, but the man did not move. He sat facing the window.....waiting, watching.

Soon he needed to wait no longer. Fiery specks were climbing from the horizon.

He leaned forward in the chair. This is it, he thought, the hour...no, almost the minute...that spelled finis to Man's work.

Odd, he reflected, it almost seems to follow a pattern. This sort of thing had happened before, several times. It had probably occurred many times even before written history.

But time to dwell upon these ideas was growing shorter; the specks were rapidly increasing in size.

"Enough, Garth, you are right. The old pattern returns again."

"Yes, Tregg, the old fault continues. It doesn't come by the same means as the others, but the end result will be the same.

"The first time it was brought about with bare hands. Next came rocks and then cutting instruments. It has progressed up

to a crude form of fission as the agency for the latest drop. It is sad.

"Therefore I shall concede to you and dissolve my set, as I certainly should have done long ago."

The specks were much nearer now, and the man in grey was now standing at the great window, his eyes fastened upon the flaming streaks in the sky. He remained there, motionless.

What use to attempt interception, he thought, all of them couldn't be stopped. Let them do a good job of it.

Then he noticed something else rising from the horizon. At first sight it appeared to be a mist of some sort, but the observer at the window quickly decided it was a blackness, or more accurately, he decided, an emptiness.

The strange darkness moved rapidly, rushing across the mountains in the far distance, seeming to swallow them up,

pushing onward across land and rivers. Everything it touched it engulfed.

It overtook the deadly flaming messengers in the end even seemed to gain speed as it devoured them.

The man in grey felt a calm wash over him. Was this some fantastic new weapon? Or, he was startled at the thought, was it simply....the end of the world?

The consuming blackness swept over the scene.....

"It is done, Tregg. Completely dissolved."

"And I have finally won a game from you, Garth. That fact elates my ego."

"...and deflates mine," added Garth. However, join me again in the near future, Tregg, and I will try to produce a better set. Then we shall see who plays the better game."

-the end-

## READYLY FRIENDS (CONFUSED SCIENCE FEATURE)

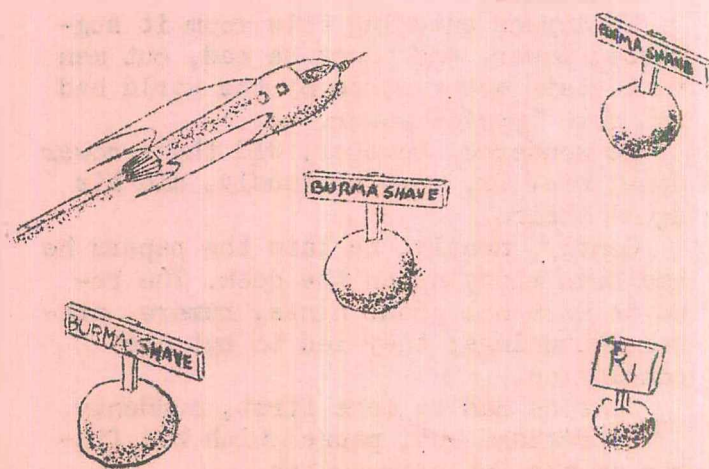
Although a tarantula can easily kill a wasp, there is one relationship between arachnid and insect which shows reverse results. The members of this relationship are a species of tarantula (*Cyrtopholis portoricao*) and a species of digger wasp (*Pepsis marginata*.)

When it comes time to lay an egg the female *Pepsis* must find a tarantula to be used for a host, alive but paralyzed. She flies low over the ground and, when she spots a likely prospect, she lands and begins to examine the spider by crawling all over it and feeling with her antennae. The amazing and unexplainable part is that friend spider remains calmly stationary and allows the examination! Satisfied that the tarantula is the correct one, the wasp proceeds to dig a grave 8 to 10 inches deep in front of the victim, who just stands there watching. With the excavation completed the wasp crawls around on the under side of the spider searching for the soft tissue where the leg joins the body.

Finding this spot the wasp locks its jaws on the spider's leg and, finally, the spider shows some fight, but too late. The enemies roll around on the ground until the wasp inserts her sting into the spider's body and pumps in her poison. The spider is paralyzed, his heart

stops, but he is still alive. The mother wasp then drags her victim to the bottom of the grave, lays her single egg on the spider's abdomen and crawls out of the hole. She then goes about filling up the hole bit by bit with dirt carried in her jaws and then packs it down so that nothing may disturb her handiwork. She then flies away leaving her descendant started in life.

Scientists cannot explain the strange behavior of the spider, who allows a normally irritating inspection and puts up no resistance until it is too late.





# **"TEX" RUNNELS**

ASKS:

## **WILL DIANETICS SURVIVE?**

After little more than two years the greatest invention since the wheel and the arch has dropped into oblivion.

When the first book on Dianetics was published in 1950 it enjoyed an immense and immediate popularity. There were several reasons for this. It promised the abilities of genius after a few short hours of "auditing". More important however, it was optimistic. In the prevailing attitude of the day the mind and the mental processes involved in sanity and insanity were mysterious and unapproachable. Only psychiatrists and specialists could consider the problems involved.

In the midst of this Hubbard dared to be optimistic, he dared to say that the problems of mind were solvable and could be solved by the ordinary individual. In fact he claimed to have at least part of the answer, and in his book proceeded to enumerate them. His claims were to most thinking individuals fantastic. Nevertheless, the neurotic and maladjusted individuals jumped at the easy solution to their problems.

Those who took the trouble to investigate the claims for the dianetic techniques were soon disappointed when Hubbard's results were discovered to be unobtainable. They quickly dropped it and condemned dianetics as a hoax. Others, particularly those with a little more knowledge of what was possible in the older types of therapy were not so quick to discard the new techniques. Granted they did not obtain Hubbard's clear, but they did get results comparable to many previously obtained. Those techniques will be used, improved upon and eventually superseded. What then will have been

dianetics claim to fame?

This: At a time when interest in the mind was receiving little stimulation it threw the public eye upon man's greatest problem and mystery, His mind and how to control it. It gained the interest of many capable people and thus brought to bear on the problem more effort than had hitherto been expended. It developed the idea that the problem was solvable

with scientific method and would yield to such an approach. This removal of the problem of mind from the ranks of unsolvable mysteries can and will be the most important contribution which dianetics will make.

This optimistic and hopeful attitude in a society filled with fears of destruction and general attitudes of pessimism and indifference, will do more towards creating conditions in which the problem can be approached and solved than will anything else.

In addition to this it placed the problem fully upon the shoulders of the individual, pointing out that no special training of abilities were needed., in fact nothing more than ability to think and apply the scientific method. This in itself though completely unorthodox is an important advance, for who can solve the problem better than the people who feel it's pressure the greatest? Thus placed within the public domain as a problem of mere self-benefit, more results are sure to be had.

These results of dianetics, though indirect will have more effect upon the future of man than any of it's popularly claimed benefits can ever have.

As a technique it may disappear,  
As an idea never.

**CAN YOU  
WRITE READABLE  
fan-fiction?**

SUBSCRIPTIONS TO CONFUSION  
AND AFSF MEMBERSHIPS GIVEN  
IN PAYMENT FOR ACCEPTABLE STF!

