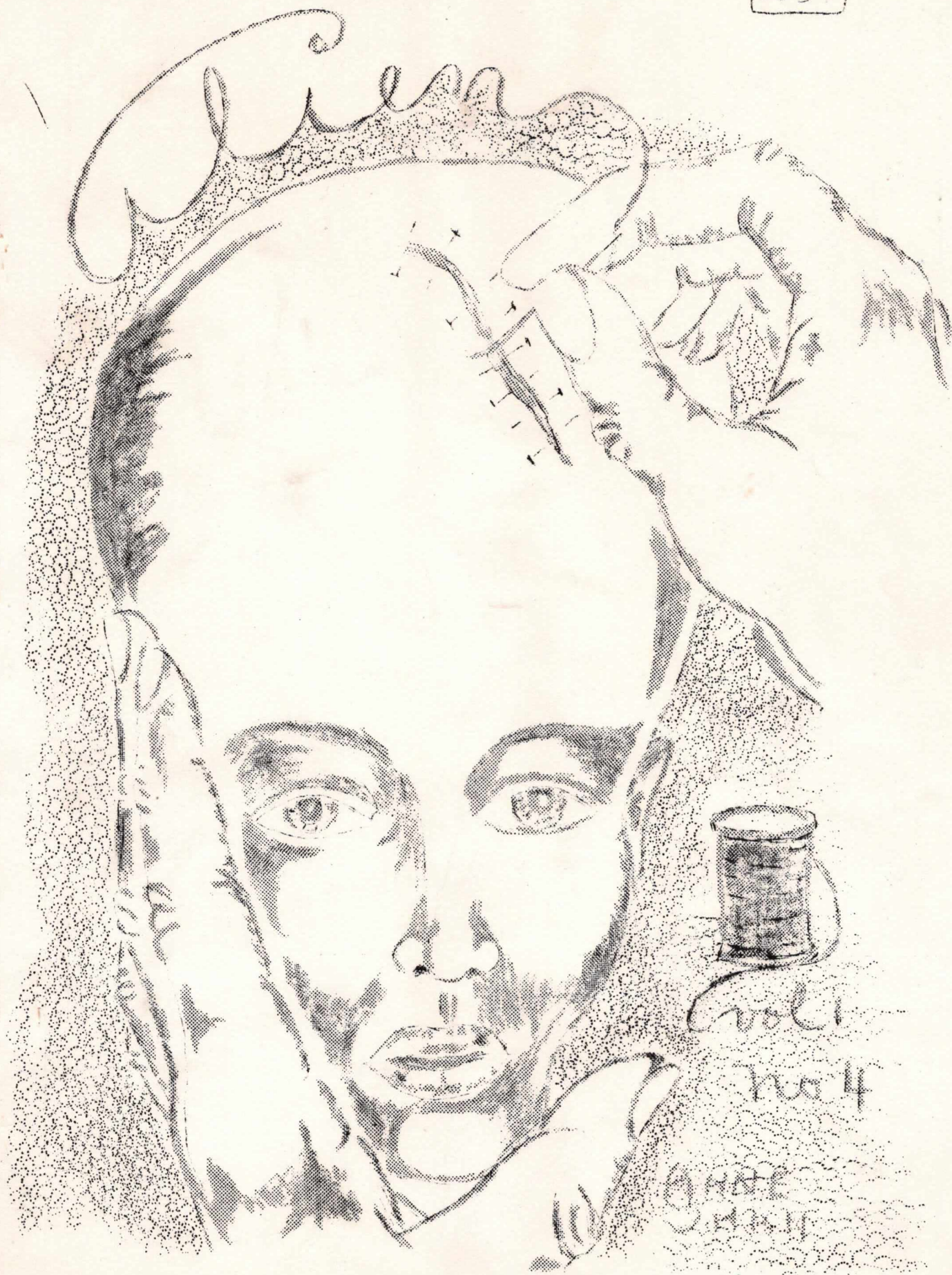
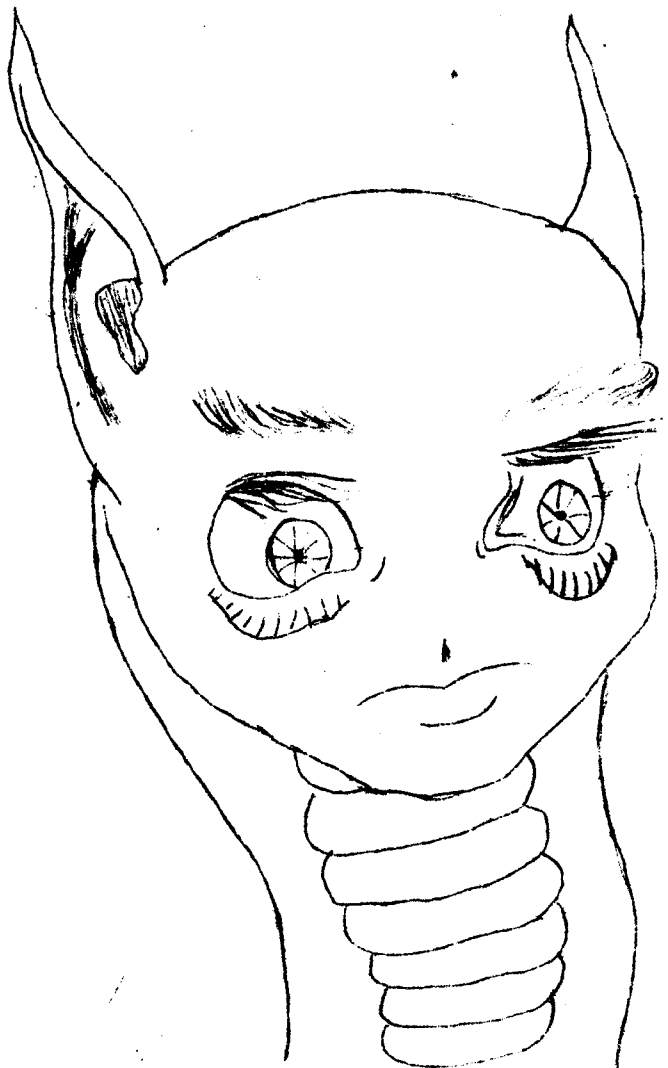


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alien

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edited and published by
Vic Waldrop, Jr.
212 West Avenue
Cartersville, Georgia

SEE PAGE 37 for an important
advertisement
of a
new
and
important
fanzine,
A S F O

CARR

This is going to be sort of a crummy editorial, yet it must epitomize all I need to say, its being the last one I'll write.

ALIEN was on the road going places; its third issue being 100% advanced over the poor first issue. The poetry column, under the able direction of Joe Green was the best thing that happened to ALIEN. Perhaps Joe will transfer his excellent column to a less ill-fated fanzine. To whoever gets it: You've got about the best!

A summary of the names in ALIEN (including this) includes DEA, Hoffman, Anne Shan, Jim Schreiber, Isabelle Dinwiddie, Calkins, A. A. Henderson, Lynn Hickman, Bob Warner, Shelby Vick, William Rotzler, Nancy Share, George Viksnins, Terry Carr, Dave E. W. Parker, and R. H. Orroy. I sincerely hope that they have not regretted submitting material to this publication.

Being the last issue, this one is larger than previous issues. At the typing of this editorial, the magazine is not complete, but here's hoping you enjoy it. 25¢ is also a lot to charge for such an issue, but, due to its nature, and the fact that it is very expensive, and that several subbers must be repaid, the price was raised a considerable degree. I hope that you get your quarter's worth.

A note to the subscribers: do not become impatient about receiving your money; this issue is running into money, and, after it is paid for, then your money will be returned.

There will be most likely many copies of this issue left over, and all must be sold. Yours truly would appreciate it very much if you would just inform your correspondents in your next letter about this issue, and persuade them to order a copy. The address will be listed at the bottom of this page. There were issued 100 copies of this ish.

To you whose fmzs had not been reviewed in previous issues: they were to have been reviewed in issue #4 (this ish), but, its being a special ish, all space is taken up with material of other natures. I can't do much about those who sent exchange copies, because they have been stored along with other fmzs. Of this issue, there will be NO exchange, review, or complimentary copies.

At this time, I would like to offer my most sincere thanks to Andy Robison and Penny Henderson without whose personal help yours truly would probably never have gotten out of this #3()***!!! stf ampubbing. Thanks, fellas.

Also, thanks to the pastor of the Cartersville First Baptist Church for the use of his A. B. Dick mimeograph which was used on issues #2, #3, and #4.

Many people have called yours truly a non-fan, and everything else a fan would consider uncomplimentary. Actually, though, I appreciated the distance placed between myself and a true FAN. Thanks, I guess, to those whose ~~unwitting~~ words of boosting, etc., unwittingly kept ALIEN in publication for 10 these four issues.

Old fans never die, darn it!

Sincerely,

Vic Waldrop, fro

(advertisement)

This is not about fantasy, science-fiction, or anything related to it. This is about fact.

If you are interested in helping to find the truth about the "flying saucers," you will be interested in this. An international group of individuals seeking knowledge about these unexplained sky objects is the ~~EXTRA~~ TERRESTRIAL RESEARCH ORGANIZATION.

After one year of experience, ETRO has completely reorganized its old methods of procedure, so it may efficiently conduct research.

There is no cost for participation in the ETRO program. The only expense involved is the purchase of the group publication, ETRON, and this purchase is optional. This publication is available to all persons.

ETRO, operating on the working theory that the "discs" are interplanetary, is compiling a file of all possible related data, and needs as many researchers as possible to make this complete.

The individuals engaging in activities to further the research program participate in a wide variety of projects. Some persons investigate particular incidents of importance; others analyze "saucer" articles which appear in various publications; research is carried on concerning the several prominent "explanations" offered. If the interplanetary hypothesis is correct, the persons taking part in the "origin" phase of activity may be able to offer some indication of their source.

Reports of the researches appear, along with other material of interest, in ETRON. This is a fifty page publication which is issued five times yearly by the staff of directors.

The ~~EXTRA~~-TERRESTRIAL RESEARCH ORGANIZATION is willing to co-operate fully with any individual or group doing similar work, to the extent of unrestricted exchange of ideas and information. None of ETRO'S work is secret.

"Research . . . The Road To Truth" is the motto of the organization and it intends to accomplish its researches without red tape and the complexity of committees and sub-committees. After over a year of organization, ETRO is out of its embryonic stages of becoming economically and structurally stable, increasing its membership, and deciding on programs. Now it is able to do its research with efficiency.

No matter what your personal opinion about the "flying saucers," if you are interested in helping to discover the truth, whatever it is, you will not be wasting your time if you contact the ~~EXTRA~~-TERRESTRIAL RESEARCH ORGANIZATION.

Any information will be supplied immediately upon request. Don't hesitate to ask specific questions. You will not receive a form-letter; all letters receive personal replies.

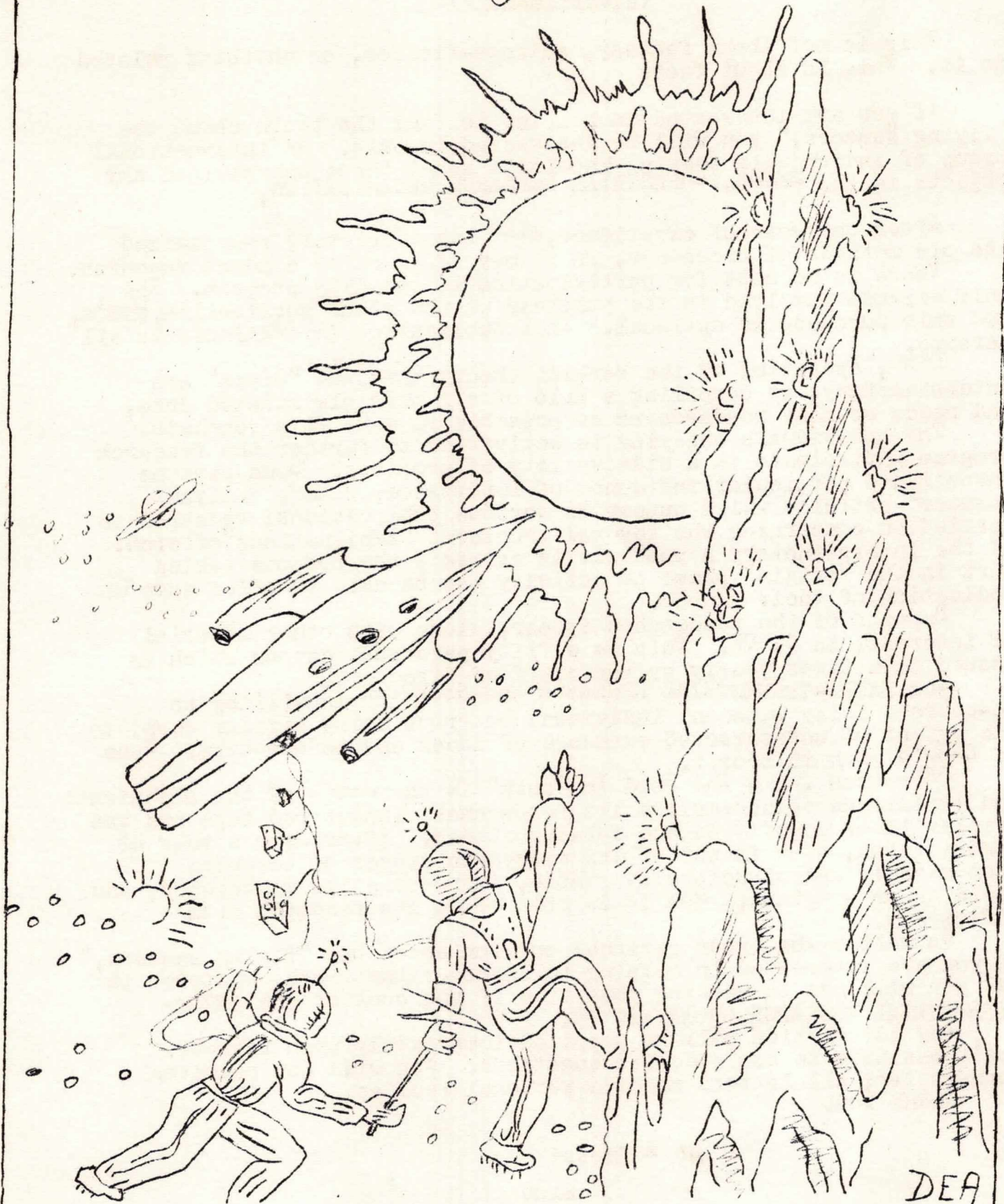
Thank you.

Address:

ETRO

4118 W. 143 St.
Cleveland 11, Ohio

(advertisement)



SOLAR MINERS

DEA

7

VOIDSONG



by
303

WARNER

LARR

The crowds were there to see them off, to cheer them with a million shrill cheers. Cheers which were put to silence when their rocket lifted into the skies on its yellow-orange shaft of flame.

Yorkson was the first to awaken. He swallowed several stabilization capsules and relaxed in his rubberoid hammock. Then he waited for the others to return to consciousness.

Five minutes later Talbot opened his eyes and said, "Well, I guess we made it."

Yorkson smiled. "I guess we did."

The others awakened not long after. There was Rensil, Thorsen, Baily, and Tennyson. Talbot and Yorkson completed the crew.



Yorkson was in charge of the ship, and when the red light just above his hammock blinked three times in succession, he said, "Okay, guys, pile out and get to your stations."

The flight went smoothly for the first three "days." Every twenty-four hours the red light would blink and the men would rush to the stations and double-check their instruments. Other than that, their compulsory duties were nil.

On the fourth "day" Baily came into the main compartment and said, "I must be going spacemad or something!"

"Why?" asked someone.

"I hear music. It's soft, incredibly soft. Yet it's there."

"You hear it now?" asked Yorkson.

"No. I can only hear it when I'm in the engine room."

Yorkson stroked his chin for a moment. "Let's all go down to the engine room."

The six of them stood in the engine room and listened to Baily's music. Only now its haunting sound was not Baily's alone. It belonged to all of them.

"Maybe spacd is driving us all nuts," murmured Talbot, drawing a lungful of smoke from a cigarette.

"Maybe."

The hours crept by with an abominable slowness. The six Earthmen lay in their rubberoid hammocks and read and smoked and talked in hushed tones. But, for the most, they were silent.

At first, they could only hear the music in the sections of the ship which were nearest the hull. Then they began hearing it all throughout the ship, until, finally it invaded the main compartment where the men spent the major portion, if not all, of their spare time.

On the seventh "day" out from Earth, Baily was caught by Tennyson and Rensil attempting to open the outer air-lock, which would have, of course, resulted in the instant death of all six of the crew.

Baily became violent, and Tennyson was forced to knock him unconscious. When Baily came to, several hours later, he sat up, looked around at his fellow crew members, and said, "I had the worst dream." When Baily had finished relating his dream, Tennyson said, "It wasn't a dream."

"What do you mean?" Baily demanded.

Tennyson told him.

"Did I do that!"

And all the while the music grew in volume.

By the "tenth day" out from Earth, the members of the crew had been reduced to bundles of nerves. The music had risen to an almost unbearable thunder in their tortured ears. It pressed in upon them incessantly; surged through their bodies; tore at the fibre of their nerves. The music had become a part of them.

"Just listen to it!" said Tennyson. "On Earth it would be beautiful; but here, it's straight out of Hades!"

Twenty hours later, Tennyson was found dead at his station, his wrists slashed with a razor blade.

"He never cared for an electric razor," said Talbot.





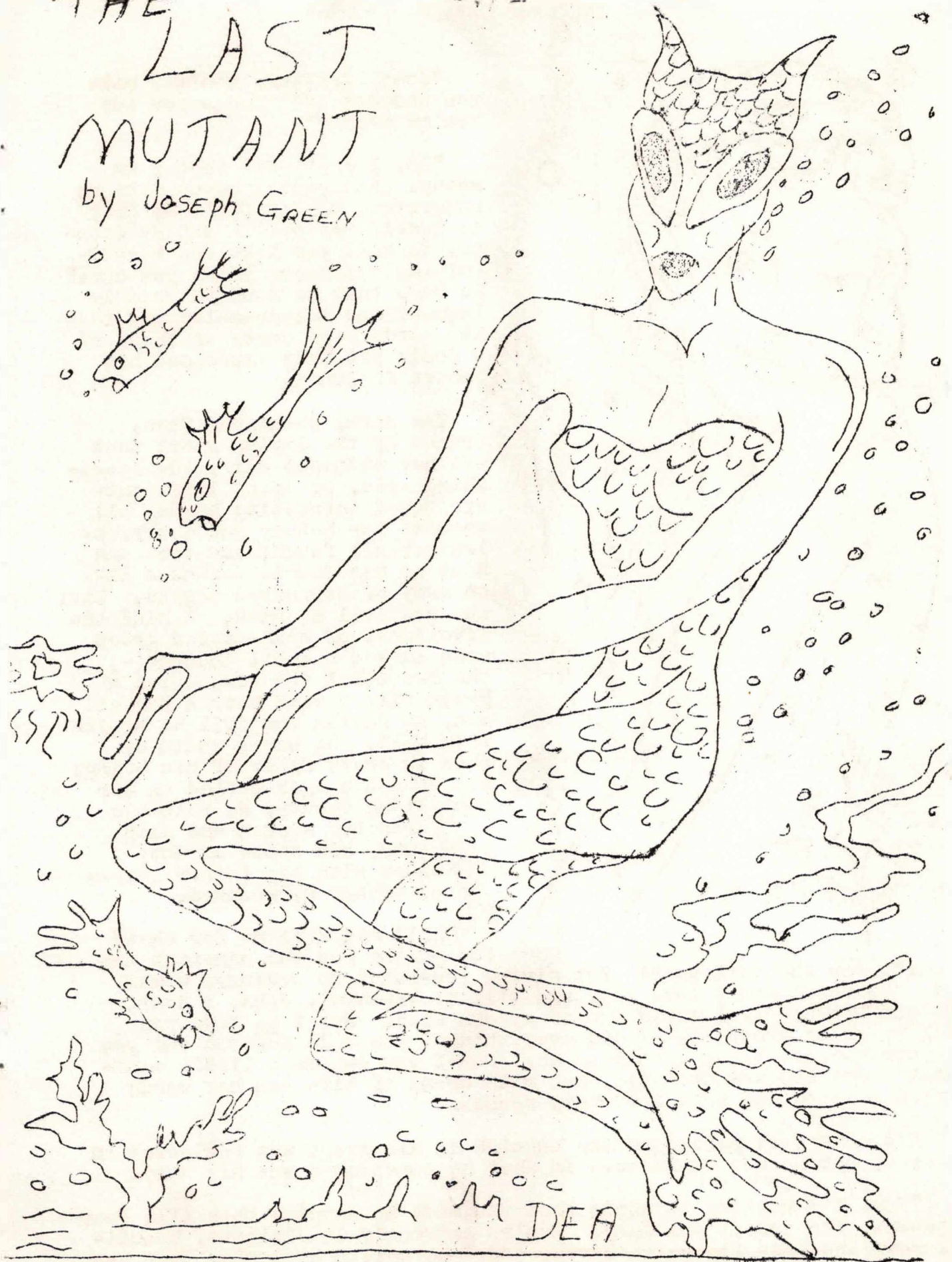
--the end--

11 "WHERE ARE THE
PLANES?"



THE LAST MUTANT

by JOSEPH GREEN





"John, darling, can't I make you understand? Don't you see you're wrong?"

"No, I can't see that I am wrong. And you'll never make me understand why it isn't my duty to myself, my people and my country to kill you like the beautiful and poisonous snake you are." He knew that he sounded grandiloquent and melodramatic and that his words were empty as those of a fool; yet they expressed his honest feelings.

The dark, beautiful face, framed by the living glory that was her midnight hair, the beseeching eyes, pleading lips, outstretched entreating hands, all shouted her beauty and desireableness, all fought and tore and beat at his feeble defenses like an army of corrupted angels. That she was evil he knew. Behind the liveliness of wide-spaced green eyes lurked a devil incarnate; the beautiful face concealed a grain filled with hatred for all men, as rotten and evil as miasma from hell. He was certain of this in every fiber of his being; yet when his eyes rested on her compelling beauty, he felt his resolve weaken and slip away, his sense of duty clash with his former love--and withdrew, wounded.

"Kill me! Kill me for what? for making you the happiest man on earth for the past year? For giving you--what no ordinary woman can? You say I don't love you, and I'll be truthful, John; I don't love you as much as I could one of my own kind. But I do love you and I tried to prove it. I did everything I could do for you and you owe your success today partly to me. Don't you owe me a little something?" She too was dramatic, but with drama of life and her words carried meaning and were not empty sounds.

His dark face paled and the anguish in his heart was reflected in his eyes, but he was implacable in what he considered was his duty.

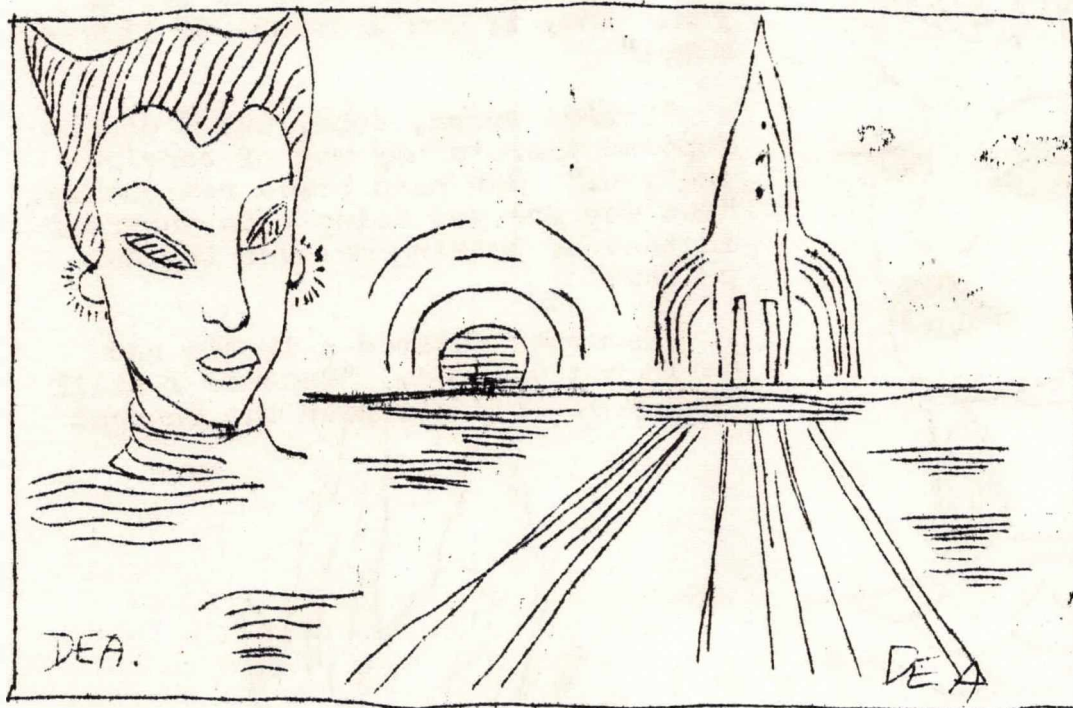
"Yes, I'm willing to admit that you made me happier than I'll ever be again. For you it was easy. You're extremely intelligent, beautiful, have the best figure on Earth, and," he smiled bitterly, "you can give a man a joy almost unbearable by your use of your mental power and

body together. You're like a drug; you get into a man's blood and he never wants to free himself. But, you once told me I was stronger than ordinary men, and now I'm going to prove it--by killing you."

"John," her voice was soft now, "haven't you forgotten something? I'm with child, John." (He wondered at her wisdom, the wisdom that made her avoid the use of that stark word, pregnant.) "And I just know it's going to be a boy. My baby boy. And your's, John."

She had seen the irresolution in his eyes and was playing on his sympathy and father-love. He knew this, and yet the words weakened him

"Can you kill your own flesh and blood?"



She knew she had made a mistake when the look of mental suffering faded from his face and was replaced by an odd expression of mingled love, resolve, and sorrow.

"Yes!" he almost shouted. "I can kill my own flesh and blood! Because it won't be mine! Every child born of a mutant father or mother is a mutant, no matter that the other parent is normal." His voice deepened and became steady. "Let me refresh your memory. Two years ago, you atomic mutants made your try for world domination. It failed because you were so ambitious, you struck too soon and because a talented normal invented this shield against your killing telepathy." He tapped the small square case attached to his belt. "We thought we killed every mutant, man, woman, and child. Your blood-thirstiness, the torture you inflicted on captives for the sheer pleasure of sadism had convinced us beyond any doubt that the radio-activity in your blood had poisoned your brains. And besides, your revolution came perilously close to succeeding, and home saps, as you dubbed us, have a pretty strong self-preservation instinct."

The Security Police rounded you up, one by one, and executed you on the spot. Because you have one strange, almost fantastic hereditary

characteristic that provides an infallible test for mutancy. Every mutant born is marked by the hoof of Pan! In place of the small toe on each foot, you have a tiny hoof."

"But, you were very careful. I didn't know you were a mutant until the morning after our wedding night, and then it was too late. I was so madly in love with you--and the pleasure you gave me--I couldn't turn you in, even knowing as I did that, you were the last living mutant. But now--there will soon be two of you. And, if you continue to live--more."

"You're wrong, John, but I don't suppose there's any way of convincing you." Her head bowed resignedly. "But why are you doing this yourself instead of turning me over to the police?"

His mouth twisted a little and he looked ashamed. "Because I still love you. I can't bear the thought



of some policeman man-handling you. Also, you're the last mutant. For that they'll make the execution public."

He raised the pistol he had held in his hand the entire time they had talked. "Are you ready?"

Until now, it had all seemed only another act to her, like the thousand she went through every day while pretending to be a normal woman. But the cold menace of the pointed gun brought her to life.

He had gone into the bathroom to bathe and change into pajamas, but returned fully dressed, with the pistol.



She had been in bed dressed in her habitual thin nightgown. Now, standing close to him, she made her last appeal. Swiftly she bent, caught the edge of her gown, and stripped it off over her head. It had always been her voluptuously beautiful body that had held him before. It could do it again.

He stared at her lovely body as though fascinated. She knelt, clasping her hands in front of her beautiful breasts, her long unbound hair and arms hiding their beauty and leaving bare the best of her body. Her entire form was a mute appeal for mercy and a promise of unthinkably sensual rewards if--when--the merch was granted.

Strangely, it was not her loveliness that drew his gaze, but the one thing that marred her figure, the slight swelling of the womb.

"My child," he thought dully. "A mutant, but still my child." And even as he thought, she spoke. "Can you kill your own child and the woman who will bear it, Hohn? And with them the happiness I give?"

There was a tinkling crash as the pistol shattered the window, and then he was kneeling on the floor with her, sobbing unashamedly, while she soothed and comforted him. His arms encircled her waist, and she held his head on her breasts and stroked his hair with one hand, while the other hand undid the clasp holding the little flat box on his belt. She was afraid his determination might return someday when she was wearing a three piece suit and underclothes.

The box came off in her hand and without looking, she fumbled at the cover. The switch was on the inside. And even as the cover came off and her fingers found the switch, he realized it was gone from his waist and he jerked away from her. He was on his feet in an instant, all his resolve returned, strengthened by the black rage her easy trickery of him brought raging to the surface. Even as she pressed the switch his hands leaped for her throat. He felt the beginning of the blasting current of death, but his hands were fastened now and he was satisfied.

Disregarding the strangling hands, she concentrated every fraction of the strong electrical current generated and controlled by her brain and sent it smashing at the synaptic connections at the top of his spine. Instant and complete paralysis was the result, followed in seconds by death.

His heavy body fell to the floor, pulling her after it. But the hands cutting off her breath did not loosen. Her wind was ebbing fast. She seized the hairy hands with both her own and tugged with all her failing strength. They refused to move. Desperate now, she lowered her hands to her waist, pressed her palms and fingers tightly together, making an inverted V of her arms, and brought her hands up between his arms, so that the K V of the arms would force his hands apart.

The dead hands held.

Too weak to try again, she collapsed. Her last ironic thought before the blackness came was that she had, after all, saved him pain. He would never have found happiness with another woman after enjoying her mutant embrace and he was far too strong-minded to seek suicide.

--the end--

JANUARY 30, 1953

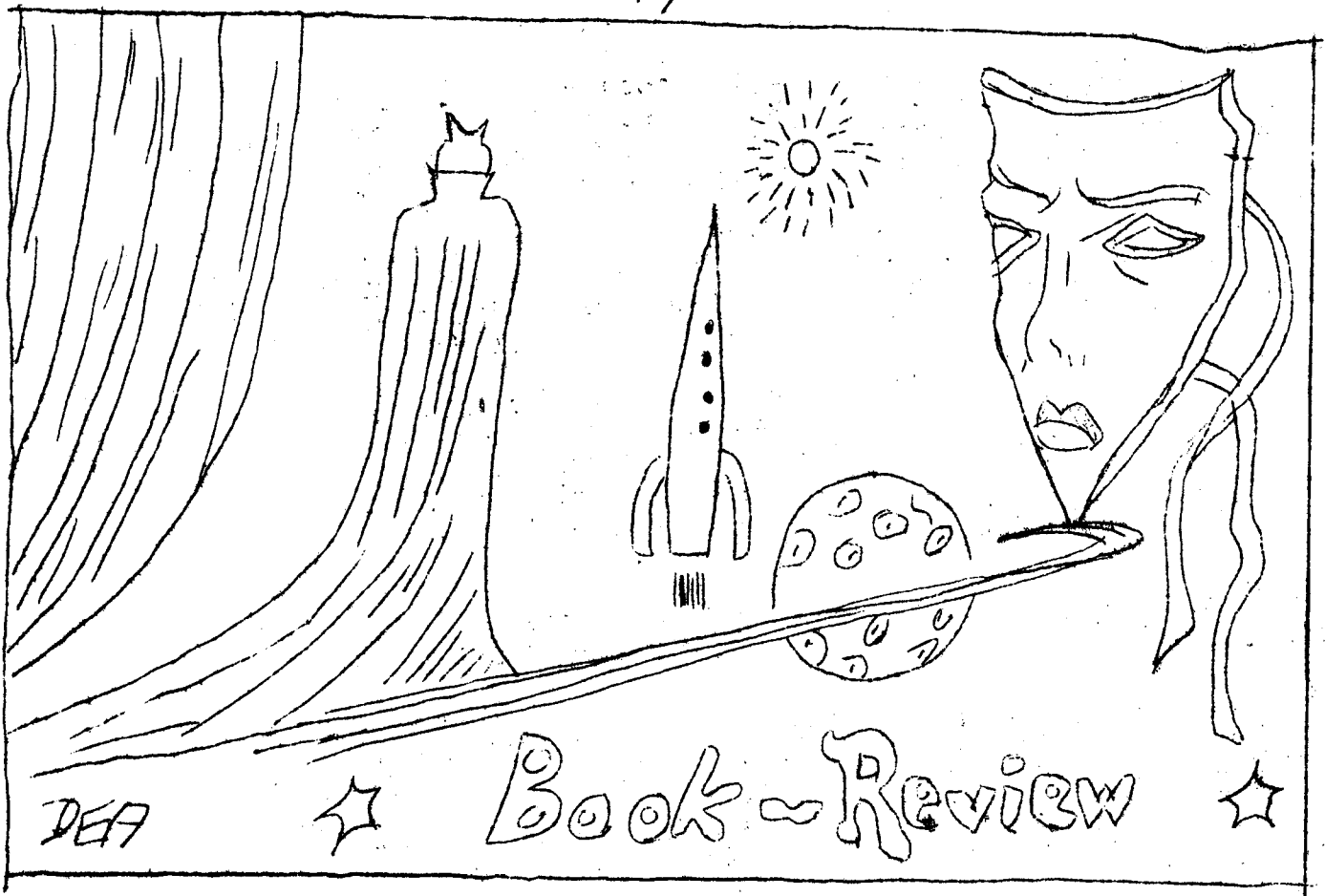
All I have on hand
for #5 at present, is
the "Progress Report."
Please contribute fiction,
articles, anything!
Thanks. --- Vic

PROGRESS REPORT

A PAST & FUTURE HISTORY OF
SCIENCE-FANTASY BULLETIN

DON'T MISS THIS INTERESTING
AND INFORMATIVE ARTICLE IN #5.





THE NIGHTLAND by W.H. HODGESON

AS REVIEWED BY

Joe Green

Have you ever tried to describe the word "greatness" to someone who did not know personally the ideas and ideals, the meaning of the adjectives as applied to the word? If you haven't, don't. It isn't worth the effort.

Many novels have been written and many read. Out of the vast collections of words, a few reach fame and their owners, fortunes. A few of the famed reach the near immortality that is the highest honor man can give to man, to man's way of thinking. But man is a variable creature. What appeals to me may be a dud to you. What quickens my pulse and sears my brain with splendor may leave you cold and unmoved. And so greatness, in literature, may be called that factor which the largest number of variables are in affinity with, and moved by. And all authors who have succeeded in gaining this affinity are very well-known indeed.

But what of the little variables outside the majority who have similar tastes? A group such as fandom, for instance. Does the rule

always apply. The answer is no, for two good reasons. Limited editions and high prices. In seeking to please a minority group, the publishers of stf-type literature take a drastic reduction in general salability; A reduction which is being diminished as fandom grows.

And now to the heart of the matter. A paper heart with little black lines on it. A book. A long story told by black marks on white paper. A fantasy, unheralded and almost unknown, almost neglected entirely; but to me it bears the unmistakable stamp of "greatness."

The old style English translated into modern words, the quaint phrasing and different verbal structure, frighten many people away. The formidable length, 221,000 words, discourages many stf fans, who seem primarily to love the short story, and short novel. The first chapter, a charming love story of old England, both beautiful and tragic, holds nothing to tempt a fantasy fan.

And so, what is in my opinion the greatest novel ever written, THE NIGHT LAND, by William Hope Hodgson, remains far from the fame it deserves.

To the best of my knowledge, Arkham House, in 1946, published the only uncut version in this country, entitled THE HOUSE ON THE BORDERLAND and OTHER NOVELS, in a limited edition of 3,000 copies. In an introductory article, H. C. Koenig praises Hodgson in general, Lovecraft praises the lead novel, and Clark Ashton Smith, like myself, praises to the stars and beyond, the novel which occupies as much room as the other three together, an immortal saga of the Land of Eternal Night.

In the far, far vista of the future, when the sun is dead and Earth almost so, cosmic evil and cosmic good do battle on the Earth, for the sould of the few million left alive. In two great citadels, built after the coming of the great dark, the race of man awaits extinction. Between the two lie thousands of miles of bleak earth, peopled only by monsters and forces of evil. And in the larger redoubt, as the citadels are called, there is a young man torn by ancestral memories of a lost love. And torn by the same memories, the lost love awaits him; in the smaller redoubt.

The hero, whose name is never mentioned, plunges into the dangerous hell that is the Night Land, for the lesser Redoubt is falling to the besieging monsters. He has no means of transportation but his feet; no weapon except a powerful spinning saw; no knowledge save instinct and ESP guidnace. Yet he must find his love or die. Day after weary day he marches through the Night Land, meeting danger when he must, avoiding it like a sensible young fellow whenever he can, always seeing before him the remembered face of his beloved. His spirit guides his feet by the straightest route and his mind and body grapple with anxiety and the Night Land. How he reaches the redoubt and finds it empty and dead, with the people scattered and eaten by the monsters is a novel in itself. But, after having found her, the two of them start the perilous journey back to the Greater Redoubt, and the suspense becomes almost unbearable. The dangers and hardships are both doubled and halved, with two to share them. And when the two lovers meet the primitive humped men and almost die at their hands, the

- 20 -

HOW STRANGE OR ODD

by
Toby DUANE



HOW STRANGE OR ODD

Ivan Stutstivetski's thick boots sank roughly in the expensive carpets that lined the halls of the Kremlin. Behind him, his comrade Petrov slinked along quietly, checking each door as they went past.

"We go down this hall now, comrade," Petrov said in Russian as they came to a branch in the hallway.

"Yes, Petrov," the other said, "It is that door; come."

They passed the three outer secretaries merely by exhibiting the proper credentials, and several intricate pass-words got them by the two inner secretaries and the five guards. Finally they were admitted to the innermost chamber.

"Sir, we report."

"Ivan Stutstivetski and Petrov Romanov," stated the man who sat behind the desk of maple. He pressed a button, and a messenger entered the room a moment later carrying a dossier, which he deposited on the desk. He left. The man glanced through some of the papers, then pushed them aside.

"You are they," he said. "I give you your orders here," he added, handing Petrov a sealed envelope. "You are the finest spies in all of the Soviet Union. For you we have the job of stopping the American rocket to the moon, and obtaining its plans. Here," giving them a small packet, "are your credentials and necessary equipment. Your clothes you will obtain in Switzerland."

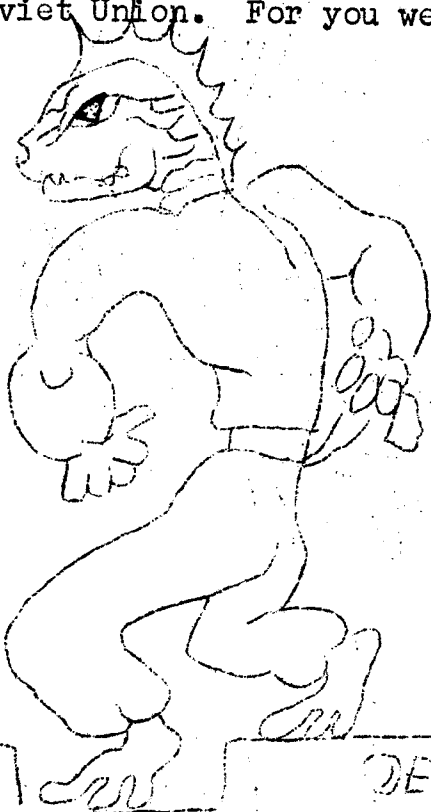
Petrov took the package and gave it to Stutstivetski.

"You must reach America within two weeks. You have your assignment. Your American passports are within the package. They are devoid of any names, so you will use names of your own choosing."

"Yes sir," said Petrov. "I have read some English literature. We shall have no trouble; I shall choose two average names from among those books I have read."

"Good. Then go. And go with the knowledge of the price of failure!"

The man behind the desk turned from them and bent over some paperwork. Ivan stood there until Petrov motioned him to the door. They left the room, Ivan's thick boots still



stomping on the plush rugs. "Bored and undisciplined idiots," muttered the man behind the desk to himself, "but excellent spies."

The vessel rolled softly to the wash of the water in the harbor. Ivan and Petrov stood on the deck watching the process of making fast the ship. They were dressed, now, in good-quality westernized clothing, and conversing only in English.

"We leave the boat now," said Petrov, as the men got the gang-plank put down. "Have you got your passport?"

"I have it here," said Ivan.

"Then we will get the suitcases and leave."

The lines through the customs men went quickly. The spies were taken aside, their luggage given a cursory glance, and their passports examined. "English, eh?" said the man as if that might explain any situation whatever. "English." He was from Brooklyn. "They look in order. Messers. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern. Okay, okay, beat it."

"What is this?" Ivan whispered to Petrov. "Did he now say we are to be beaten?"

"He means we may leave," said Petrov. "Come." Ivan picked up the luggage and they headed toward the street.

"Automobile styles have changed since I was last in the United States," Petrov mused idly. "Come, let us find a taxi and a hotel. Then we shall plan our operation."

"How will we get into the launching site, Petrov?" said Ivan.

"Do not call me Petrov!" exclaimed Petrov. "We must not make the Americans suspicious in the least. To you I am Rosencrantz, or better yet, a nickname. Yes, call me 'Slug.'"

"Yes, Petrov," said the chastened spy.

Well, here is a taxi now."

DE 7



HOW STRANGE OR ODD3

They decided that their first step would be to go the vicinity of the rocket-construction, and having reached this decision, they acted upon it.

A train took them within forty miles of their destination, where they got off and rented an automobile for three weeks. Ivan, who had learned to speak English at an obscure English college, had trouble driving with the wheel on the left side, and ultimately it was this defect in his ability which both caused and saved them much difficulty.

The car was about fourteen miles from the small city of Hillcrest, Nevada, when Ivan suddenly swerved the wheel the wrong way as another car started to pass them, and frantically tried to correct his error as the car headed for a ditch at the side of the road.

"WATCH OUT" Petrov shouted in Russian, grabbing for the wheel, but the car plunged into the ditch, turned half-over, and came to rest against the indignant bark of a well-scraped oak. Petrov cursed, for he had struck his head on the windshield, and blood was coming from the gash. He held his handkerchief to the wound.

The other car had stopped a few feet away, and a tall, rather nice-looking young man was walking toward the smashed auto. Petrov nudged his companion, and the soft flow of Russian oaths reluctantly died out. "Shue up, you fool, the American is coming over. Get out of the car."

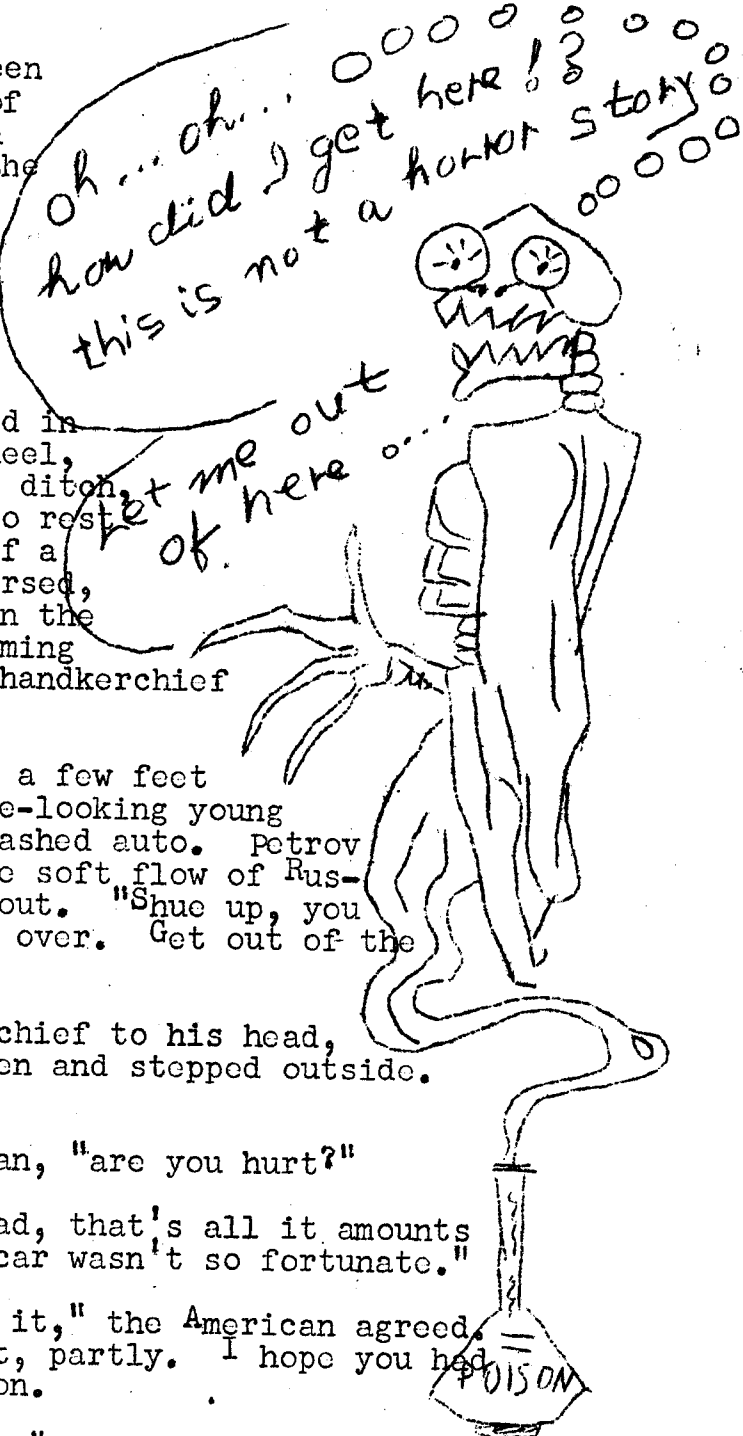
Still holding the handkerchief to his head, he tugged the dented door open and stepped outside. "Hello there," he said.

"How are you?" said the man, "are you hurt?"

"Just a cut on the forehead, that's all it amounts to," said Petrov. "But the car wasn't so fortunate."

"No, it doesn't look like it," the American agreed. "Looks like this was my fault, partly. I hope you had insurance." It was a question.

"I think so," Petrov said, "you see, this is a



rented car. I guess we'll have to call a garage. Do you happen to know the nearest one?"

He thought for a moment. "I guess you'll have to go all the way to Hillcrest to get help. I'm headed that way, and I'll be glad to take you along."

"Thanks a lot," said Petrov. "Guildenstern, get your luggage and come along. WE'll leave the car as it is. I don't think anyone will drive it off."

"Oh, by the way, my name is Harry Kenyon," said the American.

"I am Slug Rosencrantz, and my friend is Washington Guildenstern. We're vacationing in America, and he isn't used to driving your cars."

"You're . . .?" asked Kenyon hesitantly.

"English," muttered Ivan, speaking for the first time.

"I studied over here for a while," explained Petrov, "so I suppose my accent is gone with the winds."

"Ah, yes, well, okay. Here's the car; I've got a lot of junk in with me. Wait, I'll pile it in front." He slung a few packages into the seat beside him. "Okay, uh, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, climb in. We're off."

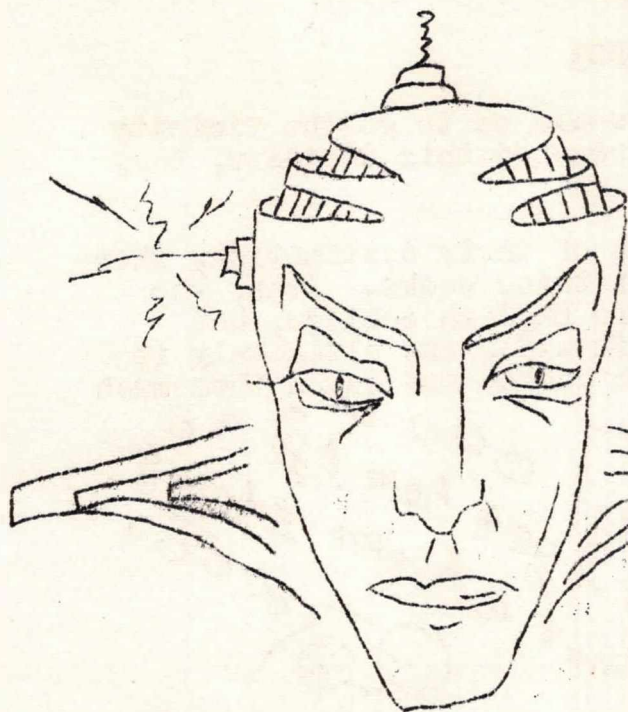
And beyond a queer glance at Petrov, he said nothing more for several minutes as they drove along in silence.

It was a small town, and the hotel was really only a boarding house, but Petrov and Ivan took rooms there and took care of the matter about the automobile. It would give them a plausible excuse to remain in town for several days.

It was while breakfasting in the corner diner that they again encountered Harry Kenyon, who entered just after they received their orders. He spotted them and walked over.

"Hello, George," he said to the counter-man, "the usual, eh?"

"Sure, Mr. Kenyon," the fellow said, moving off.



"How did you two make out with the garage?" he said, turning to the spies.

"Reasonably well," replied Petrov through a mouthful of fried eggs. "It'll take us a few days, maybe a week or so, before we can continue our itinerary."

"You'll be staying in town then," stated Kenyon.

"Yes, at the boarding house. Do you live here?"

"Not exactly; I work around here," said Kenyon. "Oh, here comes George with my breakfast."

They ate without conversation, Petrov finishing before Ivan (who, unused to the fare of bacon and eggs, had eaten more slowly than usual). They paid the counter-man as Kenyon walked away, and Petrov asked him, "Does Kenyon work around here?"

"Sure," the guy said, "Yeah, he's a test pilot."

"A test pilot, eh?" Ivan raised his head more interestedly, and Petrov added, "I'd no idea there was an airfield around this area."

"Oh, sure," he said, rubbing the counter with a considerably dirty rag. "Sure, not exactly an airfield, I mean, not a commercial airport. Some government thing, don't know what they're doing. Kenyon doesn't talk much about it, and neither do any of the other fellows who come to town."

"Probably building some new kind of thing," Petrov suggested.

"Yeah, maybe new jets or something. Well, yeah, let's see, a buck forty-five. Okan?"

Petrov paid him and he and Ivan left the diner and strolled through the town.

From the barber they picked up the information that the government installation was located about two miles northeast of town, and that (as they had expected) townspeople were not allowed within the vicinity.

"How do they get food supplies for the personnel, then?" Petrov asked casually of the clerk in the grocery store. "Must ship them in from out of town. Hurts you business, I guess, if they do."

"Nope, they get 'em from us," the man replied. "I usually take 'em out Saturdays." This was Thursday. "But even I don't ~~know~~ get any nearer then the maintenance building. Nope, them government boys are pretty strict about such things. Oh, here's your change. Seventy eight cents, from a dollar."

Petrov pocketed the package of cigarettes as the fellow ran up the payment, and he and Ivan turned to leave.

"Hon," the storekeeper yelled after them, "I ain't been talking too much. You guys ain't government men, are Y'?" I mean---

"No," said Ivan in his strange combination of Russian and English accents, "we're Russian spies."

Petrov laughed, and so did the storekeeper, and they went out into the quiet street.

"I believe," Petrov murmured, "that Kenyon will pilot the rocket; and I think I know how we can get inside the field. But first, we must find that rocket, and either sabotage it or do something to Kenyon that will affect him adversely in the midst of his flight."

Ivan looked around. "Give me one of these American cigarettes, will you," he said. He lighted it. "It is difficult to smoke these capitalistic products without wretching," he added with a grimace. "Tomorrow we shall purchase several cartons to take back with us, eh, my friend?"

Petrov laughed.

They met Kenyon Friday evening in the diner, and attempted to draw him into conversation. "We've heard you're a test pilot," said Petrov after a gulp of coffee. "I imagine you have quite an adventurous existence."

"Oh, yeah, I suppose so," said Kenyon. "Most of the piloting gets routine after a while, though. Standard stuff."

"Are you testing something up here?" asked Ivan bluntly.

Kenyon hesitated, then explained, "Well, we're supposed to keep all this stuff confidential, so you see, I can't say much about it. I'm trying out something pretty new in the line of aircraft tomorrow morning, though."

"Oh," said Ivan.

"That's something I never thought of," said Petrov hazily, "getting up early, I mean. I'd thought test pilots have a mighty adventuresome time of it, but I guess you fellows hate alarm clocks just as much as anyone else."

"Yeah," Kenyon grinned at that, "Yeah, especially when they wake us up at six a.m."

Petrov gulped the rest of his coffee. "I imagine, what with atomic power and all, that some day you fellows'll be piloting spaceships to Mars and such." He ignored the quickly-suppressed startled look on Kenyon's face, and went on rapidly, "You know, when I was thirteen and used to read that science-fiction stuff, my Dad used to take it away from me because it was a lot of trash. And yet, here we are, on the threshold of Man's greatest venture---or adventure."

"Yop," muttered Kenyon, "I guess it's not too far off." He stopped speaking, as if he didn't know what else he could say. He looked at his watch.

Petrov said, "But one thing I never could figure out about rocket

ships. Say, you being a pilot, maybe you could tell me. How can a rocket work in space when there's no air to push against?" His face bore a look of perfect innocence.

He watched Kenyon's face around his eyes. The small crinkles relaxed slightly. He smiled slightly.

"Sure," he said. "I can tell you that. You ask any physicist that question, and he's liable to kick you out on your ear. I know, I did. It works on Newton's principle that every action has an opposite and equal reaction, like when you try to walk on roller skates and your feet slip backward. It works better without air, and in space the engine will function with greater efficiency than it will in the atmosphere. ~~It will~~ it will---that is, when they build a good enough engine, it will. Say, I'll have to be going now." He looked at his watch, again. "I'm supposed to be out at the base, and I walked out on them just to have dinner here this evening. Sort of got calmed down. Maybe I'll see you fellows again, if you stay around long enough."

He climbed off the stool, left his payment beside his empty plate, and left the diner. Five minutes later Petrov and Igor left too.

The sun of the Saturday morning was hidden just beneath the horizon when Igor and Petrov slipped into the garage in back of Clint Oppotto's grocery store and stealthily borrowed his delivery truck. It was a new model, luckily, and made little noise as it headed toward the barbed-wire enclosure that marked the site of the rocket take-off.

The guards held up their rifles in a gesture, and Petrov halted the truck. There were two of them. Petrov got down from the truck on one side, and Igor slipped out the other door.

"We are sent by Mr. Oppotto," explained Petrov.

One of the guards looked at Igor suspiciously. "He usually comes by himself, and alone," he said to his companion.

"I guess it's all right," said the other, "I recognize the truck. Okay, you guys, go on through, but hurry it up."

"It is that building over there, is it not?" Petrov said, pointing to a building that looked as if it might house the food repository.

"Yeah, yeah, now get going."

The spies got back into their vehicle, and drove carefully through the gate and around the side of the building they had been directed to. No one was around. They quickly disembarked from the cab and headed toward the far end of the base, keeping the building between themselves and the guards, and watching for signs of another person.

The sun was just spilling its light over the shadowy ground where Igor and Petrov crouched. Petrov pointed to a crude-looking structure, and suggested, "That may be the launching platform; looks pretty jumbled up to be a building. Come on!"

But he and Igor had taken only four steps forward, when a great silver object suddenly roared with a thousand voices and leapt up into the embrace of the sleepy-eyed sun.

The rockets bathed the ground below in a brief blast of fire, but the spies were far enough from the site to be unharmed.

"Too late," groaned Igor.

"Perhaps," said Petrov, "come on. That little hut over there, with the aerial. It looks like a control station. Perhaps they are controlling the rocket from here; it's worth a chance." They spoke quickly, in Russian. They moved forward, toward the shack, opened the door, and slipped inside. No one noticed them.

"Listen!" whispered Igor sharply. "Ahead. Voices."

"Two rooms," said Petrov. "Come."

They advanced until they reached a position by the half-open doorway where they could observe seven men seated around an eighth who was intently regarding a wall-sized control panel. For several moments they heard no sound.

"I'd hoped we could subdue them," said Petrov. "Perhaps we still can. Listen, one of them is speaking."

They strained their ears, but caught little more than fragments. The eyes of all were intent upon the blinking lights and nodding dials of the panel. Petrov whispered, "Stay here. I'm going to slip inside," and darted forward. Before any of the men had seen him, he was secreted behind a clumsy-looking piece of apparatus in the corner, listening to a two-way conversation between the operator and the rocket-ship pilot.

He stayed there a long time, then finally darted back outside, not an instant too soon. The meeting broke off, and several men started toward them. Petrov grabbed Igor's sleeve and pushed him ahead of him, out doors, and toward the delivery wagon.

They got there safely, and drove out through the gate with no trouble. Petrov said nothing for a very long time.

The Great One pushed aside the report with vehemence, a vehemence that was all too likely to transfer to the underling who stood before him. The underling knew it. He said, "Only you can give a proper sentence to these reprehensible traitors! A sentence that will give them their just deserts."

The Great One said nothing, but the underling kept quiet now, waiting for him to speak. Finally the Great One fingered the report again. He read the last few paragraphs, then looked up at the underling

"I have the punishment," he said. "We shall not kill them, nor torture them. They have caused us to fall behind America in the race to construct a rocket. We are all aware of the great savageness that exists in the backward state of America; no pure-minded Russian

could long endure it. You will take back the order that Stutstivetski and Romanov will be sent---

Both the Great one and the underling paused as the Great One contemplated the fiendishness of his punishment, and the underling almost guessed its unutterable horror.

"---back to the United States, and abandoned there !"

The underling had a strong stomach, so he did not immediately vomit. Instead, he saluted and left, wondering how he would break the news to the ex-spies and ex-Russians.

Back in the inner office, the Great One fingered the report again, reading the last few paragraphs over, satisfying himself that his terrible punishment was just.

"I, Petrov Romanov, was then in a position from which I could hear although not observe the proceedings. The pilot's voice I was familiar with. He was complaining that his rockets were refusing to function and that he was unable to change his course and give to it the slight correction that would place him in a completely accurate trajectory to the moon.

"The people in the room were watching the scene in horror. One of them, whom from pictures I recognized as one of the great physicists of American science, suddenly snapped his fingers.

"Newton was wrong," he suddenly yelled. "He was wrong."

"The pilot evidently heard him. 'He's got it,' he replied, 'That's what's the matter. The rockets aren't working because, because there's no air up here for them to push against. Nothing !'"

The Great One dropped the report into the wastebasket. He had indeed rendered a just, although infinitely horrible, punishment. No air, indeed ! Everyone knew there was air in space, for how else could the sun burn? No air? Bah !

---the end---

~~~~~

This is the

FINAL

ISSUE OF "ALIEN"



# VOE DREAMS -30-

## A POOR PRESS PUBLICATION

"FEATURING ONLY PRESS-POOR MATERIAL"

J L GREEN

It is Sunday afternoon. I feel bad. I have to turn out a poetry column. I am not in the mood. I am short of poetry. I feel like hell. The poetry in both Alien and Confusion is put in one spot so that fen who don't like poetry, and there are a hell of a lot of such creatures, can with the greatest ease and speed skip the whole damn poetry column, and not happen onto a poem at every page turning, read the first line before they can jerk their heads away, and be compelled to finish the whole poem. To such fellows I say poot! And I do mean the stinking kind.

I sent Rory a photomontage, asked her to admire it until she felt inspired, then write me a poem. I give you the result.

FINIS

With Solar Phoenix geared to senseless strife  
Man has destroyed the very seed of life.  
The moon's cold eye stares at the scene below,  
A sterile world bathed in an eerie glow -  
A dead sea breaking on a desolate shore.  
A Spirit mourns for life that is no more -  
The soul of Woman, brooding over earth  
Where there is no more death - and no more birth.

Rory Faulkner

A fragment, stolen from a life that is passing.

BEFORE THE CURTAIN

And once, before the final curtain,  
look upon the mountains, and the meadows,  
look upon the hilltops and the glistening snows;

-31-

look upon the oceans, and their caps of fluff;  
and last of all, look upon the works  
that you have wrought, and find them good or bad.  
And then make whisper: "Done; and now, farewell!"

Toby Duane

A dying wish, a dream of the dead, the desire to do unto you  
likewise

### Nemesis

From my desolate grave I come to you  
Just for a glimpse of your proud face.  
I, lying there have remembered so long  
Each attribute of your beauty and grace.  
Did you place various unholy charms  
Across the threshold and around the walls,  
Sensing echoes of my weary footsteps  
Or did you hear my agonizing calls?  
My feeble knock will not open the door  
That your mystical spells have closed so tight,  
Why were you so afraid to look at me,  
Were you fearing perhaps to die of fright?  
I am certain some eve you will forget  
To weave your spells before an open door,  
You will chill and then feel an ice-cold wind  
Around your feet, flowing across the floor.  
It is strange! but I harbor resentment  
For all the evil you have done to me,  
For the time you moved the hands of life's clock  
Into the years ahead, and set my spirit free.  
I wish to crush with my bony fingers  
That venomous thing you have called a heart.  
If this desire can be accomplished  
In all humility I will depart.

Is

### THE OTHERS

They all come out, and flit about, and shout,  
with evil grins, remind of sins and doubt.  
War and strife, all of these rife, in man's life,  
with evil grins,  
remind of sins...  
THE LEMURIANS COME!

Dave E. W. Parker

See you next ish. jlgreen



- 32 -  
SCIENCE FANTASY  
BULLETIN

# PROGRESS REPORT

by

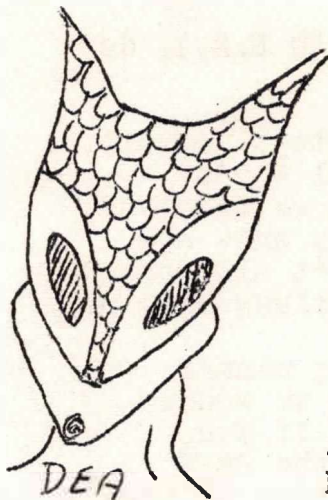
Harlan Ellison, Esq.

Just about now, my Annual issue stares me in the eye. It seems as though just yesterday I was finagling with the members of the Cleveland Science Fiction Society to help contribute some money to me for the purchase of a miniscule mimeo for the production of the club bulletin which had been (alas) defunct for a goodly number of months. I had seen the mimeo, seen the price, and finally persuaded the members to advance the amount, now forgotten.

The machine was a poor job and was traded back the next day with a loss of two dollars which, at the time, broke my heart. But, somehow or other, I was maneuvered into buying a machine at cut rate that, though new, left much to be desired. It was a small-ish mimeo that had to be inked from the outside, on the pad, and ate up great quantities of ink and manual labor with the most shoddy of results. But, it was better than nothing.

In February of 1952, the first issue of THE BULLETIN OF THE CLEVELAND SCIENCE FICTION SOCIETY came out. It was an 8½ x 11 zine, with a poorly-mimeographed cover by Ellison, near-illegible contents, no right hand justification, few illos (and those that there were were horrifying), and a general disregard for anything mature. It numbered 16 pages and, though amateur-ish in format, showed much of the ambition with which the later issues were printed. That first issue featured a short story by the editor entitled GREEN DENOUMENT which, to this day, I think was one of the best switch-ending yarns I've ever read (this, of course, could be considered prejudiced thinking---anyone who does consider it such, however, is a dangerous character and should be carefully watched). It also featured one of the nicest pieces of fan poetry published in the last few years. It was A MANIACAL INSTRUMENT by Stephen Schultheis, whom many of the readers of this magazine know. Steve has the peculiarly scarce ability to put a biting satire in a few words and make you rock with laughter at them. Well, so much for that first issue. Number of copies laboriously printed? 30.

Second issue: we had started out as a bi-weekly but after getting through this job we realized that two issues had shown the fallacy of such an endeavour.



Even a monthly is a task cut out for a Hercules, and being a runty sort of schloony I found (and find) the task pressing, but not overly large for I had gained access to a sharp assistant editor by the time I had gotten to my second issue. Into the picture came Honey Wood, a power with which to reckon in N3F and a wonderful girl all the way. With her most capable assistance and vitriolic regard for my crack-brained schemes, we began to roll.

The cover of our second issue was the introduction to fandom of Ray Gibson, the first SFB DISCOVERY. A young high school student here in Cleveland, Ray had the ability to make lines assume clever shapes and subtle meanings to coalesce into a beautiful pic.

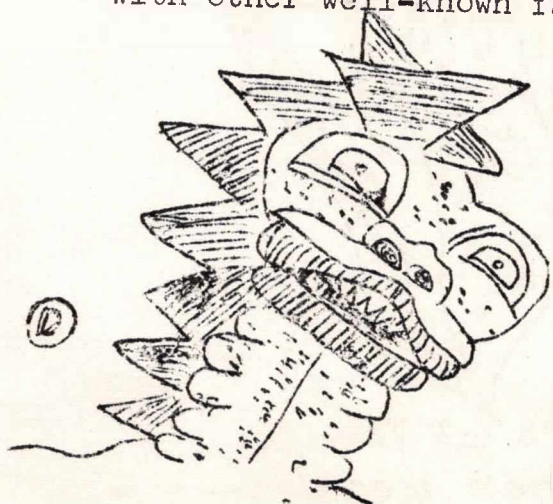
Ray also began the first of his cartoon-articles entitled GIBSON'S GALLERY OF EXTRATERRESTRIAL LIFE which presented et's of varied and amusing shapes and sizes. The ET Gallery was one feature that was consistently received with huzzahs and laughter. Sad to say, Ray has dropped away from fanart and the last Gallery was printed in issue number 8, so if you have missed them, something is definitely missing from your lives. This issue saw the birth of the Read Any GOOD Books Lately? section that was the reason for the Cleveland Public Library taking a number of copies for various purposes of use and filing.

The contests were well-rounded by two short stories, an article, three pieces of poetry, numerous features and departments. The lead short story was again taken by Yoo Troolee with a piece called LUNA, something of a novel switch that won a literary prize in the Phi Beta Kappa Writing Contest. So? 50 copies



Came issue number 3: dated April 1952, it again featured a Gibson cover. This was our Midwestern issue, the B-I-G one that we were going to take to Indian Lake---the one that had to sell the Bulletin of the CSFS (as if it was still called, as it was still under their auspices. Actually the extent of the Club's power over the Bulletin was that a Board of Advisors would pass all material before it was used.). This issue saw the 'zine blossoming out with other well-known fan writers as it featured as a lead article, ESSAY ON EGOBOO by Bill Venable, the first of Bill's highly intriguing articles on fanning. We also obtained the first of a series from Karl J. Chanz, a pen-name for an exceptionally well-known New York state fan who to this day will not let us reveal his name. But in any event QUICK! KILL IT BEFORE IT MULTIPLIES! led off the most successful series we've ever used in SFB.

Mention should be made of the CITATION which we awarded to a pro each issue. This has received the most response, drawn letters of praise from a great many Big Name Pros and won us much recognition. Through





it, we have had letters from Heinlein, Gold, Bester, Smith E.E.), de Camp, Pratt, Boucher, Eshbach, etc.

This issue started what might easily have turned into a lawsuit. We credited a certain TV show with having done Lester del Rey's PIPES OF PAN (which it turned out they had not) and soon we received a letter from Scott Meredith, Lester's agent demanding to know how they had gotten it without purchasing rights from him. It all worked out right eventually, but not before the Fear God was slung into us.

This issue was a 50-pager, which for the painstaking manner in which we turned it out, was a miracle issue. In fact we wonder to this day how in the devil it ever came out as well as it did. Our Midwestcon Section was a sparse affair, cut because the CSFS came over on a meeting-night to help staple it together when it wasn't even done, and we ran it short. But anyway it sold terrifically at the Con. Number of copies run off---100 approximately.

Issue number four was the first of the ones to feature BNF throughout. The cover was one of the best things Max Keasler has ever done, and was printed on a special stock of paper. Pro author Charlie Tanner contributed a clever poem called CON and the lead spot went to what many prozine review columns have called the "BEST Fan Satire Ever Published," THE FRIGHTENING FABLE OF HUBURTUS SNOGGLE, STIFAN by Steve Schultheis. This and the poem mentioned previously and another were the only things Steve was able to do for us before he went into the Army a few months ago. Darn shame---he had talent.

Under the pseudonym of Ray Yowler, yoo trolee ran off a critical article called IT'S TRULY "FANTASTIC"! which ripped into Ziff-Davis' new magazine. It was well-received-also. In this issue we established as a fanartist of note a young lady named Vaughn Burden whose ELLIOTS were the cartoon sensation of the year. Copies run off---100.

However, there was trouble with the CSFS and with the next issue, June 1952, we severed with them under most unpleasant circumstances which, outlined in a editorial misspelled Declaration of Independance, brought howls of rage from all corners. This issue was our turning point. We re-named her SCIENCE FANTASY BULLETIN, started featuring Big Names, bought a new A.B. Dick hand-feed mimeo, got colored paper that reduced ink seepage that had marred the quality of the zine, and went to work with a ferfer.

That issue listed as partial contents: IN DEFENSE OF MY FANHOOD by the co-head of Gnome press, David Kyle; it featured a frontispiece by Margaret Dominick who has consistently

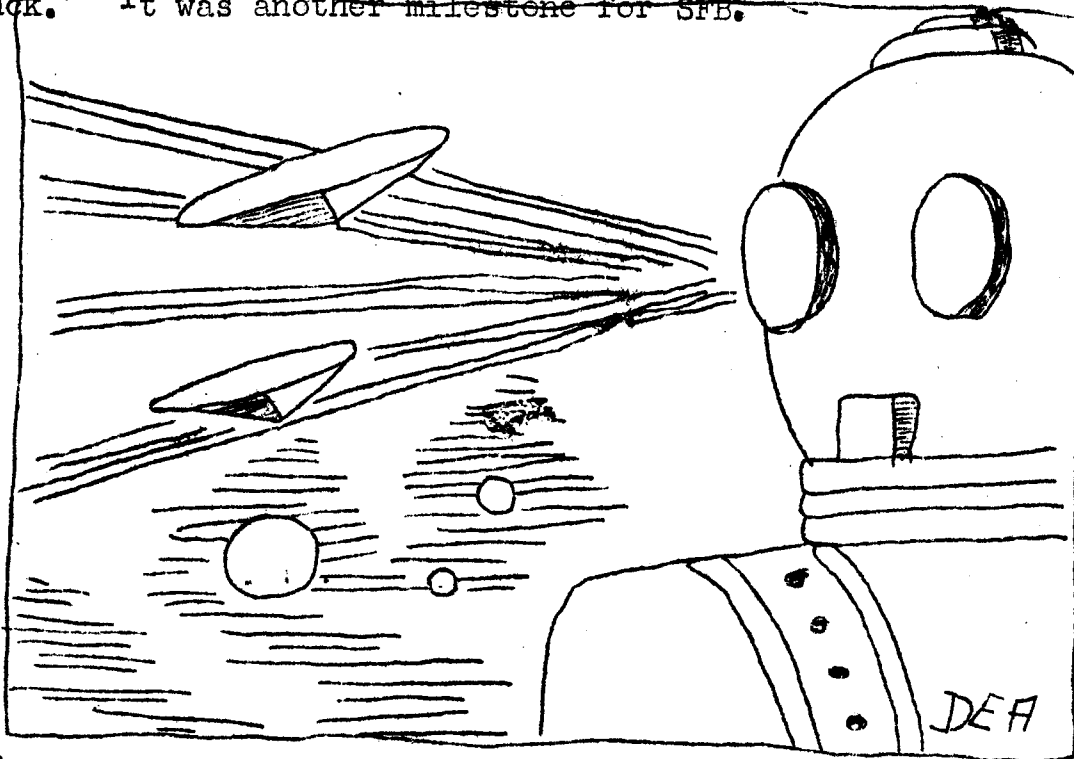


Horrors! I've got the  
earthmen measles ---



sent her best material to us, BEASTLEY'S ON THE SANDPIT AND THE 1954 MIDWESTCON by Hoffman, THE TORTURED by Chanz, and a lineup that ran the ish to 43 pages. In this issue also was the article OTHER WORLDS ON THE FIRE which was written by Ralph Beese and wring out Palmer's mag, but good. Little did we realize the action it would bring, later. Number of copies printed up---125.

By the time we hit the July 1952 issue (# 6), we had acquired a cover by Richard Z. Ward which we ran on a special colored stock; we had the sequel to ESSAY ON EGOBOO by Bill Venable entitled DISCOURSE ON ARIFANAC; a long story-poem by an unknown in Buffalo named Marianne Nichols and the finest story we have ever published: THE ULTIMAYE HORROR by Indianapolis fan Robert Kruse. This was a novelette length story of which one well-known faneditor wrote us: "...it was good enough to have been printed in the Post, and I would have given my writing arm up to here to have published it. You have all the luck." It was another milestone for SFB.



For our book reviewing section we had acquired Andre Norton, editor of BULLATD OF THE SOACE PATROL, a well-known writer and a wonderful person. She allowed us to be the first in the nation to pre-review her STAR MAN'S SON which came put from Harcourt, Brace & Company just a short time ago. Thish also saw the beginning of a serial that is still running entitled TALES OF CORTON THORNE, a slam-bang space opy with as many plot threads as one of van Vogt's jobs. Our circulation sprang up to 150---and we were reviewed in Startling Stories. Progress.....

Then came the August 1952 issue ! Number 7 ! Miracles !

RAY PALMER responded to our article of June with a retaliatory article, PALMER ON ASBESTOS, We were dumbfounded...but we ran it with a banner head that screamed it in no uncertain terms. In this issue we ran the first published story of one of the ex-Quiz kids: Lonny Lunde's FAST TENSE which was a somewhat amateruish job, but domonstrated the good salesmanship and circulation-building we were trying to get going. That issue was the first in which we picked up the

controversial fanzine review column, DRYIN' IN THE SINK by Marion Z. Bradley which had meandered through several mags before finding a more-or-less permanent home with SFB. It stirred controversy, it drew fire, and I liked the column---so I used it. Hal Shapiro cropped up in the mag now as did Orville Mosher. We were rolling (155).

Number 8: our post-Chicon issue that has made history in fandom. An 82-page, neatly mimeod, well-laid out job, it carried such pro names as Ralph Robin, Bob Tucker, R. R. Winterbotham (of Chris Wolkin fame) and such fans as Hoffman, English, Duane, Ganley, Norm Browne, Venable, Ray Nelson, Measler, Su Rosen, Bradley, Chanz, and Honey Wood. The issue bulged out at the seams with THE KEASLER BED MYSTERY, THE DAVID ENGLISH ART FOLDO, WHAT I THINK TUESDAY, CRYIN' IN THE SINK, TALES OF COTTON THORNE and pages and pages of gold papered classics. Innovation on innovation in this issue.

New lettering guide headings, Ray Nelson's cartoons used in Bradley's column, a feature of reprimands called THE BOOT, classy layout, an ad section with commercial and nonstf ads, art on every page, a column of chit-chat by the editor called BUPELINGS with art by one of the pro ranks most famous artists: Jack Gaughan. A lithood insert page of photos from the con rounded out an ish that staggered both the editor and the subscribers. By the time this sees print, ish #9 will be out with some of the contents being: WHAT EVERY YOUNG SPACEMAN SHOULD KNOW by Robert Bloch; THE IMPACT OF SF ON WORLD PROGRESS by Hugo Bernsback; MICROSCOPIC MUSINGS by Garth Bentley (his first fan work); RETROGRESSION by Su Rosen; and more.

For the future?

Well, we've got the Annual in February with material by Will Ley, Boucher, Cox, Elsberry, Hoffman, Willis, Calkins, Venable, etc., etc.

We've got a POGO issue coming out with a cover by "olly, and a lithood frontispiece of Walt with articles on Pogo from all fandom.

We've contacted Gold about a GALAXY COMMEMORATIVE issue, with a possible cover by ESMH.

We are featuring lithood covers and inserts as often as possible; we are getting Big Names as often as possible, and . . .

WE ARE GOING TO GIVE FANS AND NONFANS WHAT THEY WANT!

Our price is being upped in January from 15¢ an issue to 20¢, with our subscription rates going up accordingly.

The December issue will feature a most excellent story called ADVENT that was written by Bill Venable and should stir fandom to its very foundations.

When something new is going to be done----SFB'll do it.

But we started out small...and cruddy...and we sweated.

That's the way we all start. And if it hadn't been for the swell folks that bought our 'zine with the hope we'd improve, we might still be working that crank handle on a club bulletin.

Upward and onward . . .

t h e e n d

# ASFO

-37- 15¢ per copy  
4 for 50¢  
10 for \$1.00

replacing

Cosmag/SCIENCE FICTION DIGEST

the

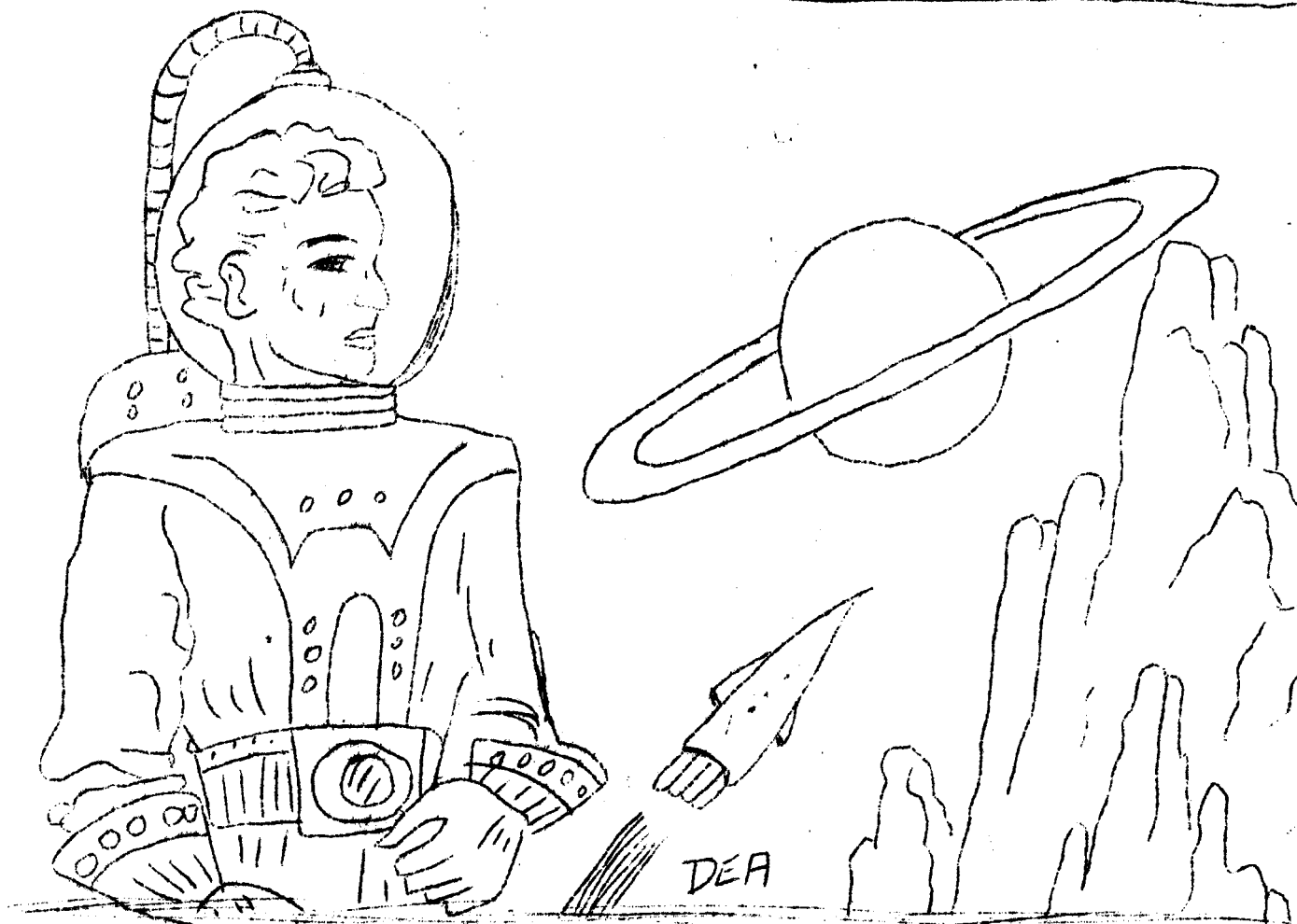
## Atlanta Science Fiction Organization

Ian T. Macauley

57 East Park Lane, NE

Atlanta 5, Georgia

a member of fanvariety enterprises





# The Con is Fading, But Oh, the Fan...

by Russell K. Watkins

Marion Slably and her husband, Bob, are having lunch when Redd Sloggs, their futual fan-friend, calls on them. "Got ybu reservations at the con hotel, Bob. Best rooms. Let's go!"

Marion grabs a let of the table to anchor it down. She expects Bob to turn the thing over lunging for his hat. He doesn't. He takes it all very calmly.

"Wanna go to the con, hyh?"

"That's right!" Redd gloats. Best con of them all. Grab your jat! The Westerncon stank, the Easterncon was dull, the Southerncon was lifeless, the Northerncon was crazy, and the 18 other annual cons were nothing when compared to this, the greatest of them all, the STATES-RIGHTS CON!"

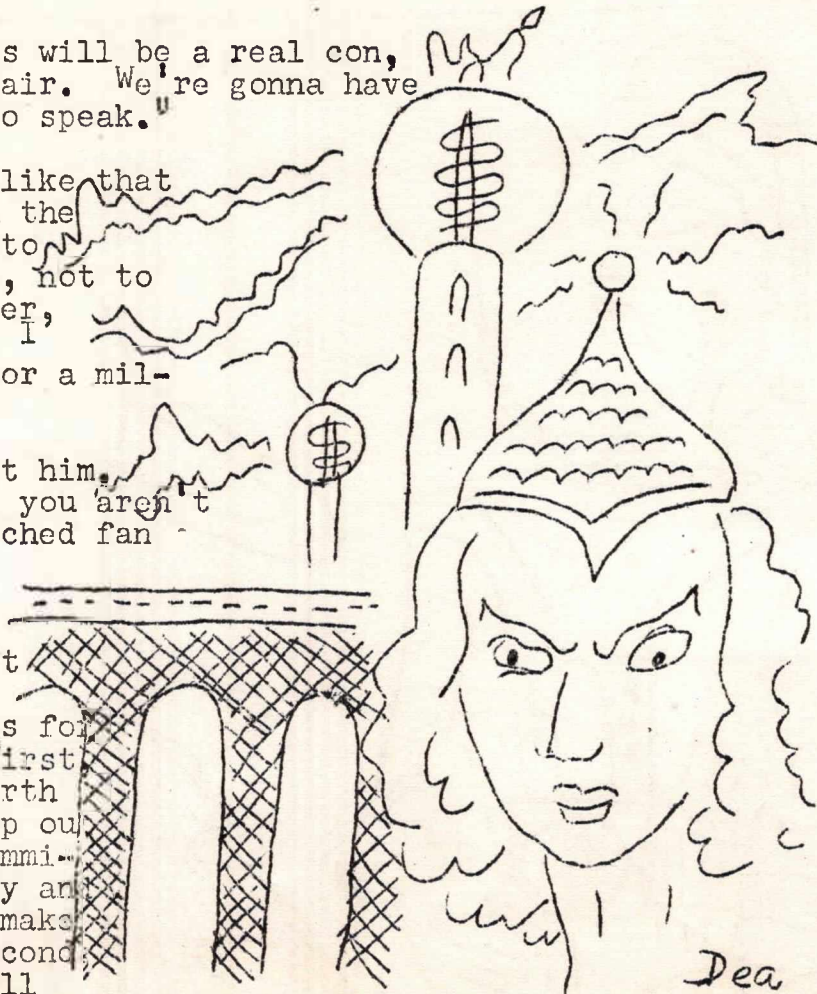
"This one is supposed to have all the old buard present, isn't it? And all of the true-fans, with no fake-fans? And only 301 in attendance? And no hucksters? It's supposed to be an old-fashioned con just like Numbers 1 through 9, -right?"

"Yeah," Redd says, "this will be a real con, not like that Chicago affair. We're gonna have some real ole-time pros to speak."

"Oh, sure, I know just like that Norwesoueast-con, held in the Gobi desert was supposed to be. Heck, 2501 showed up, not to mention that chief huckster, Sob Lucker. Take Marion, I wouldn't go to that con for a million aSF issues."

Marion and Redd stare at him. "Well," Marion snaps, "if you aren't the most ungrateful, wretched fan I ever . . ."

"Now just keep quiet," Bob tells her. "You don't know what you're talking about. I got good reasons for not going to this con. First, it's being held at the North Pole in an attempt to keep out the unwanted. The con committee thinks only the hardy and courageous true-fan will make it that far. I don't. Second, it'll be the same thing all



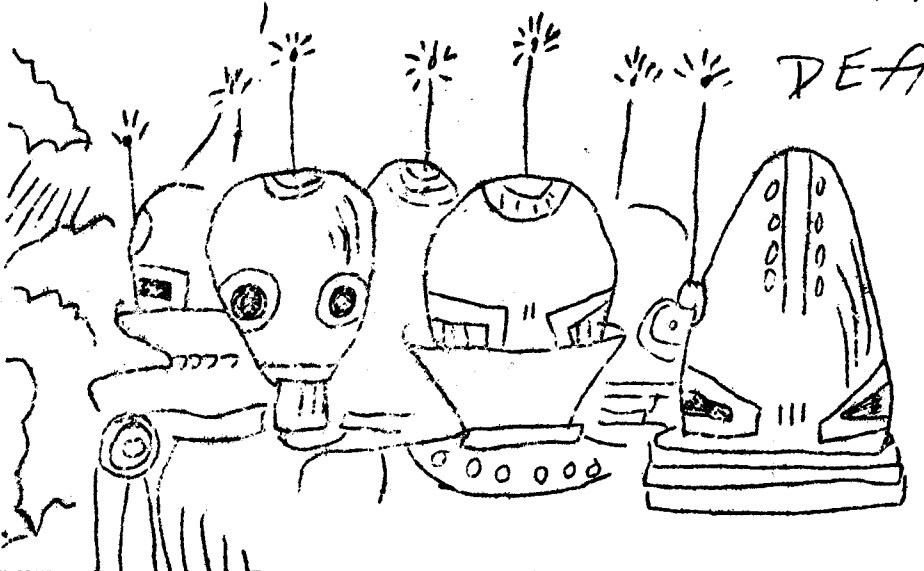
Redd stares at Marion. "You got him on dope?"

"Stop acting so innocent," Bob snarls. "If there were a chance of this being a real, old-fashioned con, I'd go with you. But, it's an impossible thing. The fake-fans and hucksters will always show up. You can't keep 'em out. WE've tried too much. WE've tried the Invention, the Disguiseventioj, the Hid-vention, and the Underground-ventio: and all failed utterly. This STATES-RIGHTS business won't fool them either."

"Hat, you're crazy !K When the con starts off real, there is no better fan company than Redd Slogs. So gay, so jolly, the life of the con, Rah-rah, whoop-de-do, yay pros, yay fans, yay everything. He can't do enough for you. Buys you pro-zines, buys you books, buys you-a fmz, sets you up with drinks. Your whiskey is no good, son. Have a drink of ole Redd's whiskey. Gay, giddy, fun-loving Redd.

"On the way home, the same thing. 'Gotta get home. Fool to come to this stinking con anyway! Let's go! Whoosh! You're off for home! The curves he took at 40 MPH coming, you now take at 70. He never passed a car on the way, but now, whoosh! Eight of 'em at a time. Hills, curves, bridges, whoosh! The heck-with 'em. -The con was awful. What can a man do who's riding with him? Get plastered. No other defense. Get so plastered he can't see what gay, giddy, fun-loving Redd Slogs is doing!"

Bob nods his head. "Yeah ! Some other time, Dr. Jekyll !"

[illegible]



# Return to Life

by A. Charles Catania

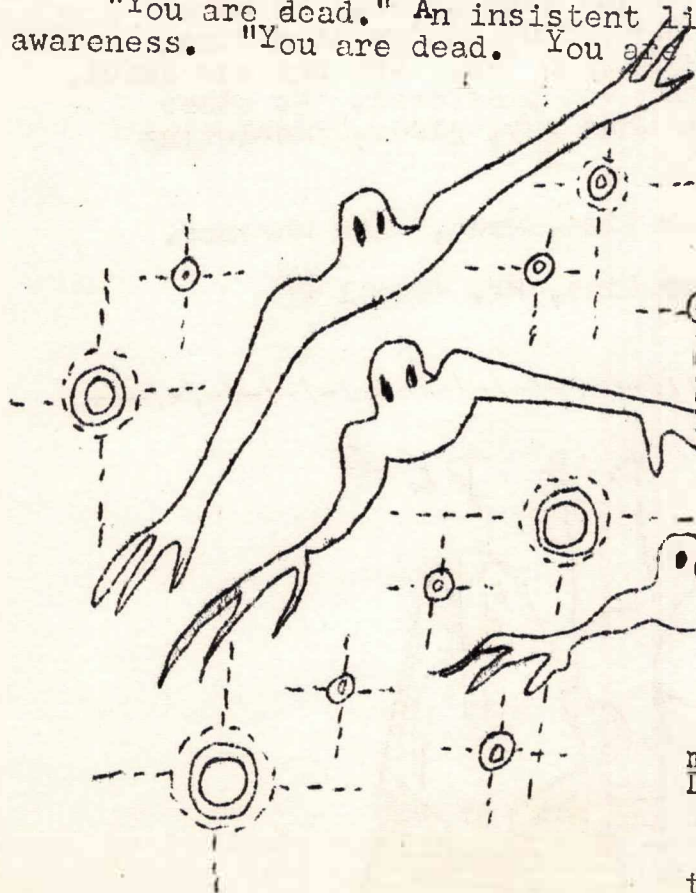
The car raced through the darkness, following toward a distant goal the narrow path illuminated by the headlights.

The occupant of the car didn't see the sign warning him of an S-curve as he careened past it. The guide rail grew large, then shattered in a kaleidoscopic rain of tortured wood and glass and steel. The car rolled end over end down the hillside. A door swung open, and the luckless driver was thrown clear. The car continued on down, caught fire, and exploded in a furious blinding light.

The driver looked at the burning wreck, then his head dropped back limply. His mind swirled down a whirlpool of all enveloping darkness. He was spinning faster...faster...faster...his consciousness slowly slipping away.

Abruptly, he was fully awake. He was able to think clearly. He was spinning no more. He was able to think normally, but that was all. He felt nothing, saw nothing, heard nothing. He was drifting alone in an infinite darkness, conscious not even of his own body. He began to analyze his situation.

"You are dead." An insistent little voice beat at the rim of his awareness. "You are dead. You are dead. You are dead." Over and over and over, in a merciless chant it began to overpower him, all the more heartless because he knew that the voice was telling him the truth.



"You are dead."

He began to fight it, to push back the thought, slowly, ever so slowly.

You-are-dead, the voice, retreated. An insistent little pulsing in the distance was all he could perceive.

He began to think. He had to return to life. He had too many things to do. He had at least too many things unfinished, things that ~~DEA~~ needed finishing.

He thought and thought for what might have been days, but here in the Death world, time meant nothing.

Finally, he made a decision. The thing which had made him realize his



situation, the little voice, you-are-dead, should still be somewhere in this blackness. You-are-dead should be able to tell him what could be done to escape from this dark eternity. He reached, out, beckoned, called to the unknown entity. Long into the black timelessness, he called and waited. Finally he was rewarded. The pulsing in the distance grew stronger, he began to perceive strange half-thoughts, fragments from an alien place, abstract, warped, distorted things that repelled him. But he had to accept the thing. It was his only chance.

"It is very seldom that a new one calls so soon. They chase us away and remain alone thinking for eons, until finally they realize what we are. Then they are as we. They know they can't change things."

He grasped the last words and shot a wordless query at the thing that seemed to flow around him. "Is it impossible to change things? Is there no way to return . . . to return to life?"

"As far as most are concerned," came the answer, "there is no way. The few whom we know can succeed may try, but they finally return to us, here."

"But I must go back. I feel I can. I know I can."

"Ah, I should have realized that when you called me. Only the dissatisfied ones call so soon. I assume you are dissatisfied."

"Yes, yes. Is there a way?"

"Of course, there is a way to almost everything here . . . almost everything."

"Tell me then, don't waste time."

"Time means very little to us here; we can't waste it for it will never end. Oh, well, you new ones are always in a hurry."

"Please . . ."

And so through the long dark eternity, he learned.

"Now you are ready. Remember, back there time has passed; I can't say how much, but you must allow for it."

"Yes, yes ! Now leave me alone so I may return."

"Must you? I warn you again, I implore you, don't go back !"

"Go away. I want to live those years that were stolen from me."

You-are-dead left. He was alone again.

He returned to life, to the ten years that were promised to him by you-are-dead if he did as he were told.

He went through the deed, dark whirlpool, up this time, and felt his body again. It felt strange, out of place, but perhaps that was because he had been gone so long.

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He opened his eyes. Blackness. -42-

He listened. Silence.

He felt about him. He was enclosed in a long box. A wooden box. It was damp and cool.

### The Grave !

It was only natural. Time had passed on Earth since he was in the Death world. His body was found, buried. It had lain there in the darkness and had begun to decay. The decay would continue.

He felt about himself again. He was trapped. He could not escape from his tomb. Even if he could, what good would it do him. What would be the reaction of people when they saw a decaying corpse walking the streets.

Ten years was not too long to wait for eternity . . .

--the end--

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