

Wowzy Wambings!

EXCURSION TO A MADHOUSE

They promised to meet me at the bus station, but they didn't. Of course, as I knew the Ashleys, I didn't expect them to.

After making sure that they weren't at the bus station (strange things do happen) I hit the road toward the Ashley domicile.

I knocked at the door and was greeted with, "Go the hell away, I'm working on FAPA."

I yelled, "And I'm the chief Critic, you emaciated nincompoop."

"Oh, it's you," drooled Al, just a moment." Then in a low voice, "Abby, hide the reefers and our valuables, and put out the cat, Walt is here."

A flaming mass of red hair opened the door and let me in. To say that this horrible apparition scared me would be putting it mild. But I remembered that one is liable to find almost anything roosting or making it's home at the Ashley madhouse, so I calmly and nonchalantly walked in.

The thing with red hair, (too bad it wasn't a rooster with red pants) turned out to be Abby Lu. As she had a rake in her hand I surmised she must have been combing the rebellious mass of her hirsute appendages.

After the usual Gladtoseeyouse, and kisses, and handshakes, I was ushered into the Ashley living room. In case you don't know, the Ashley living room looks like a cross between a library, a coke bottling factory and an old maid's hope chest. You can find anything from a cockroach to Tucker in this remarkable room, and have enough left over for three rummage sales.

Abby Lu took her combing rake and pushed some assorted junk into a corner, and bade me place the body on the bare spot on the floor. I haven't seen a bare spot on the floor since.

Just then Coger and Wiedenbeck came in, and by a furious amount of pushing and squeezing managed to enter this remarkable room also. Of course I had to sit there with Coger's posterior waving in my face, but as all seemed to be well versed in the art of contortionism, I determined to stick it out in spite of hell and high water.

"Now", said Al.

So Abby Lu squirmed her way out to the kitchen and opened the ice box. "Heavens", she cried, trying to put as much surprise into her ejaculation as possible. "We're out of cokes. Walt, give me a couple of fivers to get a dozen cases."

With a furious, but nice looking scowl, I dug into my pocket and relentlessly forked out some of my hard earned sheckels.

"Well, don't sit there like an ass", hissed Abby, "Come on along and carry the cases."

After bending Cogger into a V shape, posterior uppermost, I wriggled out of the Ashley junk shop and Ruja Blu led me to the drug store, somewhat like a conquering Amazon goading her favorite husband on to a sacrifice.

We got the cokes and Abby Lu piled them into my reluctant arms. The damn things were so heavy you can still trace the trail to the Ashley domicile from the drug store. All you have to do is follow the holes in the concrete.

I started up the stairs and ended up in the basement: en masse. But I have one consolation. The Ashleys have to shell out for a new stairway.

The horrible horde stood there and drooled while I bled profusely. Finally Abby Lu (she being one of the more humane Michigan fans) decided that red cover or no red cover (for the next issue of NOVA, ages hence) she wasn't going to let me lay there and bleed to death. And besides, the vampire tendencies in her hated to see all that lovely red blood go to waste.

I awoke to find myself in the Ashley living room. Earl Perry was administering blood plasma to me. Upon asking where he got the plasma, he told me the Ashleys always kept some around for midnight snacks.

The horrible horde went home. They said that I had lost too much blood to be interesting.

In due time I recovered. But I wish to Ghu I hadn't.

For then began five of the most hectic days of my life. Abby Lu wanted to go swimming, but by the time we reached the beach I was too tuckered out to swim. Enroute, (it was a five mile walk to the beach) Abby got tired and I had to carry her most of the way. Cogger and Perry wanted to hear me play the piano. So we went to the Youth Building (what these old codgers were doing in a youth building is beyond me) and I played, and played and played. All I got out of the deal was praise, (and numberless mosquito bites) but the rest divided up the money they collected when they passed the hat. Jack Wiedenbeck forgot his drawing board one night and insisted on me laying down on the floor so he could draw on my back. Later he decided to use paper instead of flesh but he still used my back, to stick thumb tacks in so the paper wouldn't slip. Other assorted atrocities transpired during my sojourn at the Ashley madhouse, but they are too horrible to mention.

To make this epistle shorter. I got on the Chicago bus with the comforting thought that I was going back to civilization.