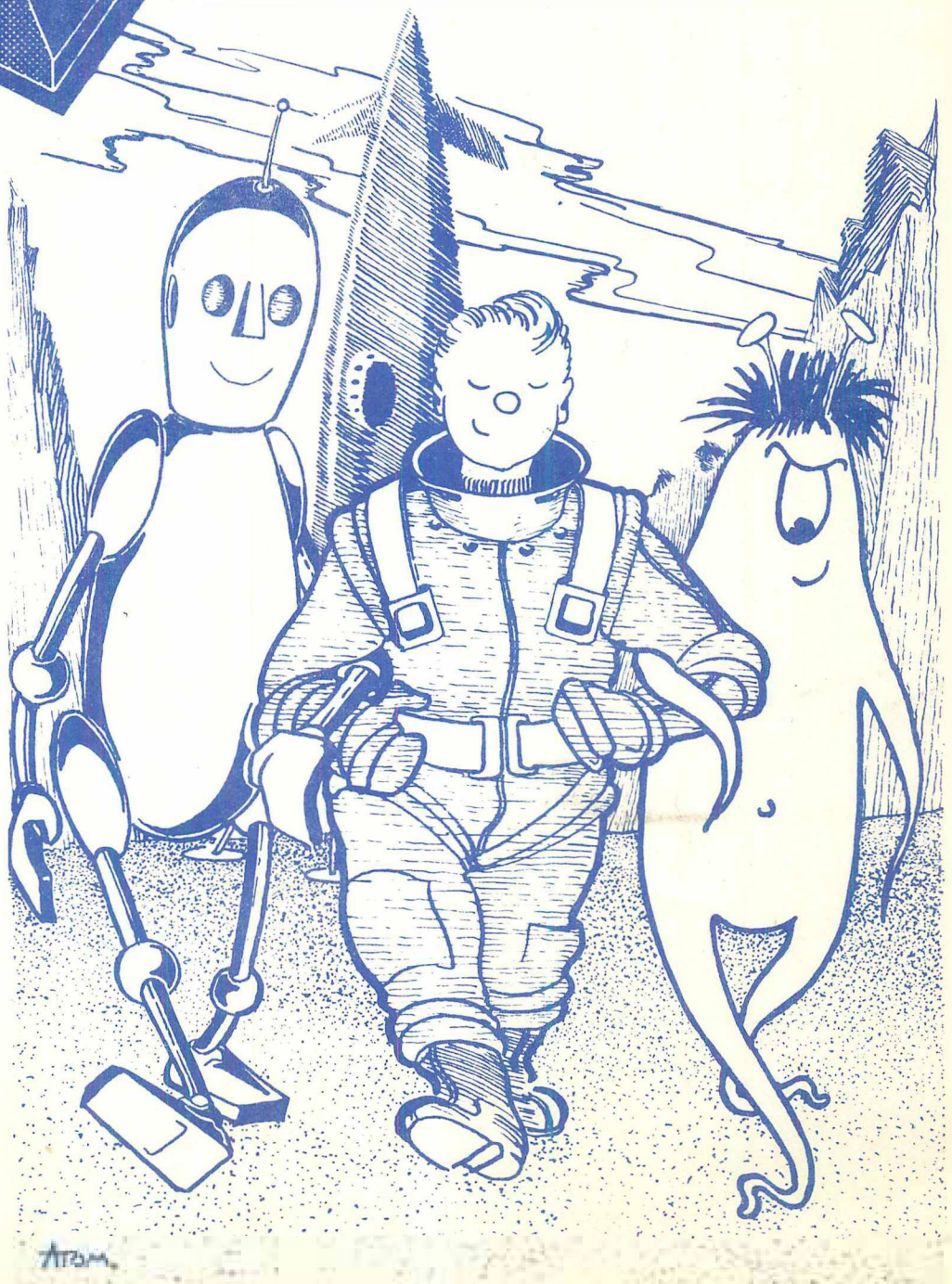


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ΔCaveat LectorΔ Not For Sale





You ask do I know Dean Grennell?  
Why, just the other day he and I  
had lunch together

Yes, I've met Dean Grennell. I've drunk his blackberry margaritas, cleaned his pool with a toothbrush, and even tripped over him at parties. If I remember correctly, I met Dean at a party. We were formally introduced when he inquired as to who it was had fallen over his body, and that moment was filled with such a profoundness of Awe that I doubt I shall ever forget it.

"You're not the Dave Locke?!"

We saw a lot of each other after that. Wherever I went, Dean Grennell was always lying on the floor between me and the liquor supply. Dean is a hard man to step over, and we struck up many a conversation as the result of it being easier for me to talk to him than to step over him, keeping my drink intact, so that I could find someone else to talk to.

Dean and I really struck it off at parties, because we found our conversations immensely interesting. At least, each of us is interested in what we have to say, and since we're both partially deaf we discovered that at parties there was no sense in either of us bothering to listen to what the other was talking about. It was a perfect fannish relationship.

Dave Locke

And then one day my wife and I went to the library, where she loaded up with fifteen or twenty books, and I, after browsing for a half hour, picked up one. I flipped the book open, dashingly, and discovered that it had been "Donated by Christine Hensel".

Immediately I called my wife over.

"Look at this," I said.

"It's a science fiction book," she observed. "Why can't you read gothic novels like I do? They're better for you."

"That's not the point," I pointed out. "Look here. It was donated by Christine Hensel."

"Is that the very same Tina Hensel who....?"

I leapt in with assurance. "Yes, the very same Tina Hensel who is a local fan and Petard member and who writes incredibly groovy articles for PELF. Isn't that amazing? Isn't that exciting? Isn't it a small world?"

"Isn't it a shame that she can't read gothic novels like I do? They're better for her."

"Yes. I'll have to speak to her about that. There's no hope for me, but she's young enough that she can give up this trash."

"Perhaps she's trying," my wife told me. "After all, she gave this book away. Maybe all is not lost."

"It's certainly worth a try to make her see the light," I agreed.

And then we checked the books out, and I let her carry half of them. I saw no sense in endangering myself by attempting to transport the whole stack. My company doesn't carry hernia insurance for its office help.

Just as we loaded the books into the back of our beautiful Japanese car and managed to crawl into it ourselves, this middle-aged couple

on a honda came screeching to a halt alongside us. The honda had a sticker on it which said "Hardly Davidson". They blocked us from getting away from the curb, and I prepared myself for trouble. Middle-aged Hell's Angels are the worst kind. If they've lived that long, they've got to be tough.

"I don't want any trouble, hippies,"

I told them. "Just get your leather jackets and your motorcycle out of the way and let us leave. I'm warning you, don't cause any trouble. My wife knows how to fight dirty."

The man pulled off his goggles and peered into the car.

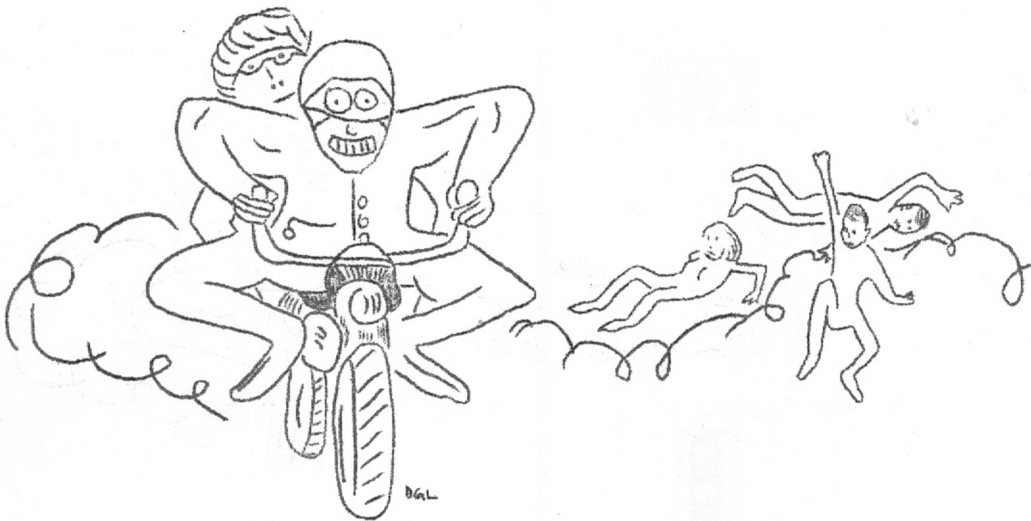
"You're not the Dave Locke!?"

I knew he was a fan. And then, while I was puzzling as to which one, he jumped off the motorcycle, caught his foot on our car's radio antenna, and fell on his back next to my door. I leapt out of the car and immediately fell over him.

"Oh. Hi, Dean," I said.

"Dave Locke," he said, pushing my body off of him, "it certainly is a small world."

"You haven't heard the half of it," I told him. "Wait till I tell you about the science fiction book I just checked out."





My wife rolled down the car window and peered at us. "Why can't he read gothic novels like I do? They're better for him."

"Why is that?" Dean asked.

"Because they don't make your lips tired," I told him.

The next time I met Dean Grennell was at the Petard meeting which he and Jean hoisted. It was a quiet party, and I felt sorry for Dean and I. By the time we had enough of a buzz on so that we wouldn't be able to hear each other, there were enough people there that Dean couldn't find room to lay down on the floor. About one or two o'clock, when the party had thinned out to the point where there was room, I turned to Jean (who was sitting there calmly listening to everybody gurggle) and asked her where Dean was.

"Oh, he went to bed an hour ago."

Presumably he got tired of waiting for floor space to clear, and decided that he had to go and lie down someplace.

No, I didn't talk to him that night. Honest.

And then there was the time that Dean gave me the phony astronomical photograph, with a silhouette of the moon in the lower right-hand corner.

"What do you think of it?" he asked me, chortling quietly behind his beer.

"It's nice," I told him, "but I don't believe it. It's a sheet of paper with holes punched in it and a light shining behind it."

He shook his head. "No, it's smokeless gunpowder sprinkled onto developing paper with a jam jar set on the lower right-hand corner. Isn't that exciting?"

"I can't get over it."

So he asked me to show the photo around at Bushnell Optical, where I work full-time and he works part-time. The art department (a guy named Jack) didn't buy it, but everyone else did when I told them that some of the stars were round because it was a time-exposure shot. The circular indentation in the bottom of the jam jar was explained away by the same story, since obviously the moon would travel and the difference between the outer circle and the inner circle was the distance covered. Of course it was.

My boss thought it a fantastic shot, and he said he could really appreciate that because he was something of an amateur astronomer. That statement completely shot down my plans of exposing the thing as a hoax. Dean Grennell is going to get me in real trouble.

I mentioned cleaning Dean's pool with a toothbrush. This is a slight exaggeration. The brush I used was at least twice as big as a toothbrush, and I believe it was previously owned by an hourly employee who scrubbed elephants' tusks.

Naturally the whole thing started when the wife and boy and I accepted an invitation to visit the Grennells' and maybe even take a dip in their pool. I'm the only one in the family who swims, and I found the swimming a refreshing experience. Nostalgic, even. The pool at our apartment is heated, and kept around 90°. Until we came out to California last year I had done most of my swimming in New York State lakes, which are kept at a temperature much more invigorating than 90°. Consequently I find swimming in the apartment pool somewhat akin to taking a bath. And when I need a bath, I take a shower. And the Grennells' pool is unheated, and its temperature was 80° that day.

So the swimming was wonderful, but I couldn't understand what was happening when Dean put on a facemask, which had no strap, and jumped into the pool holding a large rock and a toothbrush.

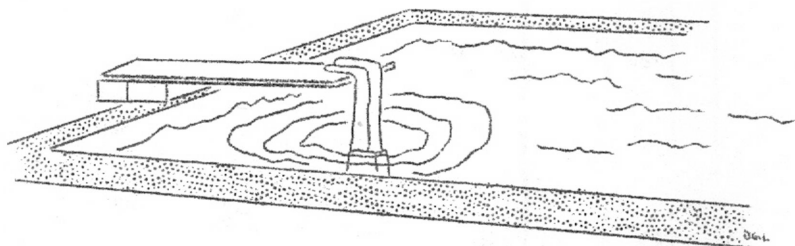
I swam down to find out.

Dean was holding onto the rock, which was flat on the bottom of the pool, with his left hand. The carbonation in the cheap beer we were drinking was causing his feet to point straight up at the surface, and with his right hand he was scrubbing the side of the pool with his toothbrush. I could see that this was altogether a new kind of watersport, and I couldn't wait for him to come up for air so that I could try it.

My enthusiasm was not even dampened when he told me that he was only scrubbing some algae off the side of the pool. It had to be a New Experience, and I wanted to try it. I pleaded with him, and after dazzling him with my fancy footwork he finally consented to let me in on some of the fun and not hog it all for himself.

It took me two minutes to learn how to hold a facemask on without a strap to go around your head, but I was determined to master the problem. However, after coming up for a breather a couple of times I decided that I shouldn't hog all the fun, and gave the mask, rock, and toothbrush to one of the boys. After a few minutes of that kind of thing I realized that I shouldn't be selfish.

And then Dean, not wanting to be outdone by my leaps off his diving board, decided to try a dive for himself. He went up with all the grace which you could possibly imagine, and came down for a beautiful four-point landing. He not only displaced three-hundred gallons of water, but washed the toothbrush, mask, rock, and boy completely out of the pool.



That diving board of his is another thing. Perhaps my memory is foggy, but back in the dim, dark past I used diving boards a few times, and unless I'm completely mistaken they all had a certain degree of spring. Imagine my surprise when I discovered that Dean's board didn't.

There I stood, Adonis at the hind-end of a diving board, chest out, muscles flexed. I trotted forward to the end of the board, took a leap

into the air, came down on the end of the board, executed a beautiful pair of fallen arches and fell forward off the end of the board. I hung there, suspended in the water because the top, flat surface of my arches wouldn't allow me to completely slide off the end of the board into the pool.

Dean let me in on one of his secret bar recipes during a visit over there. I used to be a bartender, before I went on to bigger and better things, and it was hard for me to tolerate Dave Hulan's remark that Dean made a better and stronger Margarita than I did. So we went up to him, with our bare faces hanging out, and just flat asked him what he did that made the drink so different.

"Ok, let's make a jug," he said. So he did. And we stood there watching, with our bare faces hanging out.

"Now then," he explained, "first you mix all the goodies in a 3-2-1 ratio."

"Wait a minute," I interrupted. "That's the standard mix. That's how I mix a Margarita, and you're not using any special Tequila or Triple-Sec or lemon juice. So why do yours taste different than mine? Why? Why?"

"Calm down, son," he said to my bare face, "we haven't come to the most important part."

He whipped a salt shaker out of a cabinet and carefully measured out thirty-two grains into the palm of his hand. "Here is the secret!" he shouted, and dumped the salt into the bottle. He then proceeded to shake the bottle vigorously, and finally poured out three glasses.

"Salt," I muttered. "I didn't recognize it. So there's the difference, since I don't even use salt on the rim. How about that?"

"Aha," he said.

"But wait another minute," I told them. "Hulan says your Margaritas are stronger than mine. The salt doesn't make them any stronger."

"He uses alcoholic salt," Hulan ventured.

"Don't be ridiculous. He doesn't even use uncommon salt."

"I don't care," Dave stubbornly asserted, "it tastes stronger."

"Let's not be subjective," I insisted. "The fact remains that it isn't stronger, and in drinks 'stronger' means increased alcohol content."

"I don't care," he whined, hugging the bottle to his chest, "it still tastes stronger." Then, with a whimper, he ran out of the room. He was still clutching the bottle.

I finished my drink, taking it all with a grain of salt.

Dean also makes a blackberry Margarita, which is obtained by taking a gin margarita and adding a little blackberry wine to it (if, like Dean, you have any left over after using it on your ice cream). I'll never

forget that drink. The memory of it remains on my stomach, and the underside of my tongue.

Dean calls it a "Purple Jesus". I asked him why.

"Why do you call it a Purple Jesus?" I asked.

"Because it tastes like one," he told me.

Dean is often nebulous.

And then there was the time that Dean took me down to Gallant Publishing, where he churns out such magazines as GUN WORLD, HORSE AND RIDER, BOW AND ARROW, and his fanzine, THE ARA BULLETIN.

Before I read BOW AND ARROW I was of the opinion that there really wasn't a hell of a lot that you could say about archery. After reading BOW AND ARROW I no longer hold such an opinion. In my mind it is now a firmly established fact. It has to be, considering that BOW AND ARROW is the top magazine in its field. Dean told me it was. Besides, it says so on the cover.

While we were at Gallant I noticed a bottle of scotch on Dean's desk. It isn't everybody who has a bottle of scotch sitting on their office desk. Dean bet me I couldn't do that where I worked.

"I'll bet you can't do that where you work," Dean bet me.

"I wouldn't even want to," I informed him.

"Heheheheh," he sniggered, "why not?"

"I prefer bourbon," I told him.

While we were walking down the hall Dean informed me: "I prefer to treat every gun as though a steady stream of bullets were coming out the barrel."

"This," I agreed, "is a reasonable philosophy to have when around guns." I stopped walking and paused before this picture which was hanging on the wall about at a level with my navel. "What's this about?" I asked him.

He removed the picture to show me the bullet hole in the wall behind it. "This," he explained, "was before I preferred to treat every gun as though a steady stream of bullets were coming out the barrel."

He put the picture back and added: "It's also why I now do my indoor shooting during the evening."

Then we passed a series of old GUN WORLD covers which were hanging in one of the offices. I remembered some of them, but not the one of the Negro in the White Knight armor who was holding a bottle of Ajax, or a box of Ajax, or whatever. Dean doesn't really think they'll ever use that one.

So you ask, do I know Dean Grennell? Why, just the other day he asked me for an article. I've talked to him before about reviving GRUE, but he said he couldn't until he discovered what number the next issue would be. I hope he found out. It would be a lousy trick if he didn't. I wouldn't even do that to a dirty DAG.



# MISCELLANIA

by the crew  
of Grue



Foosh and also Sheeg: the longer you suspend publishing something, the harder it gets to light off the boilers and set sail once more. A decade or so ago, when this thing appeared a bit more frequently, I had divers paraphernalia to assist in its production. There was a huge, heavy, ugly light table for tracing illo's on stencils -- an early casualty in the frantic jettisoning of our many moves -- and even a dandy little device made from an old wooden apple crate, with two staplers positioned just so and a guide for speedily whamming the dingbing staples home. Alas, all gone. In this remote point of time, it's a job to even locate a bottle of corflu.

Our cover is authentic Early-ATom. I still have the original, done on heavy artboard and rather the worse for wear. But I seem to have copied it on the 8x10 camera some time in the latter 'fifties and the cover was made up from that. Miraculously, the artwork file has survived fairly well intact so I really must see about building another lightbox for tracing illo's. The one at page top was produced under trying conditions. Be charitable, please?

## ASTROLOGY GOES, SO GOES ET CETERA

In view of the great preoccupation with horoscopes and such, these days, we present the following advices and abjorative hortatations for any person born under one or more signs of the Zodiac. Caveat lector, you betcha'! The dates are for any given month but the last few should be ignored in any given February:

1. GOOD. Saturn in the ascendancy, offspring in the descendancy. On this day, avoid polyunsaturated fats, loose women and tight men. You may hear from the sheriff in the afternoon; be very kind to each other.

2. MEDIOCRE. Could be troublesom. Do not answer the telephone after 6:00 p.m. Drink a little. Plan a holdup.
3. SPLENDID. Important mail may arrive. You will have to hurry to cover your overdrafts. Use your native cunning to evade your creditors.
4. GHASTLY, JUST GHASTLY. Not a good day. It would be better not to go outside. Repair your overshoes against the day of need and avoid waffles.
5. SIMPLY DREADFUL. If there is any way to avoid this day, don't fail to miss it if you can.
6. GLORIOUS. Jupiter in trinity with Uranus. Visiting hours are 4 to 7.
7. The family would prefer you did not send flowers.
7. ADIAPHOROUS. A good day for passing bad checks. In the evening, a little social venery may be all right. Avoid all work if possible as it will only bring on fatigue.
8. EXCELLENT. A good day to construct an outhouse. You may find money or, if you lose any, it will not be a large sum. Venus rises late today so don't call before noon.
9. Pediculous. Be temperate in your intake of buttermilk this day.
10. DUBIOUS. Take your dachshund to the optometrist for a refraction. if you don't own a dachshund, buy one at any price. It will not count if you just borrow one.
11. HAZARDOUS. Vulcan at perifelion. If your liver develops a leak today, have it patched with liver paste. On no account allow it to be vulcanized.
12. PROPITIOUS. Contact at least one unnamed foreign power. Do not eat on an empty stomach.
13. ENIGMATIC. If a groundhog, remain in your burrow. If a burro, do not kick any peons until you have made sure they have no dynamite on them.
14. HARRASSING. There is deadly peril lurking in black-eyed peas this day. You have been warned.
15. SCRUTABLE. If this day clears up cloudy, prepare for a warm frost.
16. PERILOUS. You will find a 1949 half-dollar today. Leave it right there on the sidewalk as it is counterfeit and all part of an evil plot.
17. UPLIFTING. Take a little arrack for thy stomach's sake and watch out for rose thrips.
18. STIMULATING. Dial a number at random, say that you have considered the matter and must refuse; then hang up.
19. IMPROBABLE. Do something nice for armadillos and you'll be richly rewarded sooner than you'd expect.
20. SIDIOUS. Someone is going around writing your phone number on the walls of comfort stations; be prepared for anything.

A  
The Muffet Papers

Some few years ago, mayhap '63 or '64, Bob Leman turned up with one of those ideas that he handles so well: a retelling of the Little Miss Muffet saga as it might have been handled by several different well-known writers. Lionel Johnson, my then confrere at the legendary cookieworks, was impressed with Leman's pastiches to the point of generating a couple more, which we sent along to Bob but, for one reason or another, he never used them. It pains me passing sore to see them languishing unpublished so, herewith, the one in the style of Raymond Chandler, a writer for whom ElJay's admiration is boundless:

She was young, very young. And not very big. A little girl with loose brown hair, a nice smile and a good figure. She looked like she would be somebody nice to know. Somebody you'd like to have for a client on a big lost earring job. Only she wasn't: She was a client's daughter and I was supposed to find out who she was meeting and spending her time with. Her father thought she might have picked up with a wrong number. I hoped he was wrong.

We were in Tuffet's. She was at a table, dallying with her lunch, looking as though she was enjoying herself. I was in a booth near the door, poking at a seven dollar sandwich and trying to look like it was my money I was spending. I had a good view of her profile and one ankle. I liked what I saw.

She called a waiter and talked to him, smiling prettily. He looked vaguely puzzled and shuffled away talking to himself. A few minutes later, he was back, bringing her something in a silver bowl. He didn't look happy. Maybe she had ordered vanilla ice-cream. That was only a dollar fifty and the Maitre D' would get all upset. Whatever it was in the bowl, she liked it. She dipped a long spoon and ate slowly, savoring every mouthful.

She was almost through when the man showed up. He was long and tall and smooth. Good clothes, dark hair sleeked back over a narrow skull, a pale face with a lean jaw and a mouth like a knife-cut in a piece of cheese. I didn't care for him much. He slid into the chair opposite the girl and leaned toward her. His eyes glittered and he whispered something.

The girl stiffened and set her spoon down. Her face was white and tense. She stared at the man for a long moment and then clutched her handbag and scrambled out from behind the table, making for the door. I let her go. I figured I could find her again. Right now I wanted to know more about the man. He was still sitting at the girl's table, smiling, if you can call what he was doing smiling. He had picked up her spoon and was poking into the silver bowl. He smiled again. I liked this one even less.

The girl's waiter passed. I called him. He stopped with professional politeness masking his impatience: I wasn't his customer.

"The young lady that just left," I said. "That was Diana Muffet, wasn't it?"

He looked suspicious. "Yes, sir. I believe it was."

"Does she come here often?" I took out my wallet and lifted out two new fives. He swallowed. "Twice a week, Tuesdays and Fridays. We keep that place for her."

I laid a five on the edge of the table; he palmed it away. "The guy over there now," I said, "She ever meet him before?"

He glanced around, looking worried. "That's Mr. Arachnid. He comes here regular. I never saw him talk to her before."

I laid down the other five and put my finger on it. "I'm curious," I said, "what was in the silver bowl?"

He made a face. "Curds and whey." He grinned. "Dames will eat anything to keep their shape." He palmed the second five and moved off.

\* \* \* \* \*

## ERNEST HEMINGWAY

Muffet walked down the stone path into the garden. She had a square pillow under one arm and a bowl and spoon in the other hand. The bowl was brimful with curds and whey and Muffet walked carefully on the tilted crazy stones of the path, not wanting to spill the bowl. The morning sun was fine and warm lying on the curve of her cheek and on the bowl the rich curds in it and on the crazy tilted stones in the path.

"Jeezus Krize," Muffet said aloud. The morning was warm and fine and the sun was good on her cheek and on the stones in the path. It was good to feel the sun and to think about the taste of the curds and whey. It was like the mornings in Pamplona when they ran the bulls and afterwards, before you went to the Corrida, you sat on the terrace and drank good wine and watched the sun slide over the crazy tilted stones in the street.

The path ended at the garden wall and Muffet laid the pillow where she could sit on the pillow and lean on the rough garden wall. She moved carefully, not wanting to spill any of the curds in the smooth yellow bowl. She sat down and leaned against the rough wall and felt the fine warm sun on her face, thinking about the rich taste of the curds and whey. In Madrid, on the afternoon when Belmonte was given both ears and the tail of the Black Bull with the broken horn, the sun had been like this and later Robert had said they should go to Antibes.

Muffet spooned up some of the curd. A little whey dripped off the bowl of the spoon and trickled down her chin. She felt the wet warmth of drip on her blouse. "It will stain," she thought and the memory of the stain on the tent over her bed at B'nambi came back to her.

Beside her, a spider scuttled down over the crazy sun-warmed stones of the wall. Muffet watched him. Watching him move his legs and stop beside her, his small eyes glittering. She watched him for a long moment, feeling the rough stone of the wall at her back and the sun warm on her face. The she set the yellow bowl with the rich clotted curds in the

grass and rose to her feet. She walked swiftly toward the house along the tilted warm stones in the path.

"Goddam" she said. There were tears in her eyes. They slid down her cheek, glittering in the sun. "Goddam Spider," she said.

\* \* \* \* \*

I picked up the phone to the plant room on the third floor. I knew Wolfe would be raspy if I disturbed him at this hour, but his performance with Webster's Unabridged had left me with little inclination to be concerned.

"Yes?" His voice had the precise testy edge I anticipated.

"There's a Miss Peep to see you in the office," I said. "Something about missing livestock. I've told Fritz to move the escargots to the back of the stove. He's sore, too."

"Pfui! I will be down. Put her in the yellow chair."

"I already have her there."

...dag

\* \* \* \* \*

"Your Majesty, the poor are much troubled: They have no books to burn!"

"Then let them burn coke."

--Bill Stavdal

\* \* \* \* \*

GNURRSERY RHYMES and like that-there

Tongues may wag and wags may tongue  
Gags to gag a vulture.  
The farmer's testy with his young,  
But it's an angri culture.

Oh, the ivy that's poison  
Will rob you of joys and  
Will cause you to itch passing sore.

But the poison that's sumac,  
Gesundheit, kerchoo, mac  
Will bother you quite a bit more.

Lapsing into prose for a needful and explanatory moment, it should be noted that, at some point in the late 'fifties, the eldest daughter requested help with a homework assignment and we concocted a Thing for her English teacher based upon the what-if of an improbable meld between the Spoon River Anthology and Don Marquis's archy and mehitable series. In the light of recent events, one is tempted to indulge in slight editing but one staunchly puts temptation behind one and runs it like she was wrote back there in the days of the Eisenhower Era:

KINNISON STANLEY CORBETT  
1919-1981

The airplane made the scene  
Before I came along.



So did autogyros,  
 Blimps, dirigibles and helicopters.  
 Spaceships were the coming thing,  
 I figured.  
 Today the Atlantic, Archy,  
 Tomorrow the planets.  
 Class will tell, Archy.  
 Wot the hell.  
 And don't forget their  
 Several satellites.  
 There's life in Homo Sap., yet.  
 So I gave a cheer -- a feeble cheer --  
 But a cheer, withal,  
 In 'fifty-seven  
 When the Russkies lofted their  
 First Sputnik.  
 And I followed events at Canaveral  
 With an interest most notably keen.  
 When Col. Glenn elected to shoot  
 The works for a third orbit  
 I cheered him on  
 And not so feebly, either.  
 When Cosgrove touched the moon in 'seventy-one, (\*)  
 Three weeks and two days after Mogolnogov  
 Touched it a bit too hard,  
 You'd have thought it was me that did it.  
 And I was there amid the sun-baked swarm  
 On Coney Island on that afternoon in late July  
 Of Nineteen Eighty-One  
 When the second stage of the first manned  
 Venus rocket  
 Missed the Atlantic Ocean  
 By about ninety yards  
 And obliterated three thousand  
 Nine hundred and sixty  
 One.  
 You see, the one was me.  
 But wot the hell, Archy,  
 Toujours gai.

(\*Well, woojja' believe Armstrong in  
 '69? And how long since you've heard  
 anyone call it Canaveral?)

\* \* \* \* \*

MAN DOES NOT LIVE BY PEANUT BUTTER  
 AND JELLY SANDWICHES, ALONE!

By THE Tina Hensel  
 (But Not The Orchestra Leader)

Several days ago, I was stranded at work, without any lunch. So I  
 grundled down to the vending machines in the coffee room, intending to  
 buy a candy bar, or some such, to sustain me until dinner. When I got  
 there, I discovered that a new machine had been installed. AND IT SOLD  
 SANDWICHES FOR A QUARTER.

"Oh Frabjous Day!" said I, "I'm going to get to eat lunch after all."  
 So I happily dropped several quarters into the beast and thundered off to  
 eat my lunch.

Now, in all fairness I have to admit that the sandwiches tasted no

better nor worse than any of the average vending machine fare. Nowever, they were not precisely as represented. Oh no. On reading the small print on the package label, I found to my shock, horror and amazement that my sandwiches were composed of ersatz material. YARST!

I had purchased Peanut Butter and Jelly TASTING, and Ham and Cheese TASTING sandwiches. Yes, indeed. Now the package didn't say exactly what was imitation (and, somehow or other, that made it even worse). And it's bugging the hell out of me. Which was phony, the peanut butter or the jelly? I really don't see how you could make a product any cheaper than peanut butter or, for that matter, jelly.

Now the other sandwich was Ham and Cheese Tasting, and I find that understandable. Both ham and cheese are fairly expensive, so I can see why a substitute was used. But peanut butter and jelly?

This revelation as to the perfidity of vending machines has rocked the very foundations of my existence. I had thought that there were some constants in this ever-altering world of ours. But no. No longer can I cling to the basic, rock-solid reality of peanut butter and jelly sandwiches. My trust and faith in peanut butter and jelly must be tossed out to join some of my other fondly cherished beliefs (such as unadulterated coffee, unadulterated chocolate, weiners made only of pork products, etc.) in the trash heap of shattered gastronomic dreams.

At one time, in a past not so terribly distant, I truly believed that the foods of the future would consist of little pills, containing all of the various vitamins and minerals necessary to support human life. I was also prepared to accept pressed plankton steaks and imitation salads produced by squenching a whole lot of algae together, and molding it in the shape of lettuce leaves. However, I was NOT prepared to accept peanut butter and jelly tasting sandwiches.

After all, let's face it, peanut butter and jelly sandwiches ought to be made out of the real thing. The mere idea of ersatz peanut butter or jelly makes me feel acutely ill. And, ghod help me, I ATE SOME.

When the Astronauts drank Tang, way up there in outer space, I thought to myself, "That's nice." I didn't think, "Oh My God! It's the beginning of the end!!!" How was I to know that Tang would be the forerunner of all the ersatz/phony/imitation crud that is marketed in the name of food?

When I go to my friendly neighborhood supermart, I become distressed when I find soya beans masquerading as dried bacon bits. No kidding. You can buy smashed, pressed, artificially flavored and colored soybeans sold as bacon flavoring. What's worse, I have been assured that you can't taste the difference when it's used in cooked food.

Now mayhap you don't think that this is so bad. After all, due to the population explosion, we are going to have to come up with substitute meats for all those hordes of underprivileged people who can't afford bacon (but who think that they ought to be entitled to it). And squashed, smashed, pressed, molded and chemically treated soy beans still sounds a whole lot better tasting than squashed, smashed, etc., plankton. A week ago, I would have agreed whole-heartedly. But not now.

These fiends (probably Communist-subsidized) have been wantonly ripping apart the very fabric of my life. THESE PIGS HAVE BEEN MUCKING UP

MY PEANUT BUTTER AND JELLY SANDWICHES. They have managed to defile one of the basic nourishments of mankind. Some things in this life ought to be sacrosanct and, assuredly, the humble, traditional peanut butter and jelly sandwich belongs in that category.

--Tina Hensel

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Ah well, the process has been going on for some time, I've a book on chemistry that was written shortly after WW the Ace which mentions the then-new synthetic flavoring agents and the author relates how one entrepreneur set up to produce artificial raspberry jam and figured it would fool no one unless it had seeds like the real stuff, so he happily stirred in several pecks of timothy seeds for authenticity.

#### THE REAR VISIPLATE

Once upon a time, in the long and long ago, we had a lettercol by the name of The Fickle Finger Writes. Unfortunately, it has been many a geologic epoch since last anyone wrote me a letter suitable for FFW so it is necessary to dispense with that cheerful department for this issue, but next issue, quien sabe?

Yes, Virginia it is not outside the bounds of possibility that there may be a Next Issue. Be I permitted a spot of genteel stumping, I might note that Dave Hulan is running for Fapa OE and it is more or less promised that if he is elected, so that the point of delivery for fapazines is but an easy Honda-hop away over in Duarte, I shall endeavor to revive and resurrect the Grue of ancient times and might even get an issue out before I need the activity credit.

Why don't you cast your Hulan vote upon the fappish waters and see what comes of it?

While you're at it, you can even vote for me for Vice-Prexy, if I get my application filed in time.

Damn the full speed -- torpedoes ahead!

--Dean A. Grennell

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Dave Locke is faunching to desecrate the remnant of stencil while I hie forth to pick up a few sixpacks of Gestetner fuel for the printing and gathering session. Here he is:

Dean actually does have a couple letters commenting on his last issue, but they're from such old and long-gafiated fans - like Gilgamesh and Methuselah - that he felt it of little use to scrape off the moss and publish them.

Ah yes, Vending Machines. I don't know about peanut butter vending machines, but I once had an amusing encounter with a coke machine. If you first looked carefully up and down the hall to ascertain that noone was watching, you could stand with your back to the machine and get a coke by applying a swift heel-kick to the coin-return slot. And then, of course, you would tell all your pals about this wonderful machine over in the next building, and they would pass the word on, and so on and on, until someone finked. And then the thing was repaired. And then every so often you would see some uninformed soul standing there in the hall, looking sneaky, kicking strenuously at a healed machine. It was pathetic. So were the heels on my shoes.