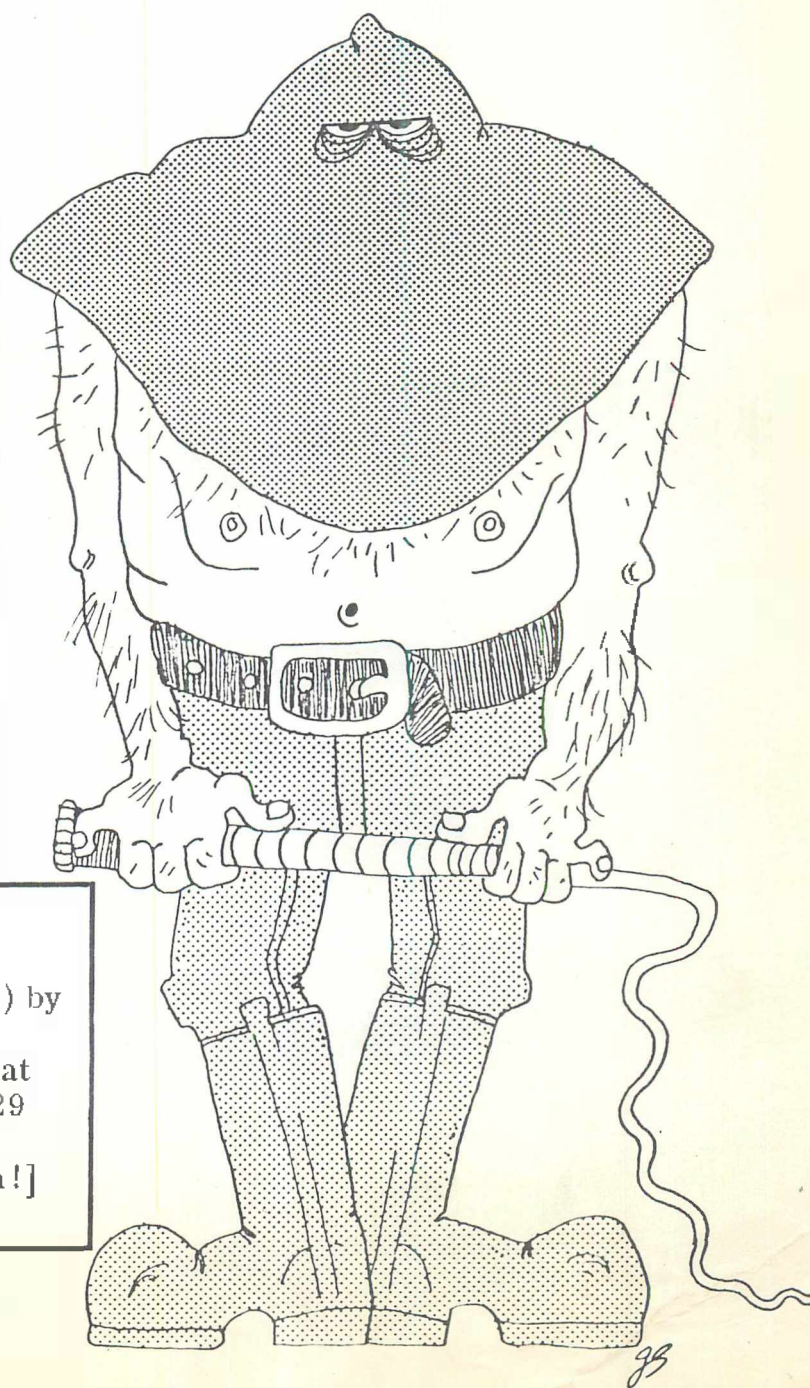


No 43 August, 1979

A LITTLE PAIN NEVER HURT ANYBODY



Furiously Flogged Forth for the
168th Mailing of the Fantasy
Amateur Press Association (FAPA) by
Dean A. Grennell, a member in
reasonably good standing (cogito), at
P.O. Box DG, Dana Point, CA 92629

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A Caveat Lector Publication [Natch!]

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Welcome to the forty-third brewing. One hopes you grokked the cover. The "JS" stands for Judy (Mrs. Dave) Stevens, who takes her mail at Route 1, Box 191-B, La Feria, Texas 78559. Jütz, as we call her, has been collaborating with me upon various and sundrious perobjects including an envisioned disinterral of a series I did long ago under the title of Little Known Game Animals (LKGA). These consisted of ... well, if it'd been done by a hatchetman with an obsession for haut couture, it could've been styled tong-in-chic approaching. Some of the duly chronicled LKGA of bygone days consisted of the Dubious Distinction, Urban Blight, White-Faced Snit, Drunken Lurch, Vested Interest, Veiled Allusion and Biting Retort. That may give you an idea as to the profundity of the discourse.

The series ran for a couple of years in the newsstand publication for which I am mastheaded as managing editor, though we sometimes modify that to barely managing. During its brief moment on stage, it polarized the readers like I still can't believe. About that time, we conducted a reader survey, asking them what feature in the magazine they liked the best and what one they hated the worst. I was gratified to find out that LKGA was the walkaway winner!...on both counts!

At any rate, after a decade of disuse and desuetude, LKGA is being groomed for resurrection. The guy who used to do the graphics for the first go-round was my boss's partner of that time, from whom he parted amid crackling acrimony around 1970 or so. Naturally, he's not available for the current collection. That's where Jütz enters the picture. To capture on paper the essence of my prosal popforth is no minor challenge. Jütz is the first soul encountered in about a decade who is capable of cutting the mustard and chopping the cotton.

In fact, I feel that her pen is so a-drip with infectious humor that she has been named staph cartoonist for Grue, among other dubious distinctions. As Grue launches into its second quarter-century of disturbing the symmetry and order of the Fantasy Amateur Publishing Association (FAPA), I would hasten to note that, along the way, we've had eminently grokkable input from some of the best cartoonist/artist types in (uhh...) the field at that time. The roster includes names such as Bob Kellogg, Ron (ESHM) Fleshman, Rich Bergeron, damon knight, Arthur Thomson and several others who deserve to be listed. Practically all of those have been out of touch since who-laid-the-chunk, though I Hadacol from William Rotsler only the week just a-dwindle, desirous of technical expertise regarding matters ballistical. Can't lose 'em all, thank goodness.

Very frankly (likewise lloydly and also wrightly), I had just about decided to bimber off into the undergrush and spare the more sensitive fapans my odious presence about August of '79. I had negotiated a small codicil with myself to the gist that, if I came out below 15 on this year's egoboo poll, that was it, goo'bye, goom-bahs. Something ganged hideously a-gley, to the point where I feel compelled to doss in my dues and whunkle forth some more pages. Yesterday's folly this day's madness did prepare and all that good jass.

I promised (cogito) to reveal what the honorific "RTP&BP" initials after Tom Ferguson's name stood for. Now it can be revealed: Renowned Toss-Pot & Buttock Pincher. Are you sure you don't regret having asked?

The "Frying Crowd" was a famous Japanese cripper ship.....

In the days when Ike & Mamie were getting their mail at the White House and J. Arthur Sommerfield was fighting to keep it as sweet and pure as the breath of a new-born baby calf, Grue was wont to incorporate a department yclept 'Gnurrserly Rhymes.' compacted mostly of shoggy daggerrel. By way of a curt nod in the direction of hallowed tradition, leave us herewith endeavor to structure up some GRs in the manner and more or less spirit of olden days, hein? Moved & 2nded...

Notes on a Loco Motif

When Wellington at Waterloo,
With battle-cry and view halloo,
So countless many French troops slew
To give the ground a bloody dew,
What was it made the Iron Duke do
That daring deed of derring-do?
(I'll tell you in a sec' or two*).

And what makes DAG chug down a few,
Roll up his sleeves and grind a Grue;
That pot of pixified perloo
That fills fan's souls with retching rue?
The *Answer (strictly entre nous):
For egoboo ---
The same as you.

--Cadwallader Bream

Sonnets of the Porsche You Grease

I've never seen a purple Porsche,
A parked one or a live one;
But this I'd have to say, of corsche,
I'd sooner see than drive one!

--Gellet Ray-O-Vac

They Said It Couldn't Be Done Dept.

Roses are red,
Nasturtiums are orange.
I've a cold in the head,
And a nose full of scoringe.

--Ralph Waldo Emerycloth

A Sparse & Spartan Couplet, Inspired By
A Report That A Certain Highly Publi-
cized Press Princess Had Suffered A
Mortifying Faux Pas Whilst Getting
Busted By The Fed Fuzz

Fearing the worst, Ms. Hearst
Blinked her sphincter.

--Provo Rambler

DOLLY
MADISON
CAKES

BUT MORTON'S
SALT
DOESN'T!

i never think at all when i write
nobody can do two things at the same time
and do them both well

archy

MISCELLANIA

"The fault, dear Brutus..."

Bob Tucker, speaking from his experience as a cinema projectionist of several years, assures me that the speaker systems in a great many theaters are deplorably mushy. Well I can believe that. Despite urgent admonitions on the part of several friends (Hi, Ice Maiden!), we've not gone to a walk-in theater for the past several years. I think what tore it was going to see "The Late Show," starring Lily Tomlin and Art Carney at the Niguel, over in Monarch Bay. To borrow a perhaps archaic slang phrase from the British, it was a perfect shower.

Veteran readers may recall an account appearing in a much earlier Grue on a visit to Brooklyn in the summer of '54 to see Bob Silverberg and other nearby landmarks. Along the way, we encountered a theater marquee lettered with sheer gibberish. I dutifully copied it down verbatim at the time and reproduced it for the marvelment of our readers. Later, the astute Tucker doped out that it had been or would become a plug for "The Robe," but the letters were jumbled in stochastic abandon when we had viewed it.

I remember recalling that Brooklyn marquee as we sat in a middle row at the Niguel, straining in vain to copy even a few pertinent words of the chaotic soundtrack. At first, I'd just ask Jean (my hearing-ear girl) what he/she had said, but I kept getting responses that she couldn't understand it either so I kept quiet in hopes of giving her a fighting chance. It didn't help much.

About Monday/11 June, IBM sponsored a tv showing of "The Big Sleep," with Bogart and Bacall. I must've viewed nearly half of it before it suddenly occurred that I was catching every bit of every spoken word of every line of dialog, even Ms. Bacall's, with perfect clarity. It was sort of mind-blowing.

I have the possibly erroneous impression that, at some point around the '50s, some of the film moguls got the bright idea of achieving a cinema verite effect by having members of the cast mumble and run their words together in hopes of making them sound more like people of The Real World. If that be the case, they rate a right royal raspberry, imho.

Back around '75 or '76, I yielded to suggestions and urgings from any number of associates and blew upwards of \$400 upon a hearing aid. Again, a perfect shower.

The damned thing did little beyond transmuting soft, muted gibberish into harsh and strident gibberish. The guy fitted it into my left ear, which is far and away the quiet side and I think that was a strategic booboo, among others. More, it tended to blow certain sounds out of all possible proportion. Crackling papers, the banshee squall of small children or a nearby siren would send my hand flailing frantically for the off-switch.

Finally, after a year or two, the wee gizz gave up its transistorized ghost and stopped working. I took it back to the guy, who peered at its tiny innards and announced, "Well, of course it stopped working. You've been perspiring!" Sheeg, around that time of year in Southern California, everybody perspires and besides he'd never told me I wasn't supposed to. I think he quoted \$65 to fix it but I just decided that it was worth that much to be able to perspire with an easy mind. As of about then, I went back to begging lots of pardons.

The source of the problem is partially congenital, partially occupational. For the greater part of the past three dozen years, firearms have played some manner of role in the earning of my livelihood. Perhaps 15 years ago, the ear-muff hearing protectors appeared on the market and I've been using them ever since, but they came along rather too late to help me much. Even so, both my father and his father had fairly severe hearing problems and neither of them did all that prodigious amounts of shooting.

The problem is that I hear just fine only it's impossible to extract much sense from what I hear. Some years back, when Dave Locke needed a column for his fanzine, Awry, I set down the hilarious if faintly scatological details of an episode at the family's doc's anteroom. I'd arrived for my 10,000-mile checkup and the receptionist called out, across the crowded room, something that sounded for all the world like, "Have you had a fleet enema?"

"Have I had a what?"

"A fleet enema."

We reprised that and went e da capo a few times, to the sniggering amusement of all the other patient patients until, in desperation, I asked if she would just write it down on a piece of paper and hold it up for me to read. She did so and that was when I plumbed the depths of frustration. I couldn't decipher her handwriting, either!

It wasn't until long after that before I resolved the nagging dilemma. Walking down an aisle in a drugstore, I came upon a display of packaged enemæ bearing the brand name, Fleet. "Merde alors," I muttered, "That's what she really was saying!"

Olive witch, I suppose, helps to explain (though not excuse, surely) my pronounced predilection for paranomasia since, in effect, the rest of the world communicates with me via the medium of puns. Endlessly, I have to ask myself, "What could have been said that would've sounded pretty close to that, but would've made sense?"

Uhh... would you repeat that, please?

Poem+quoters all evenchley/Get around to Robert Bently.

Improvisation Upon A Traditional Theme #53

If you needed a fan to disparage a slan,
 Or to harrass a pro from the rear,
 Or to bicker and pout, you had only to shout
 For Roscoe Rasputin O'Leer.

(Continue that for 23 more stanzas and
 sign it with the name of your choice ---
 be my Guest, Edgar!)

In their eyes, the look of eagles on their breath, the smell of beer.

"For the rich, they sing..."

I suppose (sigh) that stands in need of footnoting. It concerns a chap upon whose head a passing robin had jettisoned the contents of its lower alimentary canal. Swabbing at his polluted hat, he glared and gritted, "I understand that, for the rich, you sing!"

If we can get on with it now, as the tittering subsides, what I'd planned to recount here was a long-ago episode that recently popped to the surface of my mind in a manner reminiscent of a drowning victim on about the third day (depending of course upon ambient water temperature). It was/is, I thought, so exquisitely delineating of the way my life script has been written.

It was still fairly early in 1943. The previous October, for want of anything more promising to do, I'd gone off and volunteered for the USAAF as an enlisted schweinhund and had spent the ensuing few months as a greasemonkey on the flight line of an airbase at Eagle Pass, Texas, later as a cameraman/darkroom tech in the base photo lab, still later as an aircraft armorer and then off to Randolph Field as a Link Trainer instructor trainee. It was while at Randolph that I got a wild hair up my nose and signed up to go to school to become an airplane driver.

Completing the course to become a graduate Link Trainer instructor, I returned to Eagle Pass. Training wasted. I never spent even so much as a minute in imparting my hard-won expertise in blind flying to any hapless student. Soon after getting back to Eagle Pass, I got orders to pwd (proceed without delay) to the San Antonio Aviation Cadet Center (irreverently known @ the time as Saadd Saacc) for classification. After a lengthy while, I got classified for pilot training (instead of bombardier or navigator training) and got reassigned across the fence into pilot preflight.

That --- as we used to put it, whilst spraying the Royal Iranian palace with insecticide --- was about when the Flit hit the Shah. I and several hundred other witless wights became members of Cadet Class 44-B, so designated because, if all

went as planned, we would be the second class to graduate in 1944. We ended up on the ground floor of a two-story barracks whose second floor was infested with an equal number of members of Class 44-A. They wore blue name tags; we wore red ones. They were upperclassmen. We were lowerclassmen, ergo seventeen levels below a snakefart. They expended vast efforts in demonstrating this to us, beyond any risk that we might not grasp the basic concept.

Call it the class system, call it hazing, call it chicken doodoo; what you will. It was fair fierce. The blue-tag buggers gloried in it. We suffered it and tried to comfort our harried selves with the reminder that it was only for 4-1/2 weeks and, after that, if we managed to hold out, we would don the mystic blue name tags and swathe ourselves in ghodlike status.

Well, we made it (I did, at least, and a lot of the rest) and ... hey, surprise, surprise! ... someone in a position of power and authority had decided, belatedly, that all this hazing was a bunch of veritable feece for the falcons, so away with it. No more class system, no more hazing, no more henhouse carpeting. They took us off to one end of SAACC and Class 44-C moved into the other and spent their days and nights in untrammelled bliss and sweet contentment. Bully for them, I say.

So I went on to Fort Stockton, Texas, to an installation called Gibbs Field at the time, for Primary Flight School and washed out about halfway through it. That involved getting sent to Sheppard Field, near Wichita Falls, Texas (better known at the time as the Devils Island of the USAAF) to spend several hard weeks in the very warm late summer of '43 awaiting forwarding to HAGS (Harlingen Aerial Gunnery School, at Harlingen, Texas), where, as previously annotated, the decomposition of my auditory acuity had its keel laid and most of the ribs set in place.

That was the handwriting on the wall at that time. If you washed out of cadet training, you bloody-well went to gunnery school. If you washed out of gunnery school, The Powers That (Were) took steps to make sure that your fate was such as not to encourage any others to follow your footsteps. You could, for but one random example, be assigned to the Aleutians to dig straddle trenches.

Not for me. I graduated from HAGS with sufficient honours to be sent on down to Buckingham AAFB near Fort Myers, Florida to aerial gunnery instructors school and graduated from that affair, also. After a bit of shuffling about, I was assigned to Tonopah AAFB, near the tiny hamlet of that name in Nevada and was still there when V-Jay Day rolled 'round.

My pwrsonal scriptwriter didn't relax after putting me through the last class at SAACC to suffer the odious experience of the class system; oh, no, indeed. The bulk of the gunnery school trainees were graduates from various USAAF tech schools: mechanics, armorers, radiomen, etc., and entered gunnery with the rank of Corporal. Washed-out gadgets (cadets) held the rank of buck-derriere Private and, on graduating from gunnery school, were pampered with Pfc (Private First Class) status. There was no rank-jump for graduating from instructors school so I went on to Tonopah still a Pfc with the military occupational specialty (MOS) number of 938. The table of organization (TO) for 938s decreed that 2/3rds be

buck Sergeants and the remaining 1/3rd Staff Sergeants. There was absolutely no provision for a 938 being promoted from Pfc to Corporal; not for a very long time, at least. By the time someone in power happened to notice the status of the quo and rectify it, I had spent 28 months in grade as a Pfc. The all-time record for anyone in the USAAF at that time to remain in grade as Pfc was only 33 months. Hence, even when my belated second stripe materialized on my upper arms, it was at the cost of missing a claim upon immortality by a paltry half-year.

Along about that time came the furore over Nagasaki and Hiroshima and the gunnery training program collapsed like a poniarded balloon. I was reassigned as a draftsman to Base Statistical Control at headquarters and they liked my work so well that they put me in for Sergeant. It came back denied. You see, I didn't have enough time in grade as Corporal...

So they closed the base at Tonopah and I was sent to Mountain Home, Idaho. And they closed the base at Mountain Home and I was sent to Gowan Field at Boise, Idaho. And they closed Boise/Gowan and I was sent to Hamilton Field, near San Rafael, California where, wonder of wonders, I wound up assigned to the base photo lab again.

It was a pleasant interlude in my milit'ry career. They asked if I might care to re-enlist in the USAAF and consider making a career of it. Without quite putting in in the exact context, I advised them, "You bastards had your chance and you royally blew it!" Among other things, I've learned to extract pleasure from an occasional berserkly-cloven infinitive.

So, finally, they cut orders to send me to Chanute Field, near Champaign, Illinois, to be discharged. I arrived at Chanute to find the place in a stomped ant's-nest turmoil. They'd just gotten word to close down the separation center. So I sat at Chanute for a further while until orders came through for me to pwd to Wright/Patterson near Dayton for discharge at that separation center.

Along about then, I guess my scriptwriter in the sky must've sprained a pinky (poor bloody sod) or perhaps wore out the ribbon, because the sep' center at Dayton was still operational and remained so long enough to snip the skein of my attachment to the USAAF with a zest that grim sister Atropos herself might have envied a bit. So I sewed the Ruptured Duck emblem upon the chest of my tunic and took the train back to Fond du Lac.

Four years flicked past and came the Korean affair, I got back into the USAAF Reserve for another three years. Again, I got an honorable discharge, still a Corporal. No, I dunno what the record may be for time in grade as a Corporal in the USAAF, then or now. Came 1958, I got involved with the program for auxiliary police at the Fond du Lac PD and came out of that wearing the gold stripes of a Sergeant. On the tenth of May, 1978, after almost precisely 20 years in grade as Sergeant, Gov. George C. Wallace signed my commission as honorary Lieutenant*Colonel in the Alabama State Militia. Don't bet I'm kidding if you're not prepared to pay off. Foo-Foo alone knows how long it's apt to take to get my chicken...

As I was saying, for the rich...

(*try Lieutenant; merde alors!)

DG

Oh fanzines and prozines
Are better than no 'zines,
Buttypers are a fan's best friend...
--Lorelei Lee (freely paraphrased)

If a policeman is a 9
minion of the law,
is a Policewoman
a filly minion?

The time, as our programme continues, wallows in the waning moments of 1979's 4th of July and I've been tracking back among the memory banks to visit other fourths. 1927 seems to be the first I recall. Dad brought home some fireworks and scared small self into the screaming megrims. 1935 (?) may have been the year I was walking across the barnyard and spotted a smoking-fresh cow-plop. Pausing to daintily insert a nice fat Zebra-cracker into its lower perimeter, I scratched a kitchen match with deft thumb nail and ignited the fuze. The fuze (or fuse, if you will) was one of those treacherous puppy-muthahs with a fat bulge of powder in it. The derm' thing went "phwtt-BAMM!" and I was the only apple-cheeked farm lad in the whole state of Wisconsin with green freckles. 1945, I was working on a caliber .50 machinegun range at Tonopah and felt a burning faunch to make loud noises to celebrate the momentuous occasion. Now you could say that I could've contented myself with burping a 200-round belt through one of the Brownings, which produces enough dB to satisfy any reasonable need. But no, not me. I found a three-foot length of 1-1/2" pipe, hammered one end flat, bent it over to seal that end and spent a lot of time patiently pulling the slugs out of cal. .50 ammo and dumping the powder into the open end. When nearly filled, I hammered the other end flat (very-very carefully!) and folded it over. With the artifact completed, the problem remained: How to detonate it? There was a trash pit, about 8'x8'x3' deep where we burned old targets and similar refuse. There was a brisk fire crackling in it. I walked over and chucked my extemorized bomb into its fiery heart and sauntered back to the range shack in sang froidal insouciance. Just then, a truck drove up, dropped off its load of gunnery students and then proceeded on over to stop with its front bumper almost over the pit. What to do? If I tried to yell and tell him to move the truck, he'd want to know why. I was not about to walk over there and tell him. I could but wait. Finally, he finished filling out his trip-sheet -- and put the transmission in gear. The engine died. He ground the starter. It started; then died again. All this while, I was mindful of the ambient temperature of all those nitrocellulose molecules getting higher-and-higher/& higher. Again the whurrry-whurrry of the starter, the harrumph-kaff-kaff of the engine and he nursed the clutch eptly enough to back it up and come back out of harm's way. Just as he passed the range shack, my masterpiece let go. The foot or so of ashes in the pit made a passably accurate facsimile of the mushroom cloud of which the world knew little yet at that time. One could see the flattened hunk of pipe spiralling -- airily, about 350 yards straight up. The driver stopped and looked at it thoughtfully, then at me. I shrugged and made an eloquent gesture with cupped palms upward. He drove away, and may have forggotten the incident by this time.

1946: First peacetime 4th in ever so long a while. It shieked for commemoration. (Well, believe 'shrieked'?) As midnight of the 3rd hove up, with no firecrackers to be had, we mustæred on the outskirts of the tiny home town with guns and hoarded ammo. At the stroke of midnight, we cut loose. As the exhoes died, came the sound of the village marshal's car approaching. We fled into a nearby pea field and flattened. I flattened onto a large thistle. It was memorable. Thought he'd never leave!

One recalls the time Cassidy bought a Turkish water-pipe,
referring to it afterwards as his 'Hoppy Hookah'...

10(1)

By the time most if not all of you who read this see it, the matter will be vanishing back into the cobwebby catacombs of history. From the right-here/right-now, however, it's still looming up in the front viewscreen. I refer of course to the homecoming of SkyLab. Subjectively speaking, my attitude is one of que-sera-effingwell-sera; like Kismet & all that good jass.

The only point that seems to make it a little mentionworthy here/now, imho, is the fact that the whole world's population is thrust into playing a role in a science-fiction plot, like it or no. What strikes me, with a dull clang of rusty irony, is the considerable degree of disparity between s-f literature and its developing cognate in the Real World. I recall — just about exactly a decade ago — sprawling on the floor in Bill Rotsler's living room and watching the first-ever (? one presumes) H. sapiens footprint going down onto Luna's gritty pumice. I can't recall that any far-sighted s-f writer ever predicted that the event would be televised. Nor do I recall that any foresaw that so much of our actual space-probing would be carried out by remote-controlled drones and the like.

I would have loved to have read a Robert Heinlein treatment of the plot still currently unfurling. I cannot recall that RAH nor any other author has dealt with the topic of large masses of cosmic jetsam coming down all eeny-meeny this way. But then I've not kept in touch with the field all that intently in recent years, so I could be wrong; I'm not, but I could be (thanks for that'n, Buck Coulson!).

In fact, the nearest approach to the shemozzle @ hand, imho, appeared in a blank verse meld of Spoon River Anthology and the Archy & Mehitabel canon. I quote the last few lines: And I was there amid the sun-baked swarm/On Coney Island 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, missed the year by two, but got the month, if nothing else. And it doesn't look as if there will be any manned trips to Venus, not with the ambient temperature so close to the melting point of lead, but wot the hell archy

The source of the quote, as some few may recall, is Grue No. 31, dated August, 1969 and the alleged poetry was committed about '55 or so for one of the kids to pass off as their homework. In it, I'd had Cosgrove setting foot on the moon in '71, instead of Armstrong in '69; appears I've a habit of guessing about two years too late on these things.

"You can lead a horticulture,
but you can't make her read." --Dorothy Parker

Thus come we to the biting-off sector of yet another Grue; neither the worst nor yet the best of the breed, imho. I plan to run off a few beyond the 68 copies needed for Fapa and plonk them about to deserving souls with whom I'm still more or less in contact. I used to huckster 50-page Grues @ 25¢ each. Today, that wouldn't even cover postage to the city limits. So it goes, but no more 'sticky-quarters'; a phrase that may ring a bell--?