

124

Here is another frantic last-second effort to save via minac the FAPA membership of Harry Warner, Jr., 423 Summit Avenue, Hagerstown, Maryland, 21740, United States of America. Honest, I'm going to be represented in a couple of mailings next year, if I don't think of something else I'd rather do. To save time, these stencils are being dispatched via the British dockworkers' union hall so the Coulsons will receive them for mimeography a full day before the mailing's deadline. Oh, and I almost forgot to mention that I've saved a little more effort by filling this issue with reprints from The Warmed-Up Brickmush Wholesalers' Weekly. Now, with the November, 1970, issue, volume 32, number 1, FAPA number 118, and whole number 124, I finally feel like a real part of the FAPA gang. It's Horizons.

In the Beginning

The Fantasy Amateur: Is there any particular reason for listing incompletely the contents of the mailing in the FA? When the bundle contains publications not listed, it does little good to check off what you got against what's listed. You can't tell if you received everything that was accepted for the bundle after the announced deadline. You can inquire to two or three other members, to try to determine if anything got left out, if you have the time and are lucky enough to get answers to your questions, or you can wait three months for the next mailing and look for comments on a publication you didn't receive, then hope that the publisher or official editor will have a copy to spare, or maybe it'll be listed in the next FA as part of the preceding mailing. If incomplete listings continue, I'd suggest withholding unlisted stuff from surplus stock sale for four or five months, to make sure everyone got what his membership entitled him to receive. Vukat: I've been contending for a year or more that the big city large-scale con in a hotel will be obsolete within a few more years. The apparent success of a WesterCon that broke with some of the old traditions makes me hope that I'm finally going to be proved a good prophet just this once. The next step, I suppose, will be to try out a con in the off-season at a beach resort or other establishment that can offer cut prices and few mundanes. ' '. As a new but violent convert to movie fandom, I am sure I'd have boosted attendance at that screening of The Bandwagon. It's conceivably the only chance WesterCon attendees had to see that particular Astaire movie. It's not released currently for television, it's not famous or arty enough to turn up on museum film schedules, and it's too old for revival in commercial theaters. Star Begotten: Don't worry about the migration of fans from New York. It's been going on for at least thirty years and there are more fans than ever left behind. Apparently every big city has semi-dormant fans who just lie there, waiting for a few big names to pull up stakes, whereupon they suddenly grow active and scoop up all the egoboo involved in growing prominent in a metropolitan area's fandom. Damballa: Mark Twain used to believe that this nation was ripe for a monarchy, because its residents were so fascinated by kings and queens and their antics in other nations and so apt to make semi-royal heroes of politicians and other stupid commoners. I can think of only two real obstacles to proving the Twain-Greenleaf thesis valid. One is mates. If we created a royal family over here, it would be necessarily small for a few generations. Would its members find mates by the incest system or would the American people put up with marriages involving foreigners

with royal blood? Then there's the tradition problem. No crowned heads ever make a move that isn't justified by something an ancestor did a few centuries back. Would it be necessary to keep the royal family in seclusion for the first two or three hundred years of the monarchy, so an ample stock of customs could be built up privately? " Maybe Chuck was speaking ironically about the virtues of the scholar's life. My own contacts with university life indicate that fandom doesn't even begin to compare for weird characters, pointless endeavors for supremacy, and other quite human ways of behaving. " Well, T. O'Connor Sloane isn't quite wrong as yet in his pessimism about interplanetary travel, unless you count the moon as another planet. There's always a faint possibility that he'll stay right longer than anyone now believes, if there isn't a propulsion breakthrough soon and human bodies run into physical problems from months in space. Nastrond: I find almost any movie, even a bad one, more rewarding on second viewing. My mind pays more attention to details when it's relieved of the surprises created by watching unfamiliar events and hearing previously unknown dialog. I've seen Splendour in the Grass four or five times, and it wasn't until the last viewing that I spotted a telling little detail like the way the boy and girl close the cover over the piano's keys after they've finished playing. That puts the story firmly in its time and place more convincingly than the costumes and auto configurations. Celephais: Say an occasional prayer that none of the Maryland Department of Health hotshots ever gets a similar job in New York. Those wonderful-sounding stores on First Avenue would be wiped out within weeks. Two local examples of what's going on: church and lodge groups operating refreshment stands at the Hagerstown Fair are no longer permitted to sell homemade cake. The Health Department won't let them do it in outdoor surroundings. A small restaurant's owner got arrested and fined for violating food laws which included, among other things, preparing sandwiches at one end of the counter at whose other end customers were sitting. I know all about the importance of sanitation and refrigeration to prevent epidemics, but some regulations could defeat their own purpose. How many fairgoers got sick at the stomach because they packed their own lunch and carried it around in the heat too long before eating, because they knew they couldn't get homemade food like cake at the refreshment stands? How careless will that restaurateur be if he makes those sandwiches in some secluded nook where customers can't notice his procedures? " Can you paste a thin layer of silica gel at the top and bottom of the hour glass? It works pretty well in keeping photographic equipment uncorrupted from moisture. Sambo: Reading about someone's moving day gives me almost as many chills as a description of a bit of surgery that I might eventually undergo. I don't know if Sam had the depressing thought that's going to come over me if I ever have the ordeal of moving again: the realization that there probably won't be time to get full benefit out of all the stuff being hauled to the new home. There's a guitar somewhere on the attic. If I ever look at it on moving day I'll think about the thousands of hours that I'd like to have to learn to play it properly. There are hundreds of old prozines, at least half of whose pages I'd want to re-read and there would go a couple of years' spare time. Tons of fanzines that ought to be properly sorted out, and then I should snatch at their applepie order to do some of the indexing I've always wanted to see fanzines given, a much bigger task than writing the fan history. A few more glimpses and I'd know that I'd already set aside more time for such

delights than my probable lifespan would accommodate. '' Amen to the advice about seeing an attorney if you're buying property. I know three cases of people around Hagerstown who thought they'd become the owners of Potomac River-bordering land on the West Virginia shore, only to discover after a few months that the land had been sold for unpaid taxes owed by a previous owner. '' It seems highly probable that every fan either once lived in Indianapolis or has some kind of family connections with that city. Yet to be determined is whether this also holds good for pros, but the prognosis is favorable. We must have a common origin of some sort. I hope it isn't too common. '' Maybe the theory about fanzine writers as frustrated prozine writers is correct. I know I felt better after I proved to myself I could sell to the prozines. But why do some fans who accomplish this fail to continue to write science fiction for cash? Basic laziness in my case, perhaps. Now I feel the urge to sell again. This time there may be twin motivations. I'd feel safer to quit a regular job if I knew I could free lance profitably in the event that inflation made investment income inadequate. Then there's the belief that I'd feel less conspicuous among all these terribly young fans, if I had some pro status attached to me, for many other pros are almost as old as I am. Roundshot: "The only stuff that really sells in this society is stuff that people are programmed to buy." Isn't this giving too much credit to the hucksters? People bought James Bond novels, Erle Stanley Gardner mysteries, Tarzan novels, and other stuff that strikes me as decidedly second-rate because there was something in those books that lots of people liked of their own free will. Later came the incessant plugging of these characters in movies and on television and through paperback floods. But the people deserve the praise or the blame when they don't put Sturgeon or Farmer in a position for this sort of exploitation. '' I can't understand why Hollywood doesn't start by filming just The Hobbit. It's much better suited to two or three hours on screen than The Lord of the Rings. Moreover, if it became successful, there would be material enough for a half-dozen sequels in the three succeeding books. New Cat Sand: Normally I purse my lips and shake my head sadly when I find someone praising a fanzine but calling it uncommendable. But here I sit, in exactly that position, over Calvin Demmon's latest. Saying anything about it would somehow clutter up its succinct excellence. Kim Chi: Somewhere I read that the change in anti-smoking commercial style came because the pre-change ones were too frightening. People were feeling the need for cigarettes to settle the nerves they'd jangled. Is it my imagination, or are the pro-cigarette commercials growing more unbearable at a galloping acceleration as the January 1 deadline approaches? '' Every time the local newspaper splashes a marijuana item all over the top of a page, I think how time has changed journalistic attitudes. Many years ago, people used to grow the stuff in vacant lots in the southern part of this county, and a narcotics agent would get only a single-column 24-point headline when he burned over a field. We'd probably publish our first extra since FDR's death, if that happened tomorrow. Bete Noire: I don't want to find myself in the totally untenable position of defending Campbell. But Redd's attack is another disturbing example of his growing tendency to call people names and use invective instead of depending on logic and reason. Esdacyos: The description of the open heart surgery is almost as strong evidence how the future is upon us as the Apollo trips. I know that this type of operation is not as new or as rare

as a trip to the moon. But when this kind of near-miracle touches the wife of a FAPA member, then we have gone considerably beyond tomorrow. ' ' Some evidence of my own degradation: for the first time in my fannish life, I no longer have a reasonably clear, uncluttered desk top. Just in the past eight or ten months, it has become too much trouble to find some place to put stuff while it awaits attention. It now covers the entire top of the desk and I'm reduced to finding working space atop the stacks or on this tiny typing stand.

Horizons: The Kim Darby collection is coming along just fine. Apparently it is a healthy and innocent preoccupation, because a local minister has added himself to the ranks of those keeping on the watch for things that would interest me. He spotted a magazine containing four splendid pictures and a long, inaccurate story. Greg Shaw is the latest fannish benefactor, contributing a magnificent 8x10 Capitol Records promotion photograph. Century Schoolbook: I'm sorry FAPA couldn't have had Andy three or four years ago. Even if he's still the same Andy, he isn't as prolific as he used to be, and lots of Andy Porter, which we won't have, would be better than a small amount of Andy Porter, which is what we'll probably be limited to. And people still think chronology is the way to decide when an individual shall enter FAPA. Sercon's Bane: I can't share the feeling that a tiny waiting list would solve FAPA's problems. That long wait has served in recent years as bait. Fans get on the waiting list in the belief that something so hard to enter must be pretty special. When they finally get in they're old and tired and by now the lack of energetic young fans has caused FAPA to lose most of the attractions it once had, so if that waiting list goes, we're really in trouble. This is why I continue to believe FAPA should either follow the constitution and drop the arbitrary procedure by which the mailing list has been shortened, or adopt some radically different method for obtaining new members other than simple waiting in line. ' ' It wouldn't do much good to divide basketball players by height. It's the combination of height and reach that counts. Abnormally long arms can make a man better endowed from the reach standpoint, the one that really counts, than a taller player. ' ' What does it mean to "intensify a chunk of" life by means of marijuana? Is this something that can be proven or is it just another copout like the claim that drugs provide "greater insight" into the universe? Detours: The photographs are welcome, as something that appears in FAPA too seldom. But these three need a lot of cropping to be fully effective. The three people who eat and stare at the camera are not as effective as they'd be if all the foliage and most of the vacant areas of the bench were cut off and they were blown up to the full page dimensions. The picture of the child led by a hand might be very powerful if cropped even more radically, to show only the child, the hand holding his, and just a small slice of the grown person's garment. Then he would become a child being led by some mysterious large thing to an unguessable destination; as it is, you can't even be sure if he's happy or sad to be taking this walk. I'd like to see the other picture done as a high-key study of just the central couple, with a very narrow but tall area of vegetation visible around them. But I fear there's no hope at all for the story, The Lover. It reads like an unskillful attempt to achieve the kind of parody that Bob Leman does so masterfully. The Rambling Fap: I find some of the ecology stuff on paper and on television an obvious case of bandwagon hopping. But it would be improper to complain about everyone getting into the act, when the act itself is unique

in the nation's history. I can remember no previous instance in which the future has really been taken into consideration as a governing factor in today's activities. Of course, there have long been marketing experts who look into future business trends and planning departments who decide where schools and roads will be needed as years go by, but they always assume that today's trends will continue in an otherwise unchanged world. That's nothing like serious talk about banning the internal combustion auto. '' Something I don't understand about the oil business and the calculations about reserves of its raw material: Do those calculations take into consideration the increasing consumption that continued population growth and progress in developing remote regions of the world would create? And are the reserves the oil that is known to be there, without taking into account the fact that much of it may be prohibitively expensive or dangerous to get out? '' If I cut back to ten percent of the locs I write, I would probably be saved writing about 225 locs each year. That would save me $112\frac{1}{2}$ hours per year, roughly. I could save almost as much time by cutting my FAPA activity to the eight pages per year. If I cut back to minac in FAPA, I'd get just as many fanzines to enjoy as before. If I cut out 90% of the locs, I'd no longer see half or more of the fanzines that now reach me. Don't be too sure that I'll find another hundred hours for work on the fan history that way. Besides, it's quite obvious that the locs are more appreciated than Horizons, which is apparently read by perhaps one out of every six FAPA members, to judge by the way it's ignored in many sets of mailing comments. I get about five times as much comment on the two dozen copies I mail to non-FAPA members as I do from the 68 copies that go to FAPA. This may be partly because I do not have a waiting list set up chronologically to determine who outside FAPA gets Horizons. Descant: I used to spend two or three hours most nights listening to CBM in Montreal, whose programming is quite similar to that offered in the golden age of radio by many big United States stations. I even grew fond of the old geezer who did the Sunday night hockey games so many years with a style that must have been unique in the sportscasting world. I can't remember his name but can't forget how he broke all the rules by describing all the action in the past tense. Alas, the station no longer comes in dependably. Apparently the same frequency is now occupied by either a Cuban station or a United States station that has newly received permission to continue operations after sundown, and reception has turned bad. The other Canadian stations that come in well in Hagerstown are French-language ones, and I'm unable to follow that language very well when it's rattled off fast. '' I think the first figure in the tube name indicates its voltage. So you may have goosed up the energy going into your radio with the 12BA6 to the point of making it neurotic and easily frightened of bad vibrations. '' Nostalgia Book Club is assuming a fannish aspect. Just a couple of months ago I got Jim Harmon's book on radio comedians, and now All In Color for a Dime is supposed to be the next offering. It would be nice if Nostalgia would outbid Advent for the rights to the next volume of the fan history. I've even seen some fannish names in the letterhack section of the Nostalgia bulletins, such as Walt Coslet, who is still trying to sell his collection. Getting It All Together: If things continue to go in this nation as they've been going for the past few years, I might run away, too. It'll probably be to Europe, rather than to Mexico. But wherever I go, I'll be damned if I'm going to egg people on to fight from that safe distance.

Rosemary's Fanzine

Rosemary Budd was moderately pleased when the chance came to join N'APA. "It's nothing extra-special," she told her husband, Joe. "But we've just simply got to belong somewhere if we're going to be fans. It's mostly younger people who ought to be congenial. Most of them haven't been in fandom as long as we have. And you know, dear, we'll be able to go ahead and do what we've been wanting to do."

Joe frowned almost imperceptibly. "I suppose so. But Rosey, we're still pretty young and there's lots of time ahead of us. Now, you know you have this knack for writing. Maybe it would be better if you helped us get renewal credentials by writing for other members at first."

"Well, go out and mail them our dues before someone beats us to the vacancy. We'll worry about the, this other thing when we get to know the people a little." Rosemary kept her right hand in her apron pocket, rotating slowly the small object she'd kept hidden from Joe these last weeks. It was a promise of the future, a symbol of a form of immortality, that Joe might regard in too crass a manner if he saw it too soon.

She waited until she heard the door click shut behind him, then took the bottle of corflu from her pocket. She held it up to the light, smiling as she remembered the struggle she'd had to get the stubbornly pasted label off completely. Now that the glass was clean and uncovered on all sides, it gleamed with mysterious little purple highlights as she rotated it slowly in front of the red shade of the table lamp. She tried for the hundredth time to see the bare bulb of the ceiling light through the corflu itself. As always, the tinted glass and deep blue of the contents permitted only a vague suggestion of light to penetrate the opaque liquid-solid complex. It was as mysterious and as promising as if she'd just seen the first suggestions of forms in her crystal ball as a beginning fortune teller. I've got to stop this, Rosemary told herself as she held the bottle like Parsifal with the Grail at the end of the third act. I'm going to hypnotize myself.... She whirled at the footsteps behind her. She hadn't heard Joe return in her concentration. She tried to pop the bottle down the neck of her sweater, missed, and it slithered to the carpet. Joe didn't even notice. He had a piece of paper in his hand, waving it under her nose.

"I can't believe it," Joe said, softly, almost for himself.

"What's happened?" Rosemary rolled the bottle toward herself with the toe of her slipper, then put her foot on it gently, concealingly.

"CASH! The Confederation of Amateur Sciencefiction Hierarchists! We're invited in!"

"Is that good? I've never heard of it. Maybe you could stop them from delivering the letter to N'APA if you called the post office."

"I didn't mail it. I found this invitation in the mailbox before I left the hall. Honey, it's our big chance. This isn't a bunch of neofans. It's a lot of big shots. Old Freddy Frecombe said he'd put in a word for me. I guess I forgot to tell you about applying."

"Who's Freddy Frecombe? And I never heard of this guy who wrote the letter. Are you sure it isn't a bunch of fringe fans? I don't want to be in the wrong place when the time comes for you-know-what."

"Hell, honey, you know how fandom is. Cliques inside cliques and some bnfs are so important that it takes years before neofans even get to know their names, just because they are careful about not wasting their fanac on most of us." Joe went to the desk, took a piece of paper from the top drawer, then put it back and rummaged in the bottom drawer. "Where's that box of expensive stationery we got for Christmas last year? I want to look good when I tell them how proud we feel to be members."

Rosemary picked up the corflu and put it back into her pocket, and held her breath until Joe had found the box and grabbed what he needed from it. In the bottom of the box, in a little crevice left where the false bottom was put to delude people into thinking the box was filled with stationery, there had been room to hide the strip of staples she'd shoplifted one awful day when even the corflu hadn't been enough to satisfy unfulfilled instincts.

"Why do they say we've got to send in our dues every three months?" she asked, reading again the letter. "Why can't we just send a year's dues all at once?"

"Oh, it must be some kind of old tradition. Rosey, do you know that Freddy asked me specifically if you'd send him a little article or story for his CASHzine? He's heard about you somehow."

Rosemary threw her small body across the space to the desk and grabbed Joe around the neck as he was sealing the envelope. "Let's not wait another minute," she said fast, as he grabbed her onto his lap. "I'm human. Just looking at other people's fanzines isn't enough. Now that we're in a real good ayjay group, let's make one of our own, Joe."

Joe ran his strong arms down her body. His hands crept around her waist, searching skillfully, unerringly, until they rested on the bottle of corflu. She breathed faster.

"I can't wait, either," he said. His face was growing red as he fumbled at the cap.

"Now, Joe, now!" Rosemary cried. Joe raised the open bottle and Rosemary tensed as she took a mighty sniff, then expelled her breath in his face. "I've even got a name for it already," she murmured, sinking back limp in exhausted reaction. "We'll call it Planet of the Apas."

Four weeks later, the mailman brought a limp manila envelope, filled with an inch-thick wad of fanzines, and a letter from Rosemary's old friend, Jack Weiss. When Joe got home from work, she showed him the CASH mailing, which she'd scattered across the bathroom floor for convenient rapid reference. "I shouldn't feel disappointed," Rosemary said thoughtfully. "I know you can't enjoy your first mailing properly when you don't know what the mailing comments are about or the in jokes or any of the personalities. For instance, I guess there's some kind of tradition in CASH to tell lies about your income. An outsider would think these people were saying things the polite person doesn't talk about. And what do you make of this, Joe? Joe?" She tugged at his ear. He was flat on the floor, grabbing first one fanzine, then another, as if he wanted to read them all simultaneously.

"Huh? Oh, I guess these are such all-out fans that they want to know everything about each other because everything they do is fannish. Rosey, do you really think we ought to publish our first fanzine right away? Without waiting for another mailing or two to get our bearings?"

"You promised, Joe. And it would be wrong, awfully wrong, to

stop nature from taking its course, now that we've gone this far."

Joe looked up from the fanzines. "All right, all right. It's just that I've started to correspond with a lot of other members, and told them about some of the things you've done for Planet of the Apas, and they're wondering if we can really do justice to your brainchildren. We don't know anything about publishing fanzines, and they seem to think that you're a real genius, someone whose ideas shouldn't be wasted in a crudzine."

"Crudzine! Joe, I wasn't going to tell you about this. I didn't want to make you think I'm against these fans in CASH. But if you take that attitude, then look what Jack says. His letter came today, with the mailing. And he writes about CASH. Don't you think it's significant? More than a coincidence?"

"I don't want to read letters from a wornout old fan like him. You should have stopped corresponding when you married me."

"Jack Weiss is my best friend in fandom. Except you. And he doesn't read those disgusting prozines like you do. He reads nothing but the faanish kind of fanzines. I wish you were like him. Except in age. Look, he says he's heard a lot about CASH and even if he's never seen a mailing, he doesn't like the company we're keeping in fandom. And he says he's sending me an old copy of Writers Digest and I'm supposed to look at the classified ads that he's put circles around because they could tell us something awfully important. You didn't see a magazine in the mailbox when you came in? Sometimes the mailman leaves it in the wrong place and we get it later."

Rosemary was looking at the dummy for Planet of the Apas two days later when the mailman came. Joe had been home almost constantly since the CASH mailing arrived. He'd complained about a sore throat and he had the typewriter in bed with him, pounding it almost constantly. He wouldn't show Rosemary what he was writing, but she assumed that he was catching up on a lot of locs and she wished he'd finish so she could retype the dummy, this time justifying the margins. In robe and barefooted, Joe beat her to the door and the mail. She was close enough behind him to see him slip a small package under a flap of the robe.

"Joe, it's no use hiding anything from ourselves. I know it's my Writers Digest. You give it to me and we'll get to the bottom of all this." Grumbling, he handed her the plain brown paper parcel. She tore off the wrappings, and found a single two-year old issue of the writers' magazine inside. She knelt on the desk chair, an old nervous habit, as she riffled through the pages, looking for marked ads. Joe bent over her. She cradled the magazine under her bent torso, suspecting that he would grab it away at the first opportunity.

"Here they are." She pointed to the red-circled little classified ads on two facing pages. Then she frowned as she read the first of them. "Why, it's just someone who wants a set of Arabian Nights. Just initials and a box number. JKB. Hey, that could be Jerry Bostitch from CASH, couldn't it?" She looked at the next circled ad. "And here's one from another CASH member. Joe, what's a plot genie? He wants--oooh."

Rosemary sprang back as the dark blue stuff appeared as if by magic on the magazine and flowed inexorably over the open pages. Then the empty corflu bottle rolled across the chair where she had knelt. "Golly, I'm sorry, honey. I just brushed it with my elbow. Maybe the cap wasn't tight." His voice wasn't convincing. Rosemary stared at him as if a stranger stood before her. She poked one fing-

er at the congealing corflu. It wouldn't budge and the ads were totally illegible. Joe lowered his eyes, shifted his feet uncertainly, coughed, and went back to bed.

Rosemary took a sheet of the expensive stationery and tried to remember how to write a letter with a pen, after so much fanaticism on the typewriter. She checked two old letters from Jack Weiss, to make sure she'd used the right address on the envelope. Then she slipped noiselessly from the apartment and watched the envelope go down the slot in the corner mail deposit box. After she had poked two fingers down the slot, to make sure it wasn't hung up on something, she returned to the apartment, knelt on the chair again, and began to bawl. The typewriter had started to click again in the bedroom.

Her letter to Jack came back a week later, unopened. It had a post office stamp in one corner, listing reasons why mail couldn't be delivered, with a space after each for a checkmark. The checkmark on her letter was opposite the bleak word: "gafia".

"Go ahead and telephone him," Joe urged her, alarmed by the expression her face had formed. He'd been more like the old Joe since the corflu spilled, hadn't been talking so much about money, and had annoyed Rosemary only by throwing away the ruined Writers Digest before she could copy off the date of the issue. "I didn't know you thought it was important enough to try to find another copy," Joe had explained gently.

"I'm scared," Rosemary said. "Suppose nobody answers the phone? Suppose he's just vanished completely?"

"That's impossible. Doesn't he live with a couple of sisters? They'd know how to reach him. Maybe he just decided to go to a rest home or something. He was getting pretty old. Here, I'll put in the call myself."

The line was busy, the first time he dialed after getting the number from information. That's a good sign, Rosemary thought, if Jack had a private line. Someone's home. On impulse, she went to the desk, fumbled around until she found the little strip of staples, and pressed a moist palm around them. It somehow brought her closer to an old faanish fan who'd never sat through a speech or a panel discussion at a con in his long fannish career. "It's ringing," Joe told her. She stood on tiptoes, trying to press her ear against the listening part of the telephone. But Joe sucked in his breath hard at the answer to his first question and pushed her away roughly. Something haunted in his eyes frightened her out of trying to listen in to the rest.

Joe missed the cradle twice when he tried to put down the telephone. "I never guessed," he muttered. "If I'd thought that I'd ever--"

"Joe, did you do something to Jack? If you've hurt him, killed him, I swear I'll--"

Blinking, Joe seemed to wake up. "Rosey, I didn't mean I did anything. I mean, I wished I hadn't called. It's just as bad as you think it is, except that I didn't have anything to do with it. Here, hang on tight to me and then hang on tight to yourself. I've got to tell you. Jack is in FAPA."

Rosemary saw blood trickle between her clenched fingers where she'd driven the staples into her palm when every muscle in her body had contracted involuntarily. She whimpered: "Any last words?"

"Nothing. But remember, now, sometimes they don't say their last words until after they're in FAPA. There's still hope for six

months. And there's something else. Jack's sister told me that Ted Baldwin was with him when it happened. I'm going to invite Ted and some of the other CASH crowd right here to the apartment for a few days. We can borrow some sleeping bags if there's not enough room on the couch and beds."

Rosemary was bent like an old woman as she shuffled to the kitchen to wipe the blood from her hand and hunt for some clean cloth so she could bandage it. Somewhere in the back of her mind she felt proud of Joe. He'd obviously been deeply shaken by the tragedy, because he hadn't even noticed the staples. And she'd been suspecting him of losing his fannish ethics, all this time.

It was two weeks before Ted and a half-dozen of his friends stopped by. Rosemary didn't quite understand what they were explaining about a business trip that they'd decided to make together. She was feeling better by now, after writing the proper notes to Jack's sisters and revising the Planet of the Apas dummy to make room for a tribute to the fanac that had been too glorious and extensive to think about even now without getting morbid and depressed again because it was over now. These were the first CASH members Rosemary had met. She found it a trifle hard to get used to their odd habit of talking so much about themselves. It was even harder to find a gap in the chatter into which she might insert the things she wanted to know about why she saw their names so rarely in fanzines outside CASH and whether they'd be at the next worldcon.

"We were just talking about cons," Ted said when Rosemary finally slipped in a few words. "None of us is going to the worldcon this year. We're putting on a little con of our own, calling it the Icon. You folks ought to come. It's only a couple hundred miles away. Why spend all that money to go thousands of miles to a worldcon?" Ted shoved another drink into Rosemary's hand. She already felt wobbly from the previous two and she wished she could get Joe into a secluded corner and ask him why he hadn't told her about the liquid provisions he'd brought in for the occasion and exactly what he was putting into these drinks.

"I'm starting to feel as if I'd been tapped on the shoulder," Rosemary laughed. The room suddenly was silent. The CASH members' eyes were on her, as if she'd suddenly spoken in a foreign tongue. "You know, the big moment when someone's chosen for St. Fanthony." She paused when the faces around her looked more baffled than ever. My god, Rosemary was thinking as the liquid burned in her belly and made her want to go on with her explanation of how the chosen one's initiatory drink must taste just like this. Am I around a bunch of fakefans? She didn't even realize Joe had left the room but he was back with another tall glass, helping her to hold it as she sipped. "Hey," Rosemary said, "did I ever tell you about Planet of the Apas and how I was going to put in it a science fiction story? I had this stupid notion about a novel where a guy goes back to find out who Kit Marlowe really was and the real truth behind his death, but the time traveler gets murdered himself before Marlowe dies and then his pal has two mysteries to solve and he goes back himself and tracks down the person who killed them both and in the end finds out that Marlowe really didn't grow up the way the books say. Just like a stupid prozine story. And then I had this theory that we're all just about ready to evolve into creatures that change into something entirely different when they apparently die, like worms and butterflies you know, and the pharaohs had already started to do it because they strengthened the tendency by marrying their sisters and that's

why they mummified the bodies, not because of religion, and some of them really did turn into something not human and that was going to be a science fact story, wouldn't that have been stupid?" She paused a moment, certain that she was ready to throw up, took another big swig and watched all the fans begin to turn in circles and change colors. "And I, get this, even let the cat out of the bag, I just simply admitted I used to read paperbacks, because I wrote a new version of a famous story, only I called it The Unethical Equations, and the man didn't kill the girl but just cut off her legs and arms and his own legs and some other things and threw them out to get the weight down because they knew they could get transplants if they managed to land safe, stowaway or no stowaway, and if someone would stop hiding that typewriter I could show you what a god-damned lousy fanzine I'd have put out if I hadn't had the good sense to realize that I was acting like a neofan and now I've got this wonderful dummy for Planet of the Apes and it's more faanish than anything you'll find out of Inchmery or Oblique House or I'm thirsty."

And another tall glass turned blue and it had little round things on it that clicked when she pressed them and the blue came up and unrolled before her eyes with thin white markings appearing on it but they were too blurred from the humidity or maybe she'd mislaid her glasses, but she didn't wear glasses and anyway with all the glasses she'd emptied tonight she must be one of the lasses with cute little....

Things really became confused after that. Noise rose and fell as if the room were equipped with a large volume control with a life of its own and even after she didn't have much feeling anywhere else in her body she felt her fingers jumping and jerking on mysterious activities of their own and try as she would to inform those fingers about the faanish matters she had in her dummy, she was too dumb, he must have been around somewhere, Joe she meant, but she didn't know where Joe, Joe, Joe....

He heard her calling and hurried to the couch where Rosemary had begun to regain her senses. She shuddered when she felt his hand wiping perspiration from her forehead but groped blindly for his other hand. "Oh, Joe, I'm so ashamed of myself. Are all the other fans still drunk?"

"I hope not. They seemed pretty sober when they left yesterday. They were worried about you, but they had some kind of business to take care of, kept talking about what they might make out of it. They told me to be sure and tell you what a fine fanzine you're going to have."

Rosemary managed to get one eye open, but shut it again hurriedly. "I never thought I'd ever say such a thing," she groaned, "but right now I don't think I want to publish a fanzine. Not until I feel a lot better. You won't mind terribly if we wait a little longer?"

She felt the couch sink, but didn't have the courage to look again and verify her deduction that Joe had sat on its edge beside her suffering body. "But, honey, you don't understand. We've done it. Everyone says it's going to be a wonderful fanzine."

Rosemary managed to prop herself on one elbow. "What do you mean? Joe, you all didn't take advantage of me? Not a one-shot session? Oh, Joe, it shouldn't have been like that. Not for our first fanzine."

"But you were positively brilliant. The more you sopped up,

the faster you typed those stencils. The rest of us hardly had to do anything except take care of the cushion sheets and brush the gunk out of the type whenever you stopped for a minute. You just wait until the next mailing comes. You'll be just as much in love with it as if you'd typed everything from the dummy."

"You mean I didn't use the dummy? And the stencils, where did they come from? You hadn't let me buy them yet. And where are the stencils now? And if all our fine CASH friends don't know about St. Fanthony, how could we have a one-shot session?"

"I want everything to be a surprise to you. You probably did everything exactly like it was in the dummies. You'd worked on the dummy pages enough to memorize them. Ted took all the stencils with him. He'll have them run off by someone he knows and he'll send all the pages back to us and then we can collate just the way we always planned. He even took the dummies with him, just in case there might be some typos that he couldn't figure out from the stencils themselves."

"How long have I been out?"

"A couple of days, off and on. No wonder. It was a wonderful one-shot session."

Rosemary didn't normally drink much, so she attributed the odd sensations of the next weeks to some kind of alcoholic residue that needed a long time to dissipate. Somehow, now that the dummies were no longer in the apartment, she found it increasingly hard to remember details of what had been on them. She knew that the main article had been an opening chapter of what would someday be a book-length epic, Fan Quixote, and there had been a long article comparing all the published accounts she'd been able to find of the famous Ellison-Harmon encounter at a long-ago Midwestcon, besides some odds and ends reprinted from old issues of Aporrheta and Quaundry, and the inevitable apology for the lack of mailing comments. She hadn't been honest with the apology. She'd written about lack of time and actually she just couldn't think of much to say about CASHzines that emphasized the prozines and paperbacks and terrible antics of agents so exclusively. Besides, she associated mailing comments inextricably with poor Jack and she suspected that Joe would have to write them in future issues, even though all his typing seemed to produce very little fanac these days. He'd bought a lot of large manila envelopes and occasionally took one stuffed with unknown contents down to the post office.

Her lethargy hung on and discouraged her from spying on Joe's fanac. She didn't even count the days until the mimeoed loose sheets of Planet of the Apas were due to arrive, and she scolded Joe only a little for his refusal to arrange a big collating party to which she wanted to invite all her faanish friends in the area, to make up for how nice she'd been to Joe's pals from CASH. So it was a genuine shock, the day Rosemary looked at the calendar, dug out the CASH mailing, hunted the announcement of the deadline for the next mailing, and realized that there were only a dozen days remaining.

She cornered Joe about it as soon as he got home from work. "You'll have to hurry them up," she said firmly. "We can't miss the deadline and we've got to allow time to collate and staple and mail them off. Besides, Joe," and here she snuggled up to him like in the old days, "I'm starting to feel right about my fanzine again. I really feel that I want it badly. Do you realize that for a while, I almost felt as if I didn't care much about it? My very own first fanzine! Can you imagine?"

"You can't exactly fall in love with a fanzine before it's a fanzine. I mean, just suppose something happened to that issue. It really wouldn't count as your first fanzine. You could go ahead and publish a first issue and maybe you'd rather put in it all those things you'd always talked about using."

"But I don't understand, Joe. You sent the dummies along with the stencils and the dummies had everything for my fanzine." Rosemary fought uselessly against her voice's rising pitch.

"Sit down a minute. You're already excited, so I might as well break it to you. Remember what I said about what really represents your first fanzine. You wouldn't bawl over the baby that would have been born if your husband hadn't had to take a trip to Europe, would you?"

Rosemary pressed her rear end against the chair as firmly as she could, and pressed her hands against her temples. "Tell me, Joe. I think I can stand it and I can't stand this uncertainty."

"Well, the worst happened. All the runoff pages got lost in the mails. They told me days and days ago. I hid it from you and tried to have them traced. Nobody can find any sign of them." Rosemary moved her hands to cover her ears while Joe continued to talk. Then she eased the pressure long enough to say in a tiny, squeaky voice: "They can always run off more pages from the stencils. They might even collate them and staple them and send them direct to CASH to save time."

"I thought of that. But it's no use. They put the stencils in the package with the pages. They thought you might like them as a souvenir of your first fanzine. And they'd thrown the dummies away as soon as they'd finished running the stencils. And do you know what? They offered to pay us even though it wasn't their fault! They told me they'd be glad to send you the cost of the stencils-- wholesale cost, of course, even though you bought them retail--minus postage and a little bit more for the cost of the carton they packed them in and the tape they used to seal it up. Rosemary, are you listening to me?"

Suddenly her voice was back at its normal pitch but its volume was abnormal. "No, I don't hear anything because I'm hysterical and do you know why I'm hysterical? Because you're messing around with a bunch of pros and trying to be one yourself! Poor Jack tried to tell me and I suspected from a lot of little things that happened, and I don't think you married me for any reason except that you thought I might be able to make money writing! Now my first fanzine is gone, gone, gone, just because it was faanish and those CASH pros couldn't see any way of making any money out of it. And no other fanzine ever can be my first fanzine again. Now I'm going to faint, I think." She was right.

Convalescence was slow. Joe even called a doctor, who hunted over Rosemary's body without finding much of medical interest and spoke vaguely about malfunctioning glands whose real purpose puzzled science but might have something to do with the individual's special interests and activities. Rosemary couldn't bear the sight of any fanzines, except those that had been publishing for three or four years at the least. Joe forced her to look at all the contents pages of the latest prozines, as proof that he hadn't turned into a filthy pro, but she simply charged that that was his intent and he wasn't listed as an author because he wasn't good enough yet. He missed two weeks' work, caring for Rosemary, returning to the job only when she again began to watch for the mailman and to open the letters

whose envelopes clearly identified them as the creation of fans of unquestioned faanish instincts. On his final trip, the doctor had one parting word of advice: travel. "Spend a lot of money, don't give a thought to making money for a week or two." Joe winced, but after the doctor had gone, he reminded Rosemary that the Icon was just ahead.

"I know that some of the CASH people are on the committee. But you've seen for yourself in the newszines how many fans will be on the program. And you just can't find a con without pros. We'll go and stay away from the pros and you'll feel like a new fan again. Maybe the change will even help you remember what was in those dummies. It hasn't come back to you yet, has it?"

Rosemary shook her head. "Just the vague idea of what the items were about. I couldn't possibly rewrite them. Joe, are you absolutely positive that my fanzine is lost? Mightn't it turn up fifty years from now when they sweep out the corner of some post office? I read just the other day about a pocksard that fell in a crack and didn't get delivered for a long, long time."

"That's exactly the kind of notion we've got to stop you thinking. You'll get so pepped up talking to all those fans at the Icon that you'll have material for a dozen fanzines. We'll even get a mimeo of our own and you can do all the publishing."

"It still won't be my fanzine, the one I dreamed about." Rosemary continued to shake her head sadly but she agreed to go to the Icon.

Things began better there than Rosemary had imagined possible. The moment of silence for Jack, which seemed to shake other congoers badly, left Rosemary almost unaffected. It seemed such a small silence beside the enormous one that had engulfed him, so she was almost indifferent. Joe and she went their separate ways during much of the con, because he'd never been totally comfortable among the old faanish friends she was rediscovering. When she asked him what he was doing, he muttered something about having been down in the bar. But Rosemary didn't smell anything imposing on his breath, so she assumed that she'd misunderstood. The CASH crowd was present, but those on the con committee were too busy to approach Rosemary, from all appearances, and the other CASH members she recognized seemed to slink agilely away when they saw her coming. Rosemary felt touched, rather than angry. It was obviously their way of respecting her loss, she decided. When apologies were inadequate, avoidance was really the proper behavior. She felt as if she might have misjudged the CASH members, because if they really were pros in disguise as fans, they wouldn't demonstrate such niceties of behavior.

The one problem was their room. They weren't in it very much, because of the urge to be circulating through the lobbies and to mingle in the throngs waiting for the elevators that never came. But when they were there, Rosemary was worried by the silence on the part of the room to their right as you entered their room. The hotel was so crowded that some congoers had been forced to stay at the Y three blocks down the street, unless they were lying about their finances. Rosemary thought she detected a low rumble of measured voices through the wall from the neighboring room on several occasions. This worried her, because fans never utilized such calm tones at a con, and if these were mundanes, they were sure to complain about the fannish noises that originated occasionally from the room occupied by Rosemary and Joe. But she never spotted anyone leaving

the neighboring room and the only person she ever saw about to enter it was Joe. He had been quite embarrassed, explaining that he'd somehow confused it for their own room and it was a good thing Rosemary had come down the hall when she did or he might have complained to the desk about a jammed lock which refused to accept his key.

Rosemary told the real faans that she didn't think she'd ever produce another fanzine, after losing her first. The experience had caused her to realize all sorts of harsh truths about the nature of the real world. She orated quite lyrically about the contrast between the ideal world of the imagination and the impracticality of attempting to embody it in material things like mimeograph paper and ink. She felt that she might even write a fanzine article on this topic as soon as she figured out why other fans created fanzines in the face of this obstacle.

It might have been too much meditation on the matter that gave Rosemary the severe headache on their third night at the con. They planned to leave about noon the next day, and Rosemary had fully intended to stay up all night, on the assumption that she could catch up on the lost sleep on the way home. But it wasn't long after midnight when she realized that she wasn't going to make it. Joe was nowhere in sight, so she couldn't tell him she'd had it. She said a few goodbyes to the fans who would leave early in the morning, was fortunate enough to get an elevator in the first half-hour of waiting, and threw herself on the bed in the dark room, too tired to take off anything except her shoes.

But Rosemary couldn't sleep. The voices were just audible from the next room, not loud enough to disturb her as noise, but audible enough to set her to puzzling all over again about the occupants. Then the pattern of sound changed. Rosemary half-heard, half-felt the vibration of two little thumps, followed instantly by a sort of scurrying noise, a single voice raised above the others that might have been exclaiming, "Ah!" and after that the more subdued rumble of many voices again. The whole cycle repeated itself at intervals of perhaps two minutes.

Even though it wasn't loud, its regularity began to have the effect of a dripping faucet on Rosemary's barely healed nerves. I'm being silly, she told herself, when I get this odd feeling that all this has something to do with me. When I hear that thump, it's as if someone were nudging me the way one pickpocket does to divert your attention away from the other one making the grab. No, it's not like a nudge, either, she meditated, it's more as if they were tapping a nail deeper into my palm. Like the day I squeezed the staples we were never able to use....

Rosemary sat bolt upright. The thumps were coming from a stapler. She was sure of it, even though she'd never heard a stapler in operation in an adjoining hotel room. Joe had almost entered that room and maybe he had the right key and would have gone in if she hadn't come up. A fanzine was being produced in there and its stapling wouldn't have any effect on Rosemary unless it was her fanzine.

"They've stolen my fanzine!" Rosemary whimpered to herself. "It wasn't lost. It's been kidnaped. It's coming into the world and they weren't going to let me know. Joe's in on it somehow. There must be a bunch of CASH members in there. My god, maybe they didn't think it was good enough for anything but a postmailing!"

Still shoeless, Rosemary tiptoed out of her room. The hall was empty, and dim in this area. Noiselessly, Rosemary crept to the door of the next room, looking for a keyhole to peer through. It

was keyholeless, after the custom of hotel doors, but there was a thin sliver of light at the bottom where the door made a poor fit with the threshold. Rosemary first squatted, then lay flat, trying to get one eye close enough to the gap to see something. Just before her eye began to water from overexertion, Rosemary thought she saw a forest of low-lying, thickly clustered trees, which suddenly turned into the pile of the rug just inside the door, backlit from a light somewhere inside. Nothing else was visible.

Rosemary whimpered again, a noise that was halfway between fury and despair, and pulled herself to her feet with the help of the door-knob. Just before she was totally vertical, her hand turned the knob a trifle, the door swung open, and she tumbled offbalance into a heap in the room.

The room was empty, obviously part of a suite instead of a single room. Rosemary picked herself up, peered suspiciously behind the chairs, table and sofa, and found nobody hiding. The noises were louder, behind a closed door at the other end of the room. She closed noiselessly the door to the hall, pressed herself flat against a wall, and began melodramatically to slide toward the closed door, one remote corner of her mind chiding her for such behavior when nobody could possibly see it.

Rosemary listened to one cycle of the thump-ah-voices, her palms as moist with perspiration as if blood were flowing. Just as the next thumps sounded, Rosemary with perfect timing swung the interior door open a little and crept through.

The room was packed with people, crowded into a semi-circle around a small open area in one corner. One member of the crowd was just darting into the open area and grabbing at what another person was pulling from the biggest stapler Rosemary had ever seen. He said "Ah!" as he grasped it, clutched it to his chest with one hand, and slipped back into the crowd with the other hand over his hip pocket where a wallet bulged. Rosemary saw what he'd grabbed for only a second or two, but that was enough. It wasn't her fanzine after all. It was nothing but a prozine.

The relief was too great for Rosemary to prevent the "Whew!" that started in her subconscious, gathered momentum in her conscious mind, and drove most of the air from her lungs. Her exclamation silenced the room, as if by magic. Everyone froze after turning to stare at her. Half of the people were holding copies of the prozine and she could see a few stacks of unassembled sheets in the corner near the stapler. She recognized nobody except a few CASH members, and thought there wasn't another fan in the room until a tall person stirred into motion, breaking the spell, and came to her. It was Joe.

"Rosemary! You'll get sick barefooted. You'd better go back to our room." He put his big hand on the small of her back, as if to start her in the proper direction. She slapped it hard and the prozine fluttered to the carpet. Rosemary kicked it halfway across the room. It fell with its front cover visible, a garishly colored illustration of a harassed-looking man and woman in what appeared to be a spaceship cabin, with several arms and legs floating in free fall. The prozine's name was plastered over the top third of the cover: PLANET.

"It's as much yours as it is ours," an unknown man said as he gathered it up, smoothed its fluttered pages, and held it out to Rosemary. "Just look at it. Did you ever dream you'd create something like this instead of a stupid little fanzine?"

Rosemary grabbed the prozine and tried to rip it in two halves with her bare hands. She failed and started to bawl. "I guess you haven't met Freddie Frecombe, Rosemary. He was a real big help to me with the rewriting I had to do. You know, just to stretch out your ideas and make them interesting to everyone, not just to a few faans."

"Within every faan, there's a pro," Freddie pronounced solemnly. "But there's a bigger pro in you than in most faans, Rosemary. You mustn't feel the wrong way about this. It's just the same as forcing a bright child who hates school to go to his classes so he can make something of himself."

The other words on the front cover blurred and melted their way through Rosemary's tears. "'Unhand That Stowaway!' Oh, Joe, how could you?"

"A good, snappy title wins customers," Joe said. "Just look inside, Rosey. Here's 'Tomb Doom Boom', all about how Egyptology is going to thrive because of what you've figured out about mummies and a special kind of reincarnation. 'Marlowe Was Dead, To Begin With'---just the first instalment, of course, since your literary murder story's going to run to maybe seventy-five thousand words by the time it's finished. And I think this one's my favorite, 'The Stream Time'."

"That's unethical!" Rosemary yelled at him. "You can't saddle on me a story I never even gave anyone the idea for. I wasn't going to put anything like that in Planet of the Apas."

It popped out of your typewriter during that one-shot session, right at the climax. You'd talked the idea over with me a long time ago. Remember, about the scientists who prove that we're all on a probability world created when the future sent someone far back into the past, everything here is different from the real basic world, and now our time is about to flow into the real world because it's reached the point where the trip through time started and everyone is affected differently trying to prepare for the changes...."

Rosemary hiccupped and looked helplessly around the room. Most of its occupants were ignoring her, cooing over the freshly stapled copies of Planet or jotting lots of figures on little pads of paper, a few of them inspecting their wallets.

"These are just advance copies," Freddie explained. "We put them together by hand. We were going to surprise you when the regular run came off the presses. Look here, your name's on the contents page as associate editor and you get half of all the profits less ten per cent agent fees."

"Five per cent. Not one penny more," Rosemary said. "And I'll sue if you don't make me both associate and consulting editor." She made another futile effort to tear asunder the prozine. Then she looked again at the CASH members, happily leafing through the magazines and adding up their rows of figures. "You'll have to give me all the originals of the covers and interior artwork, too. And I'm still going to publish fanzines."

"Of course," Joe said. "Why, I'll order a mimeo as soon as we get home."

"Well, there's no hurry about that. It's going to be a long time before I feel able to trust any faan again and I wouldn't publish for a faan I couldn't trust. I hate pros and prozines. But I might as well think up some more story ideas while I'm waiting to get faanish again." Rosemary smoothed the abraded spot on the front cover that her fingernails had dug and made a little cooing sound.

Hagerstown Journal

July 28--I stood there helpless in the utmost blackness, surrounded by science fiction's past four decades and awaiting the wall of flame that could incinerate me in seconds. Is this to be the climax of my fannish career? was the only thought that flashed through my mind. The evening had started mildly enough with a normal sort of hot summer day at the office and lots of idle chatter with this and that person about the chances of a storm breaking the heat. I'd been sitting in the front room, listening to a baseball game from the radio in what would be the dining room if there were ever anything edible in the house, when thunder rolled somewhere and I happily compared today's FM advantages with my youth when baseball couldn't be heard on many summer nights because of static on the AM stations. A moment later, it was wham pow sock and several things too violent to be used on the Batman episodes on television. All hell broke loose in the heavens around the house, it started to rain so hard that the flashes of lightning were hardly visible through the downpour, and finally a climactic clap of thunder followed by a crashing sound. I started to get up to see if the other half of the house was still there when there was a stupendous crack that must have deafened me totally for a moment because I couldn't hear the thunder. The control box for the television antenna rotator lay partly at my feet. I got up to look at what was still on the television set fifteen feet away and found the little doodad which divides the leadin to the UHF and VHF terminals of the television set also split into several pieces scattered over the dining room floor. I could hear partially again by now, felt a little dizzy, and realized that the house had been hit by lightning. Lights in the house were still on but streetlights were dark outdoors and I could barely see what had caused the crash just before my own thunderbolt: the giant tree across the street had been struck by another flash of lightning and had dropped dead atop the nearest house, inflicting massive harm to the spouting and stucco and windows in its final agonies. It seemed silly to expect my television set to operate after that, but I turned it on and it gave good sound and a fuzzy picture so only the antenna must have been damaged. But my Hallicrafters AM-short wave radio which hadn't been turned on when the lightning struck refused to show any sign of life. I checked the rest of the house, smelling no smoke, gradually hearing more clearly the excited voices of people who'd rushed to the felled tree, and found no other evidence of damage in my place except on the attic where the cover plate of the light switch had been blown off and thrown part-way across the floor. The rain had let up by now, and I established visual communication with the house from outdoors. The antenna had an odd appearance, and I wondered how I was going to explain this to the insurance company that had just paid a month ago to have it installed after the previous one had blown down in a windstorm. The remainder of the house appeared no worse off than it usually does, so I decided that there was nothing to be done tonight about repairs and in the morning I could start calling repair people. A couple of hours later, the night had cleared beautifully, the crowd had lost interest in the wooden cadaver, and except for the lack of streetlight, it was a normal summer night in Hagerstown again. But I was still a smidgin uneasy, recalling anecdotes about electrical fires that smoulder in walls for hours before they get worse. So I gave the interior of the house one more good looking-over before going to

bed. I took particular pains to sniff for smoke and palpitate the insulation for heat on the attic, out of respect for the Bob Silverberg experience. At that moment, the light went off. There wasn't even a hint of light coming through the two tiny attic windows. I had no flashlight with me, and even if I'd been carrying matches, I wouldn't have dared to strike one in the midst of all those magazines, books, correspondence, and music piled around me. The blackout had come without warning and I wasn't quite sure where I was in relation to the stairs. They are steep attic stairs, they have only the frailest of guard rail, and if I took a false step I might tumble ten or twelve feet and nobody would come to help me until they realized at the office that I hadn't come to work and hadn't called in sick, about eighteen hours from now. And if the light had gone out because there was a fire in the wiring here on the attic, that fire might become the flaming variety any instant and I probably would die quickly. Even if I could get out the small, high windows in time, one was forty feet above a concrete sidewalk and the other thirty feet above a slanting porch roof. There wasn't a chance in ten thousand I could attract anyone's attention by yelling at that hour. If anyone in the audience ever played red light as a child, he might understand what I mean when I say that I took about two hundred baby steps in a cautious rush toward the general direction of the stairway. I found it without mishap, felt my way down the stairs, and discovered the rest of the house in darkness but the radio plugged into an outlet in the dining room still playing. A tiny fat man came with gratifying promptness from the power company. He discovered why I couldn't locate a bad fuse: the one that had blown was in the ceiling of the back porch, instead of in the fuse box where all such things should live. The lightning had probably inflicted fatal injuries but its death throes had lasted several hours, he conjectured. I almost didn't get a loc written that night, in all the excitement. Next morning, I had no hot water. I heat it with the oil burner in the summer, and that refused to respond to stimuli. The service man found that the control box had been ruined by the lightning and put in a new one. The day after that, I emerged from a bathroom session of moderate length and found the remainder of the house at 98° and every radiator hotter than they ever become in zero weather; weeks later, we still don't know what causes this to happen periodically. The new antenna rotator control box still wouldn't turn the antenna and I spent most of the summer waiting for service on the antenna itself. I found either spots of blood or very dark wax on my pillow the first two mornings after the thunderbolt, leading me to wonder if an eardrum ruptured or something else happened inside that ear; but hearing seems to be back to normal. About three weeks after the storm, I discovered another effect: the doorbell wouldn't operate, accounting for the mysterious scarcity of people ringing the doorbell during all this time. In any event, it's much brighter and the air is considerably fresher around 423 Summit Avenue now. They won't have another tree of those dimensions across the street for at least a half-century, and until then I can enjoy the gap the old one has left.

July 6--The big, burly man with the scowl on his face strode into the courthouse, gun dangling from holster. People stood aside as he headed toward the second floor, a steely glow of resolve in his slate-grey eyes. He passed the snack bar without giving it a glance, an unprecedented behavior for any courthouse visitor. He pushed his way into the county commissioners' office. The girls on

duty there froze in mid-motion. He stalked to the counter, threw one look of utter disgust at them, drew, and slammed the six-shooter onto the counter. "Ah'm turnin' in mah gun," he said and strode out. We had just lost our dogcatcher. The SPCA has always been a group in a twilight zone here, supported partly by private funds, partly by the county. For years it had been bedeviled by lack of a first-rate dogcatcher. The good ones refused to work longer than eight hours per day, leading to problems in the summer when a stray animal dropped dead on someone's lawn just after quitting time on a Saturday, with nobody to retrieve it until Monday morning. The SPCA shelter has been inadequate, too, in location and size, but there has never been enough money to build a new one, and besides, the organization has promised perpetual care for the tombstones which the owners of deceased pets had been promised when part of the SPCA property was converted into an animal cemetery, making it inconvenient to sell the whole works. Things came to a head when county authorities absentmindedly passed an ordinance making it legal for the dogcatcher to pick up licensed animals running at large throughout the county; previously, only the unlicensed ones had been vulnerable and now the work load was multiplied and who would do it? The elderly maiden lady who has run the SPCA administratively for many decades was near despair when a burly man of much experience in outdoor life announced himself available and willing to take over the whole mess. For the first time, the SPCA activities were put on a masculine footing. The new dogcatcher announced that he intended to carry a gun at all times because you never knew when someone might give an argument when you came to haul away the chihuahua he'd been allowing to run wild. The new dogcatcher promised to answer every call for help from the public, drawing the line only at dead pigeons. He bought himself uniforms, another innovation. Moreover, he sent away for information on how he could do his part toward cutting down air pollution. He calculated that the incinerator which disposed of small bodies was playing a calculable part in worsening the local atmosphere. Just about the time he decided that a hypodermic would be more humane than gas for destroying unwanted pets, his problems began. County authorities began to get complaints from residents of trailer courts. The dogcatcher, it appears, detested cats. He had mounted a large bullhorn on his station wagon and was roaming the county, roaring out warnings every time he approached trailers that everyone should get their cats indoors immediately because he intended to round them up. Moreover, a controversy enveloped the little old lady at the head of the organization, and it was his fault. He'd read somewhere of a newly deceased wealthy man whose will provided large sums for animal organizations. The dogcatcher was certain that he could obtain the sum needed to build new headquarters and kennels and buy hypodermics but when he filled out the application, he made a discovery. The bequeathed funds were available only to corporations, not informal groups, and the local SPCA's corporation had been allowed to lapse in 1942. In vain did the lady explain that it was just a detail she meant to get around to when she had a bit of spare time. The dogcatcher demanded the bookkeeping records and uttered newspaper threats about skullduggery in the SPCA, threats that were hard to understand since it didn't make any charge for services and didn't have enough income to be worth falsification of the records. When the directors wouldn't let him have the books, he took them anyway, announced his intention to turn them over to certified public accountants, and threw the revolver down on the counter. He had quit.

He's a good man, but not quite a Gary Cooper or a John Wayne, and Hagerstown had licked him, fair and square.

August 21--Several fans have thanked me for mentioning them in All Our Yesterdays, on the grounds that this represents their sole mention between hard covers. So it's only fitting that I should feel grateful over the way Summit Avenue has been immortalized in a new book about old things. FAPA has a few transit fans, but most members are probably unaware of the existence of a new volume entitled Blue Ridge Trolley, by Herbert H. Harwood, Jr. It's the story of the Hagerstown & Frederick Railway, the official name for the trolley car system that once thrived in this part of Maryland. The trolley car line ran right past my present home, although it had vanished by the time I moved out here. I've never been an all-out trolley enthusiast, in the sense of traveling around to look at remaining trolleys and collecting mementoes of their past, but they're quite closely linked with my Hagerstown past. Even though I have some of the basic information contained in this new book, as it appeared in trolley fanzines, I invested in the new volume for its wonderful quantity of pictures and extreme documentation of almost anything anyone might want to know about the area's trolley system. I'm not mentioned in this volume, as I am in James Murfin's history of the Battle of Antietam, Gleam of Bayonets (I hasten to point out that in keeping with my lifelong pacifism, the reference to me is as a civilian, not one of the principals), but it contains Summit Avenue pictures taken not far from my home and a map that would even be helpful to motorists today, for its generous size and perfect reproduction. The book pinpoints the exact date of one of my most vivid early memories: the night I screamed unmercifully smack in the middle of Public Square upon learning that the West Washington Street trolley was being replaced by a bus. I can still remember my father trying to explain to bystanders that he hadn't done a thing to me except tell me to say goodbye to the old trolley. This must have been the first activity of the sense of nostalgia that has grown so alarmingly in recent years. It was in August, 1927, and I was still months away from my fifth birthday. Blue Ridge Trolley does a fine job of describing the more exciting events in the area trolley history. Just like the Apollo program, the beginnings of the Hagerstown & Frederick Railway were fraught with peril and mishap. The very first link completed, between Frederick and Braddock Heights, was only in its second day of full operation when a 110-passenger load proved a trifle too strenuous for the brakes on the 48-seater going down Braddock Mountain. It was out of control for half of the descent, eventually ending in a meadow after going straight through a utility pole without even slowing down. Only one person was killed and Harwood doesn't mention anyone suggesting that the money spent on trolley cars would be better given to the poor. There's the faintest of chances that my picture is in the book. I was aboard the final passenger run on the H&F, on a cold February day in 1954, and the photograph of ceremonies on that occasion on page 123 might possibly show me on the far left. But the photographer's back is turned, making it impossible to be sure, and the camera is invisible, which probably wouldn't be so if he were using the big Graphic I took along that day. The curious thing about the trolley age is that it lasted longer than the bus age that succeeded it, in a sense. The trolley thrived for nearly four decades around here and existed for nearly sixty years. The buses that began to replace the trolleys for intra-city service here stopped running last spring,

after little more than forty years' operation. The inter-city bus usurpation has been declining for the past quarter-century, since the local company sold out to Greyhound and the Greyhounds preferred superhighway routings that skip most of the small towns in the area. So now it's the private auto and I wouldn't want to bet that it has as many years ahead of it in its present form as either the trolleys or the buses survived.

August 13--One of the less-publicized methods of taking a trip into the past involves surrounding yourself with a batch of old city directories in a town you know well. They aren't illustrated but the endless succession of names and addresses can conjure up to the mind people and events that seemed hopelessly lost in the past. But I wasn't really delving into the public library's collection of Hagerstown city directories for old times' sake. With occasional backslidings into neighborhoods I wanted to try to remember better, I was striving to discover when Hagerstown segregated its street names. Maybe the same thing has happened in many small towns, but I'm not aware of any other community that did as thorough a job of changing the names of Hagerstown streets so the bigots wouldn't have the same street name in their addresses as the black people. Hagerstown's Negro population has not grown through the years as the white population has; it has held fairly steady around 2,000 people for many decades while the white population has risen from 20,000 or thereabouts to close to 50,000. Census figures don't agree with this growth, but that's the accident of unchanging city limits. Hagerstown didn't get its first city directory until late in the 19th century, but it confirmed what I'd suspected: twenty years after the Civil War, each street running through the Negro section had the same name throughout its length. It was about 1895 that it started: one of the east-west streets in what was then the northern edge of town had suddenly acquired a different name in its white blocks while retaining its old name through the black neighborhood. It took forty years for the process to be completed, street by street, until today the street name segregation is complete. Summit Avenue is a special case. It is an extension of one of Hagerstown's main north-south streets. About 1890, what was called the Surrey Development became the first big new subdivision in Hagerstown's history, that north-south street was extended to serve all these new houses, but the new section of the street was called Summit Avenue from the point where it began, while the old section retained the name the town's founder had given it, Jonathan Street. A few years later, the bigots were at work, and the two blocks of Jonathan Street nearest Summit Avenue had had their name changed to conform. One more block which contained mostly businesses, even though it was in the white section, continued to be Jonathan Street until the 1930's, when it too switched. There has been agitation in recent years to change back or to choose entirely new names for the streets in question, to get rid of the connotations of this peculiar form of placename segregation and to make life easier for strangers to Hagerstown who can't understand why a street only five or six blocks long needs to have two separate names. Many and wondrous are the objections that have been raised. "It's too difficult from the legal standpoint," they say, forgetting that South Boulevard was turned into Wilson Boulevard when the city decided that the honors the nation had heaped upon a late president were not yet sufficient. "Businesses will have to order new stationery," others explain, unmindful of the fact that this hasn't prevented the telephone company from changing numbers with decimating effects on letter-

heads twice in the past two decades, once to serve the new dial system, then to remove the letters and replace them by numbers symbolizing exchanges. "But Jonathan was the founder's first name. You mean those people want to change the street he named to something else?" George Orwell should have seen Hagerstown before he died.

August 28--Fandom has many anomalies, and not the least of them is its preoccupation with the future's wonders and its occasional resemblances to the distant past in such things as speed of communication. I've missed an occasional worldcon in my time, and every time I fail to get to one, I wonder how many weeks or months it'll be until I get some real information on what happened at it, just as people in the old days waited many weeks to discover that a war had been won or lost by the nation a long while ago. With customary disdain for logic, the most distant worldcon of them all has had some of its major happenings known in Hagerstown with the utmost speed this year. I received a sort of preview of the Heicon as early as August 25, in the form of an enormous postal card from Reichenbach in East Germany. Herbert Haussler, the pioneer German fan, lives there and Forry Ackerman, one of his early fan contacts, had paid him a visit. "I've just finished reading your letter here in Reichenbach where I've been having a Utopianly fannish few days with my s.f. penpal of 35 years!" Forry wrote. "It is a great thrill to discuss 'it all' in Esperanto and to see his many mind-boggling treasures--and also to meet some bright new boys who are in about the same starved position as we were at the beginning. My very best to you always." Herbert also appended a message: "I still am thinking to be in a dreamland and fear the moment I wake up. Forry is indeed here in flesh and blood. He was here and left for continue their marvelous voyage. In a soon following letter more details." The other side of the card shows the Gultzschatal bridge near Netzsckau in Vogtland, a region whose landscape is so like western Maryland that I would probably be quite content to live there, from the scenic standpoint. A couple of days later arrived a postal card that was all the more welcome for the fact that two of its three signers are fans with whom I've had scant contact, and their thoughtfulness touched me deeply: Banks Mebane is practically an old neighbor but Dannie Plachta and Fred Prophet went over and above the call of duty to think of such a little-known-personally fan. I'm not sure which of them had the inspiration to put an umlaut over each vowel capable of sustaining the decoration in my address, but it looks most impressive. The card came from Munich, where the postal people apparently fixed up for fandom a special cancellation stamp which speaks of the city's celebrated beer. Most unexpected of all was the enlightenment another batch of fans I don't know at all well, the New Orleans group, gave me about the Hugo winners. I'd assumed that I might hear who won when the Locus and Focal Point publishers returned to the United States and regained their strength, but on the phenomenally early date of August 28 I received an issue of NOSFAN bearing the word, with the explanation: "You are a fan who should know the Hugo winners and we tried to get 'em." That's less than 96 hours after the awards banquet, a phenomenal achievement. It was also nice to see that many of the Hugo winners had received my own vote, although I'd abstained from the novella and short story categories for lack of sufficient reading. Someday, someone ought to create a special award for Mrs. LeGuin as author of the only science fiction novel that no reviewer has disliked. I felt particularly good about its Hugo, because she is little known in fandom as a person. That's a handicap.

The Worst of Martin

We admit that my first attempt at printing wasn't by any stretch of the imagination, a pleasing typographical masterpiece. It contained no erudite or fetching thoughts; still, we think it was worth more than one lonely card of recognition. On second thought, we may waive that card for its condescending sender was really trying to sell us something. We have one consolation in our meditations of publishing failure: Jaroslav Chmelicek. 'True genius,' blurbs the esthetic Chem, in the Fall issue of the ever welcome Mountain Trails, 'remains unrecognized until death breaks the thread of life.' Beautiful thought. And now let us leap blithely to the November Eisege-sis. 'A genius,' burps the unrestrained Jaro, 'is only honored after he expires.' We perspire at these heights; and wonder why this inspiring reverie was reworded for the respective publishers. Practically above Chem's 'Barks of Philosophy' in MT, Mr. Adams has printed, amusingly under the circumstances: 'All articles must be original and previously unpublished.' Hem...Sabotage in the mob.

The title page is FOUR colors--gold, green, red, and black--and the rest, 19 pages, are red and green. Truly, Benton Wetzel made a 'printers envy' of his Christmas Couleur de Rose...The inevitable Edkins is strongly in favor of raising the NAPA dues to \$2 a year; but after days of mathematical juggling I'm still unable to decipher how the increased sum would equal 'One and 8-10 cents per day.' ('4-5' would have been better anyway--). .0054794520547 ad infinitum, is what I get, a fraction over a half a cent. But this only makes Mr. Edkins's point a mite stronger. '--Anyone who boggles over paying a half cent per day for the privilege of membership is either too fond of his pennies or not fond enough aj.' I'm certain all worthwhile members can afford that infinitesimal sum. Otherwise they wouldn't be 'worthwhile,' for 'worth' and strength in aj is based on activity, and all activity costs money. Raised dues might help weed out some of the unknown 'bundle collectors;' an excellent idea. Why should printing members have to send over a hundred of their laboriously produced papers to members they shall never meet or hear from. No wonder there's 'closed lists.' By all means raise the dues to \$2 a year. Each group should seriously consider raising their dues for the 'weed out' possibility. Talking about 'deadwood,' why all this desire for recruits? My mind wavers to an extreme. Let's not recruit, let's get rid of the unnecessary members...The UAPA has about 500 constituents--haven't seen a bundle since God knows when. NAPA about 300--a big bundle had 19 papers recently. AAPA 200--23 papers last month. BAPA 150--continuous activity by a good third. And now the king of all, the Fantasy APA--limited to 50; the last bundle contained exactly 50 papers. Now there's activity. Have you noticed, as the quota decreases publishing activity increases? Let us not be too hasty about recruiting. Let us make entrance requirements stiffer. And let us start a universal drive to rid our crowded ranks of the hundreds of unknown 'bundle collectors.' Let us change our cry to: 'Come, chum, resign, you ain't doin' nothing'!!

Ah! The Mocking Bird--with its page layout mixed up twice. Bianchi, couldn't we have one "Bronx-Cheer," just one for a start, without sad looking cuts and more regrettable half-tones? Gee, fruit, your prose is smooth reading...Gad! what is that on page three?

Congrat.: A & J C on J (8 lbs. 4 oz.) G Jr.

(From the Spring, 1939, issue of The Contributor, by Ed Martin)