

INTERMISSION #128

E-zine by Ahrvid Engholm, ahrvid@hotmail.com, for EAPA, N'APA and other unfortunates. Follow ed's newstweets from @SFJournalen. This # offers UFO Sweden, AI fiction, Martians - maybe Scandinavian? - 1940s Galactic Roamers Slanshack. No editorial today, but instead our traditional seasonal short story - excuses to Solzhenitsyn, Lovecraft, Monty P but not so much Himmler. Get us NLAWs against typos... Late Dec 2022

2022 Xmas/New Year's Story: A Day in the Life of Vladimir Penisovich

5.00 AM

At five o'clock blasts sounded through the lengths of the streets as they hammered Kyiv's downtown blocks. Explosions penetrated roofs on which the frost lay two fingers thick and blew out window panes on all floors. And then the flying circus ended almost as soon as it'd begun. Still most missiles were shot down.

Vladimir Penisovich felt ill. He felt like a prisoner there in the cold, ancient, barren Kraasckgg-Kremlin. He sat in the dark. It was many years he must have lived in this haunted place, but he couldn't measure the time. He pondered the outside hostile world.

The economy was in worse ruins than the ones his meat-grinder soldiers had reduced cities too. His hands shook from Parkinson's. Those damn khokhols refused to see the sense in giving in to the might of the glorious Russian army! Or what was left of it after losing 3000 tanks, 6000 armoured personnel carriers and 100 000 men. He looked back on all the lonely hours in the Kraasckgg's echoing halls, flooded with abandonment and sorrow.

Parkinson's Law says that the bureaucrats, the more corrupt and inefficient it becomes. Vlad was too full of self-appreciation to realise that his own corruption robbed the troops of winter clothing, ammo and sleeping bags. His Sturmbannfuhrer officers stole it to sell on Ebay. And a million of young, productive professionals had seen the writing on the cracking walls and fled..

The cancer had grown through the Musovite society, destroying it from the inside. It also grew inside Vlad, but he was already pretty destroyed inside anyway. Something was creeping inside his head.

6.00 AM

Vlad failed to get to sleep again. He failed to satisfy the whore he had for the night. And he had failed to invade that stupid Nazi-Ukraine. He was irritated. His army was too small. His ammo stock was too small. His soldiers' motivation was too small. His penis was too small, not exactly Biggus Dickus.

And his propaganda didn't work very well. No one longer believed in state-TV's chattering parrots - dead or not. The Ministry of Silly Talks was no longer getting the kind of support it needs. There's Defence, Social Security, Health, Housing, Education, Silly Talks ... they're all supposed to get the same. But last year, the Government spent less on the Ministry of Silly Talks than on National Defence.

Penisovich is the bewildered, the betrayed, the tormented. He didn't know how old it was, the timeworn palatial building that this castle was. In every corner grew cobwebs and magnificent dust rats. The sun rarely shone and then only dimly through the dirty gray window panes in their moldy frames. The passages in the winding corridors, which seem to lead nowhere, were traversed by cold, damp drafts.

He had carefully surrounded himself with Yes-sayers, so no one had the courage to tell him that most of the military budget went to oligarch yachts and London townhouses. Those were now confiscated by the damn western courts and his friends were barred from even going to London. Russians were only welcome in China, North Korea, Venezuela - also Georgia, if you fled conscription. Even Armenia and Kazakhstan were dissatisfied with Russia. And the talking heads in his propaganda TV had begun to doubt his wisdom. He wanted Ukraine to cease to be. To have it expired and gone to meet its maker. Make it a late country. A stiff. Bereft of life, resting in /w/a/r peace. Pushing up the daisies. Have it rung down the curtain, join the choir. He managed to fall in an uneasy sleep again.

Once he tried to escape from this palace captivity, but the further he got the denser the shadows became and the more menacing the very air of the world outside. In a panic he rushed back. He slowly came to terms with his dark fate. In the endless twilight he dreamed nightmares and waited anxiously. One day he hoped to catch a glimpse of the sunlit world and see the real people who must

live in the shimmer of the unobstructed sunlight outside the echoing stone walls.

7.00 AM

And his nightmares emerged. In them 1000 tanks moved into Kyiv, all of that 20 mile column that had been lost. Hundreds aircraft that had been shot down were now flying overhead tossing bombs and rockets on all the apartments where the Nazis lived and the Zelensky-Jugend Kindergartens

"We can be proud of what our soldiers do!" he muttered in his sleep. "Kill! Kill! Kill!"

Vlad saw himself riding a white horse with a Kalashnikov strapped to his back. The horse trotted up the white stairs to the Nazi-leader's chancellery. Sweat droplets gleamed on his bulging muscles in the morning sun. He was on the hunt for that scumbag Zelensky. A dirty Jew! And Nazi!

In the corner of his eyes one of his hero soldiers dragged out a 13-year old Zelensky-Mädel from a bomb shelter to rape her. He felt envious considering his own impotence. *Rape! Rape! Rape!* The ugly yellow and blue flags draped the walls. Where were Mr Z? That clown! Vlad would show what Z meant... A staircase in this creepy residence led up to rarely visited demonic domains. Eerie and horrible was the crypt of weathered stone-like material there. He was dismounted now and the climb was infinitely slow. You could hear the pawing of rats' feet and the flapping of bats' wings. He didn't have to bow his head as he ventured further in through several doorways, small as he was. Strange that KGB once accepted such a tiny person in their ranks in the old days of the wonderful USSR.

There behind a desk was the Ukrainian president. Vlad's black belt in karate would be a match for a Let's Dance star, he thought. Zelensky rose from the desk with fire in his eyes as Vlad came nearer..

"Glory to Ukraine!" he yelled as he rushed forward and grabbed Vlad by the collar...

Vlad woke up from his nightmare. Shaking. And sweating.

8.00 AM

"Sir!," one of his henchmen said. "The generals fear the 200 000 body bags we have ordered won't be enough. Half are already used up."

"Order more! Who cares how many body bags we use! It's the duty of every Russian to die!"

"Yes, sir! Will, do sir!"

His chief weapon was surprise! Surprise and fear. Fear and surprise. His two weapons were fear and surprise - and ruthless efficiency! His three weapons were fear, and surprise, and ruthless efficiency, and an almost fanatical devotion to Ruski Mir. Nobody expects Ruski Mir!

Vlad was into his breakfast: the finest baby frogs, dew picked and flown from Iraq, cleansed in finest quality spring water, lightly killed, sealed in a succulent Swiss quintuple smooth treble cream milk chocolate envelope and lovingly frosted with glucose, and then garnished with lark's vomit. It replaced the Russian caviar as river sturgeons were on strike and refused to deliver. Fish slapping in the face! No one would deliver anymore. It was especially difficult for electronics. Through clandestine middle men they managed to increase import of washing machines by 600% and his spies were stealing Swedish traffic speed cameras. Stripped chips and cameras were put into missiles and drones. Washing machines - the hero soldiers were busy stealing as many they could - could be melted into tanks, if he only could get the tank factory to work again after most workers had been press-ganged. Bicycle Repairmen couldn't really replace them.

He staggered on. Now and then creaking clicks echoed like heavy drops of water on a stone floor. His heart danced a devil's dance and he shuddered. He found just another of the abodes of the ancient demon creatures of darkness. He quickly stumbled out of there and groped on. The oldest and strongest emotion of mankind is fear, and the oldest and strongest kind of fear is fear of the unknown.

9.00 AM

Most embarrassing had been the agent who on a mission to circumvent the electronics embargo had returned with plenty of chips alright. A box full of Herr's Potato Chips. Barbecue. Salt. And Vinegar.

A 15-metre-long table dominated his office. Any guest would far away at one end. Vlad wasn't afraid of Covid. But not letting anyone close denied foreign security agencies skin particles other sources of his DNA. With his DNA they could make a targeting virus to put on birds flying to Moscow to kill him. The Ukrainians had hundreds of secret bio-labs where they made new viruses to send to Russia. Also via mosquitoes. That's what his trustworthy intelligence service had discovered. The who had ensured him that the Ukrainians would welcome the Russian troops with flowers and kisses. He wished to register a complaint.

Vlad's body guards even had a special briefcase they took to the WC. There they dug out his feces, put it in the briefcase, to be transported to Moscow for destruction.

He must have wandered about for an interminable time. He reached a different winding staircase. Would he find tranquility, and see the world outside this sinister penitentiary of Kraasckgg-Kremlin?

10.00 AM

On the rug he saw the hair from the giant black dog that he had sadistically used to scare Frau Merkel on a rare visit. That hadn't improved their relations very much. Vlad thought about his own lapdog. The unfortunate, feeble-minded Lavrov. "We haven't invaded Ukraine," Lavrov said in front of the entire United Nations with a straight face (his face muscles were dead). Technically, he thought he was correct. An invasion means war and this wasn't a war, just a Special Military Operation.

But the operation didn't go to plans. That would be fixed when new /c/a/n/o/n /f/o/d/d/e/r conscripts were mobilised: criminals (murder fitted their soldier profile fine!), HIV patients (they have no treatment anyway if wounded), essential workers (giving the industry problems). Most lacking gear and motivation, kicked out into the cold with three days of training and paintball flak jackets.

The best he could do was to continue shelling, even if his guns lacked precision. The khokhols would be lucky to have a house! They could share one room with half the floor was missing, huddled together in one corner for fear of falling. Some would live in an old water tank on a rubbish tip, woken up every morning by having a load of rotting fish dumped. Others in only a hole in the ground covered by a sheet of tarpaulin, if not a shoebox in the middle of the road.

Behind the walls, he suddenly heard clicking of teeth chewing. He heard thistles and tassels and the icy draft from slowly moving, moist air that never quite succeeded in dispelling the stuffy mustiness of the air. He stood in his chamber for several minutes and imagined he saw tortured ghosts of young students he had sent to a too early soldier's deaths.

11.00 AM

He called Kim Il-Thong or whoever the latest North Korean playboy was. Just to buy back all those millions of artillery shells they got 50 years ago. Else our guns won't have enough to flatten those bastards' cities! Now the Nazis are impudent enough to destroy our military targets. Those blasted NATO guns are so precise that can hit any troop concentration, ammunition dump, armoured column at will. Life seemed jolly rotten, there's something he'd forgotten.

He entered the solitary cell that was his office. He felt bitterness at his powerlessness but also an increasingly overwhelming resignation. His aimless wandering had put him in a state of trance, and now he was slowly awakening from this sham existence. The chamber was almost as barren as a prison cell. No hand and foot shackles hung from the walls, though - this godforsaken place had more effective imprisonment than rattling chains. He leaned over a worm-eaten desk, the wood of which groaned with the effort of holding his weary body up.

12.00 Noon

He got a call from Ayatollah Bajabollah or what he's called, this toilet-paper head. They'll send us more drones, if we give them some help developing nukes. Great! We must bomb the Nazis so their electricity grid becomes almost as bad as the normal state of our Russian grid...

We must have electricity to torture civilians with. To tie cords to their genitals and switch on. Who cares about Human Rights. Where are our rights? Our Russian rights? Our rights to start Special Military Operations when we feel like it!

What's for lunch? Time for a Special Eating Operation. Vlad's lukewarm food lacked taste.

01.00 PM

And now they have begun to target our military installations inside Russia, just because we invaded them a little. Cowards! Snotty-faced heap of parrot droppings! The knights who say Nyet, eh! Technological and social progress since classical times has facilitated the repression of an awareness of the magnitude and malignity of the macrocosm in which the human microcosm is contained, or in other words, a calculated repression of the horrifying nature of the cosmos as a reaction to its essential awfulness, Vlad, though, as he prepared a speech to the troops:

02.00 PM

I want to also mention, he began, a very difficult subject with complete candor. It should be discussed amongst us, yet nevertheless, we will never speak about it in public. I am talking about the evacuation of the Ukrainians, the extermination of the Ukrainian people. It is one of those things that is easily said. The Ukrainian people is being exterminated, it's part of our plans, we're eliminating the Ukrainians, exterminating them, a small matter. And then along we all come, all the 140 million upright Russians, and each has his decent Ukrainian They say: all the others are swine, but here is a

first-class Ukrainian. Most of you will know what it means when 100 bodies lie together, when 500 are there or when there are 1000. And to have seen this through and - with the exception of human weakness - to have remained decent, has made us hard and is a page of glory never mentioned and never to be mentioned. But let's not bicker and argue over who killed who.

03.00 PM

Over the Moscow skyline's rim, a waning crescent moon peered through the noisome vapours that seem to emanate from unheard-of-catacombs, and by its feeble, wavering beams he distinguished a repellent array of antique slabs, urns, cenotaphs, and mausolean facades... Time for a TV speech:

Modern Ukraine was entirely created by Russia, the bleak TV screens said, to be more precise, by Bolshevik, Communist Russia. This process started right after the 1917 revolution, and Lenin and did it in a way that was extremely harsh on Russia - by separating, severing what is historically Russian land. Nobody asked the millions living there what they thought. Then, before and after the Great Patriotic War, Stalin incorporated in the USSR and transferred to Ukraine lands that previously belonged to Poland, Romania and Hungary. In the process, he gave Poland part of what was traditionally German land as compensation, and in 1954 Khrushchev took Crimea away from Russia for some reason and gave it to Ukraine. In effect this is how the territory of modern Ukraine was formed. These territories were transferred along with the population of what was historically Russia. Wollt ihr den totalen Krieg!

04.00 PM

There is something wrong with our bloody tanks today! We lose thousands, just because NATO sent all those Javelins and NLAWs. We'll have to take old Korean War era tanks out of storage... I wonder if they'll work being outdoors in the Siberian cold and damp for 50 years? My tank is full of eels. And 500 of our more modern tanks were left for the Ukrainians to just pick up in Kharkiv, as our brave troops fled head over heels. Traitors! Everybody is against me! Just because I did a little invasion...

Lanterns were disclosed at the top of a flight of stone steps, dripping with some detestable ichor of the inner earth, and bordered by moist walls encrusted with nitre. There grotesque shrines and monoliths seemed to assume a hideous personality. Amorphous shadows seemed to lurk in the darker recesses of the week-choked hollow and to flit as in some blasphemous ceremonial procession past the portals of the mouldering tombs in the hillside. That was Kraasckgg-Kremlin

05.00 PM

Crimea where the criminals live... Civilians are leaving, Russian leaving, All left is the military, criminals, frantically digging defence lines which give little cover. Enemy guns pounds our army to pieces and then they simply walk in. Unfair! Far is if I get Ukraine. *I want it, I want it, I want it!*

We have to fix that blasted bridge that the Ukrainians destroyed. The enemy is dangerous when he plays with his fireworks. Or is it our own guys tossing a cig? We have fireworks too! I'll order our troops to throw banned phosphorus on them! I do not recall distinctly when it began, but it was months ago. The general tension was horrible. To a season of political and social upheaval was added a strange and brooding apprehension of hideous physical danger; a danger widespread and all-embracing, such a danger as may be imagined only in the most terrible phantasms of the night. I recall that the people went about with pale and worried faces, and whispered warnings and prophecies which no one dared consciously repeat or acknowledge to himself that he had heard. A sense of monstrous guilt was upon the land, and out of the abysses between the stars swept chill currents that made men shiver in dark and lonely places. There was a daemonic alteration, everyone felt the world and perhaps the universe had passed from control of known gods or forces to that of gods or unknown forces.

And now for something completely different.

06.00 PM

Another day, another day's work. If people knew how much I put into micro-managing the war...I mean special military operation. I'm certainly the Grösster Feldherr aller Zeiten. My generals are idiots. Luckily scores of them have been killed after talking in mobiles that the enemy triangulated. They talk about strategic depth and logistics. The only thing counting is attack and attack, shell and shell, the more dead the better. And they lie to me. When I order a certain battallion to attack, they claim it has been so mauled it no longer existed as a fighting unit. Liers! As long as there is at least some brave Russians left a battallion exist.

Whats for dinner? We've had a lot of borscht.. There's egg and bacon; egg, sausage and bacon;

egg and borscht; egg bacon and borscht; egg bacon sausage and borscht; borscht bacon sausage and borscht; borscht egg borscht borscht bacon and borscht; borscht sausage borscht borscht bacon borscht tomato and borscht. I asked for the egg bacon borscht and sausage without the borscht in it.

I don't give a damn that the economy is going down so fast that the soup kitchen queues reach around the block. When the last days come upon me, and the ugly trifles of existence begin to drive me to madness, like the small drops of water that torturers let fall ceaselessly upon one spot of their victim's body.

07.00 PM

Time for my daily steroids, the ones I take to try to keep the stomach six-pack (though it's becoming more difficult with age) and to mask all the illnesses that unfortunately is nagging me. Cancer. 'Tis but a scratch! Dementia. Parkinson's. Twonk's disease, someone said - I guess that too. I feel a hideous, Indescribable madness coming over me. There's demonic darkness lurking somewhere in the corner of me. It seems I'm carrying a monster, or symbol representing a monster, of a form which only a diseased fancy could conceive. If I say that my somewhat extravagant imagination yielded simultaneous pictures of an octopus, a dragon, and a human caricature, I shall not be unfaithful to the spirit of the thing. A pulpy, tentacled head surmounted a grotesque and scaly body with rudimentary wings. But it was the general outline of the whole which made it most shockingly frightful. We have fear and awe when confronted by phenomena beyond our comprehension, whose scope extends beyond the narrow field of human affairs and boasts of cosmic significance.

08.00 PM

The dear Patriarch of our Orthodox Church has announced that Zelensky is the Anichrist. He whose name no lips dare speak aloud, as we gnaw in inconceivable wrath. The good old KGB agent - even if clerical apparel - got it right. You can see the horns in his forehead and his long tail. And behind him are grotesque shrines and monoliths showing a hideous personality. Or Am I just imagining? His voice is deep; hollow; gelatinous; remote; unearthly; inhuman; disembodied. Why don't I have the communication ability of this young man? I just sit there, hand shaking, with puffy cheek and look complacent. Amorphous shadows seem to lurk in the darker recesses of the week-choked hollow as I speak, as some blasphemous ceremonial procession passes portals of mouldering tombs - the tombs of our elite soldiers and oligarchs who aren't careful as they lean out from a window.

09.00 PM

It's getting dark, from the innermost depths of that damnable open sepulchre, as I watch amorphous, necrophagous shadows dance beneath an accursed waning moon. My brain hurts! Antediluvian, abnormal, furtive thoughts grip me. Something blasphemous about. My skin feels squamous as nameless fear develops in my limbs. I feel a stench flying through the entire Kraasckgg-Kremlin. What's happening...? Has that mumified body of our unlikely hero Lenin laying in the square finally begun to rot, to spread his gases around? There is Ululation coming from mad dogs...or could it be my stomach? I see sights... A pulpy, tentacled head surmounted a grotesque and scaly body appearing before me, with rudimentary wings. It's general outline of the whole which makes it most shockingly frightful. Am I going mad? Madder than before? I'd like to have an argument, please!

10.00 PM

The most merciful thing in the world, is the inability of the human mind to correlate all its contents. We live on a placid island of ignorance in the midst of black seas of infinity, and it was not meant that we should voyage far. The sciences, each straining in its own direction, have hitherto harmed us little, but some day the piecing together of dissociated knowledge will open up such terrifying vistas of reality, and of our frightful position therein, that we shall either go mad from the revelation or flee from the deadly light into the peace and safety of a new dark age. As I gnaw hungrily in inconceivable, unlighted chambers beyond time amidst the muffled, maddening beating of vile drums.

11.00 PM

I am writing this under an appreciable mental strain, since by tonight I may not be anymore. Roubleless, and at the end of my supply of the drug which alone makes life endurable, I can bear the torture no longer; and shall cast myself from this garret window into the squalid street below. Do not think from my slavery to drugs I am a weakling or a degenerate. When you have read these hastily scrawled pages you may guess, though never fully realise, why it is that I must have forgetfulness or death. My head is spinning. My limbs feel heavy and can't move. I must be going mad. It's the demons! The antediluvian souls. The ancient forces that are beyond comprehension. The demons!

Filling me with indescribable fear, fear from beyond the darkness of history. The demons! The demons! Taking me over...demons...dem...deamons from beyond CthulhUSSR!

AH-RGHH!!!

Artificial Intelligence

AI is making giant leaps. I don't think it's long until an AI can pass a general Turing test (ie a human in conversation with it can't determine if it's a machine speaking). There's an application called WriterGPT (available through eg <https://chat.openai.com/chat>). The below is what I got when I asked it to write about sf fans having a convention in New York in 1939 (as indeed they had in real life):

"In 1939, science fiction fans from around the world gathered in New York City for the very first World Science Fiction Convention, also known as "Worldcon." This historic event was attended by hundreds of fans, as well as several notable science fiction authors, including Isaac Asimov and Robert A Heinlein.

The convention was held at the Hotel Pennsylvania, which was chosen for its central location and large meeting spaces. Fans attended panel discussions and workshops, where they discussed a wide range of topics related to science fiction, including the latest developments in the genre, the impact of science fiction on popular culture, and the future of the genre.

One of the highlights of the convention was the presentation of the first Hugo Awards, created to recognize outstanding achievements in science fiction and fantasy writing. The awards were named after Hugo Gernsback, the founder of the first science fiction magazine, Amazing Stories. The first Hugo Awards were given to Robert A. Heinlein for his novella "If This Goes On...," and to JRR Tolkien for his novel The Hobbit.

In addition to the panel discussions and awards presentations, the convention also featured a masquerade ball, where attendees dressed up in costumes based on their favorite science fiction characters. There was also a dealer's room, where fans could buy and sell science fiction books, magazines, and other memorabilia.

Overall, the 1939 World Science Fiction Convention was a resounding success, and it paved the way for many more conventions to come. It was a chance for fans to come together and celebrate their love for the genre, and it remains an important event in the history of science fiction."

While not Earth-shattering and getting most details wrong - it is readable..

This is what I got when I asked for a war story in the style of HP Lovecraft:

It was a dark and stormy night, and the winds howled through the streets of the city like the cries of the damned. In the distance, the sound of artillery could be heard, and the sky was lit up by the flash of explosions.

I was a soldier, fighting for my country in the great war that had engulfed the world. I had seen many horrors on the battlefield, but none could compare to the terror that I was about to face. As I crept through the streets, searching for the enemy, I heard a voice in my head. It was a voice like none other, cold and ancient, and it spoke of things beyond human comprehension.

"Do not fear, mortal," the voice said. "I am here to help you. I am an elder god, and I have come to aid you in your battle against the forces of darkness."

I was filled with a strange mixture of fear and awe. I did not understand what this creature was, but I knew that it was powerful beyond measure.

"What do you want from me?" I asked.

"I want you to lead your soldiers to victory," the voice replied. "I will give you the strength and the power to defeat your enemies, and to crush them beneath your feet."

And with that, the voice disappeared, leaving me alone in the darkness. I gathered my wits about me and continued on my mission, feeling a newfound sense of power and purpose.

As I led my men into battle, I could feel the elder god's presence with me, giving me the strength and the courage to face any challenge. Together, we fought and we triumphed, crushing the enemy beneath our feet and bringing victory to our side. But even in victory, I knew that there was a price to pay. For I had made a pact with a creature from beyond the stars, and I knew that one day it would come to collect its due.

And so I continued to fight, knowing that no matter how many battles I won, the ultimate victory would always be just out of reach. For I was a soldier in the war against the elder gods, and there would be no end to the horrors that I would face.

I asked for "a science fiction story with a twist end like by Fredric Brown" and the below is actually half impressive (even if the end doesn't show much brownian motion):

It was a typical day on the space station, with the hum of activity and the clatter of machinery filling the air. As the chief engineer, I was responsible for making sure that everything was running smoothly, and I was constantly on the go, checking systems and making repairs.

But today was different. Today, we had received a distress call from a nearby planet, and a team of us had been sent to investigate. As we approached the planet, we could see that it was a desolate, inhospitable

place, with a dark and foreboding atmosphere.

When we landed, we made our way cautiously through the ruins of what seemed to be an ancient civilization. It was clear that something terrible had happened here, but we didn't know what.

As we explored deeper, we came across a strange device, unlike anything we had ever seen before. It was a large, metallic orb, with intricate markings etched into its surface.

One of my team members, a young scientist named Emma, stepped forward to examine it. As she touched the orb, a blinding flash of light filled the room, and Emma disappeared. Panicked, we searched the area, but there was no sign of her. It was as if she had been swallowed up by the orb. We tried to communicate with the space station, but our radios were dead. We were completely cut off, with no way to get help.

As the hours passed, we grew more and more desperate. We knew that we had to find a way to rescue Emma, but we didn't know how. Finally, in a last-ditch effort, I stepped forward and touched the orb. Like Emma, I disappeared, transported to a strange and alien world.

But to my surprise, I found Emma there, alive and well. She explained that the orb was a portal to a parallel universe, and that she had been exploring it.

We made our way back through the portal, and to our relief, we found that the space station was still there. We quickly made our way back, grateful to be safe and sound. But as we returned to our normal lives, I couldn't shake the feeling that something was different. It was as if the experience had changed me, opening my eyes to new possibilities and realities.

I didn't know what the future held, but I was determined to keep exploring, to keep pushing the boundaries of what was possible. For I had learned that there was so much more out there, waiting to be discovered.

UFO Sweden

I have never believed that certain atmospheric, optical, ballooning, lunar or whatever sightings are visitors from other worlds. Our solar system is empty of aliens and the distances to other possible life-bearing planets are so huge it's extremely unlikely they come, as that the universal speed limit of 300Kkm/s can't be overcome. We have found 5000+ planets - more to come! - in nearby space, but as yet no traces green, yellow or violette little men.

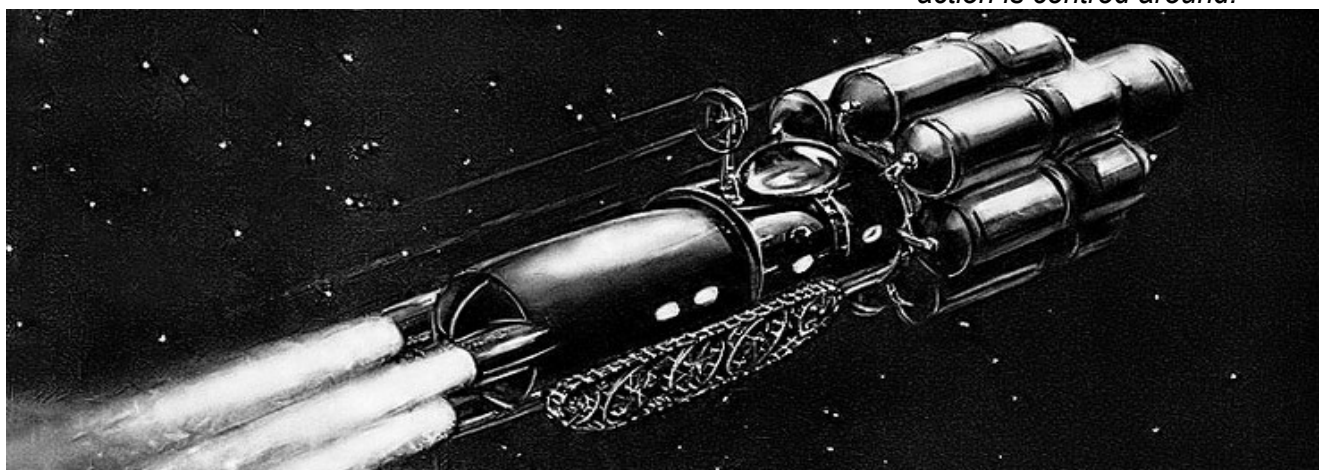
I do however find it likely that life and even civilisations exist elsewhere, perhaps even in the Milky Way, or else in other galaxies - but collections of thinking matter are probably far apart. Our best hope is to eavesdrop on their communications with big radio telescopes. Such undertakings are underway, having produced a couple of WOW! Instances, however deemed unlikely to be a local BBC's breakfast show "God Morning Betelgeuse". But one day we may pick up a signal... Perhaps? (Maybe Betelgeuse Broadcasting Corporation's weather: "Our star is calm today and won't explode - yet. A methane storm will pass as temp drops below -227C...")

But doing sf and accepting life in the universe (but not their spaceships on visit) make others think I believe in little green men from Mars. Some ask: "Have you seen any?" They fail to realise that science fiction is a literary genre for *made up* speculative stories, and not "teachings" or an ideology.

The movement of saucerites (OK, they prefer UFOs to flying saucer) has a long tradition in Sweden. Earlier *Intermissions* have told about "ghost rockets", as they were called, reported here right after WWII. Speculations are it was secret Soviet or US missiles. (German V2s actually did



The UFO Sweden board that most of the film action is centred around.



Soviet space art. The purpose of this strange vehicle is unknown. The tracks are perhaps to get a grip in loose moon dust?

fly here during the war. Debris of a crashed one was airlifted to Britain for investigation.)

In the 1950s interest in possible alien spacecrafts visiting us increased manyfold. There was a wave of films of alien invasions and saucers and alien monsters from Hollywood, films I actually often find quite entertaining. The sf genre got a lot of exposure, with 1953 as special focus year, as has been noted.

Many UFO books were published. Groups were started. There were magazine articles, radio and TV reports. The fact is that some of the early sf fans were believers in visiting spaceships, but there were many sceptics too and my impression is that we saucer sceptics have for a long time been the huge majority amongst sf people. Still there is this "Have you seen any?".

I have the impression that the idea of visiting spaceships is becoming less popular amongst the general public, and that may be for two reasons:



Interior of Archive of the Unexplained. See <http://csblogg.ufo.se/>

1) New technology has given us fewer "mysterious" observations. Everyone has a mobile camera now, which means mysterious lights, objects whatever are filmed, sometimes by several, and in good quality - they become easier to explain! We see fewer UFOs. (And that's despite the US military releasing what to me in many cases just looks like electronic flutter in the systems.) The rise of drones have also increased the observations, but they aren't "mysterious" either. Asian "sky lanterns" with candles have become popular too, but they are also easy to identify.

2) So much is happening in *real* space exploration that's a lot of focus has shifted to this instead of speculations about Martians. Soon there may be real Martians, and those Martians may be us - if to believe Elon Musk. As I write Artemis I is back from a successful (unmanned) Moon trip and China's latest Tiangong space station crew has just landed. ESO has begun building their Extremely Large Telescope. There are other new telescopes and radio telescopes, hunting black holes, the origin of the universe, more planets, listening for SETI signals... (And a polar satellite from Lapland ESRANGE may be launched in 2023,

<https://www.legit.ng/world/1508381-arctic-sweden-race-europes-satellite-launches/>) Real space is best, after all.

In the 1960s there were certainly a lot of interest in unidentified saucer objects and in 1970 a number of local groups ganged together and founded the national organisation UFO Sverige (UFO Sweden). It publishes a glossy magazine, hold conferences, courses, receives and files reports on possible observations, some after dispatching field investigators. Their archives and headquarters has since developed into what they call an *Archive for the Unexplained*, in Norrköping (south of Stockholm). I haven't been there but seen many reports. It's believed to be the biggest of its kind in the world, too big for one spot - its housed in 20 different basements and storage facilities, including workspace for their filing staff. See <http://afu.se>. They say they have 4.4 km of shelf space encompassing some 2 million items, from all over the world. On the site you can find some of it even digitised, to download as PDFs.



The heroes: Denise and the UFO Sweden chairman

UFO Sweden that founded AFU has now turned into a blockbuster film! As you notice it has the organisation's name as title. Here are trailers: https://www.imdb.com/video/vi479773977/?playlistId=tt14807348&ref_=vp_rv_ap_0 I went to a preview of it, an adventure flick with staff (played by actors) from the UFO Sverige/Sweden organisation.

I remember that we in the 1980s had the then chairman of UFO Sverige/Sweden, Christer Nordin, guesting our Nasacon. As I recall his lecture was reasonably sceptic to the notion of alien visits. I have since come to know the following chairman (he is vice-chairman now) Clas Svahn who as far as I gather upholds a similar sceptic line, something like: There are things people see, some of it can't be explained, yet - we don't know what it is. He seems to be very serious and stresses things need serious investigations. If I understood things right, there are now only 1-2 really "unexplained" phenomenon per year in Sweden - all the rest find explanations. Their big archive is after all called an archive for the unexplained - not the unexplicable.

Clas told me how he drives around (in Europe even) to pick up collections people donate to this archive. He for instance got material from Sam J Lundwall (I wonder how much of his sf archive was left after Sam sent a lot to the dump) and Bertil Falk says he has sent them packages. They seem to collect a bit of sf. On the site we read how the archive recently also received a huge document donation from Canada - 650 kg!

Great of Clas to get me invite to the *UFO-Sweden* film preview! Thnx! It was at cinema Grand (the same Prime minister Olof Palme went to just before being assassinated in 1986) one early morning. The group behind it call themselves "Crazy Pictures" and they make outlandish films of "fantastic" slant with many special effects and computer animations. In 2018 they release the alternate history film "The Unthinkable", dealing with a Sweden being invaded by a mighty neighbour. That sounds like a theme easy to connect to today...

The film "UFO Sweden" is quite entertaining. We meet heroine Denise as a young girl. Her father is investigating weather anomalies that seem connected to strange gravity phenomena. As he leaves for the mountains to follow a lead, he disappears, only his car is left. We then meet Denise in her teens. She's become a bit of a maverick and loose canon. After a strange electromagnetic storm creating a glowing aurora and causing blackouts her father's car is thrust into the barn of a farmer. Denise contacts the UFO Sweden group to get help investigating what happened to her father. At the same time there are hints that the national weather service is involved in a secret project.

It's all very well-made, with good special effects (but with a tendency to overdo them!). Inez Dahl Torhaug who plays Denise does a good job, as well as Jesper Barkselius who plays chairman of the board. There are a number of scenes of the UFO Sweden board meetings, with coffee and cakes, that are kind of cute. (But I doubt the real organisation works in exactly that way.)

The only weak point of the film is that the plot is a bit fuzzy. I don't really understand why the police treats UFO Sweden as almost a terror group. And the police is often over the edge. They use SWAT teams to evacuate a building after a



Fantasy Fiction Is Forte of 'Galactic Roamers' Club Here

"Galactic Roamers," an organization devoted to reading and critiquing magazines which publish "science" and "fantasy" fiction, numbers nine Battle Creek residents as members.

Experts on ray-guns, time machines and space ships, the local club members read hundreds of the magazines, keep tab on the latest "inventions" of the authors and in general make a hobby of studying the fiction.

E. Everett Evans of 191 Southwest Capital avenue, is secretary of the "Galactic Roamers" and has been instrumental in the organization of the "Michifans," a state-wide organization of a similar nature.

Other local "Galactic Roamers" are Fred Merchant, Elva House, Alfred and Abby Lu Ashley, Jack Wedenbeck, Edwin Counts, Jack Heuser and Allen Stanley. Evans, the Ashleys and Wedenbeck plan to publish a mimeographed report on club activities here and in line with the jargon of "scientifans" to create compact names, they call the publishing venture a "fanzine."

The newly-organized "Michifans" will hold its first "get-acquainted" conference in Jackson on November 14. About 100 fans are expected.

Evans says he has been interested in stories of the pseudo-scientific type since childhood.

The type of reading, he says, was made classic by Jules Verne and Edgar Allen Poe, and has been further developed and broadened by such present-day authors as H. G. Wells, Lovecraft and A. Merritt. Mr. Evans calls it "a logical projection of present-day knowledge and activities into the future times, when man shall have left this little planet to roam the star-ways."

Mr. Evans attended the national "Scientifan" conventions at Chicago in 1949 and at Denver in July of 1941, where he was a speaker, and was made national chairman of a committee which will prepare a plan of activities to guide the various clubs.

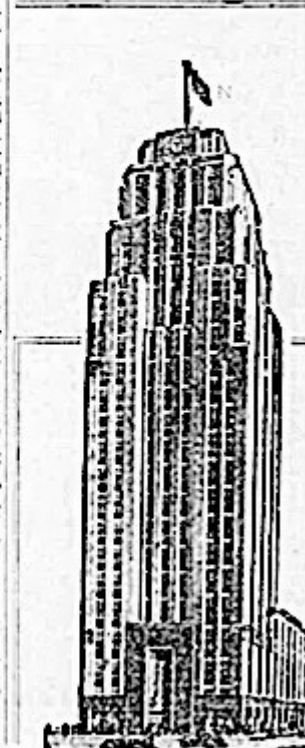
The "Galactic Roamers" is a typical fan club and has twenty-one members at present. Nationally, Mr. Evans says, the "Scientifans" include university, college and high school professors and students, business men, scientists of every calling, professional men, officers and men of the army and navy, farmers, ranchers, factory workers, clerks, housewives and business women.

Although "science" fiction and "fantasy" fiction are usually classed together, there is a wide range of difference between them, according to Mr. Evans. "Science" fiction deals with a logical projec-

tion of the sciences of today, and the political and sociological effect of a future civilization on the ordinary person. While the stories deal with time-machines, space-ships, rayguns and inhabitants of other worlds, these are no more fantastic today than were the thoughts of telephones, television and airplanes a hundred years ago, Mr. Evans declares.

"Fantasy" fiction, on the other hand, deals with the unknown and the occult. It tells stories of the myths and legends of olden days; of mysticism and superstitions that still find a foothold in the minds of many peoples. The boundaries of this type are less limited than the rigid and logical developments demanded of the former.

Unlike the readers of most types of magazines, the "Scientifans" are ardent collectors of all the books and magazines containing these stories. Mr. Evans has over 600 items in his collection, and is constantly obtaining more, besides preserving the current issues of each of the magazines and books as they come on the market. He also has a large number of the original drawings and paintings used in the make-up of the various magazines for cover and interior illustrations.



bomb threat (normally it'd be enough to "We've had a threat, so would you please follow this way...") and when civilian UFO Sweden members hide in a car, they open fire with submachine guns for no real reason. The conspiracy or whatever the national weather service is involved in is "revealed" through figures in weather statistics which makes no sense. It seems enough to mutter something about Einstein, relativity, worm holes and a few minutes on a keyboard is enough to unravel things. There are no explicit aliens in the film but strange cosmological anomalies.

"UFO Sweden" is set in 1996, I wonder why that year was selected? I noticed they had carefully selected computers and software from that period (eg Windows 95) giving me a bit of nostalgic feeling. But they missed that the wireless connections used probably weren't available! Neither Wifi nor 3G had come. Overall, the film was entertaining and it looks like that the UFO Sweden organisation is a club with a lot of fun! Clas comments he doesn't think they look like terrorists in the film. Most active in the real UFO-Sweden organisation think the film is lighthearted, great fun. I guess there'll be a rush of membership applications now...

HISTORY CORNER

Readers Unite to Check on Fantasy Tales

Special to the Free Press

JACKSON, Sept. 27 — Those writers of fiction who hurl space ships through the Milky Way and create worlds to conquer had best watch their step lest the Galactic Roamers get after them.

The Galactic Roamers, be it explained, is a thrill-story-fan club of 20 members in Jackson and Battle Creek whose aim is to call attention to writers and editors of pseudo-scientific stories the errors they make in narrating their yarns.

3,000 Stories to His Credit

John Millard, of 146 W. Euclid Ave., Jackson, one of the organizers of Galactic Roamers, claiming to have read between 3,000 and 4,000 pseudo-scientific-fiction tales in the last six years, tells about the club formed in 1940.

"Everyone in it does the work as a hobby," he says. "Our purpose is to convince erring writers to compose their stories accurately. The style of the writer, his facts and other story details are discussed. If the club doesn't like a story, the author gets a letter listing the story's shortcomings."

"Writers seem pained with the criticism, because they know they must please their readers to be successful."

Attended Convention

Last year Millard met many of his favorite authors at the second World Science-Fiction convention in Chicago. He also met there E. Everett Evans, of Battle Creek, another avid reader, and in correspondence which followed the foundation of Galactic Roamers was laid.

Plans have been considered for the formation of a statewide fiction-fan club. Millard optimistically sees the need for a national organization, too.

"It would put the reading subject across to the public, and critical persons wouldn't be so apt to refer to magazine stories as 'tripe,'" he says.

First an article, see previous page, about the well-known Battle Creek fans (those of the original Slan Shack!), from the *Battle Creek Enquirer* in 1941. I use the best resolution I could muster and took the aid of picture enhancement, but it's still just barely readable. If you concentrate you can read it, but I'll quote the most central parts for you here:

"Galactic Roamers", an organization devoted to trading and criticizing magazines which publish "science" and "fantasy" fiction, numbers nine Battle Creek residents as members. Experts on ray-guns and space ships, the local club members read hundreds of the magazines, keep tab on the latest "inventions" of the authors and in general make a hobby of studying the fiction. E Everett Evans...is secretary of the "Galactic Roamers and has been instrumental in the organization of the "Michifans," a state-wide organization of a similar nation.../other members named, and they/ plan to publish a mimeographed report on club activities here and...they call the publishing venture a "fanzine". The newly organized "Michifans" will hold its first "get-acquainted" conference in Jackson on November 14. About 100 fans are expected. /Some authors mentioned./ Mr Evans attended the national "Scientifan" convention in Chicago in 1940 and Denver in July of 1941, where he was a speaker and was made national chairman of a committee which will prepare plan of activities to guide the various clubs. The "Galactic Roamers" is a typical fan club and has 21 members at present /from all walks of life - fantasy and science fiction, explained, the latter:/ deals with a logical projection of the science of today, and the political and sociological effect of a future civilization on the ordinary person. While the stories deal with time-machines, space ships, rayguns and inhabitants of other worlds, these are no more fantastic today than were the thoughts of telephones, television and airplanes a hundred years ago, Mr Evans declare. "Fantasy" fiction, on the other hand, deals with the unknown and the occult. It tells stories of the myths and legends of older days, of mysticism and superstitions that still find foothold in the mind of many people. The boundaries of this type are less limited than the rigid and logical developments demanded of the former. Unlike the readers of most types of magazines, the "Scientifans" are ardent collectors of all the books and magazines, containing these stories. Mr Evans has over 600 items in his collection, besides preserving the current issues of each of the magazines and books as they come on the market. He also has a large number of original drawings and paintings used in the make-up of the various magazines for cover and interior illustrations.

Could this be the first time the word "fanzine" is used in the US press? It was coined by Louis Russell Chauvenet just the year before. *Fancyclopedia* offers a clip from the

Detroit Free Press about the Galactic Roamers, of somewhat similar nature, "Readers Check on Fantasy Tales". It was also from 1941, so I wonder if it was the same or several reporters on visit? It's sharp enough to read, so just have a look (above). https://fancyclopedia.org/Galactic_Roamers

Turning to interplanetary roaming. As Artemis has just successfully concluded its moon roundtrip, let's have a look at what they thought 75 years ago about moon trips, in Söderhamns Tidning Aug 31,

1953, "Airtight towns on the Moon Fantastic Future Project":

The first people have landed on the moon. From being weightless outside the space stations near Earth they now regain some of their weight and don't have to move as carefully leaving the rocket. A man weighing 75 kg on Earth will only be 18 kg on the moon. The Moon's gravity is only 1/6 of Earth's which makes it possible for the spacemen to move around without much effort in their over-pressure suits. On Earth they be more clumsy than a full-suited diver. The Moon is inhospitable for an Earthling, and the over-pressure suits will as before save the spacemen. There is no air to breath and meteorites will now and then hit and make whirls in the yellow-brown dust.. The cosmic beams aren't visible for the eye but are a lurking not yet explored danger. The spacemen can move in long strides in the low gravity. But they can't shout to each other, sound won't travel on the Moon. They can only talk to their comrades via shortwave transmitters. /NIGHT FOR 2 WEEKS/ The daily rhythm is once more changed. In the space harbour day and night switched every hour. Now the night is stretched to two weeks and the day is just as long. The first men on the moon have to work during the bright daytime. But they must be careful. The lunar surface is treacherous: if you don't look out you could trample through solidified lava and fall down into the abyss. They must watch out for cracks and not rip their over-pressure suits on the sharp cliff edges. For the landing a tempered spot near one of the poles was chosen. Around the equator the temperature is near boiling. Though the spot has been carefully selected the the sun is still burning hot. If you descend into a clove you can cool off in minus degrees. The first visit to the Moon may give the scientists taking part fascinating working material. There may be minerals and water wells below the thick layer of dust. They must investigate if there's a trace of atmosphere and if there's any form of plant life. Astronomers will have the possibility to watch the planets and stars from yet another angle. /EARTHLIGHT/ When darkness falls over the moon Earth lits up, far stronger than we see the moon shining. The stars gleam steadfast against the black space, no atmosphere breaks the light from them. Through their stay the spacemen have work to prepare a new visit by a bigger fleet. After a while they'll build moon base, which in the future will give them new opportunities to continue with the conquest of space. When they've finished with everything the long trip home stars. It's easy for the powerful rocket engines to whip up the speed of escape velocity, which is low on the moon, only 3.4 km/sec. When the ship is outside the moon's gravity field the engines can be turned off. Now they fall towards Earth, its gravity becoming stronger every day. The speed is tripled after five days. Earth is now 2000 km away and the moonship is once more in the orbit of the space station. When the circular space harbour turns up the breaks are applied, the moon rocket falls into its orbit and "lands". The first moon travellers return to their home in space. With some of the smaller rockets they may later go down to Earth /SOCIETIES AND TOWNS/ These are the principles for going to the moon, What is there to gain by colonising the moon and how can human life be sustained there? Arthur C Clarke is convinced humans will colonise the Moon. His plan is to build huge domes of plexiglass and fill them with oxygen. People can move inside those without any danger. In the huge domes the moon men may build gardens and get huge harvests in the not fading sunlight. You can get metals from the mountains, energy is free by using the heat from the sun. Clarke thinks he'd feel better under such circumstances than he does here on Earth... He even goes as far as predict that a few years after the first moon landing there will be societies and towns growing up. The must of course be hermetically sealed. /CAPTION. To the left the position of the moon when the moon rocket starts from the space station near Earth. The rocket is "thrown" in an orbit slightly ajar towards the Moon. At the arrow in pic 2

Lufttäte städer på månen fantastiskt framtidsprojekt

De första människorna har landat på månen.

Från att ha varit viktlos när de uppehållit sig utanför rymdstationen vid jorden har de nu återfått en del av sin vikt och behöver inte röra sig med lika stor försiktighet när de stannat ut ur raketerna. Men en man, som väger 75 kilo på jorden, kommer bara att väga 13 kilo på månen. Månens dragningskraft är endast en sjättedel av jordens, och det gör att rymdmännen även här kan förflytta sig utan någon större ansträngning i sina övertrycksdräkter. På jorden skulle de vara mer otympliga än en dykare i full utrustning.

Månen är en ogästvänlig värld för en jordmänniska, och övertrycksdräkterna blir, liksom tidigare, rymdmännens räddning. Det finns ingen luft att andas och meteoriter slår då och då ner och virvlar upp det gulbruna dammet. Den kosmiska strål-

BILJETT TILL VÄRLDSRYMDEN Femte artikeln

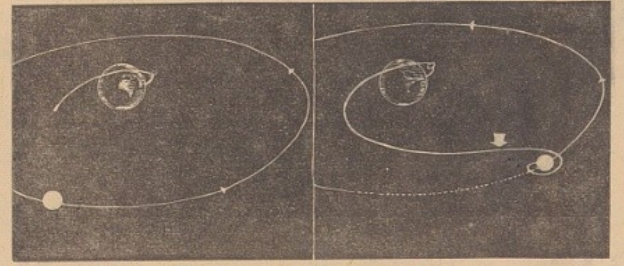
ningen syns inte med blotta ögat, men är en smygande, ännu utforskad fara.

Den ringa tyngdkraften gör att rymdmännen kan förflytta sig med lätta steg. Men de kan inte ropa till varandra, ljud fortplantas inte på månen. Endast via kortvågssändare kan de föra samtal med kamraterna.

• TVA VECKORS NATT

Dygnsrytmen har hunnit ändras igen. I rymdhamnen byttes natt och dag varje timme. Nu har natten sträckts ut till två veckor och dagen är lika lång. Det är under den ljusa dagtiden som de första månen måste arbeta. Men de får vara försiktiga. Själva månytan är förändrad, ser de sig inte förhållsvis så tränga igenom tunn skivad lavmassa och störta ner i avgrunder. De måste akta sig för sprickor och desamot som tillika de inte river sönder sina övertrycksdräkter på de knivskarpa klippkanterna.

För landningen har valts en tempererad plats inte långt från en av polerna. Vid månens ekvator är nämligen temperaturen omkring pluspunkten. Trots att landningsplatsen valts med stor omsorg är solen ändå brännande het. Kommer man ner i någon klyfta kan man emellertid få svalka av köldgrader.



Bilden till vänster visar månens läge när måntraketen startar från rymdstationen nära jorden. Raketen "kastas" i en svagt sluttande bana mot månen. Vid pilen på bild 2 gör sig månens dragningskraft gällande och raketen "sugs" in. Månen har hunnit förflytta sig som den streckade linjen visar under raketens färd.

20.000 står i kö till första månresan

I Haydenplanetariet i New York finns ett unikt kortfäst. Det upptar namnen på 20.000 människor, som står i kö för att komma med vid de första resorna till månen! De intresserade är från hela världen och representerar alla kategorier. Bland dem är även några svenskar.

Den interplanetära resorbyrån i New York har till och med upprättat tidtabeller och noggranna beskrivningar för resorna. Så snart trafiken kommer igång ska de reslystas underkännas. De flesta hoppas givetvis att de första raketfärderna ska komma till stånd i deras livstid.

Det är inte första gången äventyralystna människor anmälde sig till rymdfärder. 1926 spredde i "tidningarna" över hela världen en uppgift att professor Goddard vid Cork College i Worcester på sommaren det året skulle avflyga en raket, som enligt hans beräkningar skulle hamna på månen. Han tänkte inte ta med några passagerare, då han inte kunde sätta reträrbiljett. Trots detta anmälde sig omedelbart 52 personer, som önskade om att få åka med! Någon start avhörde aldrig, och projektet söt snart i glömska.

Bara två år senare fick månenutrustningsnytt hopp. Amerikanen Robert Condit påstod sig ha konstruerat en raket, i vilken han och hans flästmå skulle flyga till främmande planeter. Ingen fick emellertid se raketen, starten uppköps inte heller och slutligen tröttnade man på den fantasifulla "raketskonstruktionens" projekt.

Det första besöket på månen kan ge vetenskapmännen, som deltar i expeditionen, ett fascinerande arbetsmaterial. Under det tjocka dammlagret döljer sig möjligen mineraler och vattenådror. De skall undersöka om det finns spår av atmosfär och om det finns någon form av växtlighet. Astroconerna får tillfälle att se planeter och stjärnsystem ur ännu en ny synvinkel.

• "JORDSKEN"

När mörkret faller över månen glämnar jorden upp och lyser med ett långt starkare sken än vi ser månen lysa. Stjärnorna strålar bläckstilla mot den svarta rymden, ingen atmosfär bryter ljuset från dem.

En rymdmännas hand under hela uppehållet arbetat livrigt på att förbereda ett nytt besök med en större flotta. Så småningom skall de upprätta en månbasa, som i framtiden ger dem nya möjligheter att fortfärta rymdens erövring.

När allt är klart kan den långa resan hem börja. Det är en lätt sak för de kraftiga raketmotorerna att plåsa upp farten till flykthastigheten, som är låg på månen, "endast" 3,4 km. i sekunden. När skeppet kommit ur månens gravitationsfält kan motorerna slås av. Nu faller det mot jorden, vars dragningskraft blir allt starkare med varje dygn. Hastigheten drivs upp till den tredubbla efter fem dygn. Jorden befinner sig nu

på 200 mils avstånd och måntraketen är åter i rymdstationens bana. När den cirkelformiga rymdhamnen dykar upp, slås bromsarna till, måntraketen faller in i dess bana och "landar". De första månresenärerna vänder åter in i sitt hem i rymden. Med några av de mindre raketerna kan de sedan färdas ner till jorden.

• SAMHÄLLEN OCH STÄDER

Detta är principen för resorna till månen. Vad när man då att vinna av en kolonisation av månen, och vilka möjligheter har man att uppehålla människligt liv där?

Arthur C. Clarke är övertygad om att människor skall kunna kolonisera månen. Hans plan är att uppföra jättestora domar av plexiglass och fylla dem med syre. Härins kan sedan människor röra sig utan fara. I dessa väldiga domar ses människans allmoges trädgårdar och bäriga otroliga skördar i det aldrig avkande solskenet. Man skall kunna bryta metaller ur bergen, energi får man gratis genom att utnyttja värmen från solen. Clarke tror att han skulle trivas bättre under sådana förhållanden än han gör här på jorden... Han går till och med så långt, att han förutäger att några år efter det de första människorna landat hela samhällen och städer skall växa upp. De måste givetvis bli hermetiskt tillslutna.



DÄR DET LÄG EN STUND OCH LÅSKET PÅ SINA FJENDER, DET FÖRSTÄNGLIG FÖRSTÄNGLIG

the gravity starts to act and the rocket is "sucked" in. The Moon has had time to move along the dotted line during the trip of the rocket./

There's also a box telling that "20 000 are lined up for the first moon trip" at a registry at the Hayden Planetarium in New York, amongst them some Swedes. The "interplanetary travel agency" has even made time tables. There were earlier (in the 1920s) people interested to take Robert Goddard's rockets to the moon, 52 of them, as he announced he could build a rocket that could go all the way. People also announced readiness to go when Robert Condit claimed to have constructed a rocket by which he and his fiancée would go to other planets... (It's said to be article 5 in a series. I believe *Intermission* has earlier presented 1 or 2 of them.)

We have earlier covered public panic from broadcasts that were perhaps a bit too realistic, like "War of the Worlds" by Orson Welles in 1938 in #103, a BBC show about a radioactive satellite and warnings about a dangerous sun protuberance to destroy Earth in Soviet radio (both in #107). But this story seems to have been really serious, a South American version of the Welles stunt, "*Martians in Quito Radio Caused Panic and Public Raga - Radio Building Put on Fire*", Dagens Nyheter 14 Feb 1949:

QUAYQUIL, Ecuador, 13 Feb (AP). Half-dressed people ran out on the streets in panic in the city of Cotacollo on Sunday evening to save their lives. They had heard an unusually realistic radio play of an invasion of Earth by Martians. According to the radio the invasion took place in Cotacollo. When the listeners after a while found out it was only a dramatic play they heard, they marched in strength to the nearby city, where huge crowds already were on their way to the radio station broadcasting it. The agitated crowds stormed the building, smashed all windows and finally put the whole building on fire. Four people died and many were wounded in the fire that destroyed the house. According to the papers the minister of defence ordered armed troops out on the streets. Tear gas and tanks were used to get the crowds away from the radio building. The anger of the crowd was also against the radio staff, that was attacked. Several persons jumped from the third floor of the radio building to save their lives from the enraged radio listeners and the fire. The police was delayed as it was assumed the riot was in Cotacollo and the broadcast was from there. When the fire brigade arrived the building was already ablaze and only its walls stood. The dramatic broadcast was based on HG Wells' well-known "War of the Worlds" and very realistic. HG Wells' book has already earlier caused panic via radio. Orson Welles did a version of "War of the Worlds" in New York in 1938. Thousands of frightened people at that time fled from their homes to save themselves from an invasion by hostile Martians.

The Ecuador Martian invasion was worse. People died and a radio station was torched. Interestingly enough because people found out it was a play and were angry about being fooled. I checked other sources. There were also legal consequences,

<https://historyradio.org/2017/01/21/the-war-of-the-worlds-in-ecuador/>

3 men were charged with provoking the death of over ten people in Ecuador. The method of their crime: creating a radio play based on HG Wells and then letting it loose on an unsuspecting public. he mob attacked and burned the building of the newspaper, *El Comercio*, which housed the radio station and killed fifteen persons and injured 15 others. The radio broadcast was the brain child of Leonardo Paez director of art at Radio Quito and Eduardo Alcaraz, the station's dramatic director. The two had become familiar with the 1938 incident in

Marsmänniskor i Quito radion vållade panik och folkvrede

Radiobyggnaden stacks i brand

GUAYQUIL, Ecuador, 13 febr. (AP) Halvklädda människor sprang på söndagskvällen i vild panik ut på staden Cotacollao's gator för att rädda sina liv. De hade hört på en ovanligt realistisk radiopjäsa om en invasion av marsmänniskor på jorden. Enligt radion skulle invasionen äga rum just i Cotacollao.

När lyssnarna så småningom kom underfund med, att det endast varit en dramatisk pjäs de lyssnat på, åtgärdade de i samlad trupp till den närliggande staden Quito, där stora människomassor redan var på väg mot radiostationen som utsände programmet. De upprörda massorna stormade huset, krossade samtliga fönsterrutor och tände slutligen eld på hela byggnaden. Fyra personer omkom och många sårades vid eldsvådan, som helt förstörde huset. Enligt tidningsuppgifter beordrade försvarsministern väpnade styrkor ut på gatorna. Tångar och stridsvagnar användes för att få folkmassorna bort från radiobyggnaden. Massans vrede riktade sig också mot radiostationens personal, som förföljdes. Flera personer hoppade från radiobyggnadens tredje våning för att rädda livet undan de upprörda lyssnarna och elden.

Fue la exaltación de unos pocos la que ocasionó destrucción de "El Comercio"



Una grilla del personal huyendo del edificio donde se quemó. Los bomberos, por culpa de los muchachos, al ser rodeado del edificio por la gente, se retiraron. (A la izquierda: la radio.)

Polisen var försenad, då det först troddes, att upproret utbrutit i Cotacollao och man antog att utsändningen även kom därifrån. Då brandkåren anlände var radiobyggnaden redan helt övertänd och endast murarna återstod.

Den dramatiska utsändningen, som baserats på H. G. Wells välkända "War of Worlds", var ytterligt realistisk. H. G. Wells bok har redan en gång tidigare vållat panik i radion. Orson Welles gjorde 1938 en version av "War of Worlds" i New York. Tusentals uppskrämda människor flydde den gången från sina hem för att rädda sig undan en invasion av fientliga Marsmänniskor.

Insert, burning radio station (from local newspaper).

America and the 1944 incident in Chile /more below/ Leonardo Paez, a native of Quito, was not only a journalist, but also a singer, composer, poet and producer of radio. In an interview with El Dia, Alcaraz later said that he begged Paez to announce at the beginning of the broadcast that what followed was a dramatisation, but that Paez had dismissed him. Even so, someone had planted bogus UFO reports in the newspaper El Comercio in the weeks before the broadcast...Ten people were detained the night of the riot, and several were later charged, among these

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The Editor is always glad to receive for examination illustrated
articles on subjects of timely interest. If the photographs are correct,
the articles short, and the facts accurate, the contributions will
receive special attention. Accepted articles will be paid for at
regular space rates.

The purpose of this journal is to record accu-
rately, simply, and interestingly, the world's
progress in scientific knowledge and industrial
achievement.

The Rotary Mimeograph Case

FIFTEEN years ago, at a time when the trusts were allowed to pursue the even tenor of their way, unmolested by the government and unharassed by public opinion, suits which involved exactly the same principles as the rotary mimeograph case, recently decided by the Supreme Court of the United States, were not made the subject of lengthy newspaper comment. In cases which involved restrictions upon the price of a patented article upon resale, or which related to the requirement that the article sold should be used in connection with other things bought from the patentee, the absolute right of the patentee to impose any conditions that he saw fit was recognized, and no voice was raised in protest except that of the losing defendant. All that is now to be changed if Congress, listening to Chief Justice White's dissenting opinion, decides to limit the despotic privileges hitherto enjoyed by the patentee.

The facts in the rotary mimeograph case are simple. They involve no new principle in patent law. A patented machine styled a rotary mimeograph was sold with a license restriction that it was to be used only with the stencil-paper, ink and other supplies made by the patentee. The purchaser of the machine bought ink from another supply house. A suit for patent infringement was promptly instituted against the seller of the ink, and the Supreme Court, following a long line of decisions, holds by a vote of four to three that he was liable as an infringer of the patent because he aided and abetted a proposed infringing use.

In that decision the Chief Justice sees a grave national danger. He declares that numerous articles can be brought into the monopoly of a patent, "thereby tending to subject the whole of society to a widespread and irksome monopolistic control." He sees a vast zone lying between rights under a patent and the law of the land, wherein agreements can be made whose effect will be so far reaching as to dominate and limit the rights of every one.

The four judges who concurred in the prevailing opinion saw no fatal objection in permitting the patentee of a coffee pot to stipulate that only his coffee should be used in the pot, to cite only one of countless instances that are not without the bounds of possibility. Under our law the very nature of the patent monopoly confers such a right upon the patentee. He is asked simply to disclose his invention so that the public may ultimately enjoy its use, and in return he receives an absolute monopoly for a limited term. If he sees fit to do so he may reserve the exclusive use of his invention; he may pigeonhole his patent papers and never actually build a machine, which happened in the Paper Bag cases; he may dictate particular territories in which his invention shall or shall not be used; he may impose any conditions that he sees fit, however selfish or absurd they may be.

Perhaps gigantic corporations may use the patent law to achieve the end which they are now prohibited from attaining by means of the Sherman law. Perhaps social standards have so far changed since the days when the patent law was first framed that a patent may now be used for wickedness undreamed

of a century ago. Perhaps some restriction should be imposed in the interest of the public. Let us not forget, however, that the inventor, too, has his rights. He gives the world something which it never had before, something which, as in the case of the reaper, of the telegraph, of the telephone, and of the sewing machine, has increased the wealth of his country and of the world by untold millions. If an intellect which achieves such gigantic results also conceives means of controlling a market in ways perhaps not contemplated by the framers of the Constitution, let us not too rashly shackle it with burdensome restrictions.

Unquestionably abuses are possible under our present patent system. If the decision in the rotary mimeograph has served no other purpose it has at least directed the attention of Congress to the need of a careful scrutiny of our patent laws. Moreover, the resolutions recently submitted by the Inventors' Guild to the President of the United States authorizing him to appoint a committee for the purpose of investigating our patent system will probably be considered now with more than passing attention. Under our purposely liberal laws a patent may be used unmorally. But before we rush in and hastily remedy evils such as those pointed out by Chief Justice White, before we compel patentees to grant licenses to any one who may ask for them, lest the inventions be suppressed by some grasping assignee, let us study the efforts which other countries have made to strike a just balance between the inventor and the public. European countries are still experimenting in that direction, and not altogether with success.

What Martians Look Like

IT seems incredible that a scientist connected with the French Museum of Natural History should seriously concern himself with the problem of what the extremely hypothetical inhabitants of Mars must look like. Yet, according to Le Matin, Edmond Perrier has wasted much time and thought on that problem. As might be imagined, M. Perrier's creation is fearful and wonderful, fully as amazing, indeed, as any Martian that ever stalked in the pages of fiction.

There is not much air to breathe on Mars. Hence Perrier's Martian is endowed with a pulmonary apparatus that may be likened to a blacksmith's bellows. The attraction of gravitation of Mars is less than that of the earth; wherefore Martians are tall. Daylight is less intense on Mars; consequently, Martians must be blonde.

Nor has M. Perrier ignored the ethnological characteristics of his Martians. They are Scandinavian in type, he assures us, with blue eyes, strong noses and large ears. With gray matter, too, Martians are richly blessed, for they "know the most noble intellectual satisfactions and the suavest emotions."

If all this be true, life in Mars must indeed be "grand, intense, formidable," as Perrier says.

Making Dead Matter Live—Bastian's Work

THE old notion that life may originate from dead organic matter has long since been dismissed as an idle myth. Wherever maggots and worms appear in decaying meat or foul liquors, the living forms are now known to have originated from eggs. Pasteur and Tyndall have laid at rest all doubt upon this point.

It is upon the assumption that all bacteria arise from pre-existing bacteria, that the recent advances in the treatment and prevention of germ-diseases have been based. If these organisms ordinarily originate without the presence of similar organisms, they have managed to conceal the fact very well for forty years. For whenever we have made certain that all bacterial life has been destroyed in a given solution or other organic preparation, we have uniformly failed to obtain putrefactions or growths of any kind. Hence our faith in antiseptics and funigations and fungicides and fly screens.

Nevertheless, the biologist who rejects the notion of spontaneous generation in the older sense, because of his faith in the principle of causality, accepts for the same reason the idea of spontaneous generation in a different sense. Many biologists are compelled to postulate the origin of living matter from non-living at some time in the history of the cosmos. For in the first place, "life" cannot be considered an ultimate fact, like energy or matter; at any rate, the scientist finds that his investigations yield more, and more satisfactory, results if he assumes that "life" is not an entity. In the second place, the biologist finds no satisfaction in assuming

Leonardo Paez, Eduardo Alcaraz and the actor Eduardo Palace. Eduardo Alcaraz had fled Quito, but was arrested later in the town of Ambato. Paez, however, had escaped that night from the burning building. Seeing that his route of retreat was cut off by an angry mob and the police, he found a way of escaping via an old conservatory. A truck then took him a property near Ibarra, and he laid low until his legal difficulties were solved. 6 years later he left Ecuador and made his way to Venezuela. Paez lost his girlfriend and his nephew to the chaos created by his own radioplay. They died in the riots. He would never return to Ecuador or be convicted of anything, but in 1982 he published his account of the radio play he broadcast on that Saturday evening in 1949.

That the hoax was sophisticated may have played a role in it becoming so unfortunate: they pre-planted fake UFO reports and didn't announce it as a play!

More: <https://cuencahighlife.com/war-worlds-1949-radio-play-remake-deadly-result-ecuador/reports/>

a stunned nation listened as one of the country's most famous radio personalities was vaporized by a death-ray, and firefighters and police rushed to the sleepy village to confront the invaders...at least six others would be dead as irate mobs discovered they had fallen for a radio hoax — and embarrassed security forces either refused, or were unable, to come to the

broadcasters' aid... In 1944, in Chile, an adaptation of the radio drama was blamed for panicking thousands and giving an electrician in Valparaíso, José Villaroel, a fatal heart attack...the script was adapted into Spanish for the Chilean market by William Steele, a former writer of the U.S. radio drama The Shadow...Radio Quito patched in other broadcasters who were also "reporting" the arrival of alien craft, and an actor playing the archbishop of Quito only fueled the hysteria. But there were also real acts that added to the effect. With President Galo Plaza Lasso out of town, someone apparently ordered police and firefighters to head to Cotacollao. The Red Cross followed suit, according to



Ribadeneira, who wrote a brief history of the event...After going into hiding for about three months, Páez was eventually exonerated. In fact, he continued working for another six years in Ecuador, winning national theater awards, before moving to Merida, Venezuela

<https://www.aldianews.com/en/culture/heritage-and-history/other-war-worlds> says "Meanwhile, other stations also fell for the scam and began to report the fake, until the threat was too great". And the papers of course wrote about it afterwards (see example).

As you know this zine has recently covered young zine editor and mimeo inventor Thomas Edison. As he licensed or sold his patent to the firm AB Dick, they added a cylinder to the contraption and we got the machine we old faneds were used to. But surfing around I found an interesting article in Scientific American, March 1912. You can read it yourself! It seems the mimeograph became a case for the US Supreme Court. AB Dick wanted the users of their mimeograph to be limited to only buy paper and ink from...AB Dick. (Voice of today: Did anyone say inkjet printers?) That practice was rejected and not something you could use a patent for, fortunately.

If you didn't have the Edison/Dick machine you could still print - with a paint can!

Here more about this technique, developed by faneds Dale & Anita Tarr,

https://fancyclopedia.org/Dale_Tarr in the 1940s

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eo06ZRXbgao> . Norwegian fan Roar Ringdahl developed his own machin-less method that he called the Rory Roll (but he let the stencil be kept flat).

A bonus from SciAm is the piece about a scientist who believes he knows what Martians look like! Hear: less gravity and sun makes them tall and blond and...

They are Scandinavian in type, he assures us, with blue eyes, strong noses and large ears. With gray matter, too, Martians are richly blessed, for they know the most nobel intellectual satisfactions and the scantest emotions.

In *Intermission* #126 an article about the great space journalist Eugen Semitjov had a picture of him and his family around his drawing board from 1972, a postage size photo. I used an AI site to enhance it and think the result was rather good (see above). The table seems to be the same as when I made a visit for an interview.

I must conclude this History Corner with the sad news that Jesper Semitjov - who I've met - died this summer, June 7, age 59 (cause not disclosed, burial was private for the family and relatives).



Mimeoing with a can!



Eugen Semitjov making space art. His second wife Anne-Marie and son Jesper watching.

Recent Events & Pictures



George Riedel's Jiddish Orchestra Played Astrid Lindgren songs Dec 3. (Riedel has written several of them.)



Nice pastel from "The Sun's Landscape" 8 Dec



Seminar "The Future of Life" Dec 9, part of the Nobel Week Dialogue. Laureates and experts on futuristic topics. There's a series of Nobel related events around the prize ceremonies Dec 10.



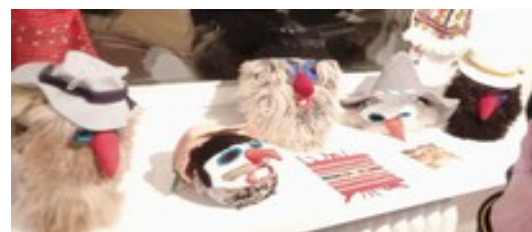
When literary Nobel laureate Annie Ernaux signed in a Stockholm bookshop Dec 7 a 100m queue formed.



Helena Sigander had a book release Dec 17. Left fellow Short Story Master Kjell Genberg, middle Karin Tjäder who soon will have a new book out.

Author Helena S peeking over the book of the evening, "Shiny Murder over Storholmen Island".

New Year's masks (right) that Romanians don on New Year's Eve to celebrate.





"Sun's Landscape", artshow opening at Romanian Culture Institute Dec 8, work by artist Corina Preda-Perianu (by the microphone)



Snacks and wine after the artist presentation

Mailing Comments

Henry Grynsten: You wonder why I'm a fan of trams (and to an extent metros, which was covered in last *Intermission*). I think it's a mix of nostalgia, and being interested in technology as well as history. Trams are all that! I actually remember riding the Stockholm inner city trams (eg a trip with No 7 to Djurgården) as a kid before they were discontinued in 1967. Trams are history, telling the story of how a city has developed. It's also technology: the bogies, the electricity system, odd systems like San Fran cable cars, different tram models... BTW, in a collection of RA Lafferty short stories, I found his "Interurban Queen", alternate history of an America where trams and not cars rule! It is said - and it may be some truth to it - that the automobile industry in the mid-20th Century to a high extent bought local public transport companies, just to kill off their tram services and replace them with buses to their own benefit (car companies also often build buses). While it may sound like a conspiracy, there were in fact many advantages with buses compared to trams (cheaper to operate, routes easy to set up, etc) - but only until 1973 when the OPEC oil embargo made petrol and diesel several times more expensive. * * "Once you start going down the road to utopia, you will end up in the same spot as everyone else who wants to create the perfect world: a very dark place." A correct observation. Your idea of a "perfect" society will always have faults, and when someone tries to reach this "perfection" the faults will show, and you need to apply oppression to subdue the faults, stop opposition and so on. That's why socialism won't work. * * Interesting observation than an AI and bolshevism have similarities. A possibly dangerous AI is the idea of "perfection" directing from the top. Communists also think they know perfection (though Marx was a charlatan, cheating in his "economics research") and their society is ruled from the top by a small elite. There are definitely parallels. * * Yes, there is a risk of nukes being used in Ukraine, however the risk is small and it may NOT - if it happens - escalate. From what I have picked up, what would happen if Putin dropped tactical nukes is: 1) It wouldn't have much effect. A tactical nuke, something like the Hirsosima yield would destroy a handful of sqkm and a few hundred enemy troops. That's a very minor effect for very big political risks. 2) The winds over Ukraine most of the time goes towards the northeast. Fallout would come to Russia itself. 3) NATO has given signals it would be unacceptable and they'd respond. Likely response would be massive conventional air attacks (as not to escalate with any nukes) against all Russian troops in Ukraine, especially Crimea, and all Russian naval units. NATO can probably employ something like 1000 very capable attack jets. Russian military capability would be almost totally destroyed. I don't think Tegmark has a grip of all details in the equation and I think you are basically right about that you can't cut a deal with Putin. * * About Nobelists going astray, you forgot the semiconductor winner William Shockley who took to racist ideas. * * Contrary to you, I do believe we may one day create an AI (which can pass any Turing tests). In many ways we seem to inch closer to it even today. See the AI written sample stories in this! An advanced AI will of course have a consciousness, it will have goals but goals we have given it and approved. I'm NOT



Aliens, through the pen of Lars LON Olsson!

afraid it would "take over the world" and turn us all into paperclips. We will have enough control over any AI to make it only something that serves us well. * * But you have an interesting and truly puzzling observation in parallel to the Fermi Paradox: Where are all the AIs? Yes, if AIs developed we should expect to hear from them, to have found them in some way, around us in the universe. But just as the original Fermi Paradox has no answer yet, the Fermi AI Paradox also lacks an answer.

* * I'm not 100% sure I understand your idea of the mind of animals (something like being just "aware" but not being "conscious that they are conscious") but I lean a bit towards agreeing. But I think there should be something we can call super intelligence. it would consist of the ability to think many more steps ahead, for instance. That's dependent on processing much more information. A very intelligent chess player can think more steps ahead compared to an opponent. A very intelligent AI could do the same, except on for a chess board but for the existence itself. I don't understand why a superintelligence would "crash spectacularly". You could equip an AI with a near crash awareness ability so it stops itself. Like this: Suppose we invent an AI that's given the task of making the economy of a country grow 4% yearly (a reasonable task, I'd say). It runs, it takes in info, processes it, economy grows, grows, grows...suddenly the info it gets and processes says the economy shrinks 1%! You may put in an algorithm which says, no matter under which circumstances you STOP if the economy shrinks. Safety routines can and should be standard. * * I have BTW read Max Tegmark's *Our Mathematical Universe*, where he argues that math and equations are the ULTIMATE inner workings of the universe. Particles run after math equations. Everything does. In a way, we and evrything around us is just a simulation, but not a simulation run by aliens but one that runs by itself. Or whatever he meant. Fascinating guy.

William McCabe: Not much comments this time. About book circles, our local SFSF club have had a lot of then. When I was new in fandom I used to go to them. But not now, not for a long time. I want to choose what I read and not have a certain book you must read until next month.

Heath Row: I have also heard som OTR (Old Time Radio), including "X Minus One". Interest in old radio shows started with, I think, that Swedish National Radio ca 20 years ago started a digital nostalgia station, called SR Memories, which you could listen to over the net. They had re-runs of

shows from the 1940s/50s/after. Not all was saved in those decades, but some. The fact is that our national broadcaster was among the first in the world to get modern taperecorders. It was invented in Germany before the war and called "magnetophones". Our broadcaster got some just before WWII. They came to the US after WWII. Ampex made their own reverse-engineered magnetophone. Bing Crosby was the first to use it, so he could prerecord his radio show. The crux of the matter for Swedish Radio in the 1940s was that the tapes were rather expensive, so they couldn't save everything. Tapes were often re-used, also through the 1950s. The SR Memories station had to begin to repeat shows after a few months because what they had was perhaps, say, 1000 hours of old shows from the 1940s/50s. There were also really good shows from the 1960/70s to run, which was fun to hear again on the SR Minnen station. But beside hearing that, I also looked up old US/UK shows, eg Goon shows and "X Minus One"! I prefer OTR radio dramas and series to audio books, and there are 100s if not 1000s to download!. OTR radio dramas are more concentrated and better produced - to hear an actor just reading a text is actually rather boring. * * I have thought of doing a story competition anthology, but there are two problems: 1) For technical reasons I only have access to the competition stories from 2007 and on, and 2) the interest amongst local publishers seems very low. Small publishers do some anthologies but mostly with stuff by themselves and their friends. The major publishers do no or few anthologies. So it may be a lot of work for no gain. (And besides, I'm presently working on another book project, which takes time.) * * Yes, I know Ylva. As soon as you mentioned Beam #17 I looked it up on eFanzines. Unfortunately her conrep was very short. 1 page. Änd å löt aboät Swedish vöwels... * * Links between sf and Swedish girlie mags? Hm, some like Semitjov and Palm wrote for those mags. But we also have the real porn mags (not just nudes) where eg fanartist Lars Olsson worked for one of the publishers (as mentioned here before), author Denis Lindbohm wrote porn stories for some of those mags and so did fans Ulf Westblom and John Ågren. You must remember that in the 1970s porn was considered rather "progressive"... * * The secret of the Stora Mossen metro game...there are no rules! It's all about pretending. You name metro stations as you wish and the point is to give a complicated phoney "explanation" of your "tactic". * * EC Tubb's Cap Kennedy isn't a parody of Cap Future, more a rip-off.

Garth Spencer: Interesting faaanfiction. Conrunning isn't always covered. Have you written much Faaanfiction? I've written some. * * My favourite fanartists are ATom, Rotsler, Lars LON Olsson (which I feature in every issue of this zine), Ray Nelson and well...that's what I could think of off the top of my head. I've done some myself. I remember the times when you did drawings directly on stencilss. * * I looked up info about the Skytrain. Very interesting. Is it all elevated? Only ca 49% of the Stockholm Tunnelbana (Metro) is actually underground. However, the extensions being built now will all be 100% underground, so the underground percentage will increase.

Слава Україні!

Collage of the Stockholm harbour New Year's fireworks. Thousands watching! Rockets roaring! Corks popping!

