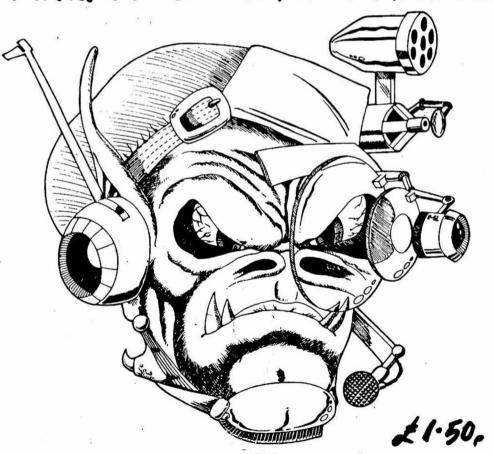


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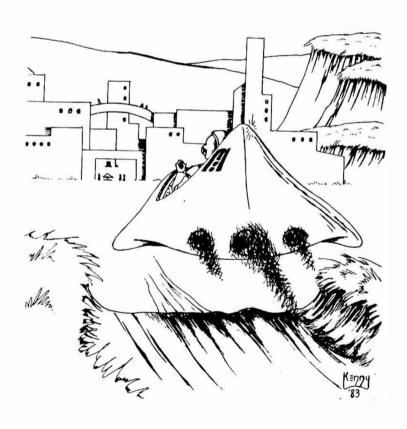
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#### EDITORIA..

Welcome to the first issue of F.T.L. Yes, at last, after long delays, grashing of testh and pulling of heir, you hold in your hand the final product.

Thanks must go to Brandan Gillen and Robert Elliott for typing these words (and others) onto computer disk and lease printing the results. Without their efforts this fine tome would not have been possible (actually, chaining them to their word processors and leaving a bottle of Pan Galactic Gargieblaster just out of reach may have helped.)

Those of you who foolishly thought this was going to be an A4 magazine may perchance be wondering why on Earth (or anywhere also for that matter) you hold in front of you an A5 magazine. This is because there just wasn't enough room in the original 24 page A4 magazine to feature the kind of cross section of stories I'd like to make in this magazine. There's no way we could have a brilliant Editorial, articles, profile and bibliography, illustrations, book reviews and a few short stories in 24 pages. We also have a couple of stories that would fill 24 pages on their own. Bo, for the same price, we can have a massive 40 page mag. Okey?

For those of you buying this "off the rack", so to speak, and don't know where this jewel of enlightened euphoria comes from, it is the product of an ineane group of frenzied fanatics who gravitate towards the Coak Bar the first Tuesday of every month (full moons not withstanding) at Dom to talk about cats, discuss thermodynamics and consums pints of Guinness. If you're one of the uninitiated why not drop down sometime. Some people have complained that cur initiation rites are too severe, but I don't think that hanging upside down from a lamp post while reciting the first three lines from Asimov's "Foundation" backwards in Hebrew is too much to ask.

Anyway, enough of these mental meanderings. Sit back and enjoy the neurotic nightmares in the neut of this mag and please, please write. We'd like to hear from you what you liked or dieliked about this mag. We'd like to build up a nice big throat-outling, mud-slinging letters column.

'Til next issue. Yours Serendipitously, John Kenny.

#### SUBMISSIONS.

FTL is always on the lookout for new contributors. We require short stories, articles, book reviews, artwork, illustrations and replies, critical or otherwise, to material that we have published. Although we are primarily concerned with Science Fiction and Fantasy we are also interested in horror, gaming, masquerade, media etc. In fact, we are interested in all the various aspects of fandom. So, if you have something to say, let us know. A lot of people out there could be very, very interested.

NOTE: As FTL is a fanzing contributors receive no payment for work published, only the satisfaction of knowing that they are communicating with like-minded people.

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ILLEGAL ALIEN.

By Bobby MacLaughlin

c.1988.

Giac stood looking out of the window of his Dublin flat, watching the rain pelting down, and meditated glumly on the series of disastrous decisions that had culminated in his presence on this Godforsaken planet. Each in itself had seemed such a marvelloue idea at the time. He was a student at the Planetary University of Puels, and had just started an external of year of experiential sentientology. Pulesans are a warmblooded mammalian species, though with a basic anatomy more arachnoid than primate. When mature they are logical, precise, and have considerable mathematical, engineering and sexual skills, though they tend to lack the wilder forms of creativity. Insanity, or even emptional instability, while not actually criminal, 18 socially unacceptable, and carries considerable stigma.

Physically they are goodlooking race. Eight-limbed, as their primaval ancestors had been, they now walk erect on two legs, have two pairs of arms, and two highly mobile feelers which are neither mandibles or antennae, but have something in common with both, and which are used for anv manipulatory functions requiring extreme delicacy. Both pairs of arms are fairly thin, the lower pair bonelese baing and retractile into the upper, to reinforce them when brute strength is needed.

Both makes and comales are smaller and less powerful than females, and outnumber

them greatly. They abhor physical violancs, feeling probably stems (at least in part) from still vivid race mamories of been esten alive by their mates as the price of permission to copulate. As they daysloped intelligence they evolved ways of changing and improving this system. Nowadays famales would be woodd by one or two male/comale pairs working in close and partnership. A amicable choreographed pair would be adequate for sex only, though this could still be a little dangerous for them. However, to bring female to the state of high frenzy needed for ovulation and fertilization they would usually operate in fours to be sure of surviving the process.

Giac and his comals partner and friend Caprisan worked hard and long think up a suitable study program for Glac's final year. In order to get funding from the Chief Burear of Bie-Kakei University, plus approval from Senior Tutor Henskont, it had to have just the right mix of innovation, audacity and solld academic research. If successful, there could afterwards be a chance of getting work in the capital, which would mean a vastly improved lifestyle for them both. Their home town, Gmhazzen, was a bit of a backwater, with very limited potential for entertainment generally, and just about none at all for at least not for sex, comales at their level. Not that their chances would actually have been all that much batter in the capital, but they both had fantastic and marvallously lurid dreams of possible

encounters.

they thesig title eventually hammered out pleased them both very much: "Banity/Insanity: Investigation of Earth-human mating behaviours". They thought this was brilliant, if not nheer genius. Plenty of audacity there - Imagine if you will a planetfull of sentient beings with only two sexes. The danger! The risk! The tremendous potential for instability! It gave Giac an illicit thrill even to contemplate it all. And since his study year was to be experiental, he might even succeed in having some solo sexual contact with another being, in the complete absence of any comale to assist.

thought was utterly terrifying, and yet at the same time marvellously exciting, the biggest turnon he'd ever experienced in his young life. He wondered for some time which of the two available sexes he should approach when the time came. And worried a bit about what areas of himself to use, and how, in the event of success, since neither Earthman or woman seemed to have anatomies which were all that congruent with his own. He realized that he badly needed to find out more about what Earth people actually do before he could Invent a system of action and interaction for himself to fit discreetly into their mode. He had in fact already received strict orders from his superiors to remain completely inconspicuous, insofar as he could do so and still meet the demands of his program.

In the end he and Caprisan both decided he should stop

worrying, and play it by ear as and when things happened. They believed that whatever differences of shape or colour there were between themselves and Earth humans mightn't necessarily be noticed, and wouldn't be much of a problem anyway. This was their fourth and most serious error. The first mistake being to choose Earth as a suitable place for study, the second for Glac to locate himself in Dublin, capital city of Catholic Ireland Idowntown New York would have been a lot better), and the third his choice of subject.

To the uninvolved observer Glac's approach may seem casual to the point of being criminally careless, but Glac was a very ordinary, average to mediocre sort of student, not greatly inclined to academic fervour. He wanted to complete his studies and get himself accredited with absolute minimum possible effort. He also wanted to spend as much time as he could with his partner Caprisan in pursuit of possibly amenable females, and in perfecting his latest' bodyhair patterns. He had recently achieved particularly fetchina fractal spiral in lustrous deep purple curis all around his torso, out along his various limbs and back again. It was just a shade lighter than his mans, and contrasted beautifully with his pale tan skin. He believed firmly that being with any sort of interest in jigsaw puzzles, sex or applied topology could possibly resist running a finger, tongue or other suitable eppendage along its various curves and seeing/feeling where It all ended up. He also believed

that his many and varied physical attractions would more than make up for any slight feelings of disquiet an Earth person might experience if s/he saw through his disguise and noticed the differences between them. He was totally unaware of Earth-humans' ability to distinguish between, and react to, quite minor colour variations.

His disquise was quite passable. First of all he amalpamated his two pairs of arms, which gave him the burly look of a keen bodybuilder. He left his mane in its original colour, a purple so deep as to be very nearly black, and twisted it into dreadlocks of the same thickness as his feelers. So they wouldn't be unless he absentmindedly used them to turn the page of a book, or adjust his tie. He wore a black pinstripe suit, very well cut, silk shirt, socks and tie, a Cartier watch and Gucci shoes. All of which he had transmatted out of a display in a Neiman Marcus on the way down.

He had previously parked his space ship behind the moon, and travelled the rest of the way in a highspeed lander, which he left in full view of any passers-by in a field amidst other rusting and abandoned vehicles on the outskirts of the city. He didn't carry much equipment with him, just one holdall with some food supplements, a sonic cleaner for self and clothing, a mini memory and note taker for writing his thesis, portable transmat in case he needed any other items of Earth manufacture (such as additional currency) and some spare powerpacks.

It was a long walk into town, and he was worn out by the time he arrived. Accommodation could have been difficult, fortunately it was summer. Hundreds of students were departing daily, not to return till autumn, so there were vacancy signs up everywhere. The first flat he looked at was dank, smelly, expensive and crowded with appalling crowded with appalling objects called furniture by the landlord. Glac disliked the lack of space, being used to sleeping in an arrangement of ropes slung from walls and ceiling. He was not prepared to QO native to the extent of sieeping in a bed, particularly one that appeared to already have a resident population.

On the steps in front of the second place the landlady looked at him beadily and said "The sign does say that the flat would suit one or two girls". Meaning that she would not be suited by one rather odd-looking male as an alternative.

Finally, on his fifth attempt he found the perfect place. A large, light airy room on a top floor in Lower Leeson Street, almost totally empty. The landlord called it semi-furnished accommodation, and said apologetically "It can get a bit noisy here at night now, but sure you won't mind that will you", as he pocketed a fairly thick wad of notes only recently liberated from a nearby hole-in-the-wall bank machine. Glac smiled and shut the door on him with a migh of relief. He was too exhausted that evening to do more than curl up in a corner and sleep, so deeply that he neither heard

nor naw anything for half a week.

He woke ravenous, cramped and uncomfortable, having forgotten to take his clothes off before collapsing. They looked like he felt, crumpled and dusty. He prelied them off and yawned hugely, stretching and shaking all his arms and legs. Then he limbered up for a while, leaping and bounding from floor to wall to celling.

It was a Saturday, and six a.m. local time. The people in the flat below his had only just fallen asleep after the usual Friday night racket tailed off around five. Then the plaster started falling off their ceilings from all the banging about upstairs. They were mostly young, hungover, extremely pissed-off with the noise and yet fairly reluctant to actually get up, get dressed and plod upstates to confront and hopefully quieten the lunatic above. The noise stopped before any one of them got themselves near enough together to actually do any of the things they'd threatened.

Meanwhile, back on the top floor, Giac was feeling a lot more cheerful. He cleaned up his clothes and got the creases out as best he could, dressed, and went bounding down the stairs in search of food and some ropes and hooks to fix up a decent bedding arrangement. The city looked lovely in the morning light, and disappointingly empty and quiet. Nothing was open, there were very few people about, and these were intent on their own business and uninterested in any form of conversation. He tried asking one or two for directions, but only got a stare or a "Sorry, I'm a stranger here myself" in reply.

Eventually he found restaurant opening up which advertised a "Full Irish Breakfast." This sounded reasonably substantial, so he went in and ordered the complete menu. It was good. lots of protein swimming in fat, and plenty carbohydrates alongaide for bulk. He tasted the tea, apluttered and decided against. It felt dangerous in his mouth. He thought he might get drunk or high on it sometime, but right now he wanted to stay cool and sober. When he'd finished the meal he decided to go back to the top of the menu and start again. Twice round was just beginning to take the edge of his hunger, and he was about to order again when he realised that one round was probably the local norm, and he'd better pay and leave before attracting undue attention. Anyway he quite felt like a change of scene, so he paid at the cash desk and went out. He'd watched other customers go through this procedure, and | followed it carefully, reflecting as he did so that exchanging some form of currency for goods or services appeared to the universal in a way that physical/anatomical criteria were not.

After eating in five more restaurants and cafes Giac found himself on the city centre quays, beside a shipchandlers, where he bought a coil of rope and an assortment of steel hooks, rings, tools and fixings to rig up a sleeping web in his flat. The shop assistant was incurious. He had customers

4.1

of all sorts coming in, foreigners as often as not, and he knew well that seagoing men often look outlandish.

Slac went home and started work, drilling and hammering holes in the walls and ceiling and trying to fix his hooks. He wasn't being very successful, they often pulled but again as soon as he tested their strength. In the end he had to make the web a lot bigger than he'd originally planned, using whatever few solid fixing points he'd managed to find in the room, which by that time was beginning to look like a bomb site. At last it was done, and he heaved a huge sigh of relief, and got ready to go out again, this time to relax, enjoy himself, maybe even have some of that Earth tea before starting work in his field studies in the morning.

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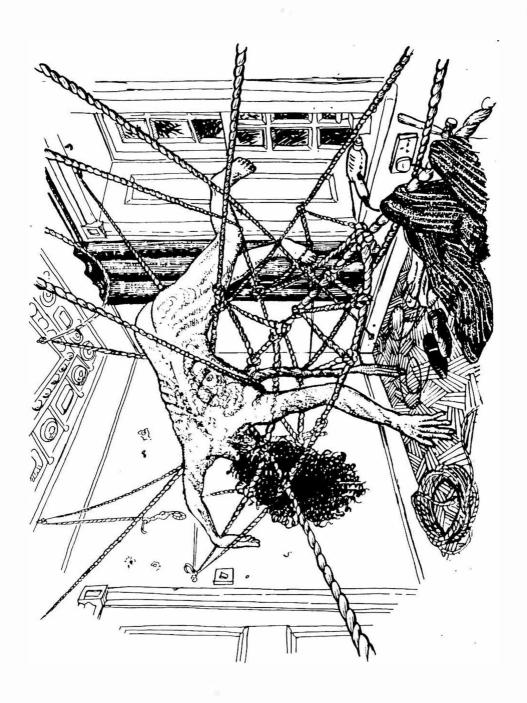
There was a knock at his door. He hadn't expected this, and didn't know exactly how to handle it. Since he could hardly pretend to be out, he opened the door, smiled, said nothing, waited. Judging by the clothing and the bumps in front he thought this person was probably female, though her apparent fragility and something about her aura reminded him so strongly of Capriann that he suddenly felt a deep pang of loneliness and longing.

She was about his height, 160 cm or so, fairly pudgy, with short spiky hair which she'd streaked and died in various shades of orange and yellow over dark brown roots. Her eyes wers brown and unfriendly.

She looked at him severely

and said "Hi. I'm Julie and I live in the flat downstairs. You woke me up at an ungodly hour this morning, and now you're banging on the walls again. I don't know what you're doing, and I don't care, but whatever it is I want you to stop. This instant." He moved sideways a little and she looked past his shoulder and saw ropework stretching from floor to ceiling to wall to ceiling to wall to wall to floor to ...... They both spoke at once; "What in the name of God is that?" "1"m very sorry. lt'9 finished now so there won't be any more..." There was a pause, during which he looked at her milently and thought unlike a female she was, in his experience. She was even a bit smaller than him, and less muscular. In fact, he didn't feel threatened by her at all. He stepped back and asked "Would you like to 999?"

She hesitated. This looked really odd to her, obviously some sort of foreigner with that hair, though his clothes did not go with her image of a Rasta - he had more of the upmarket executive VP look, a super-yuppie perhaps. Strange. Her curlosity fought hard with her sense of caution, and curiosity won. She went in and looked around. "Jamey Mac, are you an artist or something? What's the landlord going to say when he sees this?" Glac shrugged, said amiled, nothing as he watched her pick her way round the room having a good look at everything in eight. This didn't take very long, since aside from the now completed bedweb it only contained a



built-in kitchen unit with minute cooker, fridge, sink and cupboard, a short wide shelf about three foot up one wall beside it which presumably could do duty as a table, Glac's holdall in one corner, a few tools and some left over rope on the floor. That was it.

"You haven't got much In here, have you? Not even a cup or a plate," she sald, opening the only and empty cupboard. He smiled again and said "I suppose not very much. But I will get some things. What do you suggest?" 'Ah', she thought, enlightened 'another one that's never been away from home before. And I bet his mother did everything for him, and he never had to lift a finger either. And now he's totally clueless.'

"Well, I suppose you could do with a few bits of crockery and stuff, and a kettle and a teapot and a ..." He interrupted. "Wait, wait, slow down please, I can't remember so much so fast."

By that time she'd forgotten to be wary of this stranger, and her curiosity had doubled and redoubled. She thought of how best to get him talking, get some bubbling up in her, and suggested "How about a cup of tea in my place then? I'll write out a list of stuff you'll probably want. Are 'you over here working for one of these big American companies?"

"Thank you, I would like tea. No, not exactly American," he replied politely, with an infuriating lack of garrulity, and followed her down the stairs.

Julie's flat was just below Giac's, with a similar layout. The door opened into a bedsittingroom, with a tiny kitchenette curtained off in the far corner. It was carpeted, and furnished with a sofa, bed, table, two chairs, tv, stereo and a large cupboard or wardrobe. Giac stood just inside the doorway, looking around, and trying to picture Julie's life in this place. Julia walked over to the kitchenette to put the kettle on, turned, saw him still standing in the doorway, and went back towards him, saying "Come on in and sit down." As she did so a furred beast with four legs emerged from behind the curtain and walked towards them, making threatening noises.

Giac stared, screamed with fright, grabbed Julie'a head with two arms, his own with two more, all four bursting out of his shirtsleeves. Terrified by the sound, the sudden grab, purple hair glimpsed through torn cloth, the thought 'Omigod so many arms' she screamed even louder and found herself instantaneously cowering on top of the supboard at the far side of the room. They both froze, panting, she staring at him, he staring at the beast. Meanwhile the old tabby ambled matter-offactly across the carpet, sniffed at the top of Giac's left shoe, and wiped its whiskers on his leg, still purring loudly. At this he shricked again and wrapped all his arms and feeters in a tangle round his head.

He peared through a cluster of elbows and pleaded "Julie, I'm frightened. Make it go away." "You're frightened!" she roared in sudden outrage., "How the

fuck do you think 1 feel, you great gormless purple ee]It?", her voice rising higher and louder with every word. "Who are you anyway" Where did you come from? What are you doing here? Why pick on me?" crescendoing in a squeak. Sho stopped for breath, noticed the cat still at his feet and he still wrapped in a panicked tangle of his own limbs.

All of a sudden he reminded her of an animated Victorian pomander on legs. The thought made her glogle, and her fear left her, pushed out by laughter, "Oh come here Alistair" she said, got down off the cupboard, not without some difficulty, picked up the cat and sat down with it on the sofa. "Ok now, live got him. Nobody's going to hurt you. Come out of that and explain yourself."

He didn't move. "Are you sure its safe?" he asked.
"Course I'm sure. Have you never seen a cat before?"
"Maybe not exactly. Where I come from there is something which looks and sounds like that, and it will break a person's skull and eat his brains."

Tah, go way, yer having me on...... "pause.

"Really?"

"Yes"

"Right", she said, stood up, put the cat outside the door and shut it Firmly.

"Is that better?"

"Yes", and he started to unwind.

unwind.
She watched, fascinated, and beginning to feel fearful again as his strangeness became more and more apparent. After the first shock she'd reacted to him almost as if he were a two-dimensional cartoon character on telly. This "unreality" gave her a sense

of distance and safety, a feeling like - 'it's 'a dream, It's a comedy, it's to think, to look again and start taking in the information her eyes gave her, she experienced an increasing sense of dread as she realised this was here and now. happening, and she was awake already. She stayed near the door, ready to let the cat in again if Glac made any sort of threatening move. finished unwinding himself and just stood there, staring at her mournfully. He felt very vulnerable, in an impossible situation with no idea of how to . get himself out of it.

Presently, seeing he wasn't about to do or say anything, she sighed and went to put the kettle on. "I suppose we might as well have that tea anyway. God knows I could do with something stronger right now, but this is all I've got in the house." She gave him a mugfull, pointed at the sofa and said "Sit down over there. And now tell me."

He obeyed. Sat. Drank some tea. Started to speak. Stopped again. Looked at her. Drank more tea, sighed and stretched and wrighted about a bit. "This is good stuff, this tea." The tannin was beginning to hit him, he felt increasingly lightheaded and expansive, less and less aware of any possible dangers. Julie was getting impatient - her visitor had obviously lost his fears, but she still wasn't getting any answers. In fact, Glac had gone through two mug of tea in about five minutes flat, and from silent terror to a relaxed, laid-back readiness

to talk and talk in the same section of time. He babbled. She got increasingly annoyed, refused to give him any more tea — which may have saved his life, he'd nearly OD'd on it aiready and eventually hauled him bodily out of the chair, up the stairs and back to his own flat.

"I'll see you tomorrow" she said ominously "When you're sober," and stomped off down to her own place where she slammed the door to with a horrendous crash which he absolutely failed to notice.

He looked blearily about. taking his clothes off and dropping them around his feet. Then he saw the bedweb, crawled into its strands and passed out. It was raining when he came to, and the weather matched his mood with precision: grey, wet and miserable, with no sign of light on the borizon. His recollection of the evening with Julie was vague, with blank spots here and there. He also remembered feeling terrified of the pet animal she kept and touched so carelessly. He also remembered feeling ridiculousy happy later on, and trying to pay her a compliment, and her anger at this. Something or other about her being the size and shape person he could truly be friends with, and how nobody could possibly imagine she was really female. He'd also told her why he was on Earth, and in Dublin, and the title of his thesis. This made her angry too.

He stared out at the rain and wondered when she'd report him to the authorities, and what, if anything, he could do about that. He couldn't think of

anything useful, and went back to bed, dangling limply in the ropes like a heap of purple and tan spaghetti. He didn't know it, but he was also suffering from poettanin depression after drinking too much tea, and the effects would last another twenty four hours. A little ethanol in hot milk would have sorted him out nicely, but he didn't know that either.

There was a knock at the door. He walked over, opened it, stood aside to let Julis in. She seemed in a neutral mood

"How are you feeling now?" she asked.

"All right," he said, "not drunk any more. And I'm sorry I angered you. What are you going to do?" "About what?"

"About me, being here. Being alien, Wanting to study stuff you don't like to know about. All that. Are you going to report me?"

"What would you do If I did?"

"I don't know. I'm going to be in deep trouble with my own people at home anyway. After all, I was suppose to stay under cover and unnoticed, and after only a few days here you are knowing all about me. And it looks like I won't get my thesis written either." They were both silent for a while.

"Do your people have to find out?" she asked.

"N..not if you don't tell yours...." he stammered in sudden hope.

"Wall, I've been thinking about this. 'Sa matter of fact I've been up nearly all night. I thought - who do I go to? The Department of Foreign Affairs? They wouldn't know what to do with someone as foreign as

you are. Special Branch? I don't trust them, they'd probably beat you up Just in case and then lock you away until you can prove you're not some sort of subversive. Which could be forever. I don't really trust politicians either. Or four nallsts. Fact is. think you behaved stupidly, but I don't think you're out to do any harm to anybody. You don't need a cop, you need a minder. And l've got a proposition to make to you around that," "Oh yes? go on."

"My Idea is, you give me the job. I've been on the dole for a long while. There's nothing to be had here, and I feel miserable and bored and I'm so tired of being broke you wouldn't believe. So DK. I mind you for your year on Earth. I'll tell you what goes down, how to behave, where to go, what to do. I'll work with you nine to five, Monday to Friday for £200 a week cash in my hand. Time and a half for overtime and double time on Sundays.

you don't tell Revenue Commissioners about me and I'll tell nobody at all about you. What do you say? Oh yes, and 1'11 help you with your thesis and just the writing mind all. you, and looking up stuff in books for you and so on. You needn't think I'm about to get into anything physical with you." She grinned at him, pleased with her own daring, and thinking 'This could be a lot of fun." He grinned back at her.

"Minder? Yes, perfect. We take hands on it?" And they did, he holding each of her hands in two of his, upper and lower, both

of them laughing at and with

each other in a rising tide of glee.

Minder and Giac, partners. A good name, and a good beginning. From there they went on to do many things



SEX IN THE TWENTY THIRD CENTURY. By Ellern Gormley.

He woke up slowly. He knew that he was waking up and was mildly surprised to find he wasn't dead. Surprised and pleased. He had expected — he had been told — that he would feel confused and muddled when he woke, but he felt well and clear-headed. In fact, he realised with an internal grin, what he wanted most was to get laid. He stopped thinking about the awaking process — that would go on without his help and allowed himmelf to think about sex.

The fluid movement of moft skin over muscle. The curve where buttock met thigh. Long legs. Long tanned legs. A rad mouth which had just been kissed. For a moment he thought of his lover's face, transformed by passion, but still beautiful. Then he discarded the thought. Allie had chosen not to come with him. He hoped that California was still there, He loved Californians. All that long bleached hair and those ever-lasting tame. Would people still wear swimsults on the beach? He hoped not. Swimsuits epoiled his view of the special way Californiane walked and moved, He imagined a beachful of maked beauties and shivered at the thought.

"Ah! So you are with us again." A voice interrupted his thoughts. "Welcome to the twenty third century."

He sat up and looked around. The voice belonged to a black haired woman in a white coat. There wasn't much but her underneath it. Not Californian, but very beautiful in a Celtic sort of way. Sehind her two more white-coated women watched with interest.

"If you'll just step over here, I can make sure that three centuries of cryogenic slamp haven't harmed you."

Black hair led the way. He felt quite eteady on his feat.
"I'm Dr Alison Symna, just

"I'm Dr Alison Symna, just call me Alison." she said over her shoulder.

A pang went through him. Allie, Allie, where are you? "Now, here we are If you'll Just sit up here..."

He had watched Star Trek, over three centuries ago and had seen Or McCoy point a tricorder at someons and ennounce that here was a Vulcan with an entra heart who was in perfect health. He had never believed it. Now Alison was running a small beeping instrument over him and seconds later she pronounced him in top class shape. The two assistants came running up to congratulate him.

Over the next hour or two, so many things happened that his impressions were just a confused blur. He met a huge number of people, all of whom seemed delighted that he had survived cryogenic sleep. He had a vague impression that women now held the balance of power and was given a potted history of Earth since he

was last conscious.

There had been a great war. Before it, space migration had been common. Now the colonles were cut off from Earth. The effects of the war still altered people's lives. He wasn't to worry, however. Someone had had enough sense to see that his sleep capsule was moved to where the radiation couldn't affect him. Few other sleepars, he discovered sadly, had been so lucky.

Later that evening, Allson told him more about the effects of the radiation. It had affected the men mostly. Nothing too noticeable at first. Just fewer babies being born. Then, as the number of babies dropped, so did the penny. There were very few potent men left. Those that were capable of fathering children were considered the greatest of the planet. But they were getting old. The last one in Europe had died the week before. He felt breathless.

"Am I to understand that you want me here as a stud?".

Alison looked anxious. "Would it be so bad? look." She yot out a file and spread it open. Every page gave the picture and statistics of a different women. He flicked through them. Each women was beautiful, intelligent, talented. Alison's picture caught his eye.

"These are our potential mothers. You can take your pick of them. You don't have

to have anyone you don't want. All we ask is that you get at least some of them pregnant. The survival of the human race depends on you."

He looked at the pictures and his belly went cold. What a pity, he thought, that in their haste to revive him, they hadn't done their homework and found out a bit about him first. How on earth was he going to tell them that he was 100% homosexual?



Robert A. Heimlein - A Profile By John Kenny.

Robert A. Heinlein died May 8, 1988 peacefully in his sleep. He was 80 and death was due to emphysema and congestive heart failure. He was without doubt the most influential author in Science Fiction.

Born July 7, 1907 in Butler Missouri, he attended the University of Missouri and the US Naval Academy, graduating in 1929. He then served on board the USS Lexington, the first modern aircraft carrier and various destroyers but after five years had to retire due to tuberculosis. Over the next few years he studied mathematics and physics, worked at silver mining and real estate and got involved in politics. After being defeated for Californian State Assemblyman in 1939 and desperate for money he took a bash at writing a short story for a contest in Thrilling Wonder Stories. Having written it he decided to try and seil if professionally. Colliers rejected it and he sent it to Astounding Science Fiction, then edited by John W. Campbell Jr.

Campbell accepted it ("Lifeline") and it appeared in the August 1939 issue of Astounding. Thus began Heinlein's long career as a writer and the Golden Age of Science Fiction. Hainlein was the headstone of Campbell's group of writers (which included Asimov and Van Vogt) and made an immediate impact with the readers with stories like "Misfit", "Requiem", "The Roads must Roll", "Blowups Happen" and "If This Goes On -". These all belonged to an internally consistent Future History and when Campbell found out Hainlein had a chart at home outlining this history, he published it in Astounding. This not only had a profound impact on the readers but also many writers who started using a future history format within which to base their stories. Hainlein's output was prollific and he had to use pseudonyms in order not to dominate the contents page of Astounding (and its sister mag Unknown) with his name (Anson Mc Donald, Lyle Monroe, Caleb Baunders and John Riverside).

Me was Guest of Honour at the 1941 World Science Fiction Convention, less than two years after his first appearance. 1942 and the outbreak of the Second World War brought his writing to a halt. He went to work at the Naval Air Experimental Station in Philadelphia along with lesac Asimov and L. Sprague De Camp where they were put in charge of developing a space-suit among other things. While there he met Virginia Doris Gerstenfeld, a Navy lieutenant whom he married in 1948 (this was his second wife; he divorced his first wife, Leelyn Mc Donald in the mid-forties.

After the war he resumed his writing, largely giving up his future history stories. and short stories in general and concentrating more on hovels. His Future History stories were collected in "The Man Who Sold The Moon" (1950), "The Green Hills of Earth" (1951) and "Revolt in 2100" (1953). Later additions were "Methuselah's Children" (1958), "Orphans of the Sky" (1963) and "Time Enough For Love" (1973). His non-Future History stories were collected in "Waldo and Magic Inc." (1950), "Assignment in Eternity" (1953), "The Manace From Earth"

(1959) and "The Unpleasant Profession of Jonathan Hoog" (1959).

In 1947, Heinleln wrote the first of a long series of juvenile SF books. "Rocketship Galileo" (1947). It was followed by "Space Cadet" (1940), "Red Planet" (1949), "Farmer in the Sky" (1950), "Between Planets" (1951), "Space Family Stone" (1952), "Starman Jones" (1953), "Starbeast" (1954), "Tunnel in the Sky" (1955), "Time for the Stars" (1956), "Citizens of the Galaxy" (1957), and "Have Space Suit — Will Travel" (1958). Juvenile Science Fiction had been an area vary much neglected until Heinlein came along and his fast paced stories with scientific information interspersed throughout was responsible for many ynungsters entering careers in science. All of these books are now regarded as just as much adult books as Juvenile and the best of these such as "Space Family Stone", "Starbeast" and "Have Space Buit — Will Travel" are regarded among his best work ever.

Ouring this period he produced five adult novels. "Beyond This Horizon" (1948) about genetic engineering, "The Day After Tomorrow" (1949) about an invasion by Asiatics, "The Puppet Masters" (1951) about an invasion by Aliens, "Double Star" (1956) about an actor impersonating a politician (it won a Hugo) and "The Door into Summer" (1957) about time travel. The final three have come to be regarded as classics.

By this stage be was invariably in the top three SF writers (along with Asimov and Clarke) of any popularity polls and more often than not, number one. The reason for his astounding success was his whole approach to writing. His descriptions of future life were done in an everyday manner with casual references to technology, well detailed and worked out but slipped in sparingly. That and most of the action and story happening through dialogue made for snappy, fast paced stories and novels with substance.

With "Starship Troopers" (1959) however, Heinlein entered a new phase evoking controversy among his readers and fellow writers. From here on in his novels began to reflect increasingly his politicial and sociological opinions to the detriment of of his storytelling. Gone were the protogonists equally at home with their eliderules and their fists to be replaced by overblown, opinionated Father figures telling people political "truths". It was this patronising attitude towards his readers that caused many to walk away in disgust from his books. Another problem was his female characters, a problem to begin with but one that got worse in these later novels. In trying to illustrate tough, competent women who could look after themselves he just ended up patronising them.

"Starship Troopers" was still pretty much in the vein of his earlier action books and was intended as a juvenile but because of the violence and strong right-wing political message, it was released as an adult novel. Despite this it is still regarded as a classic and it won a Hugo.

It's hard to believe that Heinlein's next novel "Stranger in a Strange Land" (1961) came from the same pen as did "Starship Troopers". This novel advocating free love, amongst other things, and which also won a Hugo. Was like a direct opposite to "Starship Troopers" and was the first Science Fiction novel to hit the New York Times bestseller list. It became a cult book with the hippy culture and was later said to be the inspiration for Charles Manson and his cult. Unable to refute this story, Heinlein later hired a lawyer to interview Manson in jail. It turned out that Manson had never heard of Heinlein or Stranger. As far as content is concerned, there is a way to reconcile Starship with

Stranger. Heinlein was basically a libertarian which is generally a form of outlook politically conservative but eocially liberal,

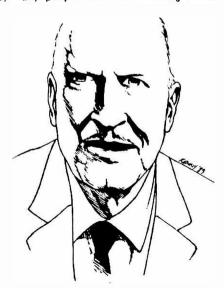
He followed this with "Podokyne of Mars" (1963) an inferior juvenile and "Glory Road" (1963) an attempt at fantasy which was well received. "Farnham's Freehold" (1964) is a long, painfull political disertation and probably the worst example of this later phase.

"The Moon is a Harsh Mistrese" (1966) was a wonderful reminder of his best work of the '50's. It won a Hugo bringing his total to 4. He followed this with "I Will Fear No Evil" (1970) as excrutiating as "Farnham's Freehold", and "Jime Enough For Love" (1973) featuring Lazarus Long, the main character of "Methuselah's Children".

Heinlein was Guest Of Honour again at the 1961 and 1976 Worldcons and was awarded the First Grand Master Nebula award in 1975. Apart from "The Notebooks of Lazarus Long" (1978) and "Expanded Universe" (1980) an expanded version of "The Worlds of Robert A. Heinlein" (1966) he was quiet.

However, in 1980 he made a dramatic return with "The Number of the Seast" a book very difficult to read unless you're very extremely familiar with SF authors and many of their characters. "Friday" (1982) was also unsuccessful mainly due to the main character Friday who is raped a number of times and is quite nonchalant about it. It was impossible to identify with her. "Job: A Comedy Of Justice" (1984) was more readable and a bestseller. "The Cat Who Waiks Through Walls" (1985) brings together many characters from his previous books. "To Sall Beyond The Sunset" (1987) his last book does the same and ironically acts as a fitting epilogue to the main body of his work. "Grumbles from the Grave" is set to be published in 1992. It's a collection of essays and letters put together by Heinlein for posthumous publication. He was awarded NASA's Distinguished Public Service Medal at a ceremony on October 6 last. This award had been in the pipeline before he died.

The impact Robert Heinlein had in both science and Science fiction is immense. Half the people in NASA went there because of Heinlein, half the people writing SF are doing it because of Heinlein. He will be sorely missed by many people but his writing lives on.



## ROBERT A. HEINLEIN BIBLIOGRAPHY.

TITLE.

YEAR. CURRENT BRITISH

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PUPPET. By David Egan. — c 1980.

The figure in russet and turquoise uniform stalked across the tiled floor and sat down cross-legged in front of him.

It was his first face to face meeting with the warlord, and he held on tightly to his secret.

"Welcome to my chambers, warrior Dar", he was greeted.

"In your presence I am as nothing", was the standard archaic reply.

Formalities done with, they relaxed into the rank-ignoring banter which permeated Earth-floot.

"My spies tell me that you've decimated a squadron or six of the wart-ridden scum since you got your new shoulder decorations last year", said the warlord, reaching for a tray on which a steaming decanter of a ruby liquid and two glasses stood.

"Nothing to it" said Dar, taking over pouring duty as manners required.

"Pretty good going for a raw conscript from the outer worlds. You've picked up some reputation for outguessing their hyperjumps".

Dar reclined on one wibow and eavoured a sip before continuing: "I read an interview with a child genius one time, just after she had acquired a professorship in mathematics. Something she said clicked with me: "Its just a matter of patterns, patterns fitting together to make new patterns," was how

she described her mental processes. It's no trouble to me to know where their ships will appear next".

"But how ?" The warlord was keen.

"I can't say", said Dar, allowing a puzzled expression to pucker his eyebrows. Too many questions now could be dangerous.

A figure entered the chamber, interrupting the warlord who saluted her in.

"Come in Shell, and meet the hot kid from the front line, Dar en Sarell". She saluted Dar. "Sometime you will honour my humble chambers with your presence", she said with utmost courtesy.

"The sooner the better" thought Dar, as he silently kissed her hand. He calculated. The poison which he had already administered to the warlord in his drink would not take effect for many days. The death would not interrupt his social calendar which he intended would be quite full on this his first off-duty epell on Earth. He would find time to reinterpret her offer.

"So", she tossed her hair back and sprayed a fine perfume into it: "How come you keep popping up everytime the poor warthwads try to re-enter normal space? They'll begin to think you don't like them or something".

"Who, Me?" I only want to be nice to them. But they keep firing their nasty shells at our ships" He shrugged; "what can a man do?" And he thought: "So much for the confidential meeting", although from the amblem on

her breast plate he could see that she was the commander of the warlord's own ship. She stared steadily at him, "Come on big boy, you can tell Shell all about it",

"Shell will do anything to get a few notches on her cannon. Pretty boring stuff ferrying your warlord back and forth between bases, isn't it?"

She yawned delicately, fluttering her eyelids; "Oh no master, you misunderstand me completely". She touched four slender finger tips to her sternum; "Why, what could be more fulfilling than the sound of my lord's footsteps in my ship's unworthy corridors?".

He looked at Dar, tilting his head in her direction; "It's probably the respect of one's subordinates that make this Job most rewarding', he said. "Commander", he turned to her; You came to say my ship is ready".

"Yes sir".

"Good. Dar is going to take us to where there's a little action in this galaxy to demonstrate his gift". He faced Dar: "Ready to move flight leader?"

Dar froze inside. What was this? He couldn't have misjudged the warlord's reputation for spontaneity to this extent. But he was reaching for his tunic. Terrible possibilities overran his mind. He tried to master his grimacing face muscles.

"It will be a pleasurs", he got out through clenched teeth. He followed behind the other two down a long stone

tunnel, catching fragments of the mock tiff about who should man the ship's cannon. They passed various ranks who nodded amicably. As they neared the end, an orange glow appeared on the walls from the lighted chamber ahead. Oar thought that it may as well be the fires of hell for him. What would happen when they were out in the chasms of space in hostile territory? Sure, he could pin-point any arriving fleet from the other side thanks to the micro system the aliens had implanted in his brain back on his home planet. But they would not sacrifice their ships to any other but his. He still could not grasp the strangeness of a race which, would allow such carnage of their own people in order to get an assassin close to their enemy. The screaming irony of Dar himself perishing with his intended victim surely couldn't carry through to its conclusion. Something must happen.

They arrived in the hangar.

Cold white mist shrouded the black ship and its red markings, as the hull was cooled for the friction of exiting the Earth's atmosphere.

Some robot crew were disconnecting the cable which linked the onboard computer to Earthmother 6, the main strategy determining system of the fleet.

Once in deep space, the robots could walk on the hull if necessary to carry out any maintenance procedures, always a weird sight because of their uncanny resemblance to humans.

Dar stepped in through the

entranceway, catching the fragrance of Shell's perfume as it drifted back on the currents of the ship's air conditioning.

She flashed a smile back at him as his feet met the yielding surface of the floor. "You'll snjoy handling this baby", she murmured. Any innuendo was hopelessly wasted on him right then.

It wasn't until they were safely secured in their flight suits that he could attempt to gather his thoughts. The huge surging lift of the ship's engines which would take them to a safe jump-off zone brought with it a flood of positive associations. He believed in his heart that he was innocent. His course had been mapped out for him years before on a still night on his home planet. Like hell would he be trapped at this stage.

He began to plan while the blue sky faded to mauve to indigo to night as they left the planet behind, and the familiar corridors of the stars winked into life ali around them. They paused with blue planet below and blackness above while the computer plotted a hyper jump to base 14 near the front line of the war, half way across the galaxy. The view ahead flickered to a different starscape, which was the only tangible evidence that they had just moved fifty seven thousand light years. Shell caused a computer generated grid to be superimposed on the view port. It made sense of the sprinkle of stars ahead, labelling base 14, shading areas held by the enemy, and indicating the plotted path to the base. Dar, deep in

thought, barely noticed any of this. He considered predicament. Simply running away had been impossible from the moment he came into the presence of the warlord. Wherever the warlord went, he was loosely surrounded by troops or other personnel, in rooms or cabins in his vicinity. Could be feign illness? No. Too obvious. There had to be some way to avoid combat in this ship. They total guaranteed ware destruction if any snemy ships came across them. They would not act out the surprised role for any but his own fleet.

Wait.

There might be hope.

How to go about it?

He managed a conversational tone.
"I assume we're jumping from here to base 9 where my fleet is stationed", he said.

Shell pouted.

"If that's what you think of my ship you can get out and walk", she said.

The warlord chuckled.

"Hard lock Bar, you can't take an action starved commander this close to a certain kill without following through. Anyway, this ship can outrun and outfire anything in the fleets. Earth command like to protect their leaders".

Dar managed an inner smirk at this remark from a doomed man.

He continued: "I don't think I could master this ship so quickly".

"Just point me at them". Shell interrupted, "That's all you have to do".

Dar". the warlord said, great talent is the "Your surprise attack. Before we left, up-to-the-minute reports of enemy ship locations were fed into our onboard computer. We can update the local picture here from Drbitbrain at base 14 without ever touching planet. You will have all the data you need for an ambush. I know you have a nearly one hundred percent record for predicting where they will arrive out of their jumps. If they are all as sluggish to react as the ones you knocked out, we can blast a few and jump out of there on a pre-set course". The spark which was Base 14 centered on the view port and began to grow. It became a misty green globe filling the entire window, before their course altered to approach the orbiting information center which was on the night side.

The view tilted and the planst moved slowly to the left as they swung in a majestic course through the day/night dividing line, to find the planet now murky green and speckled with lit cities.

The super-imposed computer map showed their plotted path leading to a blank spot on the starry blackness. Only at the last second of their journey did the bulk of Drbitbrain grow with frightening rapidity out of the gloom. They docked with one smooth motion, but did not disembark.

Outside, humanoid robots worked unprotected in the hard vacuum, connecting the ship to the brain. It was

his last chance to escape, but it was no chance really.

Doce connected, the huge amount of strategic information was transferred in seconds, and the robots came back on board. The entire operation took place in the dead silence of space.

Shell was busy at the computer view screen while the ship took off automatically. In a few minutes, she swung around in her chair, grinning.

"The ship's best guess is an attack by the wart heads on the sector seven mercury mines. What do you think Dar?"

It was the first time that she had spoken his name, and in it he could sense her handing over control to him, now that she had done everything within her skills to take them within the target range.

He could still come good out of this. He had every intention of dazzling her with a small but rapid victor, and winning her approval.

He had grown complacent in his missions. The enemy's willingness to sacrifice their ships to him had made rapid escape an unnecessary consideration. But the warlord had planted the seed of an idea in his mind: blast a few and jump out of there on a preset course was his plan, and why not?

With quick enough reflex action, they could pick off two or three ships, and instantly escape to safety. But it would have to be carefully set up: two buttons in front of him, one

to fire and one to trigger the escape would give him the slim few seconds needed.

"Take us there Shell", he said.

He told the warlord his requirements. "I think you'll find that Shell has already seen to that", was the repty.

Dar appreciated the brief glimpse of the machine-like efficiency with which she ran her ship. She keyed in some data, and again the starscape ahead flicked to a different scene as the distance to sector seven was traversed in zero time.

hie The micro system in brain came to life. He was surprised at the accuracy of the ship's computers. Its extrapolation of the enemy's movement had determined to within thirty thousand miles the arrival point of a raiding party of ten ships. He pave Shell coordinates of the point where he now know they would meterialise. They took up position at a range of nine hundred thousand miles from there, and waited.

He glanced at the handsome grey-haired man beside him. He had no qualme about poisoning his leader. The sight of his own parents bound up like parcels and thrust into the massive exhaust tube of an allen craft which had come sliently to his home one alght, had changed him values forever. Anything had seemed reasonable if I t stopped them activating their engines. With engines. had had carried out the operation on his skull that same night. His parents were released, but he always kept the price of their freedom

secret from them. He attributed the small scar on his temple to a brief but futile interrogation, and swore them to secrety.

At first he had been sure that he had condemned himself to certain death. But as the months went by. he had dreamt up the plan of the slow poison, and a hope of redemption grew within him. With the hope prew undeserved reputation battle, and he was sure that he could come through with a chance of a new life. He felt justified: parents for one man. There

Anyone else would have done the same.

would be other warlords.

The implant called for his attention.

To his eyes, a section of space bagan to shimmer, like a view screen coming to life. They were coming.

"Ready", he cried, tersely, "Ready..."

The ship's fission cannon would take one quarter second to lock on target. Firing would commence. automatically.

"There!".

His palm smacked down on the firing button. Turrets wavered like moths looking for a light source, then locked on target. Lightless shells streamed outwards.

His hand swung to the jump button and came down hard. Nothing happened. The stars remained the same. He hit it again and again, furiously. Then a familiar voice reached his ears.

"Parhaps there were two more robots on board than you thought", came the warlord's voice.

"What?" he swung around to glare at him and found only a status-still, mask faced figure staring lifelessly ahead.

He swung to the other side. Shell was a frozen 3D image of hereelf. Light caught his eye on her FTL receiver screen. He leaped over to look. The faces of the warlord and Shell were gazing grimly back at him, but were lined and aged compared to the two robots he had believed to be them.

"Nice of you to help in the field test of our new public images Dar", said the man.

"But how did you know?" he was already ice-cold with terror.

"We were not sure about you before you came, but you were kind enough to answer that question with your little polsoning routine. That was the cue for this trip. The whole thing was pre-programmed and only awaiting our signal to my public's self brain. I think the field test has proven very successful indeed, don't you?"

Shell never spoke, but scowled at him.

Too late, streams of possibilities flashed ethrough his mind. Why didn't he take them somewhere where he knew no ships would appear? Why didn't he check the setting of the escape jump himself? Why, why, why? But he knew the answer: he was hooked on the Shell robot from the first instant he saw her. Things had moved

too quickly after that for him to question his reaction. He found it in him to marvel for a second at the technology behind that beauty.

But wait. He had his reasons.

He swung back to the screen, face alight with hope, but it had gone blank. He planced frantically at the view port. A tlny star had appeared in the direction of his target. It began to grow, and was followed by another, and another. The enemy were releasing a massive barrage at the warlord's distinctly marked ship.

His last mental image before stomisation was of the robot Shell, prettier by far than her real life model, smiling at him through long, golden lashes.



BOOK REVIEWS COLUMN. By John Kenny.

CLASSICS.

Each month I will be reviewing a few books which have become regarded as classics. This may seem a vary redundant thing to do, particularly to those of our "group" who are well read in the classics.

However, there are quite a few members of our "clique" who have only recently forayed into the massive jungle of SF books available and are finding out the good and the bad the hard way. It is hoped that over the coming issues this section will build into a list of essential reading and act as a guide to those less seasoned troopers among us.

I decided, since we have featured alsowhere in this issue a Robert Heinlein profile and bibliography and since he passed away recently, to concentrate on a group of books which made him famous. Within and without the SF community. These are his "Future History" books. To be sure, there are other books by him which helped to make him famous and infamous but these books, particularly the first three were among the first by him to be received by a stunned audience.

Bix books fit into Robert Heinleln's "Future History". They are;

The Man Who Sold The Moon. (1950) (NEL)
The Green Hills Of Earth. (1951) (Pan)
Revolt in 2100. (1953) (NEL)
Methumelaha Childran. (1958) (NEL)
Orphans of the Sky. (1963) (Grafton)
Time Enough For Love. (1973) (NEL)

The first three volumes are collections of short stories originally published in the 1940's in "Astounding Science Fiction", the magazine which was to become instrumental in shaping modern Science fiction. They trace the development of mankind's energy sources and eventual colonisation of the Moon. The first book, "The Man Who Sold The Moon" takes us this far with the development of cheap solar power, a huge efficiently run transport network, nuclear power and the first moon rocket. The moon rocket and colonisation of the moon is accomplished by D.D. Harriman who conives and cone investors into the moon project. He is "the man who sold the moon". The final story "Requiem" also features D.D. Harriman and is a fitting epilog to this first volume.

"The Grean Fields Of Earth" contains ten stories, all dealing with aspects of space travel and moon life. They are all straight forward workmanlike stories and this volume is probably the weakest of the first three. However, it dose contain one story, "Logic of Empire", which deals with the slave labour on Venus. This is by far the best story in the book and plants the seeds for the next book.

"Revolt in 2100" contains three stories. The first "If This Goes On -" being of novel length. This takes place some sixty years after the events in "Logic Of Empire" and deals with a religious dictatorship in America. Space travel is forbidden and scientific research is halted. The main character, John Lyle, is sucked into a bid to overthrow this dictatorship. The other two stories deal with

the development of a truly egalitarian society (Heinlein style) and the resumption of space travel.

"Methuselah's Children" feature Heinlein's most infamous rascal Lazarus Long. Lazarus Long is a member of the Howard Families, a group of long livers, and the novel is about the consequences of ordinary people finding out about them. It also features the first successful interstellar starship. Readers new to Heinlein will encounter in the figure of Lazarus long his archetypal "Father Figure" character. There's one in practically all his books but with the possible exception of Jubal Horshaw in "Stranger in a Strange Land", Lazarus is the grandaddy of them all. Despite this, there's enough clever situations and solid story to make this book jount along.

"Torphans of the Sky" deals with the first unsuccessful interstellar launch. This launch took place well before the events of "Methuselah's Children", but the main story unfolds well after Lazarus' galavantings. This ship has gone off course and dwellers in the outer layers of the ship have long since mutated due to stellar radiation while the people of the inner layers continue to tend their hydroponic farms and fight off the mutants. Not a bad book but very, very predictable and definitely the weakest of the second three books of the "Future History" sequence.

"Time Enough For Love" is the da capo of the sequence and reintroduces Lazarus Long. By this time a massive galactic diaspora has taken place with countless numbers of planets being inhabited by an estimated two thousand million billion trillion humans. Keeping track of things and recording facts and figures has become a complicated and impossible task with accuracy thrown out the window. Lazarus is by now 2300 years old and has stayed alive by virtue of a rejuvenation process every few hundred years. However, he is tired of life and wishes to commit suicide. Being the oldest human alive the powers that be stop him and try to persuade him to share some of wisdom with them. In the meantime they will look for something he has never done before in an effort to renew his interest in life. This all happens within the first thirty pages. of this large book (607 pages of tiny print! and we are then treated to a handful of exploits from his long and colourful career. Lazarus Long is excruciatingly patroniaing in this book but perversely more interesting. As a novel this book doesn't really work (in terms of pace, continuity, etc) but as a ligsaw puzzle with half the pieces missing it works brilliantly, illuminating aspects of this man while leaving others in the dark and keeping alive our fascination with Lazarus.

All these books can be read separately but reading them in order will add an extra small delight to "Time Enough For Love". There are references to all the other books and particularly resolutions to a couple of loose strings left in "Methuselah's Children" and "Orphans of the Sky", which will be lost on someons just picking up "Time Enough For Love".

### BOOKS GONE BY.

This section will be devoted to books that have been around for a number of years but are not necessarily classics.

"The Simulacra" by Philip K. Dick. (1964) (Matheum)

This is a weird book indeed. However, typically Dickian. It features a group of people trying to track down a famous psychokinetic planist (yes, he plays the plano with no hands, just his mind) to record a symphony by him, the world's last practising psychiatrist, a jug blowing duo trying desperately to get noticed by a talent scout from the White House and gain momentary fame by playing before the President, The Karp Corporation which supplies the President's husband simulacra (robots), Hermann Goering, a messianic time-jumping guru, a group of Neanderthal man brought forward in time and living in the rain soaked hills of Callfornia and a host of other disjointed

It's hard to know what to make of it all. I kept expecting all these elements to tie together towards the end of the book but very little interaction occurs between most of the characters. I get the impression that Dick started off with some definite idea in mind but somehow lost it on the way. Despite this, it's quite enjoyable while your reading It, partly due to its pacing, which is fast because of the episodic way it's written.

One way of reading it is to regard it as day in the life of a decaying America. Viewed this way it begins to make more sense with the masses just barely getting through the day and looking towards the White House as a beacon of sanity; unawars that just as much craziness exists within those hallowed walls. Sown into this are are Dick's prime preoccupations: simulacra and the nature of reality.

Not one of his best but, for unfamiliar readers, a reasonable introduction to the style, atmosphere and illogic of Phillp K. Dick.

"The Werewolf Principle". by Clifford D. Simak (1967)

#### (Metheun)

Clifford Simak was one of those writers who, like Bob Shaw, consistently wrote good, solid stories, wasn't afraid of a good idea and didn't need a trilogy to tell it.

A man is found in suspended animation inside a capsule orbiting an asteroid and reanimated. He can't remember anything bar general background info of Earth. All these details, however, date back to an Earth of at least 200 hundred years ago. Also, lurking within his body are two alien beings. A wolflike creature and a pyramidal biological computer which can take over his mind and reshape his body to their respective shapes.

The story of the book lies in his trying to find out who he is, where he comes from and how the two aliens came to co-habitate his hody. It's a straightforward story, but very entertaining, fast paced and unpredictable with a satisfying ending. It hit me with a Sense of Wonder, that trick that the best SF writers manage to pull off. It's a sort of intellectual high which is the reason I read Science Fiction. Anyway, Highly recommended.

#### RECENT SCRIBBLINGS.

I've cailed this section "recent" scribblings because I rarely pick up a book the minute it hits the shelves. I have a constant backlog of books to read so by the time I read a supposedly new book it's been knocking around for a couple of years.

The Dark Tower Volume 1: The Gunslinger" by Stephen King. (1982)

(Sphere)

This was first published in 1982 as a limited edition but has just recently been published as a mass market trade paperback with the original paintings by Michael Whelan. It's a quest book with Roland (The Gunslinger) trekking across desert land on the trail of the Man in Black. It consists of five linked short stories each highlighting a specific event during the quest with back flashes to Roland's youth.

At E8.25 for 224 pages of large print it is not recommended to those who are not already King affictenedos but for those who are, the world of the Gunslinger is tantalisingly like that of "The Stand" with Roland's childhood memories reminding one of of "The Eyes of the Dragon". Also, the Man in Black is so like Flagg of both novels. The whole book reads like a prologue to the real novel, however the second volume, "The Drawing of the Three", should be available soon and is well over 400 pages long so perhaps some of the mystery will be cleared up.

"Weaveworld" by Clive Barker (1987) (Fontana).

I have an unnatural aversion to books longer than 300 to 350 pages. I guess it's because I'm afraid of getting bogged down in the middle and having to slog my way through the rest of it (no matter how bad a book is I have to finish it). Weaveworld though is just one great big roller coaster ride. Cal Mooney, our hero, comes across an incredible carpet being moved out of a deserted house while he is chasing one of his racing pidgeons. From that moment on the pace never lats up with Shadwel! and his magic jacket, Immaculata and her dead sisters (whom she strangled in the womb) and Hobart, a police inspector, all after the carpet which contains a whole world of people and magic.

To explain the plot and mention all the main characters would take pages. Events tumble on top of each other with such frequency that the reader is left dizzy from the experience. This is done at the expense of character development and also strains the bounds of credibility but despite this, it's unputdownable. Recommended.

ART BOOKS.

With the proliferation of art books and graphic novels now upon us I falt they deserved a section of their  $\alpha$ wn.

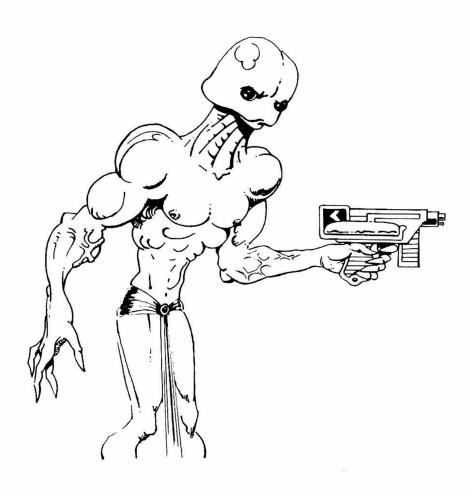
"Swamp Thing" Volume 1 by Alan Moore, Bissette and Totteben.
(1987) (Titan)
Graphic novels have taken off in a big way and to answer the demand collections of stories originally featured in comics are appearing in book form. Among the more successful of these are the "Swamp Thing" books. This is due to Alan Moore's excellent writing mainly, although the artwork captures the the almosphere perfectly.

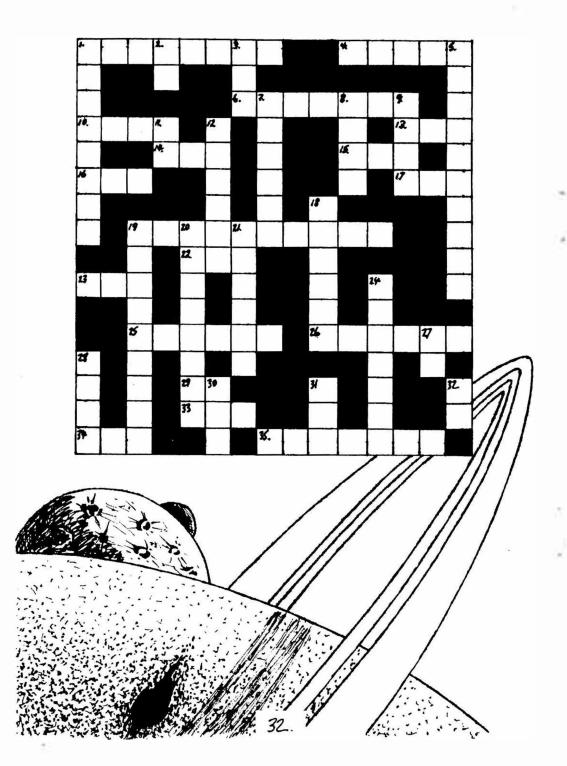
Moore has practically recreated the character which has been around since the early seventles. This volume features the reawakening of the monster and a three part story about the Floronic Man's attempts to take over the world using its plant life. A good support cast, intelligent writing and artwork makes this an above average series which is exciting and thought provoking. This is one I'd recommend to people who don't read comics.

"A Closer Look" by Patrick Woodroffe (1986) (Paper Tiger)
Patrick Woodroffe is one of those unique artists who stands out on his

own. You can't see where his influences are from. I've just never seen anyone paint creatures as weird as his are. What's special about this book is not just the featured art but the close examination of his work techniques. This isn't a how-to book. A basic knowledge of materials is required before you can gain anything worthwhile from this book. As such it is a book for artists with a certain amount of experience behind them who want to know just how did he get "that" effect.

Anyone interested in just the aesthetic pleasure of viewing his art would be better off obtaining "Mythopoeikon" or "Hallelujah Anyway".





#### CROSSWORD.

#### Across.

- i . Lord Valentine's Planet. (8)
- Common surname of E.E. "Doc", Cordwainer and Clarke Ashton.
   (5)
- Surname of Hugo Award winner for "'Repent, Harlequin!' said the Ticktock Man". (7)
- Surname of author who died in 1982 before completion of a film based on one of his books. (4)
- 13. How one feels after a bad pint of Guinness? (3)
- 14. Short Btory Writer. Mainly published in The Magazine of Science Fiction and Fantasy ... Reed. (3)
- First name of author of "Anthem" and "The Fountainhead"
   ...Rand. (3)
- Novel by Algis Budrys upon which a film was based starring Elliot Gould. (3)
- What group of countries radically changed features in Michael Moorcock's short story "Flux"? (3)
- 9urname of author of "Oying Inside" and "The World Inside".
   (10)
- 22. Paychic powers. (3)
- 23. Common term for Stardrive. (3)
- 25. Where does Arkady Strugstsky live? (6)
- 26. Campbell's rag. (6)
- 29. Speilberg's biggest grossing film. (2)
- 33. Creature prominent in James Herbert's first noval. (3)
- 34. Tree-like creature in "Lord of The Rings". (3)
- 35. Btanislaw Lem's famous planet. (7)

## DOWN.

- 1 . Robert Sheckley's novel about mind transfer. (8)
- 2. Where the creature comes from in "Forbidden Planet" (2)
- How many eteps from Earth is Harry Harrison's book on interstellar Travel. (3)
- 5 . Brian Adiss' famous planet. (9)
- 7 , Burname of creator of Faford and Gray Mouser. (6)
- 8 . A.E. Van Vogt's first novel. (4)
- 9 . How many princes were there in Amber? (4)
- Commonly used initials for Alan Dean Foster's stardrive in the Commonwealth books. (2)
- 12. Niven's "The World of -----", (6)
- Name of awards given annually by The Science Fiction Writers of America. (6)
- 19. Novel by Stephen King made into a two part TV feature. (6,3)
- 20. Murray ----- (B)
- 21. Final story added to Clifford Simak's collection "City". (6)
- City, Planet and Empire featured in Asimov's Empire and Foundation books, (7)
- 27. Frank L. Baum's famous land. (2)
- 28. Other name for Arrakis. (4)
- 30. Poul Anderson's "--- Zero". (3)
- 31. Dur star, the sun. (3)
- 32 Recent novel by Stephen King. (2)

You will find the answers to this crossword puzzle on Page 39.

By Ellean Gormley c. 1988.

I knew something like this was going to happen. It was happening all over. Take traffic lights.

I remember when all traffic lights did was to tell you when you should stop. Then they started giving your car directions. That wasn't to bad - helped you avoid traffic jams. But then they started taking your number if you went through on the amber. And stopped your car altogether If you tried to go through on the red. You had to stay there until the cops arrived.

Now, I don't know about you, but I do not take prders from traffic lights. It's undignified. I don't like cars that breathalyse you before they start or bank machines that refuse to let you get overdrawn either.

So when they banned smoking I knew that they had something nasty up their sleeves. Sure, there had been no smoking in public for a long time, but what one adult did in private had always been his own affair. Not any more it seems.

I was made even more suspicious the day the act became law. Digarettes were still on sale. Openly. I knew they were up to something. But it didn't stop me buying a packet. I went home and lit up the firet one.

Instantly a Mother-in-law appeared. Not my Mother-in-law and not in person. A hologram of the sort of Mother-in-law you have nightmares about appeared and started to mag: "Don't you know that you are

breaking the law? What do you think laws are for? There is a term in Rehab for people like you..." She went on and on until I had finished my cigaretts.

I lit another. She appeared again, this time carrying on about my chances of getting heart disease. I determinedly ignored her and lit up again. This time it was lung cancer she was lecturing about.

I kept on smoking and she kept nagging. She went into datails of things I had never heard of: low foetal weight, bad breath, throat cancer. Strokes, hypertension, miscarriages, high insurance premiums, smelly ashtrays... the list Just went on and on. By the fifteenth fag, she had stopped nagging and started to warn of impending doom. The warnings got more and more ominous. By the nineteenth the warning was a threat.

I ignored it and lit the last fag. Suddenly I fell paralysed to the floor while the empty digarette package started to blare a call to the nearest cops. I lay on the floor, helpless, while they came and arrested me. Not until the handcuffs wore on my wrists did the paralysis wear off. The cops were laughing. I was their first arrest of the day.

And that is how I became famous as the first victim of the Ban with the Scold 'n Stun.

Of Meat and Two Veg By Robert Elliott c. 1988.

"No!!" The screem cut through the air, freezing Michael Armstrong in his tracks. He looked around, but the search only revealed what he already knew; he was alone in the apartment. He shrugged, and went back to preparing the avening meal. Janica was coming over tonight, and he wanted this meal to be perfect. He was about to start peeling the potatoes again, when the panic-stricken scream cut through then air again. This time, there was no doubting it. He definitely heard it, and it was coming from somewhere inside the kitchen. He had a good look, and on looking under the table, he saw he had dropped a carrot. He went to pick it up, and noticed a small metal band around it, about half way up.

He went to pick it up, and it performed an action not usually attributed to carrots; it extended a small appendage, touched the metal ring and floated up into the air, alighting on the table. Needless to say, Michael was fairly impressed by floating carrots, but he couldn't figure out why he wasn't surprised when the carrot spoke to him.

"You may be wondering why I am talking to you" the carrot began. Michael had to admit that the thought did cross his mind, along with several other questions, such as how orange roots gained the power of flight. "Bimple enough", the carrot explained, "the anti-gravity belt does all the work. You don't really expect carrots to fly?" he asked, amazed that anyone could entertain such a ridiculous notion.

Michael apologised for his stupidity, and blamed his ignorance on the fact that the carrots to whom he usually talked were slightly more taciturn. "That's all right", the carrot said magnaminously, "One can't really expect that much from a steak". In the interests of diplomacy, Michael decided to leave that one go. Instead, he decided to ask another question.

"Arm talking carrots appearing all over the world, or have I been reason?" meemed like a good question, and at last information about the reasons for the VTOL vegetable's presence was forthcoming.

"! come from a time approximately 2,400 years in your future. For decades, we have been attempting to get back in time to this exact moment, 2:42 on Wednesday, 4th August in the year I AP, with special coordinates 12:3:334:3:4." The carrot's eyes glazed as he said this, obviously showing that he had repeated those lines many times before. It was only when Michael noticed this fact that he became awars of the fact that this was a carrot with eyes, mars and a mouth. The nose, however, was conspicuous by its absence. Michael would have asked how the carrot smelled, but was deathly afraid that the carrot would may "awful". Talking, flying carrots were bad enough, but if they started cracking jokes as well, Michael was sure he would fall spart at the seams. A question on the anatomy weemed appropriate.

"How did carrots get such human features?" he acked in what he hoped was a conversational tone, hoping

to give the impression that he talked to vegetables every day. Again, he was surprised when the carrot seemed happy to give the answers freely. "Our facial features have been carefully engineered to look mimiliar to the one steak - 1 mean Human - that veggledom looks up to. Faces flashed through Michael's mind; the features did look familiar, but he couldn't remember to whom they belonged. Clint Eastwood, Groucho Mark, Hulk Hogan, all people an up-andcoming race of vagatables might look up to, but he was damned if he could remember who it was. As if reading his thoughts, the carrot said "You are the one I mean. You, the father of our race. You, Michael Fabian Armstrong, the benefactor of vaggiadom, the great and wise one, the ... ahem." He cut himself off as he eaw the sceptical look Michael gave him. "You don't balleve me, do you?" At this stage, Michael was past wondering if he had inhaled too much garlic, and was quite ready to believe anything. He started to say so, but decided insanity sounded more plausible than talking carrots who halled him as the father of a race. A thought occured to him. "If I'm the father of your race, is there any hope that Janice Mathers is the mother? Tall, redhead, great looker" If the carrot was here on the same night as Janice was coming, there was the distinct possibility that he might get lucky. The carrot glowered, something else Michael didn't know carrots could do. "That's the trouble with you burgers, all you think about is mix". "Bex", corrected Michael, with the familing that he should have dunied the allegation instead. A change of subject was in order. "Are

you going to tell me what you're doing here?", he asked, hoping that Janice would be at least a few minutes late. If whe came in and saw him talking to a carrot, him street cred would be ruined forever. And If she saw the carrot talking back.

The carrot answered. "] am here tonight to aid you in the propagation of the vegetable race. You see that magnificent potato on the table over there? That is the first vegetable to be brought to sentience. And you and I are the ones who will perform this life giving act." Try as he did, michael could see nothing except a bag of Pinks, and none could by any stretch of the Imagination be called magnificent. The carrot continued.

"Think, Michael and Frujuse, the team supreme, the ones who brought life to a mere tuber, who set off the chain of events that would lead the vegetable race to master the world!" Michael's curiosity at this stage was well ahead of his incredulity. "How do we do it?", he asked. The carrot, now introduced as Frujuse, launched into a nerrative.

"To understand the process, you must first understand how we gained our intelligence. For tens of generations, vegstables graw as subnormal beings, with no limbs and no intelligence at all. When they reached the age of three weaks, however, they were injected with a fluid which activated the cells of the body, and making them generate siectricity. This small current was changed into synapses, which linked cells from less to too. In effect, it converted the vegstable into a brain.

Generations later, limbs and facial features were added, along with facilities for speech and other functions. This fluid is the one which will be used in Kerr, the First Potato."

"But who invented this fluid?", asked Michest. "Was it human or vegetable?" Frujuse grinned. "No-one invented it. Therein lies the paradox of time travel. Kerr gave the fluid to each of the next generation of vagatables, who in turn passed it on. Eventually, tt was given to me, and I will give it to Kerr. He will keep some, and will give it to the next generation. You see?" To eave the convolutions of a further explanations,
Michael said he did. That
only left one question.
"Why me?" To which there
was only one enswer;
"because you are the one
that was about to mash the
great Kerr into Shepherd's
pie." "Are you insinuating
that I would feed the most
gorgeous girl in the city
Shepherd's pie for dinner?"
was Michael's enraged
riposte, as he thought
desperately of a way to make
sense out of all this. further explanations, sense out of all this. Alas, no way could be found. All he could do now was hope to wake up before he found himmelf the creator of a new race of super veg. He suddenly found that he had been daydreaming, and Frujuse was waiting for an answer to a question he had posed. "I'm sorry", he said. "What was that?" Frujuse sighed. "I was just commenting that the Vegstolution has been due for centuries. Even you burgers have been plenting yourselves in the hope of emulating the great vegetable race. What I wanted to know was why you kept it up, even when they steaks planted didn't grow?"

it took Michael a few seconds to realise what he was talking about. "Oh, you meen dead people." Frujues sighed. "No wonder they didn't grow. I don't suppose it ever occured to you to plant live onee?", he asked sercestically. Michael inwardly grinned. "You mean if we planted live people, they'd grow?! This is the greatest discovery since mashed pota- I mean sliced bread! I could win the Nobel Prize for this!!" The carrot smiled. "Glad to be of help. Now, how about giving me a hand?" Michael sighed. "What do I have to do?"

A hell of a lot, it turned out. It appeared that while Kerr would develop intelligence within two days, limbs wouldn't appear until around the fourth generation. This meant that Michael had to do all the hard work, ensuring the vegetables were kept safe. and fed. And, from what Frujuse told him, he knew Kerr would take all the credit. Then, it struck him what Frujuse said some time. what Frujuse said some time earlier. "You said that vegetables would take over the world" he accused. Frujuse agreed. "Within thirty-four generations. veggiedom had developed to such an extent that we had no choice but to take over the world. You steaks never realised that we were intelligent, and kept on mating those of us that had not been genetically altered." He grinned. "You have no idea how people took it when the parenips suddenly started giving orders". Michael felt he knew exactly how people took It. "If you took over the world, what happened to the humans, and all the rest of the animals?", he asked, gusssing that he already knew the answer. Frujuse

had, after all, been calling him steaks and burgers all evening. Frujuse conceded the point. "However", he said, "we didn't kill We only took those anyone. people that were freshly dead, and used them. Fair ball, after all you have been eating us for thousands of years." While this was true, Michael pointed out, turnips had no intelligence, or indeed any form of "How do sentience at all. you know?", asked Frujuse. "How do you know that turnips haven't been trying to communicate for thousands of years, but only on a frequency too high for you to hear?" Michael froze. Could this dinner before him be indeed be trying in vain to talk to man, who was too greedy and uncaring to bother to check? "No", said Frujuse, "but you didn't know that" Michael was starting to get mad. If he wasn't mad already, talking to vegetables. He'd be locked up as one himself, if he wasn't careful. He counted to ten, and asked if man didn't object to being eaten. replied Frujuse, "We om, dead. Therefore, eaten. "Like l maid", they weren't in much of position to object. And the live ones had regressed to such a level that they wouldn't know even if we sat down to a banquet in front of them."

There was no That was it. way Michael was going to help a carrot to destroy the world, or at least the way in which he lived. Even if he was to be the father of the race, and be revered forever, he would prefer if there were one or two people around to discuss prospect. When told all this, however, Frujuse ansered. "But you have to do it. If you didn't do it, I wouldn't be here. You

don't want to create another paradox, do you?" Michael wavered. From the books he read on time travel, paradox seemed to be a pretty nasty thing. On the other hand, he didn't want to destroy the human race. But if it alraedy happened...

Him mind was made up by the sound of a key in the door. Janice was arriving, and he didn't want her to see him talking to a carrot. future of mankind aside, he didn't want to look like a nut. Only one thing to do. He picked up Frujuse, and ate him. While doing so, he took a knife to the potato he thought was Kerr, slicing him - it - into chips. Janics walked in to see him Bwallowing an anti-grav belt, and realising he had doomed an entire race. "Something wrong?", asked. "Nothing", "Nothing; "I just disagrand he replied. with something I ata".

Illustrations:

Cover logo: Robert Borban

Cover Poter M'Canney + J. Kenny

P2.19.32.40: by J. Kenny

P4.1014: by Rathur O Duffy

P31: by ? Semeone who can

Contact me for the

exympt back. (J.K).

P39: by Hugh Deasy

#### ANSWERS.

Across: 1.Majipoor. 4.9mith. 6.Ellison. 10.Dick. 13.111, 14.Kit. 15.Ayn. 16.Who. 17.EEC. 19.Bilverberg. 22.ESP. 23.FTL. 25.Мовери. 26.Analog. 29.ET. 33.Rat. 34. Ent. 35.Bolaris.

Down : 1.Mindswap. 2.Id. 3.One. 5.Helliconia. 7.Leiber. 8.Shaw. 9.Nine. 11.KK. 12.Ptavvs. 18.Nebulas. 19.Salems Lot. 20.Leinster. 21.Epilog. 24. Trantor. 27.Oz. 28.Dune. 30.Tau. 31.Sol. 32.It.

