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Masiform D 9

Devra Langsam

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Devra Michele Langsam, *Editor*

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- ☒ You're applying for admission to Arbara University
- ☐ You bet on Korbas ☐ You are writing a novel
- ☒ You've heard all *you* want to hear about the Brooklyn Bridge, too
- ☐ You paid cash ☐ You have a sub good until issue
- ☐ You contributed (good-o!) ☒ You helped
- ☐ WARNING! Your sub just died. Kindly dispose of the carcass.
- ☒ A. You see the pictures B. You read the words C. Other

ARTISTS

Kathy Carlson 91
 Susan Crites 8
 Hans Dietrich 50, 52, 61, 65
 Amy Falkowitz bacover
 Caroline Hedge 13
 Kathi Higley 29
 Susan Klasky cover, 24, 80
 Terri Laponovich 105
 Nan Lewis 72
 MRO Ludwig 6, 7, 35, 36, 70
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 Deborah Lleyn Phillips 17, 21, 23, 31
 Carrie Rowles 14, 74
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 Janice Scott-Preston 106
 Mike Symes 87
 Barbara Wheel 32
 Allyson Whitfield (calligraphy) 37
 Sally Wyant 10, 11, 95

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WORK CREDITS

Typing assistance Barbara Wenk
 Electrostencils supplied by Isis Press
 Title lettering Adrienne Fein 5
 Beth Gynn 3, 51, 75
 Allyson Whitfield 15
 Press-typing Joyce Yasner 13, 34, 35
 Proofreading Joyce Yasner
 Mimeo assistance Barbara Wenk, Joyce Yasner
 Covers printed Mapleton Printing & Offset
 Landlord Jacob L Langsam
 Toucat Kimchi & Sundari
 Collators:

Barbara Wenk *Cecilia Cosentino* *Linda Derenoff*
Sharon Effel *Louise Sachter*
Decker *Lenny Dazzo*
Joyce Yasner *Ben Yelow* *Sharon* *Marion* *7/16*

STOKALINE

Effusions by the Editor

Well, I seem to have lived through another January. . . .

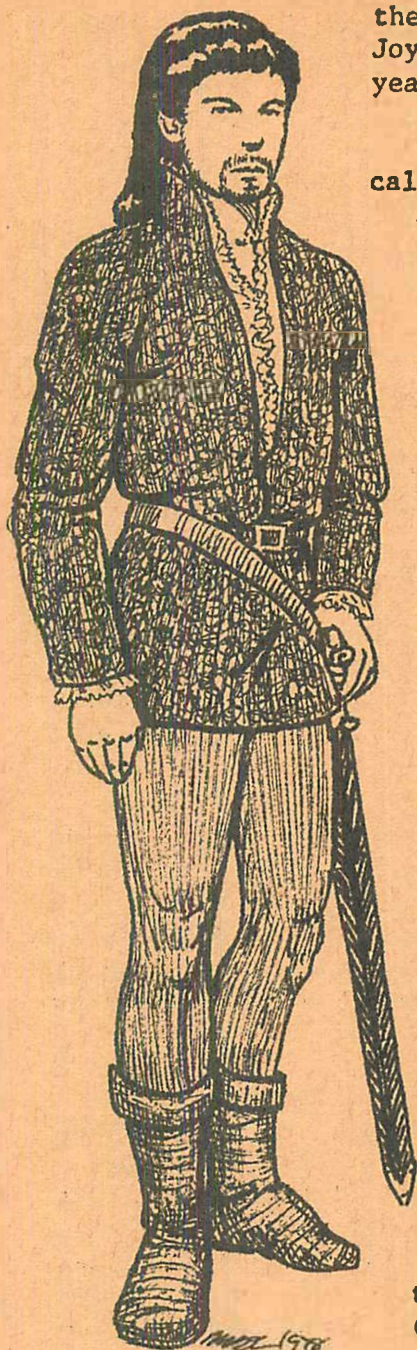
When I was collecting the material for this issue, I didn't notice anything odd about it, but now that I have it all together, I can't help feeling that the issue has a definitely--well--*frivolous* look. All of the stories have a decidedly humorous bent, and even the articles seem less than serious. Barbara Wenk tells me that it's *obviously* a summer issue, light reading, designed for use with a hammock and a pitcher of lemonade (or possibly diet pepsi?).

However, serious readers should take heart. Next issue's line-up is definitely more thought-provoking, more serious, more--well--MASSIVE. In #10 I hope to present Anna Mary Hall's "Accident", Sandra Wise's scholarly article on Bronze Age Vulcan, and Barbara Wenk's "And Comfort to the Enemy"--which isn't *at all* like the light witty pieces she's given us previously. Lightening the gloom a trifle will be Vida Joyce Hull's "Matze-loff", and an issue of THE FREE ENTERPRISE.

Looking far to the future, I have TENTATIVELY secured Barbara Wenk's permission to publish her novel, *One Way Mirror*. As you may have noticed, Barbara sees things from a slightly different angle than most of us, and her story gives us rather an unusual view of the "Mirror, Mirror" culture. *One Way Mirror* is tentatively scheduled to be out in May, 1980, as "Masiform D Special Supplementary Issue #2". It will be illustrated by MRO Ludwig, whose work I have been proud to publish in earlier issues of MD. The novel looks to be about 250 pages long, and will probably cost about \$4.

Because of the length--75,000 to 100,000 words--and what it will cost to print, the Special Issue will be considered the equivalent of 2 issues of MD on a subscription. *One Way Mirror* can be ordered by leaving an SASE on file for final price notification.

CONNED AGAIN--Despite firm statements, I've gotten ~~suckered~~ sucked in again, and am currently working as Art Show Director on the Second Darkovan Grand Council (July 13-15), as Treasurer of Lunacon '80, and as Treasurer *pro tem* for the NY:86 Worldcon Bidding Committee. Then there's



the little, intimate *STAR TREK/STAR WARS*/Mediacon Joyce Yasner and I are thinking of running next year. I must be out of my mind. (But of course.)

Speaking of that little con, it will be called Mos' Eastly Con, and will be held over the Memorial Day weekend of 1980. (There's some small confusion as to which weekend that will be (hurray for governments that keep juggling holidays!) but . . .) Attendance is limited to 350, and we will have NO guest stars, NO cash prizes for anything, FEW films, and NO disco Santa Clauses. We have a tentative agreement with our hotel (the Laguardia Sheraton), and hope to get a contract signed REAL SOON NOW. Membership is \$10 plus 2 SASES until Dec 1. Dealers' tables will be available. (whew)

In addition to the issue I've got lined up for December/January (and #11, scheduled for December/January '80, is looking for materials--submit yourself to the Imperial will! Opps, wrong universe!) I'm also involved in editing a *STAR WARS* novel (a cycle of stories, actually) being written by Barbara Wenk and Anne Elizabeth Zeek. I'm not really sure what my function is in this undertaking. Anne, publisher of *TIME WARP*, *PERN PORTFOLIO*, and *RIGHT OF STATEMENT*, surely doesn't need any help in publishing *Circle of Fire*, and she is also an accomplished editor. As for Barbara, who reads all my submissions and has an incisive (read--nasty) wit, and a sharp eye for poor writing. . . . (Though it is difficult to edit your own writing, Ghu knows.) Sometimes I think I'm just there as a buffer between the two authors. (Snarl! Gnarrish!)

BELTED! I received my green belt in Twae Kwan Do in May, so that I'm again only one level below Joyce Yasner, who has a purple belt. However, she's supposed to take her brown belt test next Friday . . . Yeah! She got it! This is a very exhausting hobby. Why am I paying someone \$30 a month to make me do painful things to my body? I must have a warped mind, or something.

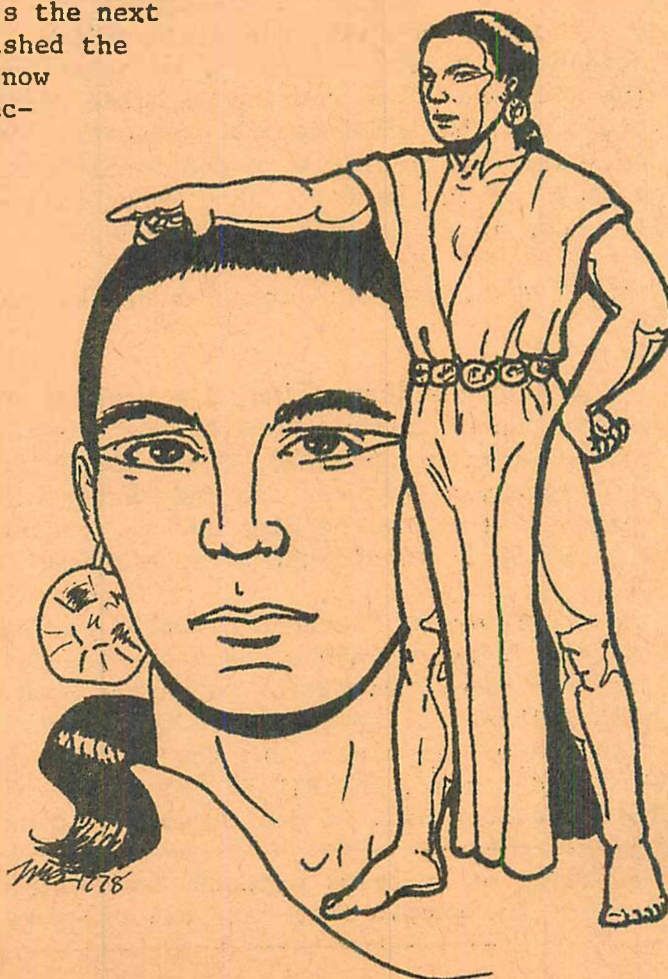
God Bless You. I have always insisted that I am the world's (nay, the galaxy's) only expert on kershu. Now, however, it looks as though I may have some competition. Susan Crites (co-editor of *SUBLIGHT READINGS*,

sexy author and author of spicy stories, and greyhound trainer), is also a kung fu student. She and her senior classmate May, and Joyce Yasner, are apparently conspiring to reproduce a page or two from one of Kintam Domineeh's priceless old kershu manuals. I don't know whether they should be opposed on interstellar copyright violation (though the material may be so old as to be in the public domain) or perhaps endangering public safety. Certainly *I* would never attempt any such translation and transcription--which may tell you something about my fighting ability, or, possibly, THEIR sanity.

This issue contains a rather unusual item: Mr. Spock's natal date as expressed in the Mayan calendar. The author, doubtful of obtaining the true figures for Mr. Spock's birthday, has used those for a well-known avatar of his, Leonard Nimoy. The year of birth has of course been adjusted in accord with the various figures given for *Star Trek* time, conjectures about Mr. Spock's age, and so forth.

Due to a confusing combination of circumstances, Barbara Wenk has moved again, and she and Anne Zeek and Anne's brother Richard are all living in the same building, about ten blocks from me. (A hive of fan-nish activity.) Anne and her brother used to live on Staten Island, which certainly put a ~~cramp~~ into socializing with her. The "when's the next ferry leave?" syndrome rather crushed the spontaneity of our meetings. So now there's an extra mimeo and an electrostenciller in EASY reach. Brooklyn as the new fan center!

The Post Offal is once again lurking in the wings, threatening to mash us with another raise in the 4th class postal rate--this time from 48¢ to 59¢ for the first pound. That's a cumulative rise of 29¢ per pound since last year--and I can remember when it was only 18¢! Sometimes I wonder if they *really* are trying to crush the small publisher, the bookseller, and the magazines. The postal increases really hit us, since so much of our business must of necessity go by USnail. It's impossible to finance a zine just by con sales; there aren't enough buyers at a



cons, and the expenses totally overwhelm the sales.

Fortunately, I think that I can still cover my expenses (and the postage) with the price increase from the last issue. (This, of course, explains why I don't like to take long subscriptions. Honoring a sub taken at 75¢ when the zine's selling to the general public for \$1.50 is painful.) However, I think the price of SPOCKANALIA will have to go up --taking in \$2.25 for an issue when you're spending 59¢ to mail it is a BIT much.

Joyce and I have been singularly honored. Susan Crites named two of her greyhound Tickle's litter after us--Yaz and Devra. Here is a picture of Devra. She is, I'm informed, a sweet and beautiful (if not super-speedy) puppy. This illo is reprinted from *Susanfan* by permission of the editor.



After being off my diet for my vacation, I'm returning to the Atkins plan, and hope to waist away---

Battlestar: Galactica was cancelled, though I've heard some rumors that it may return in the fall as a mini-series. That would be nice--I've spent many delightful hours falling off my chair from laughter while watching it. The song-and-dance routine with ~~the Statetown~~ Hector and Vector, for instance, is a cherished memory. (Snort!) And there were some very decent episodes, particularly in the final batch. Perhaps, if they get a chance to go on in the fall, they'll be able to realize some of the potential shown in those last few episodes.

And I STILL haven't gotten around to watching *Mork and Mindy*. Sigh.

In my Copious Spare Time, I'm working on rewriting two stories. "Leave of Absence" is my second kershu story. (How funny that out of four kershu stories published, I've only written one!) "Leave" deals with a disagreement between Jan and Master Kinet. Unfortunately, there are problems with both the plot and the pacing of the story, but if things go well, it should appear in MASIFORM D #11.

My other story, "Serpent's Tooth", is also about Klingons, but is not a kershu story. Somehow, by means too devious and subtle to understand, I have committed myself to having *this* story printed in Anne Zeek's TIME WARP. This will be the third thing ever that I've had published anywhere besides my own zines, and the second story. The others were a poem in PROBE, and a story in ERIDANI TRIAD III. I still have a sneaking feeling that I've been had. I don't remember promising. . .

Speaking of Imperial planets, have you heard about the Insane Asylum on Saltine? The people there are all crackers.

Acute readers of the art credits page may notice an old familiar name--Jane Peyton. In the dim golden days of early Trek, C Jane Peyton produced such notable material as "Lament for the Unsung Dead" (SPOCKANALIA #3), "Cave-In" (SPOCKANALIA #5), and the artwork for "Time Enough" (SPOCKANALIA #5). To paraphrase Jane's letter, you can go away but you never really leave. Addictive, that's what our company is!

Welcome back, Jane.

From the Vulcan Graffiti Wall: *Homo sapiens* is a misnomer!

--Vida Hull

Urged by Joyce, Barbara and I went with her to see "Alien". About half-way through the movie, as the mean vicious baddie was about to select a second victim, I said to Barbara, "I don't want to watch any more of this." To which she replied, "That's good. I was trying to think of a good way to tell you I wanted to leave."

So we both sneaked out, leaving Joyce with no one to clutch at but the lady seated next to her (which kind of disturbed the lady's date) and Barbara and I went off to a restaurant and had Hungarian pancakes and wine instead.

Afterwards, I was a tiny bit sorry I'd left, when we found out that Sigourney Weaver and the cat survive--but not sorry enough to go and sit through the whole thing. *My* feeling was that I didn't want to sit and watch those dodos getting it, one after another.

However, it's a fabulously scary movie, with beautiful, well-worked out, super-realistic effects. The plot's got a few flaws here and there--why did the captain . . .but well, no use giving it ALL away.

If you like horror movies, go see it.

Space, The Final Frontier--and there's a new book about it. ENTERPRISE, by Dr. Jerry Grey, preface by Isaac Asimov, Morrow, \$10.95. ISBN 0-688-03462-4. This opus is all about the shuttle (including how it got its name)--its future, value, inception, the works. It's written by a man in Barbara's office--the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics. How's that for a fine job for a fan?

It is hoped that the SF Bookclub may pick up this title as one of interest to their members. Write them. Write your Congresspersons, too--if we'd gotten the shuttle ready on time, they would have been able to go up and refuel Skylab, and it wouldn't be about to fall on our heads right now! For that matter, if they'd spent a little more on fuel, they could've put it into a higher, more stable orbit. (Penny wise, pound foolish--but where's NASA going to get the money to be pound wise?)

Same Old Story--in 1982, the planets are going to line up, and re-

main in the configuration for about 2 years before swinging away again. It's a line-up that may not be repeated for a couple of hundred or thousand years. But are we going to be out there studying it? Of course not.

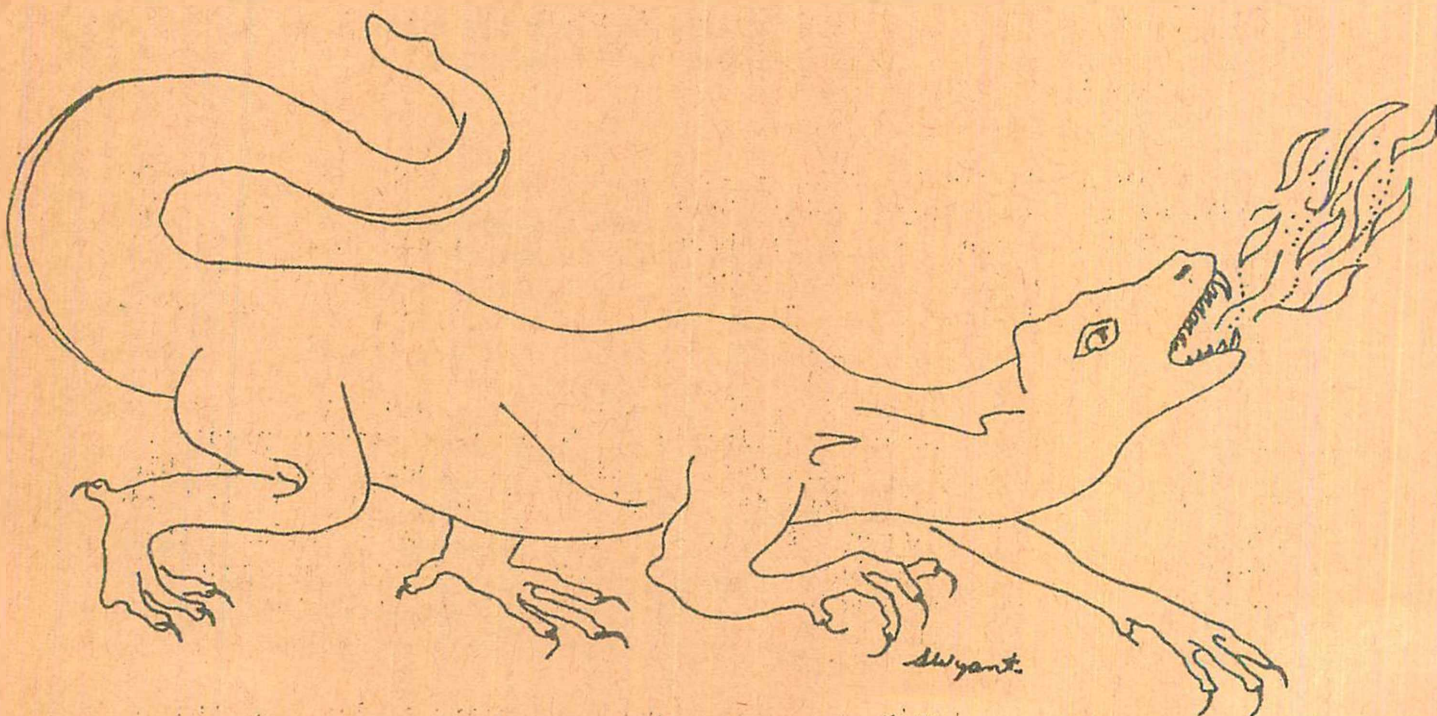
By the way, unless NASA gets some funding SOON, like by early 1981, they ALSO won't be able to mount a mission to snuggle up to Haley's Comet--which means *another* priceless opportunity down the drain. At least until 2060. Want to wait? Okay, then, fellow fen--that's right, it's LETTER CAMPAIGN TIME!! We got the shuttle named properly, didn't we? And this is a hell of a lot more important for science and space research. Start bugging those Congresspeople!

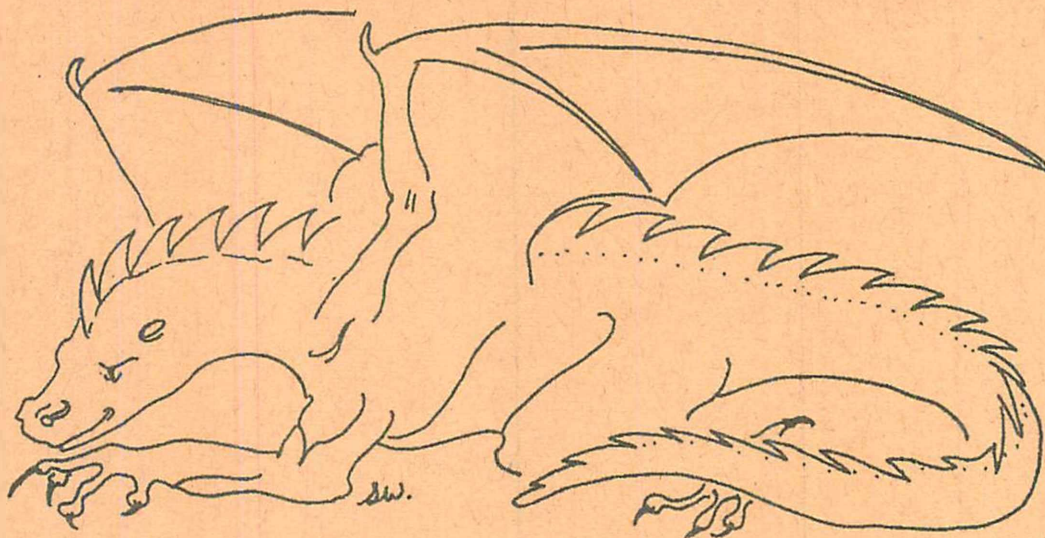
And Still Time Passes--July 20th is the tenth anniversary of the first moon landing. wow. Ten years.

I remember going to the Moon-In in Central Park. Hundreds of people dressed in white, splashing cheerfully in the mud and drizzle in the Sheep Meadow, buying moon-balloons and "green cheese", and watching the three super-tremendous TV screens set up by the major networks.

I signed up with Pan Am for their "First Moon Flights" club--got the card in my wallet still. Wonder if they'll get commercial flights before I get too old to go?

"Dear me, the skylab is falling!"--Chicken Little





Speaking of painful ideas, I just got myself a new blue tee-shirt with black lettering that says "Arbara University--Kershu team." (Black-and-blue are the university colors, my dear!)

How do you recognize a kershu fighter in the dark?

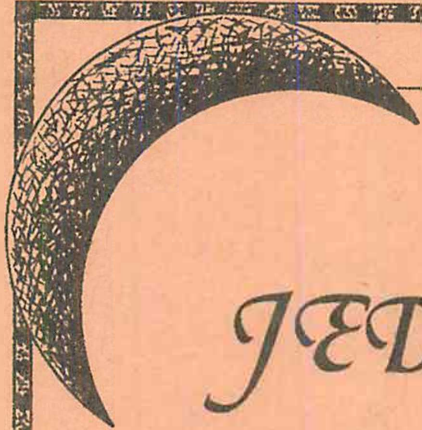
By the smell of *Ben-Gay*

--R.K.

Mandatory *Star Wars* Item: I am particularly pleased with this issue's obligatory *Star Wars* item. It is a thing of beauty and a joy forever, and could EASILY be expanded to 60,000 words and a riotous reception EVERYwhere. But what else can you expect from the originator of "Upstars, Downstars", a piece of biting satire about social climbing and political undercurrents in the Empire?

Therefore, it is with great pleasure that I present:

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JEDD NIGHTS

BARBARA LOUISE WENK

The thick-lashed eyes she lifted to his were rich pools of violet in her flawless ivory face. She stepped closer, and Obi-wan caught the subtle fragrance of rich kessel-spice.

"Master," she said, her voice soft, vibrant. Her hands went to the night-black masses of her hair, pulled loose the jewelled pins that confined it. The gleaming ebon strands tumbled in silken waves past her slender waist.

"Master," she breathed, wreathing her soft arms about his lean, hard body, "teach me the ways of the Force..."

* * *



The hallway leading to the filmroom was dimly lit and almost deserted. The only people she saw were a trio at the far end, leisurely decorating the floor, involved in some discussion, or perhaps a game. The sound of their laughter drifted down the wide corridor, emphasizing her loneliness. The con had been very quiet since Joe went back home to work.

Now that's a funny spot, she thought, staring at the edge of the carpet a few yards away, suddenly unwilling to pass the happy group. Strange that the hotel people would allow a rug as elegant as this one to be so badly mismatched. Idly she hiked the fanzines more comfortably up her hip and wandered over to take a closer look. The pattern of the red carpet seemed to be darker and sort of--blurry? She rubbed her hand over her forehead. *Glasses*, she reminded herself.

But why should this part seem blurrier than the rest? Maybe it was wet, though it really didn't look that way. She touched it with her toe; it didn't act wet either. Also the edge of the patch was too sharp and regular. In fact it was roughly circular, she noticed, and the blurring seemed more in the air above it than in the carpet itself. She bent over and put her hand in the blurred area warily. Nothing happened.

Squinting again, she frowned at the base of the wall on the far edge of the patch. She could swear she'd caught a flash of something shiny--a coin someone had dropped perhaps.

Moving her head back and forth in hopes of catching the flash again, she knelt and reached a little way into the blur. There it was again, only it looked like several coins. She reached for them and the flash appeared on the back of her hand. A light projection, then. She looked up for the source just as an odd rippling went through her. She had only an instant to look around, startled, before the world blacked out.

She was definitely *not* in the hotel hallway, but the wall before her didn't quite register as familiar either. Then she turned her head slowly, taking in the circles on the floor, one of which she was kneeling on, the two steps down to the rest of the room, the panelling of the wall and the free-standing console across the way.

A funny, fluttering, tingly feeling had started somewhere in the vicinity of her stomach. *No, it's not possible*, she thought. *Things like that don't happen* (though part of her wished fervently that they did). *Some kind of trick*, her brain insisted, but the idea rang false even as she formed it: Who would play such a trick on her? *And why? A dream then?*

She scrambled to her feet and stepped down off the platform, moving slowly toward the console. But she was already certain what she would find when she reached the other side. The stack of bound paper that she clutched was rumpling from the dampness of her hands, but she gripped it tighter, the sweaty reality reassuring.

Another TV program passed through her mind. *The Twilight Zone*, she

Sunday afternoon at the Con

By Ruth M. Bollerud

Damn, she'd left her glasses in the room again. If the whole idea of vanity in connection with her dumpy form and unexciting face hadn't been so ridiculous. . . .

She sighed and hefted the stack of fanzines under her arm as she squinted across the dealers' room. Though she had been through the room three times in the past two days, she still harbored a secret hope that there was something she had missed.

But this had already been a particularly successful con as far as she was concerned. True, three of the zines she carried were part of the same series, one she had never tried before, and one was an issue she might already have, but ten zines at one con was a pretty good haul. Even nine if the one turned out to be a duplicate. And in addition to the fanzines, she'd found two prozines that looked good, and one paperback. She felt quite rich, despite the fact that the money she'd brought was almost gone.

A man in a captain's uniform, standing in a doorway nearby, caught her eye and she smiled slightly. The only resemblance between him and the original, other than the uniform, was the mild portliness at his middle. But she kept her smile tolerant; after all, she was wearing a uniform too, though there was no braid on her red sleeve to denote a senior officer--in fact there was no braid on her sleeve at all. This was not precisely an oversight. She'd had to decide between buying some very inferior gold rickrack at the store, which she could sew on in time for the con, and sending away for the good stuff, which couldn't possibly arrive in time. She'd decided to be either a yeoman or an ensign (she wasn't sure which) for this con at least.

The *ersatz* captain, apparently not having found what he wanted, turned around and disappeared the way he had come. She sighed again and swung in a slow arc to survey the room around her once again. The last day letdown was upon her. Maybe she should go and take a last look at the art show or tour the exhibit room one last time. She pushed the blunt fingers of her free hand through her dark brown bob (at least she'd had sense enough to wash it this morning) and glanced at her wristwatch under the edge of the red sleeve.

Five-thirty. The exhibits would be closing and the art show already torn down. In fact, as she looked around again, she saw that some of the dealers were already packing up. Maybe a film then; they, at least, would still be going for a while.

thought craftily, *that's where I am. And the next person through that door will be the devil to tell me that I'm trapped in this empty, impossible room forever.*

She gasped aloud when the door opened on the heels of that thought. But the man who ran in didn't look particularly like the devil, though his tunic was red.

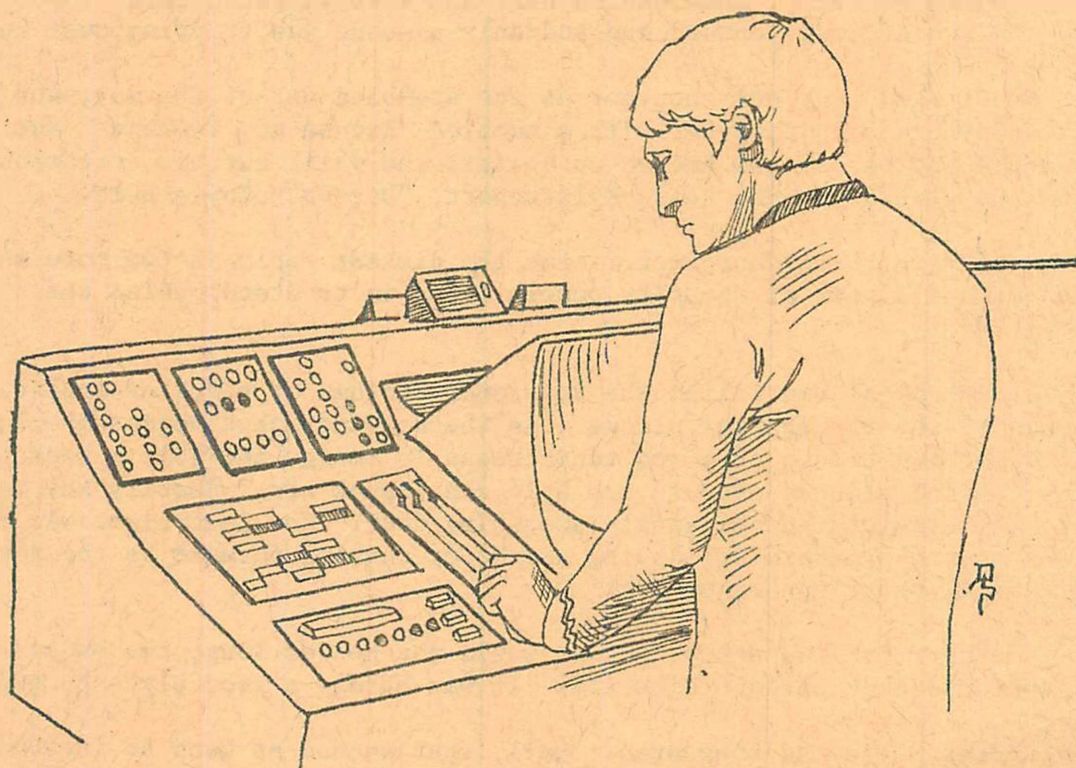
"Yeoman, has anything happened since you've been here? The bridge is reporting a power surge. And with transporters one and three down for maintenance, we don't need a breakdown here too."

She managed a vague headshake--it was literally the truth.

He ran his hands over the instruments, seeming barely aware of her. Finally he glanced up briefly, noting her awkwardness as she desperately sought something intelligent to say. "Dismissed, Yeoman. I'll set up for the landing party."

Her mouth opened twice, but of the thousand questions in her mind, none would come out.

"It's all right, I'll take over now. You're one of the new ones, aren't you. Go get some coffee, or something, why don't you."



She wanted to ask him where, but he'd already forgotten her again and was activating the intercom. As she backed away slowly she heard a distant voice say, "Bridge."

"Transporter room here. Standing by."

"Doctor McCoy is on the way down, Mr. Kyle. Have you located the source of the power surge?" Even distant and tinny by the intercom, the sound of that new voice made her shiver.

"No, sir. The instruments seem to be functioning normally. I do have a signal from someone at the landing site now. Doesn't seem to be the Captain's though."

There was a pause. "Lock onto it. Transport on my signal."

"Aye sir."

She wanted to stay where she was and watch, but she knew that the transporter chief would notice her again any minute, and the idea of trying to explain *her* problem in the middle of what was obviously an emergency seemed ludicrous.

I'm not really here anyway, she told herself. *This is just some kind of weird dream*. But if so, it was nothing like any other Trek dream she'd ever had.

Sensing the door close behind her, she stepped back again. She heard the swoosh as it opened and suddenly someone was tripping over her.

She looked over her shoulder as she stumbled out of the way, and found McCoy brushing past her with a mumbled "Excuse me, Yeoman." She echoed his apology as she backed up against the wall, but his attention was on the platform. She heard Kyle report, "Doctor McCoy's here."

"Activate the transporter," came the distant reply as two more medical personnel and a pair of security people filed in to stand behind the doctor.

A mechanical hum filled the room and a column of sparkles appeared over one of the transporter plates. As the dancing motes began to assume human shape and traces of a red tunic began to emerge she felt a sense of oppression and glanced over to see Kyle glaring at her. Hastily she backed around the edge of the obligingly swooshing door. Her last sight was of the man on the platform collapsing and McCoy rushing forward as the door slid closed, shutting her out.

The corridor was empty, but it would not be for long; the medical team would be back through directly. It was hardly a good place to tarry.

Coffee, Kyle had suggested. Well, that seemed as good an idea as any, but she couldn't remember which deck the messhalls or rec rooms were on. For that matter, which deck was the transporter room on? Six?

Anyhow, wasn't there supposed to be more than one? She reached an intersection of the corridor and turned right. A little way down she came to a set of red doors; the turbolift?

The doors did indeed lead to the lift and, joy of joys, there was a sign on the wall opposite which said 'Deck Seven'. Now if only she could remember where she could find a messhall or rec room. Only thing to do was to look, and hope she could act like she knew what she was doing. There were some doors further down the way from the turbolift. As good a place as any to start.

She spent what seemed like at least an hour searching the immediate area of the turbolift on Decks Seven, Six, and Five. She was afraid to go very far from the lift for fear of losing that one reference point. Finally, on Deck Six, she saw two people leaving a room full of tables down a side corridor she hadn't planned to investigate. Gripping her fanzines tightly, she hurried past them and stepped inside with relief.

So far she hadn't been challenged. The few people she'd met in the hall had either been in a hurry or otherwise preoccupied. Occasionally one had nodded to her. Apparently she hadn't tried to go anywhere a yeoman in red didn't belong.

But she wondered what was going on: What had happened to the man who'd collapsed on the transporter, and to Captain Kirk, whom they'd obviously expected and who hadn't returned?

At least there hadn't been any Red Alert. In such a situation, a yeoman who didn't have anywhere to go would certainly stand out. But what about an intruder alert? Shouldn't there have been one when she arrived? Could the 'Great' *Enterprise* be this easy to board, to lose oneself on? She smiled wryly at the unintentional pun; she was certainly lost.

Wait a minute; Kyle had mistaken her for transporter personnel, and no one else had been there when she appeared. What if the person on duty had traded places with her, the way it had happened in "Mirror, Mirror"? That might explain why her arrival hadn't activated any alarms, other than that for the power surge. She had a sudden picture of some unsuspecting crewman standing in the red-carpeted hallway of the con hotel. How would he/she ever make anyone believe that he wasn't just another trekfan in costume? Would he even be able to understand what had happened to him?

She started giggling in a slightly hysterical way, then stopped abruptly as she realized that others in the room were beginning to look her way. She sat quickly in the nearest chair, slipping the sweaty stack of fanzines onto the table before her.

Well, if she had reached the messhall safely, the next step was to get some coffee. She didn't really like coffee much, but she didn't know what else might be available, or how to get it either. You needed one of those plastic chits, didn't you? Well, she could wait and watch;

maybe someone would show her how it was done.

Sure enough, a few minutes later one of the men at a crowded table on the far side of the room got up and came over to a counter fairly near her seat.

She had noticed the assortment of stacked cups, trays, pitcher type containers, and little packets in bins that was there. In fact, everything was there except the coffee itself. But a dispenser nearby suggested a solution to that. Now if only he didn't use some kind of coded key. . . .

The crewman picked up a tray and put one of the pitchers, some cups, and a handful of packets from each bin on it. Then he set the pitcher under the dispenser and pushed a button. *Too easy*, she thought, feeling a little stupid. Maybe there was some catch she'd overlooked. But she could spot none. The crewman released the button when the pitcher was full and headed back to the group at the table.

She bit her lip, an idea forming. With an anticipatory tightening in her chest, she rose and copied the crewman's actions, stopping only to fill a cup for herself as well, diluting it with cream and sugar to a consistency she could stand. There was more than just cream and sugar in the packets, she discovered. There was also lemon and something she didn't recognize and didn't want to try to pronounce. For coffee? But the crewman had taken packets from every bin, so she included them on her tray along with some stirring sticks.

The tray with the full pitcher of coffee on top of the stack of fanzines made an awkward pile, one that was sure to tire her arm before she reached her destination, but she didn't want to leave the zines behind--they were her only possessions in this place. Besides, she wasn't sure she could find this messhall again.

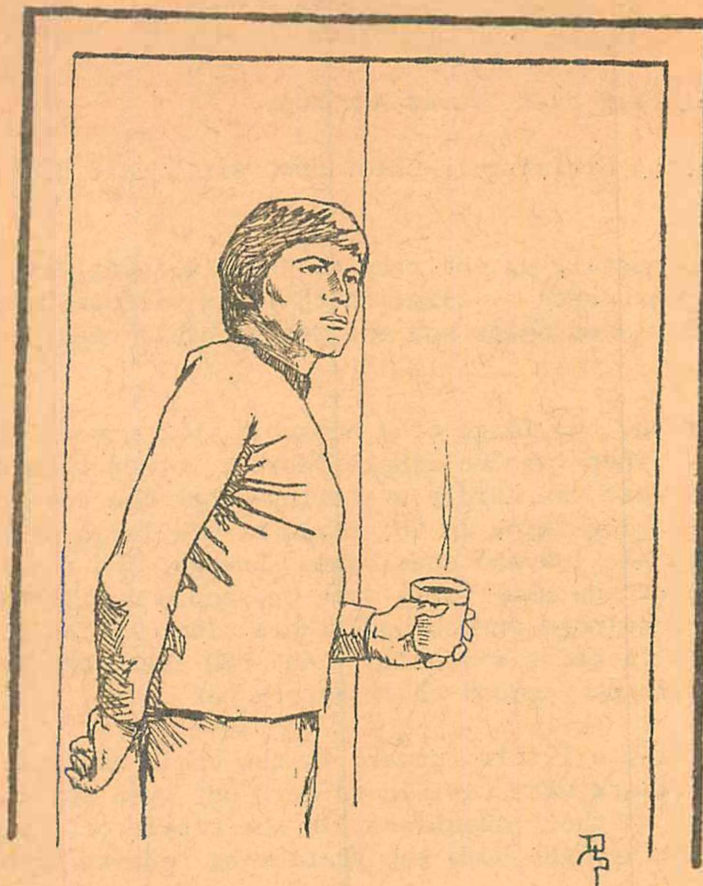
She took a deep breath to steady herself and headed back to the turbolift.

Inside the little elevator car a new thrill of doubt assailed her: Maybe the mechanism wouldn't take her where she wanted to go. But she grasped the activating handle firmly and her voice only quavered a little as she said, "Bridge."

The double doors opened a few minutes later on a strange room, and her panic returned in triplicate. A hanging sign before her read 'Deck Two'. But before she could give up and retreat in disorder, another person stepped into the lift beside her. The voice that ordered "Bridge" had traces of a familiar accent.

The Slav looked her over and produced a grin. "You're new." It was not a question. She managed a slight nod. She must look as green as she felt, and not vulcan green. "You haf quite a load. Can I relieve you of a cup?"

She gave him a sickly grin and awkwardly poured the coffee, aware



that the lift doors had just opened onto the bridge.

Ensign Chekov thanked her with a conspiratorial smile, plucked two sugars off the tray and headed for his destination.

As a self-styled coffee server, she should at least act as if she knew what she was doing, she told herself nervously. Descending order of rank was proper procedure, of that she was already certain, but the thought of the one she would have to face first filled her with an unhappy combination of pure terror and wild elation. She stepped out of the lift onto the deck of the bridge, eyes on the figure seated in the center of the room.

He was staring at the huge main screen, though she could see nothing in the view of the planet they were orbiting to so hold his attention. His hands were tented just above his lap, elbows resting on the arms of the chair.

Did Vulcans even drink coffee? If there was some reference from the program that would help her she couldn't remember it. Gathering herself and sternly commanding squirming stomach and shaking legs to behave, she walked round behind him and stepped down beside the command chair.

"Coffee, sir?" Her voice was a little breathless, but somehow steady. At the sound of her voice he shifted position slightly and,

without even glancing over, waved her away.

"I've got the Minister-in-Chief now, sir," said Uhura from behind him.

She backed hastily up the step to Uhura's level, his rejection mingled with the embarrassed realization that his picture was about to be broadcast to the planet below and she was probably right in the middle of it.

On the screen, the image of a humanoid, who was all the same not human, appeared. There was no single feature, other than the fact that he was bald--and that was hardly startling--that one could point out as inhuman, but something faint in the shape of his large eyes, the rather delicate curve of his jaw and cheekbones, brought the realization that no human, no matter how skillfully made up, could duplicate that subtle alienness. The knowledge struck her like a clout in the stomach, drowning out whatever was being discussed. And her eyes were inexorable drawn back to the man in the command chair before her.

He was sitting a little forward in the chair and only the back of his head and shoulders were visible to her, but even so, there was something in the cant of those shoulders, in the ripple of the muscles supporting them, that brought home the shattering reality of him.

This man was *not* Leonard Nimoy in blue tunic and black trousers. There was no foam rubber in the ear tips that curved on either side of that black crown of hair. This man was *real* and NOT HUMAN! (*Half-human*, some maniac part of her mind insisted giddily.) The shock of this brought a roar of blood in her ears and the sudden horror (almost relief?) that she was going to faint.

A tap on her shoulder reached her consciousness and she turned with a violent start, overbalancing the coffee pitcher and nearly the tray as well. A dark hand shot out and caught the pitcher before it slopped more than a little, and steadied the whole assemblage on her arm with calm sureness. The other hand gripped her shoulder gently and she looked into dark eyes.

"May I have a cup of coffee, please?" Uhura asked quietly.

A rush of gratitude for that simple, comprehensible request filled her and she almost handed over the whole tray and fled. But some of the black woman's calm seemed to have reached her. With shaking hands, she took a cup from the stack and managed to pour the coffee, spilling only a few drops.

Uhura took a packet of cream and emptied it into the cup. "First time in space?" she asked in that same quiet tone.

"Yes--yes ma'am," she whispered dryly, stomach hardening in grim determination not to make a *complete* ass of herself.

"Don't let it bother you," the other woman suggested with a slight

jerk of her chin towards the screen. "You'll get used to it." She paused to punch a button on her board and listen briefly, then punched another series of buttons. "Why don't you see if Haines or Marvin want some coffee. By that time they--" she indicated the Vulcan and the screen in one tiny motion "--should be done and Su can have his."

"Thanks, uh, Lieutenant. Ha-have you found out what happened to, uh, the Captain?" Why should it seem so hard to talk to these people, just because they'd always been distant images on the screen before. She felt somehow that she ought to have some kind of dialogue prepared--she hadn't memorized her part properly. Then, the memory of those shoulders leaning attentively away from the back of the command chair behind her reaffirmed the *realness* of the situation. No script. Oh well, she was no actress either.



Uhura was answering, ". . .admitted he's missing. We're dickering now to send down another party to investigate. Why don't you go serve the coffee and we'll find out what's happening.

"Aren't you even worried?" slipped out in response to the calm, soft voice.

"Yeoman, coffee!" It was a warning, but as she backed away, she realized that a haunted look almost cancelled out the annoyance in the woman's dark eyes.

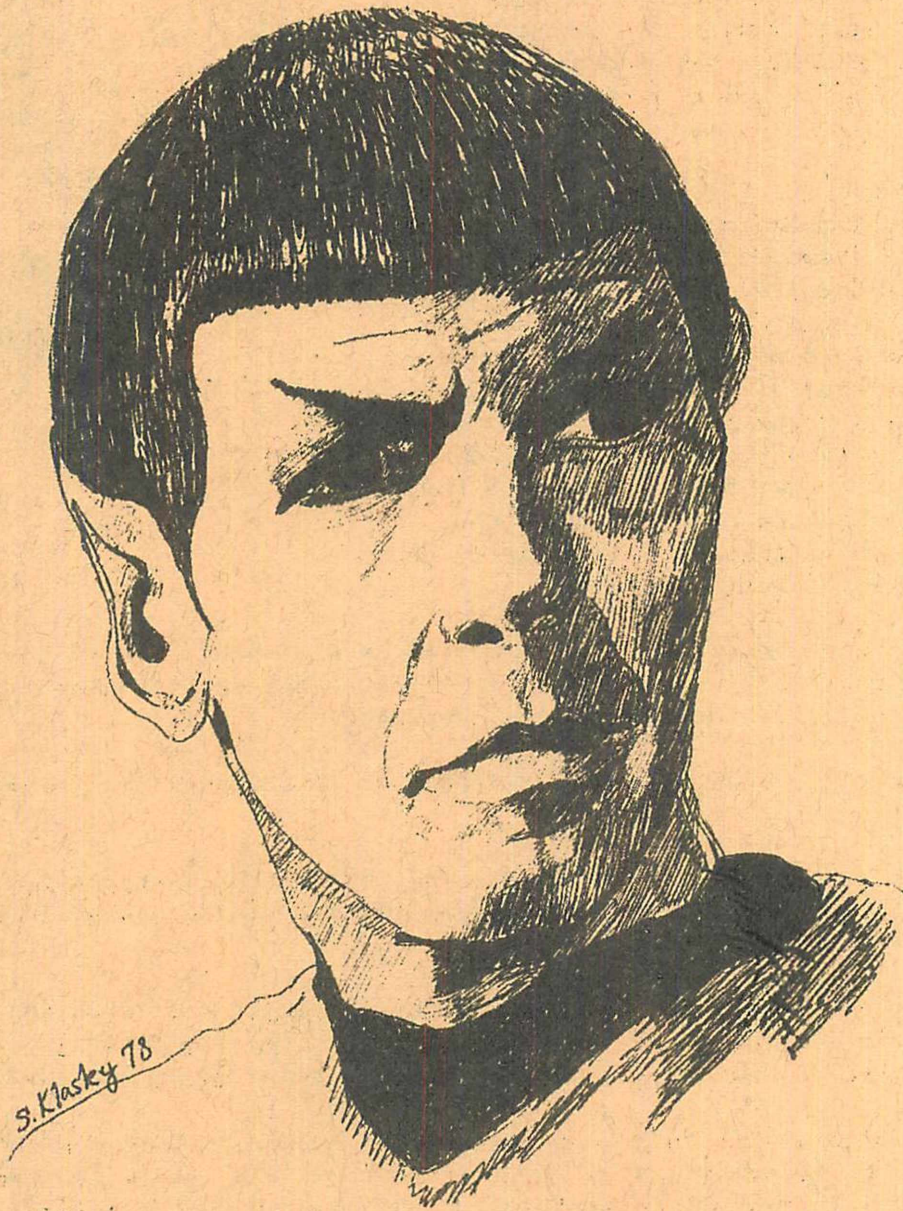
Angry at herself for the innocent cruelty, she made sure she was out of Uhura's line of sight, then sneaked a furtive glance at the screen; she wasn't sure she *wanted* to see the--person--whose image was there.

The image was frowning, or she assumed it was a frown, and as her glance held and became a stare, she realized that his (its?) lip motions were at odds with the voice issuing from the speaker on the bridge. So the universal translator actually worked!

The voice, inflectionless and machine generated, was saying, ". . . political situation here is not exactly the kind in which we prefer to entertain guests."

"You're at war." The flat voice of the man in the chair seemed to mimic the mechanical reproduction.

"Oh, no, not *war*." Even the translator managed to convey the hastiness of that refutation. "Rather a certain-ah-tension caused by



a-um-political faction which disagrees with some of the tenets of the-uh-government."

"Revolution," the Vulcan suggested.

"No, no. I assure you that the situation is, um-for the most part, under-uh-control. We had hoped that the arrival of the Federation would have an-ah-unifying effect. Unfortunately that has not-um-precisely been the case."

Coldly, "With the result that the ambassador and his party and two of this ship's crew are missing."

The image waved its hands rather frantically. "Now no, let's not make hasty judgments. As I've already stated, I'm sure there's a-um-reasonable explanation. The party was touring the-ah-recreational facilities of our complex here. I'm sure that their escort merely lost track of them during the-ah-unfortunate incident that-uh-injured your crewman. No doubt they'll be making contact with us-er-or with you any time now. I do hope your crewman will recover quickly, by the way," he added.

The occupant of the command chair seemed to have become a statue. She couldn't see the raised eyebrow from her position, but she was sure it was there. The silence dragged for several seconds before the Commander spoke: "I restate my request to send another landing party to assist your security people in locating our personnel." He leaned back and made a quick hand-signal. Behind him Uhura abruptly found something interesting to do with her board.

On the screen the alien was nibbling delicately on a finger as if considering the request. After a moment he removed the digit from his mouth and stared at it as if this was to be the recipient of his words. "I have warned you that the situation here is-um-difficult. It is possible that additional Federation people here at this time could-ah-trigger some further-um-awkwardness." He glanced over his hand at this point as if to discover what reaction that information had generated.

The Commander leaned forward in his chair and at the same moment the doors of the turbolift opened. One of these actions seemed to intimidate the alien; he flinched visibly and continued hurriedly, "On the other hand if, understanding that there is a certain-ah-risk, you still wish to send another party to-um-continue our negotiations, we will make all effort to provide a suitable welcome for our-um-new guests."

The Vulcan raised his hand as Engineer Scott stepped past the coffee-bearing 'yeoman' to stand behind the command chair. "Lieutenant Uhura, notify the second landing party personnel to assemble in the transporter room."

"Aye, Commander."

On the screen the alien diplomat raised his hands side by side,

palms forward, and bowed slightly. "I go to prepare your welcome." The screen faded back to the previous view of the planet below.

The Vulcan spun the chair around and stood, his eyes on communications. From where she stood, only a few feet away, the 'yeoman' could see that the brown of those eyes had a green shading no human's would have. Even more evident, the lips were green, not pink, and the veins in his eyes were also *very* green. Whatever had been going on here of late, the Commander was getting very little rest from it. That last realization softened the blow of his alienness and she had presence of mind enough to realize her mouth was open and to shut it.

Uhura was looking to him for further instruction. He provided it. "I want a full security team, and have Doctor McCoy meet me in the transporter room. Mr. Scott, you have the conn." Almost immediately the lift doors closed behind him.

"Evidently Mr. Spock sees finding the Captain as the means to reopening negotiations," said Sulu in a satisfied tone from the helm console.

"Aye," stated Scott in complete agreement.

At this point the 'yeoman' realized where she was and what she was there for. She stepped forward again. "Coffee, Mr. Scott?"

But the Chief Engineer also waved her away. "Not now, lass."

"I'll take some," Sulu piped up. She hurried down to him and poured the cup, lowering the tray so he could get to the assorted packets. He took the cup, but waved the rest away. "Black," he said, "black as the love of my heart." He gave her a broad grin and a wink. She giggled helplessly and glanced at Uhura, who didn't seem to have noticed.

"Don't pay any attention to him," Chekov whispered loudly. "He says that to all the vimen."

"Then all the women know where my heart is," Sulu countered airily.

Uhura still had not looked up, but a hint of a smile curved her lips.

"Hey, how 'bout some coffee over here?" said the man at the engineering station.

"Me too," the crewman next to him added.

She hurried up the steps to serve them.

"Yeoman." It took a moment for her to realize that it was to her that Uhura was speaking.

"Yes ma'am?"

The communications officer waved her over. "Commander Spock wants you."

She gave Uhura a startled, nervous look as she leaned toward the grid the other indicated. "Yes, sir?"

"Yeoman," said the distant, transmitted voice, "there's a taped report I want Mr. Scott to have while I'm on the planet. It's on the desk in my quarters. If you'll put your hand on the computer recognition plate, I'll leave instructions for you to be admitted long enough to get it."

"Yes, sir." A white panel glowed to life almost under her nose. Awkwardly she placed her hand flat against it.

"Completed; Spock out." The glow faded. She glanced worriedly at Uhura.

"Do you know how to get there?" the other woman asked softly.

"I-I'm not sure."

"Deck Five. Turn left, fifth door on the right."

"Thanks," she shifted the load on her arm to a more comfortable position.

"And why don't you get rid of all that whatever-it-is you're carrying, while you're at it," the lieutenant suggested kindly. "Drop it off in your quarters or wherever. It's kind of a load to lug around."

She gave the woman a quick smile and headed for the lift. Uhura didn't know, of course, that she had no quarters here.

The room was dimly lit and smelled, well, alien. Very Spocklike somehow. The temperature was also too high for her to endure comfortably for long. The square of plastic on the desk could only be the report--it was the only thing on the desk other than the viewphone. She took the risk of setting her load down on the smooth surface while she took a look around.

The rest of his quarters was sparsely furnished, chess set and lytherette on the shelf in the outer room. In the bedchamber, crossed shafts of metal, alien weapons, hung on the wall over the bed. And on the far side of it, a tongue of flame burned in an intricately worked container and a sculpture stood on a pedestal.

The single painting on the wall was of a landscape. It was an alien landscape, and one no human had ever painted; the colors were wrong and, in some undefinable way, so was the perspective. She looked for a signature, but if one were there she couldn't see it.

Strange though the painting was, if she had seen it in a con art show she'd have paid her whole savings, and maybe a bit more, to have it. She sighed, briefly wondering what was happening at the con.

But the room was more important and dragged her attention back. Sparsely decorated, yes, and painfully tidy. But still lived in by a man who was at home with wealth and elegance. And authority. She could feel his strength in the room. Not flashy or ostentaciously, but simmering, like the flame in this container. And deep, like the heartbeat of a sated lover.

The last made her smile. *Must be a line from a poem*, she thought, *not my style at all.*

All the xenophobic thoughts she'd had while looking at him on the bridge were gone. She basked in the sense of peace and serenity the place held for her.

A soft click startled her and brought her from relaxing calm to guilty terror in an instant. *What am I doing in this place? If he should find me. . . .*

She remembered that 'he' was on the planet below at the same time that she realized that the click had come from the heating unit going on. But the mood was broken.

I'd better get back up to the bridge before someone wonders why I've been gone so long. She grabbed the coffee tray in one hand and took the report in the other and almost ran out the door.

As she reached the turbolift a voice called out, "Yeoman?"

Prepared to be berated, she halted and looked around for the caller. "Yes sir?" She was getting used to the idea that everyone was her superior, but the owner of the voice, when she located him almost around the bend of the corridor, was only a crewman, probably of her own rank.

He hurried up. "Were you on duty in Transporter Room Four earlier this afternoon?"

"Yes," she replied hesitantly, a new fear gripping her--had they finally found her out?

"Well, you'd better get back there. Kyle's looking for you and he's plenty mad. Says he sent you out for coffee and you never came back. And it's already past dinnertime. You don't turn up in a hurry, and with a good reason, you'll be on report and God knows what else."

The wave of relief that they still didn't know who she really was made her feel giddy. "Here, take this." She handed him the coffee tray. "I've got to take this" here she waved the report at him, "up to the bridge, to Mr. Scott; Mr. Spock's orders. Then I'll go right down. Promise. Okay?" She dove into the lift before he had time to answer.

On the way up, she wondered if she could appeal to someone on the bridge for protection from the wrath of the Transporter Chief. But she realized that she couldn't claim that anyone had sent her up with the coffee, whatever had happened after. Besides, it would only draw more attention to her. Best to go on down and hope that Kyle was too hungry to spend much time yelling at her. The possibility of discipline was another problem, but maybe she could still get some mileage out of the 'green troops' bit. She smiled wryly as she realized she was in danger of getting used to this place. Still, sooner or later. . . .

On the bridge the lift doors opened to show a scene of suppressed pandemonium. Everywhere she looked she saw huge grins. If it hadn't been for the general silence she would have thought someone had told a joke and she had just missed the punchline.



Then the reason for the grins appeared on the forward screen: Captain Kirk, as unrealistically handsome as his actor alter ego, now harried and worn, but with a curve to his lips that mirrored the grins of the crew.

"Yes, Scotty, we're all safe. The would-be kidnappers haven't been completely rounded up, but the Minister-in-Chief assures me that their freedom won't last the night.

"I've sent Spock and the rescue party back to the landing site. They should be ready to transport up any time."

"We've already got them, sir," Scott advised.

"Good, good. The Ambassador and I will be staying planetside tonight. I don't think we need worry about a repeat of today's ah-incident." He glanced behind him to where the Minister-in-Chief and a

skinny man with a shiny black goatee that looked like it had been enameled on were deeply involved in discussion.

When he looked back his smile became broader. "Ah, Mr. Spock."

"Captain," the Vulcan commented in greeting as he stepped out of the lift. There was a small cut on his forehead surrounded by the shadow of a bruise--somehow the sight of green blood no longer shook her--otherwise he looked no different from when he had left.

He took the tape from her hand with a brief "Thank you, Yeoman," as he headed for the command chair. Scott rose smoothly and turned it over. As much to the screen as to her he continued, "I don't believe we will be needing this for the present, but it might be prudent to keep it near at hand." The captain's image gave a slight nod of agreement as Spock put the plastic chit carefully on the arm of the chair. "Dismissed," he nodded to her.

She returned his nod, but he had already turned away. With a sigh she went back into the lift.

She still didn't really know what had happened on the planet or how near to solution the problem--whatever it was--might be. But how much was a yeoman expected to know of the business of a Starship or the doings of Command Personnel? Scuttlebutt, perhaps, overheard in the messhall, if her tenuous position here lasted that long. For the moment she had the transporter room, and Mr. Kyle, to face.

Kyle greeted her with a curt thumb at the console and a short, "Consider yourself on report, Yeoman," as he ducked out the door. Evidently he was in fact too hungry to waste energy in yelling at her. Or perhaps a yeoman just wasn't important enough.

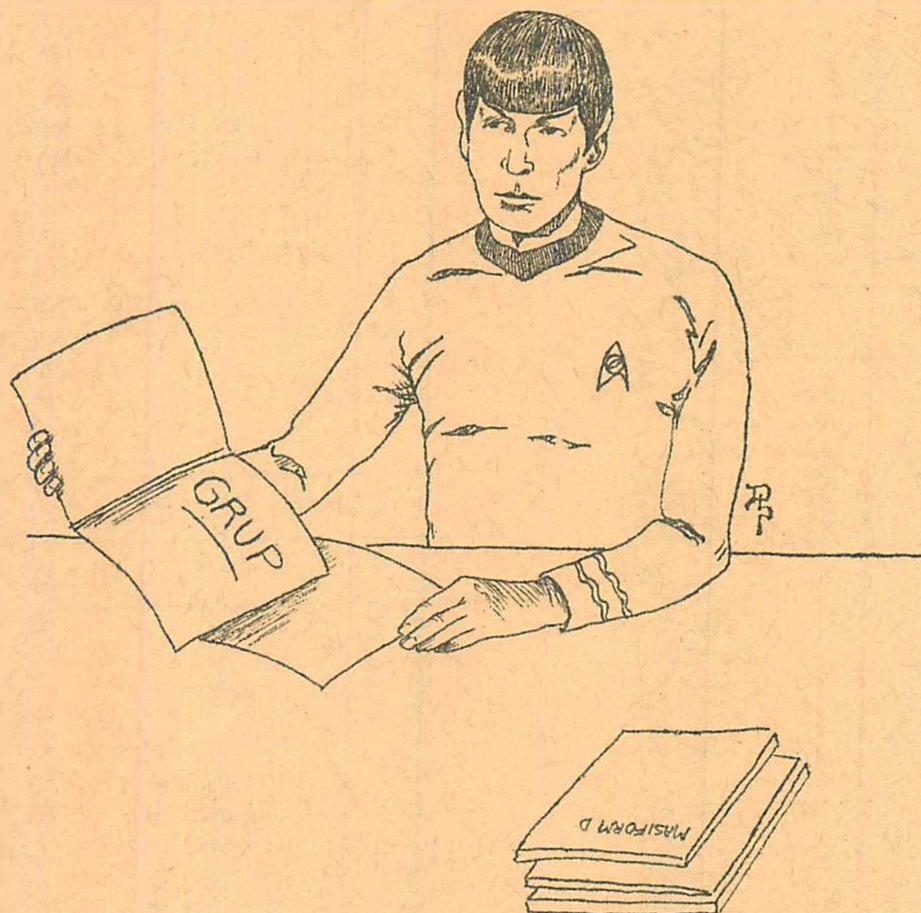
It wasn't until he had left her alone in the room once more that she thought to wonder how he was going to report her when he still didn't know her name. And just how long, she mused, would it take him to come up with the same question?

The transporter platform loomed silent and empty before her and she wondered again if the original yeoman on duty had taken her place at the con. Just for the hell of it, she went and stood on the same plate that had supported her when she arrived. Her hands hanging loose at her sides, she surveyed the deserted console with amusement.

Suddenly an oddly familiar tingling sensation went through her, just as she realized that something was missing. But her gasp of dismay was lost in the transporter hum as everything around her blacked out.

* * *

She was standing in a red-carpeted hallway and the spot beneath her feet was no different from any of the carpet surrounding it. But she was only vaguely aware of the carpet and hall at all. In her mind she saw a stack of joyfully purchased fanzines (and two prozines and one paperback) sitting on the smooth surface of the desk in Commander Spock's quarters.



A MAYAN CALENDAR

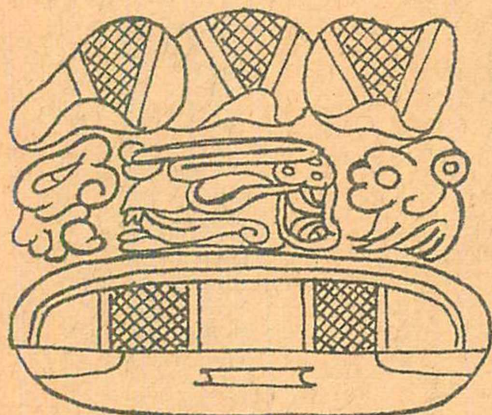
by

BARBARA WHEEL

Mr. Spock

b. March 26, 2131

Birthday computed
according to Mayan Calendar



The Mayan Calendar is reckoned
from 13.0.0.0.0. 4 Ahau 8 Cumhu
or 3113 B.C.

Time periods are:

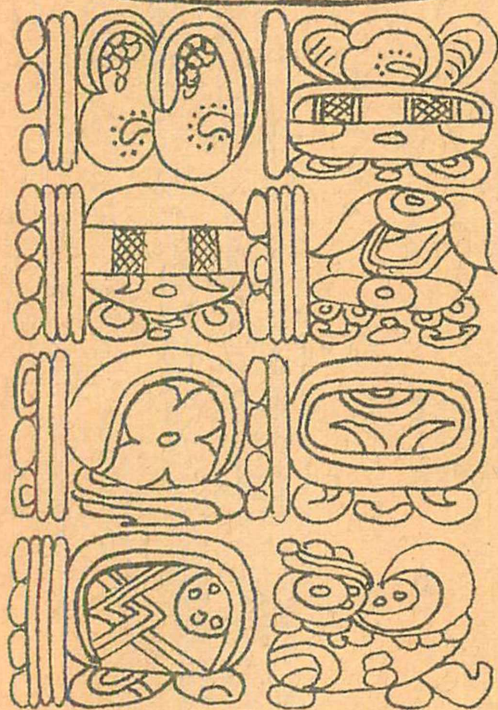
| | | |
|--------|---|--------------|
| baktun | - | 144,000 days |
| katun | | 7,200 days |
| tun | | 360 days |
| uinal | | 20 days |
| kin | | 1 day |

March 26, 2131 is:

13.5.19.17.11. 9 Chuen 19 Pop

| | baktuns | katuns | tuns | uinals | kins | |
|------|---------|--------|-----------|--------|------|----------------|
| | | | | | | or |
| 13 x | 144,000 | = | 1,872,000 | | | |
| 5 x | 7,200 | = | 36,000 | | | |
| 19 x | 360 | = | 6,840 | | | |
| 17 x | 20 | = | 340 | | | |
| 11 x | 1 | = | 11 | | | |
| | | | | | | 1,915,191 days |

(or 5,244 years) by the Mayan
Calendar. 9 Chuen is the number
and name of the day; 19 Pop is the
number and name of the month.



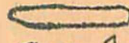
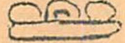



Bgw '78

March 26, 2131 = 13.5.19.17.11. 9 Chuen 19 Pop

| | |
|--|----------------------------|
| "INITIAL SERIES | |
| <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;"> God of the Month </div> | |
| INTRODUCTORY GLYPH" | |
| No. of: | BAKTUNS 144,000 days |
| No. of: | KATUNS 7,200 days |
| No. of: | TUNS 360 days |
| No. of: | UINALS 20 days |
| No. of: | KINS 1 day |
| Day No. | GOD OF THE DAY |
| Month No. | GOD OF THE MONTH |
| | Period- ending glyph |

| | |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------|
| POP | |
| 13 Baktuns = 1,872,000 days | 5 Katuns = 36,000 days |
| 19 Tuns = 6,840 days | 17 Uinals = 340 days |
| 11 Kins = 11 days | 9 Chuen |
| 19 Pop | End of Count |

Numbers: Example:

 = 5
  = 7
 = 1
 = 0
 = 6

Peoples of Vulcan:

Although Vulcan lacks the diversity of distinct racial and cultural groups which adds variety to life on Terra, its inhabitants are by no means all "much of a muchness", contrary to what Outworlders might think.

One of the most intriguing Vulcan subgroups (to Terrans, anyway) is the *Fah-Lis* or Sea People, who live on the shores of the Bitter Sea, Vulcan's only ocean.

Early in their history, the Sea People developed a process to desalinate sea-water. Therefore, they alone, of all Pre-Reform Vulcans, never needed to fear a water shortage. This meant that their culture developed significant differences from those of the majority of their species.

The Bitter Sea is the center of their culture. Sea People children learn to swim as soon as they can crawl.

(*Apropos* of this, a dear friend of mine, visiting Vulcan as a tourist, spent a few days at P'teem, a well-known resort. She told me how horrified she was to see a Vulcan mother leave a small baby--"practically newborn" according to her, but doubtless she exaggerates--unattended on the edge of a tidal pool while she herself went swimming. My friend was in a dilemma; if she carried the baby away from the water, would this constitute "interference", "bad manners", or even "kidnapping"? On the other hand, could she just sit by while the infant drowned? Fortunately, she did not have to do anything, since the baby paddled happily in the pool until its mother returned. Even at that age, it could swim.)

From infancy on, Sea People have a passion for water sports. They are expert and enthusiastic swimmers, divers, sailors, and, among the younger set, surfers and water skiers (both sports being recent imports from Terra).

A stopover in P'teem, or one of the other seaside resorts, is a must for every Federation tourist, although those with narrow pre-conceptions about what is and isn't Vulcan may find the experience mind-boggling.

For one thing, bathing suits are illogical (what, after all, is the point of wearing a garment which will only get wet and hamper your movements?) so Vulcans swim, surf *et cetera* in the nude.

This may seem strange in view of their culture's sexual inhibitions, but there is no necessary connection between nudity and sex.

Similarly, the Sea People think nothing of wearing their traditional costume in public on all but the most formal occasions. This is the *it-mahl*, or half-robe, a unisex garment consisting basically of two lengths

The Sea People

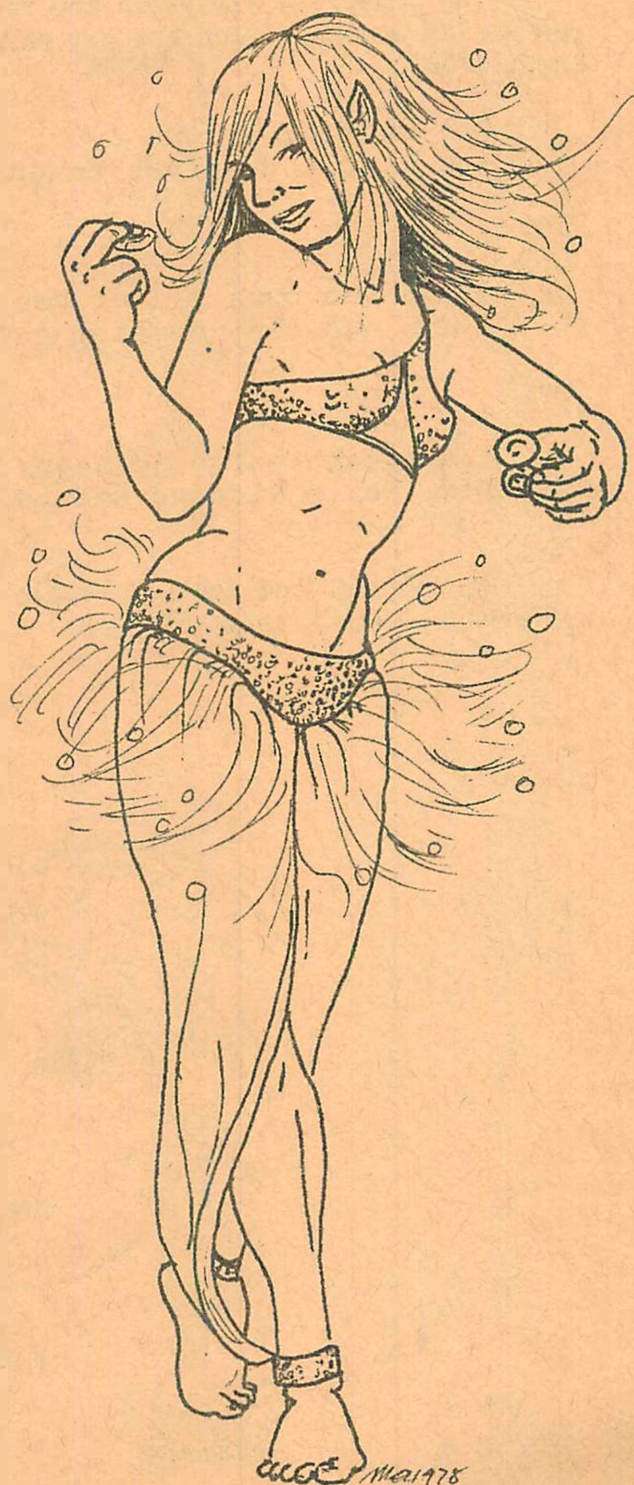
of cloth, fastened together at shoulder and ankle, but left open all down the sides, thus allowing air to circulate freely around the naked body (which can be, not just glimpsed, but studied in detail, through the two side-openings.)

The Sea People are untypical in more than dress.

To list the least important point first, they frequently have wavy, or even curly, hair. This may be for no odder reason than all the swimming they do, washing out the lacquer other Vulcans use to achieve that smooth, sculptured look.

More important is diet. Although the Sea People were among the earliest converts to the Reform Movement (indeed, Surak, Father of the Reforms, was one of them, as traditional pictures showing him in a shell-patterned tunic indicate), they were the last Vulcan group to adopt vegetarianism, and have never been really strict about it. While they shun red meat, they frequently backslide where fish and shellfish are concerned.

This is not difficult to understand: the sea provides a variety of animal protein, but very little vegetable protein. The two high-protein staples of Vulcan vegetarianism, the *plomeek* (a form of cactus resembling a prickly pear) and the *ruppok* (a tuber) will not grow near the ocean. Thus, adopting vegetarianism meant giving up familiar foods in favor of strange ones which had to be imported. It



took some time to persuade them of the logic of such a change.

Because life was never quite such a grim struggle for existence as was the case in less fortunate areas of Vulcan, the Sea People retained a certain light-hearted *insouciance*, which is reflected in their proverbs.

The proverbs, always in the form of rhyming couplets, usually involved a play on words, and are not easy to translate. However, a few attempts follow.

Only a fool drowns
But a fool deserves to drown.

and

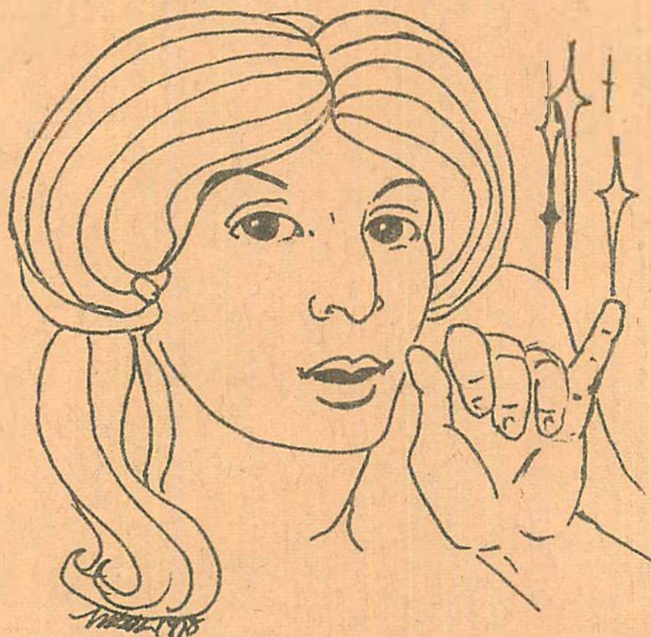
A man who owns silver has wealth;
A man who owns nothing gets a good night's sleep.

and

A man marries to be happy;
Then he is widowed and is happier than ever.

Need I add that the Sea People are the only Vulcans usually credited, by Terrans, with a sense of humor?

--Sandra Wise



Sun Warmth

You are there,
like the apples on the tree,
like the sun in the sky.
When the sun shines,
I lift my face to it,
and hold my hands palm up
to feel its heat.
When the apples are ripe,
I eat.
So I do not refuse
the sweetness dropping
from your hands.
I close my eyes and savor.
I do not need
to understand.

By Nancy Guidice

NOW YOU SEE IT--

a survey on visualization

by

Devra Langsam

One evening, I was telling my friend Barbara Wenk a story. As I went on, she said, "That's nice. What does he look like?"

"He's a Klingon," I answered.

"Yes, but what does *he* look like?"

"How do I know?" I asked.

"Well," Barbara replied with what she obviously thought was devastating logic, "he's your character; you made him up. You **MUST** know what he looks like."

But I didn't, because I do not visualize, either during reading, or when daydreaming. Barbara couldn't understand this, as she apparently sees very clear, well-defined pictures when she daydreams. As a non-visualizer, I was both jealous and intrigued, and began to ask all my other friends.

My first survey was very casual, being merely a posing of the question. It seemed to indicate a correlation between visualization and the type of creative work a person prefers. However, the first sample was very small and disorderly (indeed, I didn't keep *any* records), so I then went on to try and do a real, regular survey to see what proportion of people visualize, and what relationship it has to people's major interests.

Originally, I theorized that artists visualized and writers verbalized. However, I eventually realized that many writers also visualized. (Anne McCaffrey told me at a meeting that she could see everything in a room that she was imagining, as well as knowing what were in all the closets and drawers. D C Fontana said that it was like watching a movie while simultaneously typing the script.) This confused me. Therefore, knowing nothing of surveys, I decided to take one.

The following is the text of the questions that I asked in my survey. I distributed several hundred copies at *Star Trek* and sf conventions, to various friends and acquaintances. Joyce Yasner and Ellen Vartanoff circulated the questionnaires at their offices, and NESFA very kindly distributed the forms with their monthly newsletter. I feel that the results of the survey are heavily weighted, but I'm not exactly sure in which direction or how to adjust for it.

Indeed, the nature of this survey is rather rough, as can easily be seen from the fact that sometimes I have 54 people in the category of 'writers' and sometimes 42. I REFUSE to count the bloody things a fifth time, however.

I suspect that part of my problems with the whole survey in general stemmed from the way my questions were worded, even though I tried to be as specific as possible. What can you say about a survey in which 43 out of 123 respondents mark themselves as 'other'? The fact that this group includes someone who is *both* a well-known sf writer and a modestly successful astronomical artist shows that someone didn't make herself clear--and I guess it must have been me. Perhaps he classed himself as 'other' because he thinks of himself primarily as a scientist. Well, anyway, it made the working sample rather small.

"Other? What do you mean, *other*?"

However, the size of the sample is only one problem. The fact that there were almost no non-fans in the group MUST have done something to the results. I strongly suspect that the statistics on question #2--which concerns interest in drama and/or comics--were kind of skewed: 75% of the respondents are ST fans, and thus by definition have a strong interest in at least *one* drama.

Another problem with the survey was that people tended to write essay answers of a subjective nature, rather than just checking off a box or writing 'yes' or 'no'. How do you chart a series of responses of 'sometimes', 'maybe', and 'sort of'?

Also, some people put more than one set of answers on a form, causing me all kinds of grief when I tried to sort the sheets by subdivisions.

"I symbolize the picture rather than seeing detailed forms."

It is possible that forcing people to think about their daydreams/dreams and whether they visualize made them unsure as to what they *actually* did dream. (Heisenberg's Uncertainty Principle strikes again.) I have a nagging feeling that people slanted their answers (whether consciously or unconsciously) to give me the answers that they felt I wanted.

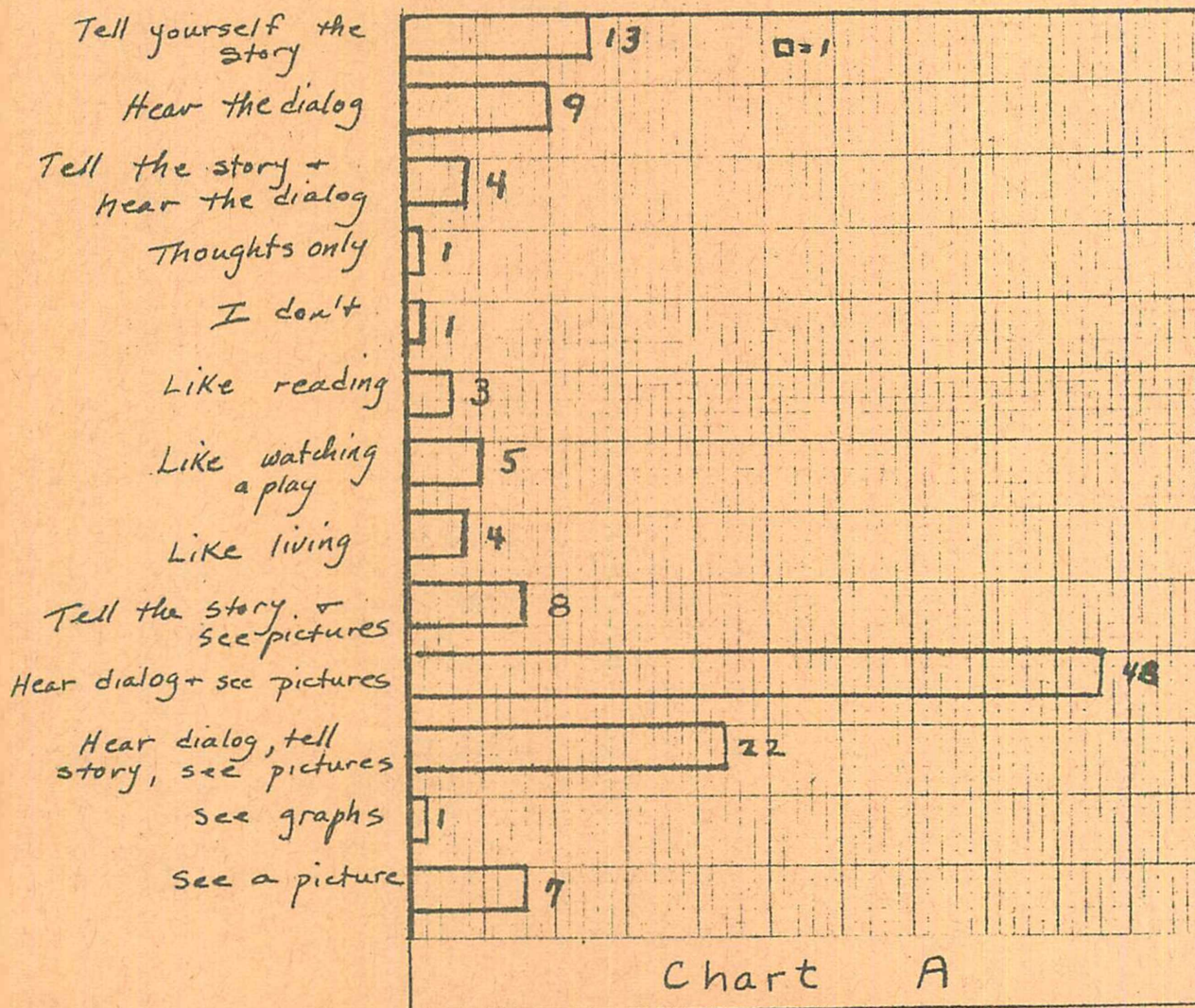
It is very likely that all this has already been surveyed, charted, and nailed down very firmly. I wasn't able to find anything under the headings I thought of when I researched in my own library--despite Lee Burwasser's statement that people were or weren't "Dalton's visualizers" and that there was *lots* of material around. However, the survey has been fascinating in and of itself. (Where else would I get to stare at mimeo'd sheets covered with indecipherable scrawls for hours on end?)

"Story content to me is not visual but emotion and philosophical/mathematical."

I still have the original responses, and if anyone's nutty enough to want to recount and recalibrate, more power to them.

I did the calibrations of the survey in two parts. In section one, I divided people by the type of creative work they preferred, their stated orientation or inclination. I did not question their skill or right to the designation; it merely indicates how they themselves see their behavior. Thus, we have 'artists', 'writers', and 'artist/writers'--hereafter called 'both' (which is a hell of a lot easier to type!)

In section two, I divided people into 'verbalizers' and 'visualizers', depending on their responses to question #4. (Chart A) An arbitrary division was made between the upper and lower halves of the chart at the response 'like watching a play', with those above being designated as verbalizers and those below as visualizers.



THE QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Do you consider yourself primarily _____ an artist _____ a writer
_____ other
2. Do you have a strong interest in _____ comics _____ drama (including TV,
plays, movies)
3. Did you watch a lot of TV as a child? _____ As an adult? _____
4. When you are daydreaming or making up a story, do you:
_____ tell yourself the story _____ hear the dialog _____ see a picture
_____ see a picture and hear the dialog _____ other (please specify)
5. While reading, do you visualize either the action or the characters?
_____ action _____ characters _____ both _____ neither
6. Do you daydream in: _____ color _____ black-and-white _____ both

 "I don't visualize my daydreams at all. They're just words and dialog."

THE ANALYSIS

In the graphs and discussions that follow, the 'verbalizers' will always be listed first, followed by 'visualizers'. Similarly, the order for the other section will be 'artists', 'writers', and 'both'.

43 people reported themselves as 'other' and therefore were not tabulated in the first part of the survey. The division of the remaining repliers--by inclination (artist, writer, both)--can be seen in Chart 1.

A total of 83 people participated in part one of the survey. They were in a ratio of 14:54:15, or 3:11:3, or 1:4:1. (Please note how cheerfully I round numbers off!)

Please note, too, that separating people into the classifications of 'verbalizers' and 'visualizers' does *not* mean that visualizers can't or don't verbalize. Rather, it means only that VERBALIZERS don't also visualize.

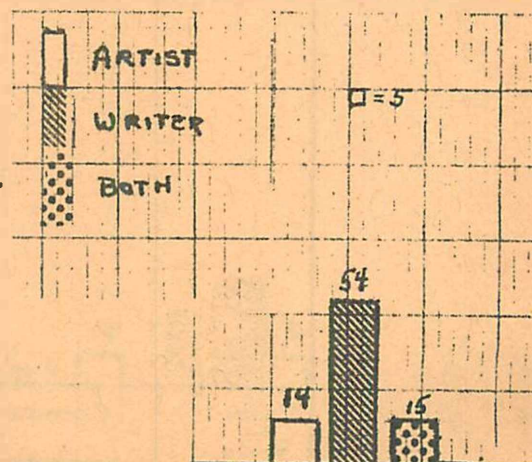
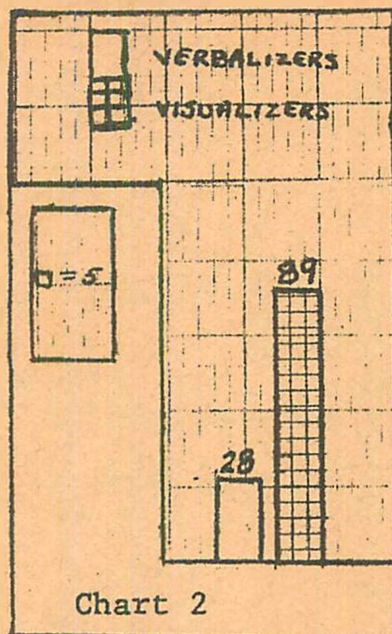


Chart 1



In the second half of the analysis, 28 people were classified as 'verbalizers', as opposed to 89 'visualizers'. (Chart 2) The ratio of verbalizers to visualizers is therefore approximately 1:3.

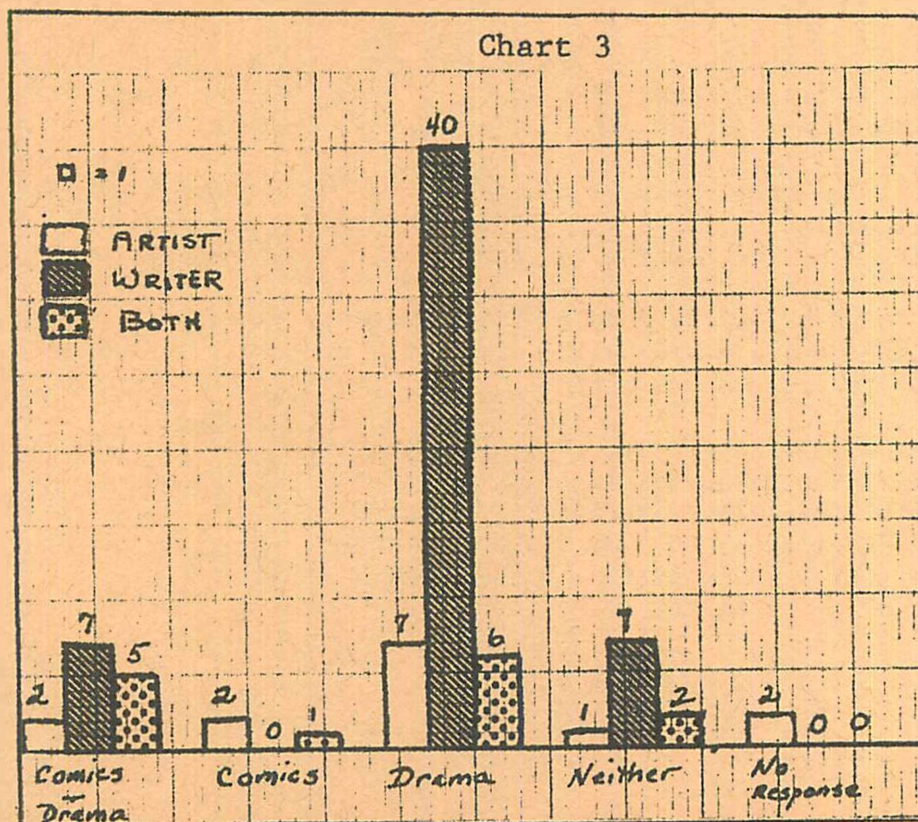
Charts 1 and 2 can be used as a standard comparison with the other charts, to give one the average figures in the different groups.

In the following graphs, verbalizers are represented by white bars, while visualizers have squared columns. In the second set, artists are shown by white bars, writers by striped bars, and 'both' with spotted bars.

Among the questions I considered was the influence of interest in comics (and hence the visual arts) and drama (the dramatic arts) on visualization. I wondered if an interest in

drama might have some relation with visualization--several people in my preliminary survey who were writer-visualizers indicated a strong interest in drama. (Anne McCaffrey, in the conversation previously mentioned, gave her many years of training in drama/opera as a possible reason for her strong visualization.)

However, if such a connection exists, it is not possible (in this



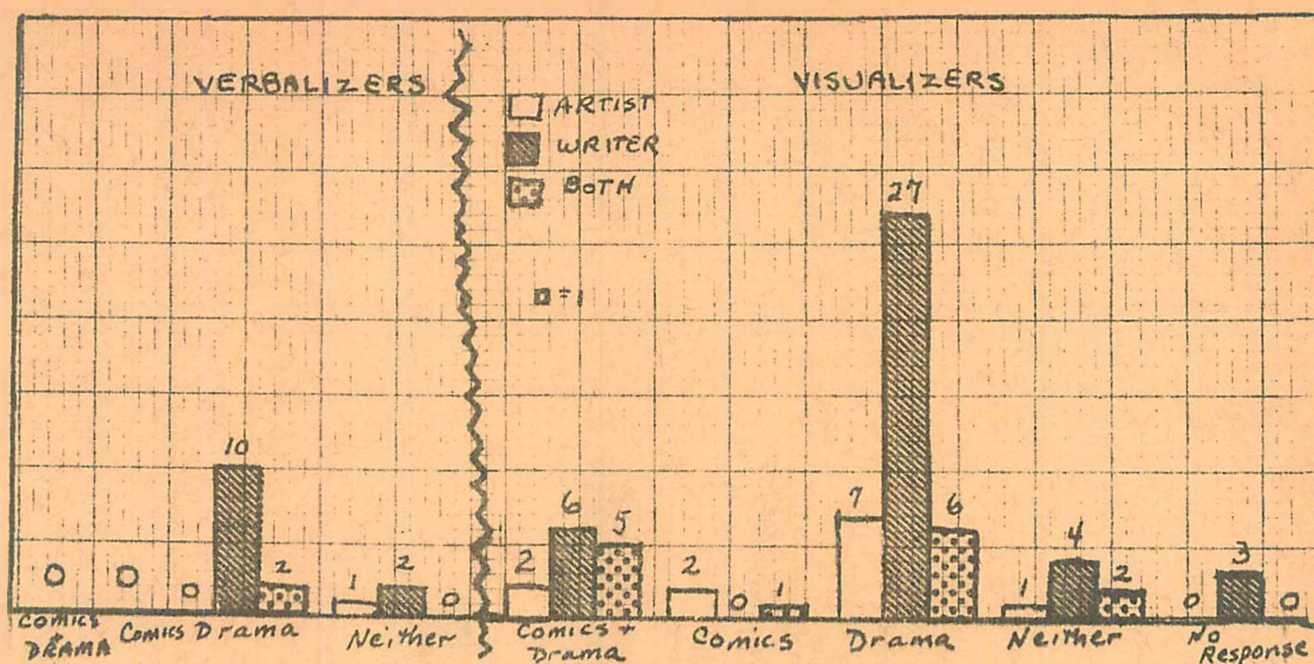


Chart 4

survey at least) to demonstrate it. Most writers (Charts 3 & 5) indicated a strong interest in drama, totally out of proportion with the number of visualizers in the group (Chart 4). Further, it seems that everyone (almost) has a strong interest in drama--or in drama and comics. (Well, many of my respondents WERE trek-fen.) Only 15 of the people tabulated showed interest in *neither* drama *nor* comics, with 5 giving no response to the question.

However, it is perhaps noteworthy that there was NO interest in comics among the verbalizers, and very little among verbalizers in general (Charts 4 & 5).

"It's like a film--70mm panavision, dolby sound, the works."

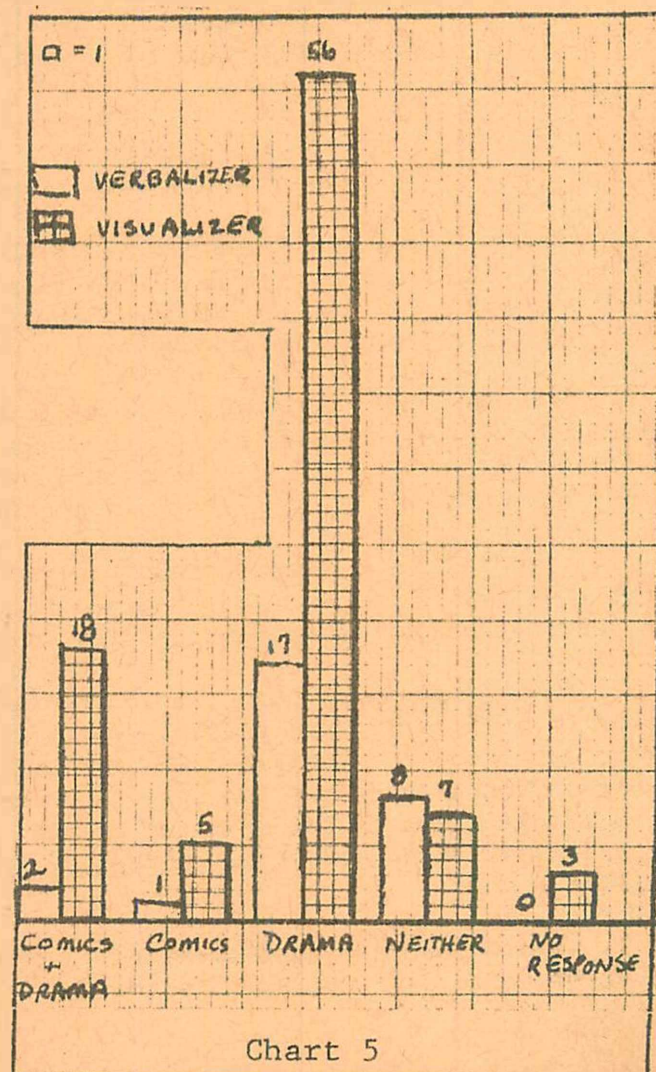
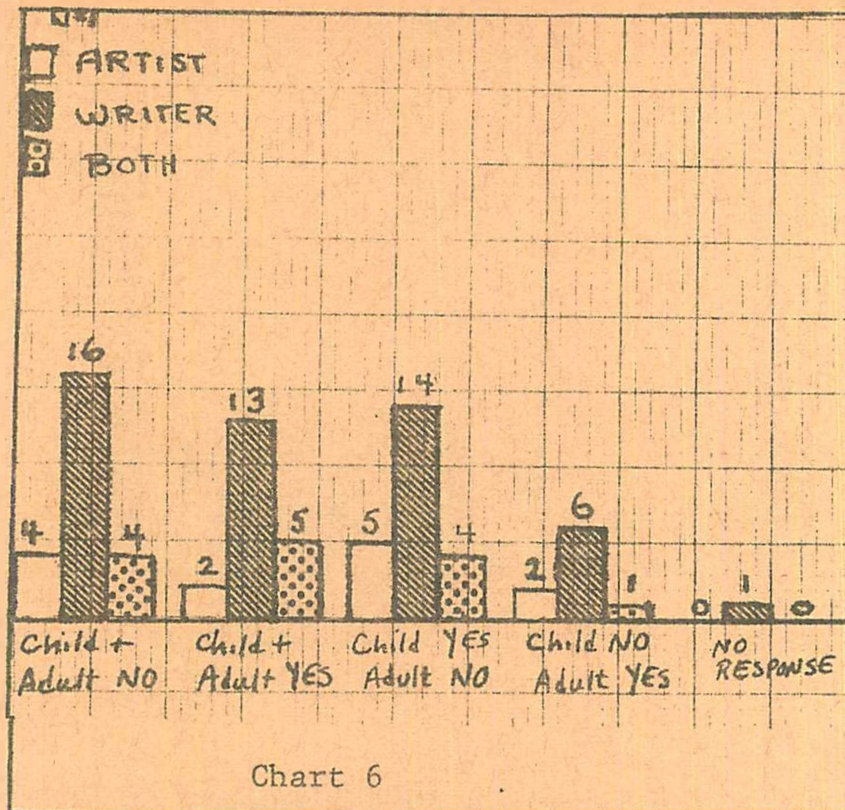


Chart 5



Another question I considered in the survey was the influence of TV upon visualization. Did early TV-viewing stimulate, repress, or otherwise influence the ability to visualize? TV is said to repress the visual imagination by doing all the work for you.

However, the results seem to indicate that TV-viewing has no real decisive influence. More verbalizers did *not* watch TV extensively as children (17) than did (11). Further, *more* visualizers did watch TV extensively as children (59) than did not (43).

I don't know if that's really significant, though. In any case, the number of people who watched or did not watch TV (grouped by inclination) is generally proportional to the total number in each group (Chart 7).

Most people said that, while reading, they tended to visualize in terms of both action and characters (Chart 10). A number of those who are classified as visualizers--4, in fact--are also marked on this chart as visualizing *neither* action *nor* characters. The reason for this seeming disparity is the original method of division--by the answer to question #4, which apparently sorted separately from the answer to this question.

It also appears that dreaming in color or black-and-white is not a decisive factor in separating verbalizers from visualizers. (Charts 12, 13, & 14).

I hope these charts are self-explanatory.

Chart 7

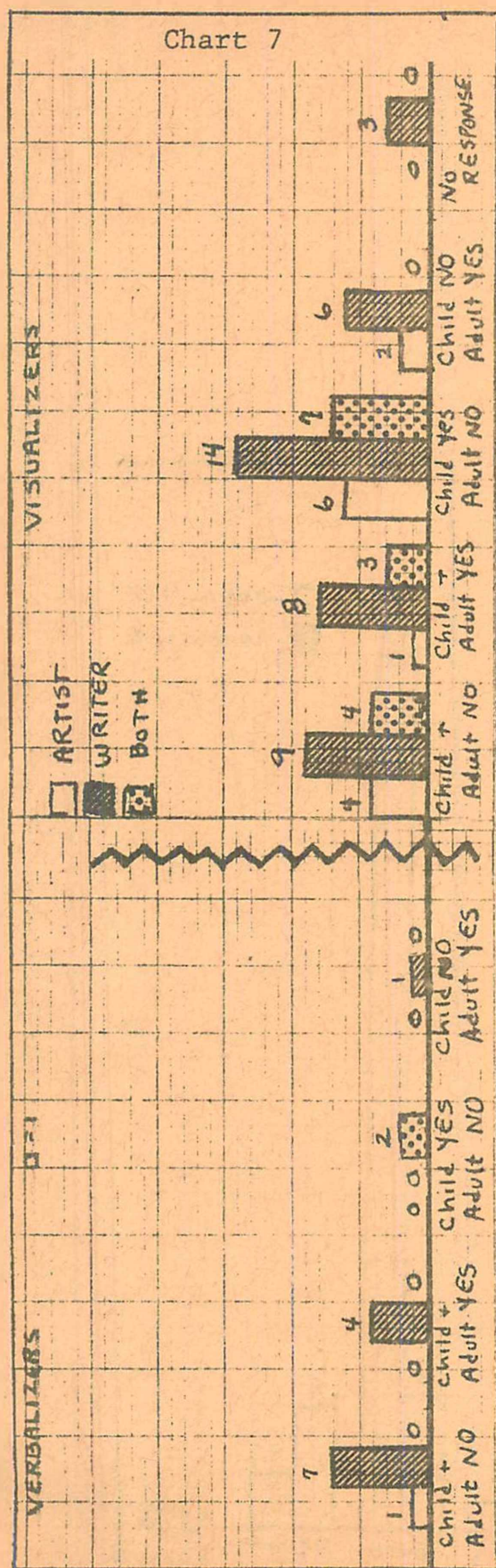


Chart 8

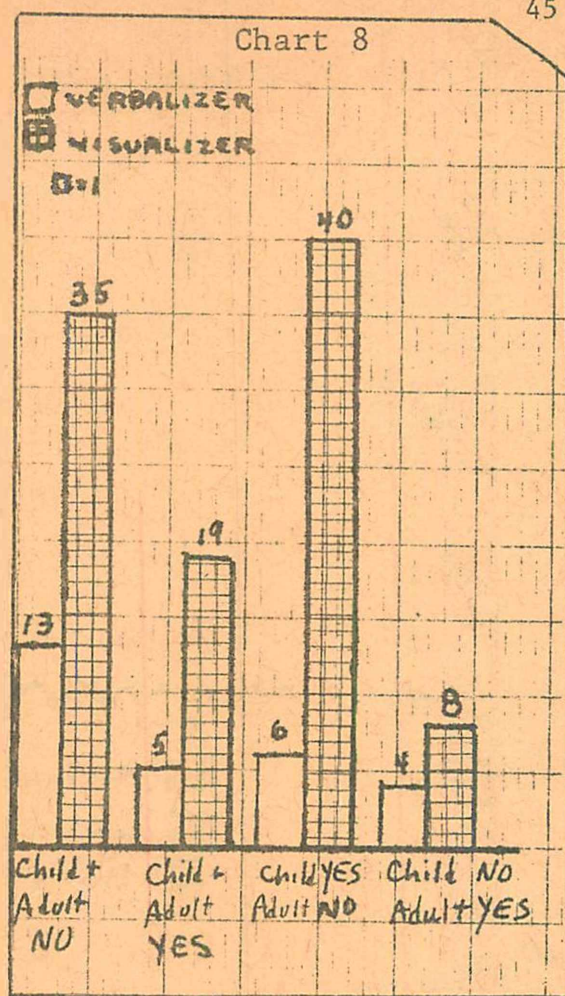
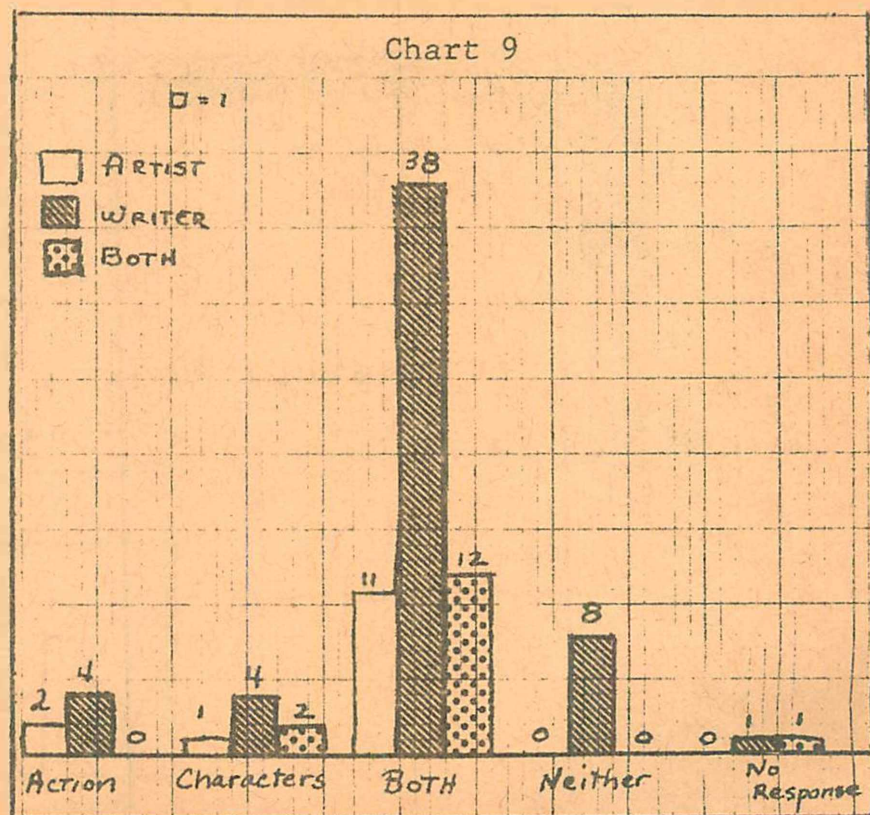
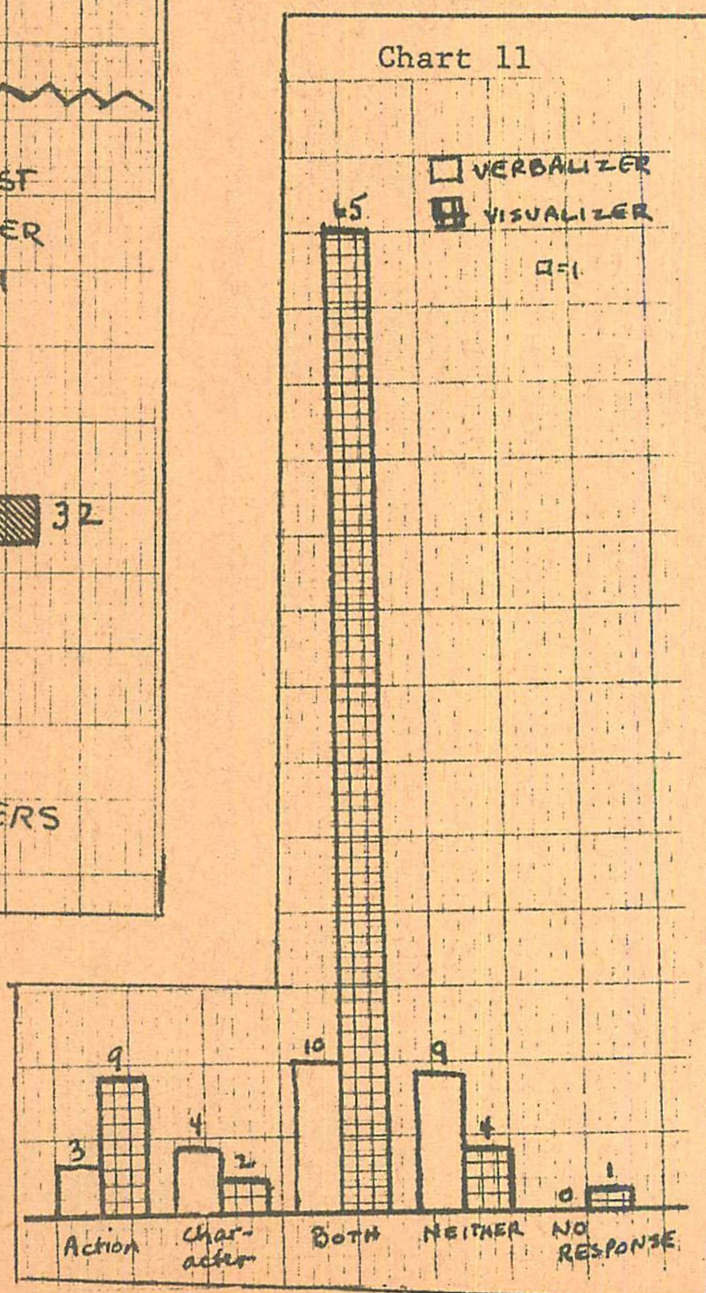
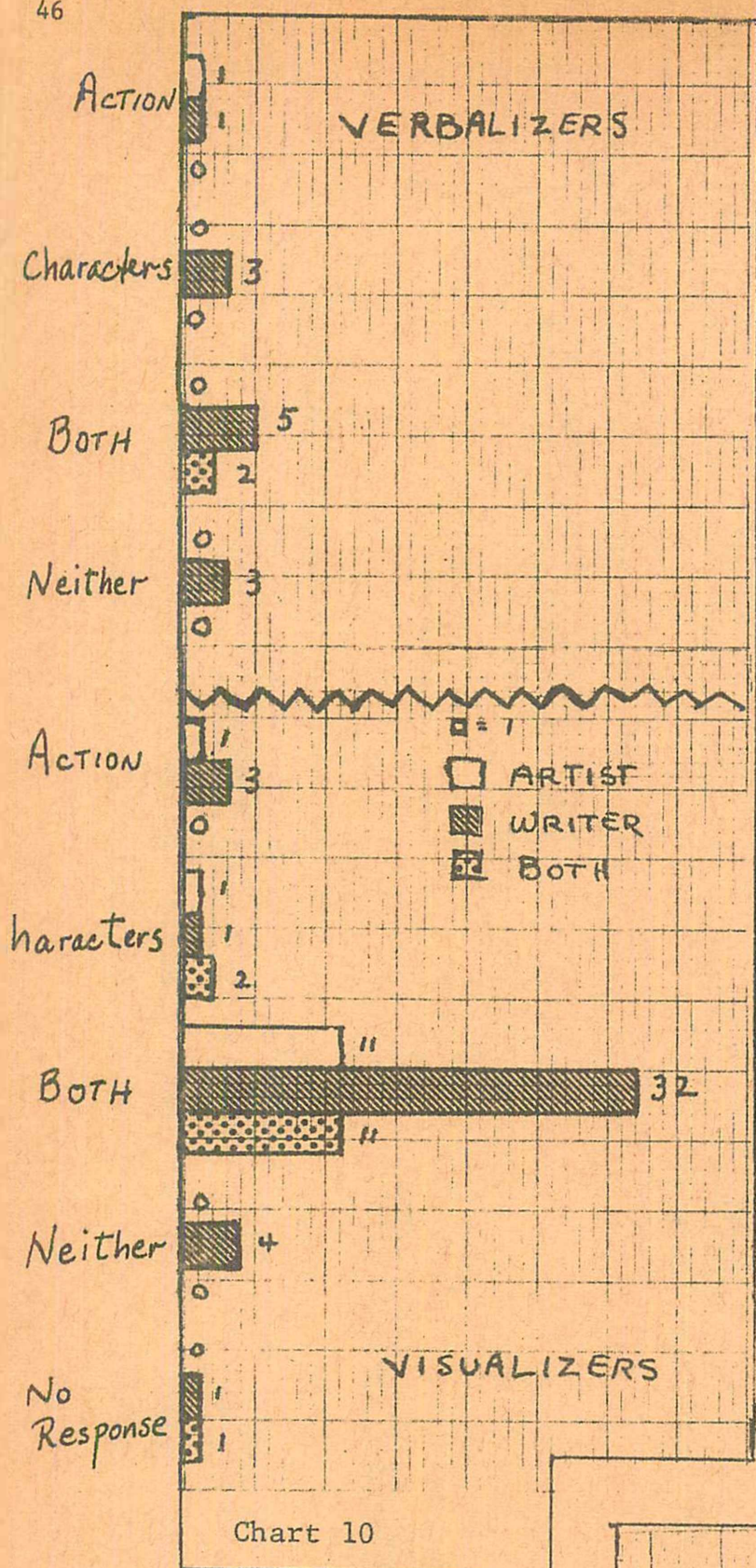


Chart 9





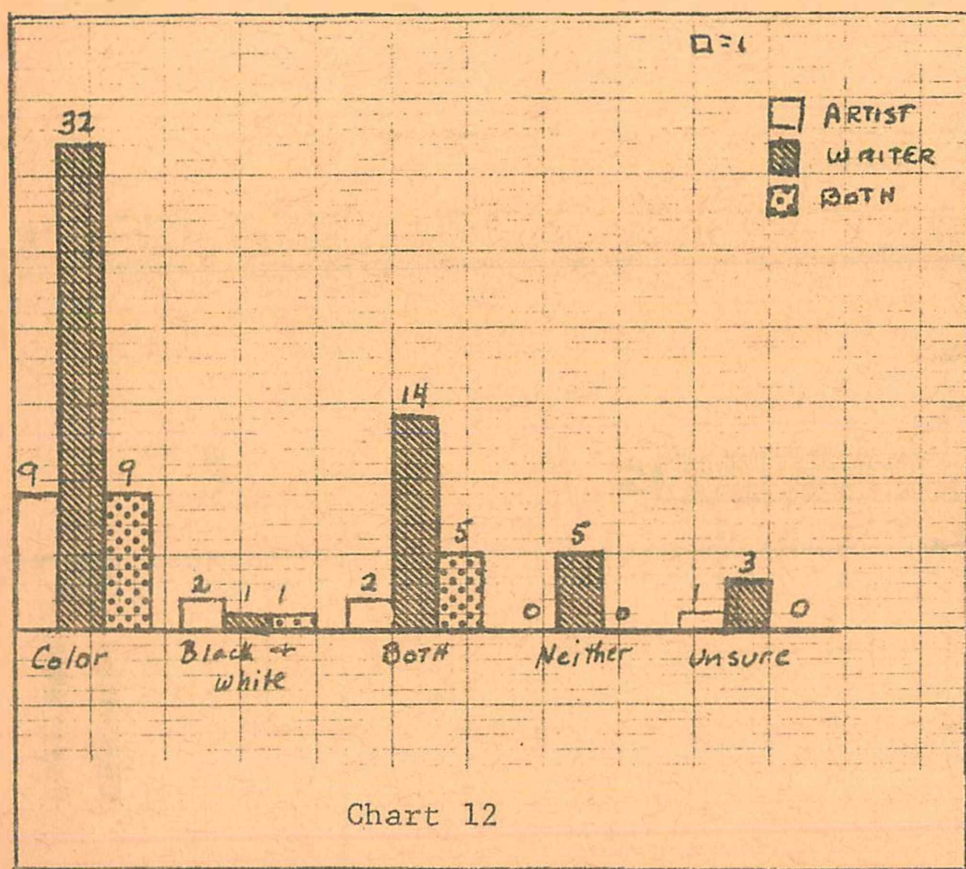
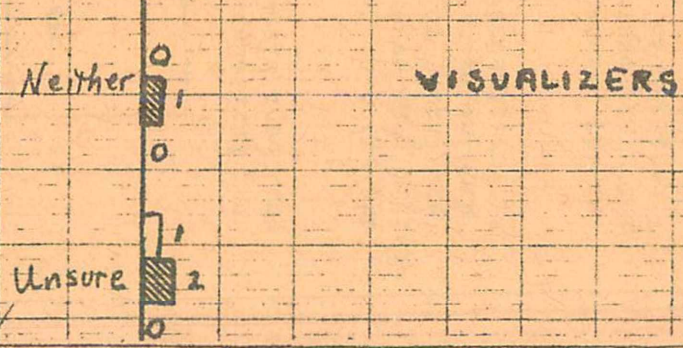
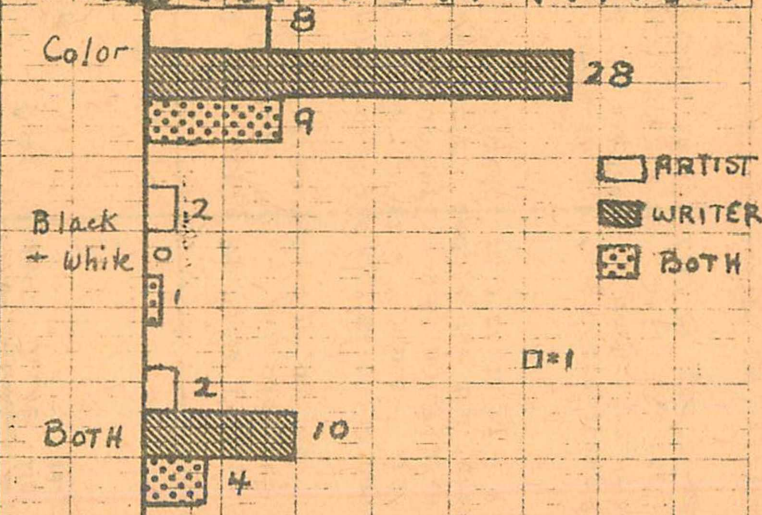
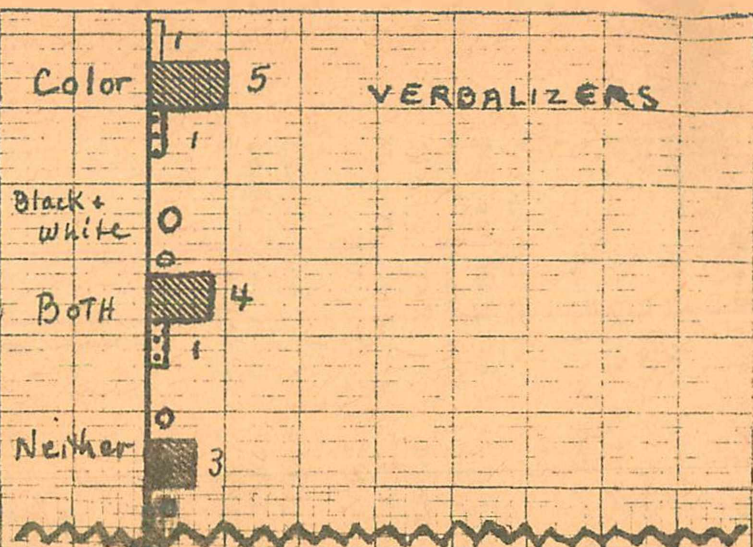
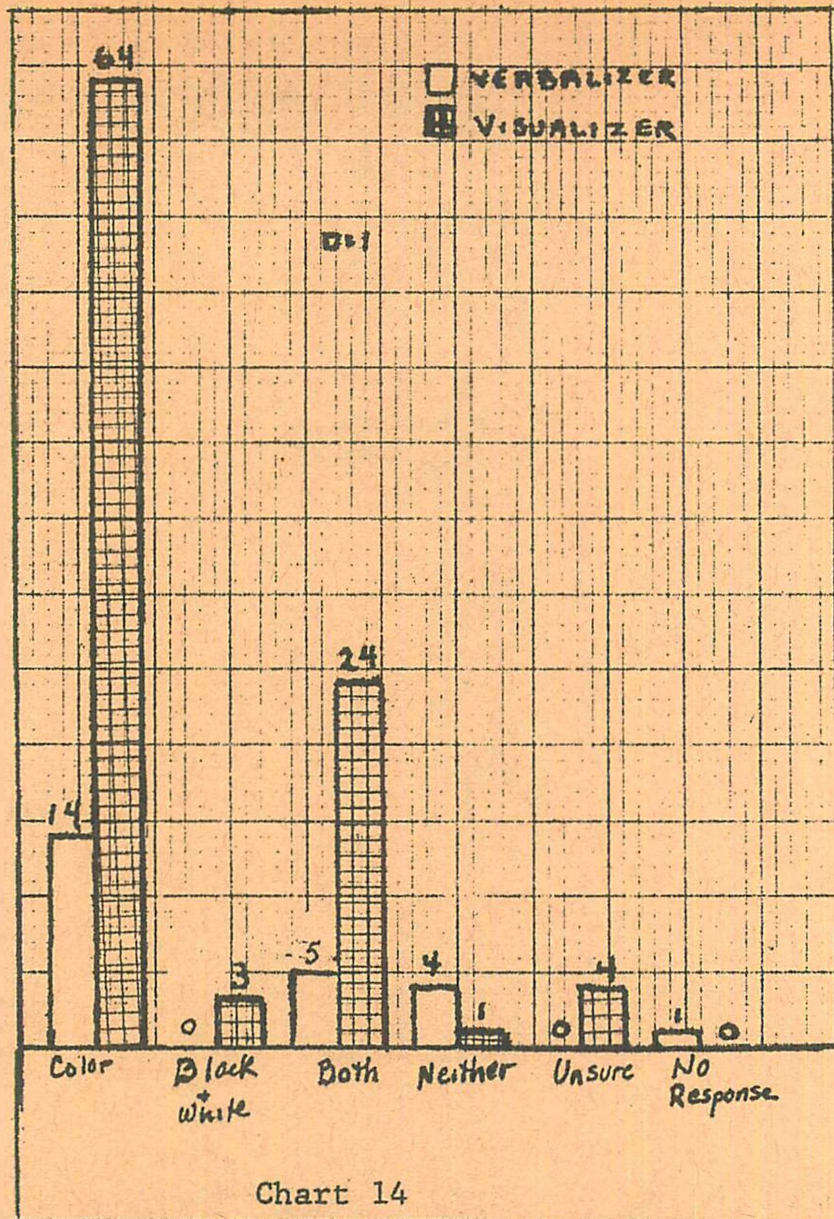


Chart 13





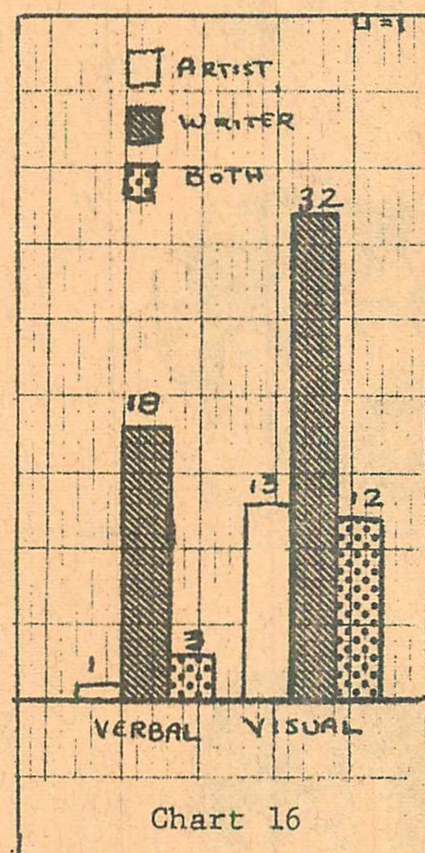
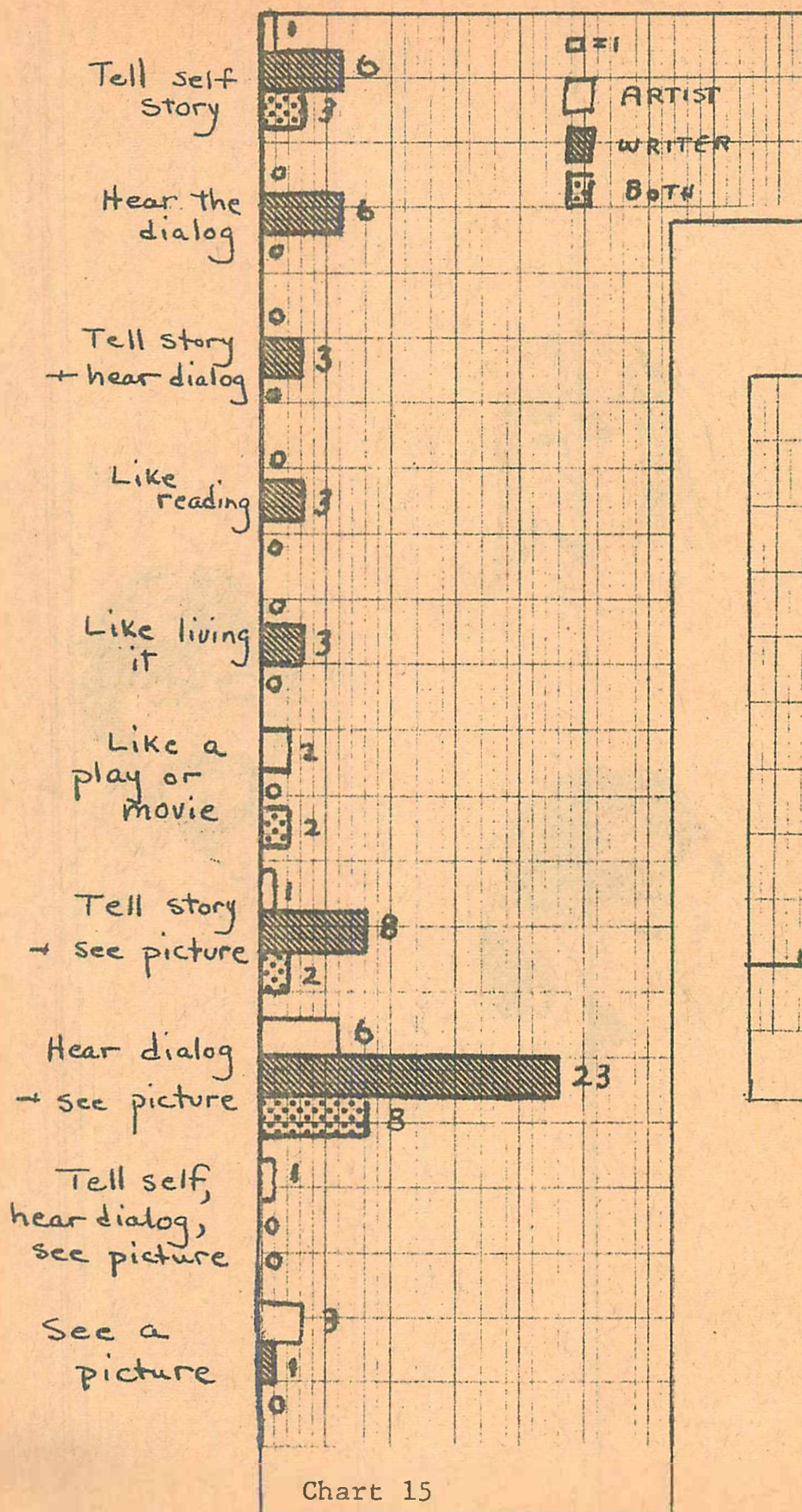
Originally, I thought that people who were artists visualized and people who were writers verbalized. People who did both would then tend toward one or the other. This turned out to be untrue.

Not only did I have one artist who claims to be non-visual (he/she marked 'tell myself the story' in question #4) but I also have *many* writers who do visualize. (Chart 16) However, almost no artists or 'both' are verbalizers rather than visualizers. People who are interested in both art and writing tend to be visualizers, in a ratio of 1 (verbalizers): 4 (visualizers).

Despite the overlap, there is a strong correlation between the inclination of the person and the tendency to verbalize or visualize. The ratio of artists:writers:both overall is 1:4:1. The ratio of artists:writers:both who are visualizers is 13:32:12 or *approximately* 1:3:1.

Going the other way, the ratio of artists:writers:both who verbalize is 1:18:3, which is not *anywhere* near either 1:4:1 or 1:3:1!

Apparently, the inner vision and the outer product do coordinate.





KORBAS



RUTH



KINTAM



KINET



MANARDESA



JAN

The Bet

Barbara Wenk

"Don't be silly," Korbas said. "Kintam doesn't *like* Terrans."

"Kintam's a creep," said Jan. Her sleepy voice was rather muffled by her pillow. "Ruth's all right. Even if she isn't a fighter. You'd think Kintam'd be flattered to have someone that interested in him."

"Sure. They have so much in common, too. Ruth loves his body, and so does he."

"You'd think that after all this time, Ruth'd just give up on him." Jan gave the blanket a jerk. "Stop hogging all the covers, Korbas!"

"Did it ever occur to you," said Korbas, releasing about one inch of blanket in Jan's direction, "that Ruth only keeps up that impassioned act to annoy Kintam? He wouldn't sleep with a Terran on a bet, and she knows it by now."

Korbas reached out and waved off the light. There was a moment's silence.

"Wouldn't kill him," Jan muttered, "to take poor Ruth to bed. That should cure her pretty fast."

"Hell," said Korbas, "Kintam wouldn't be interested in even a really gorgeous Terran. He wouldn't even go to bed with *you*, and he's used to you."

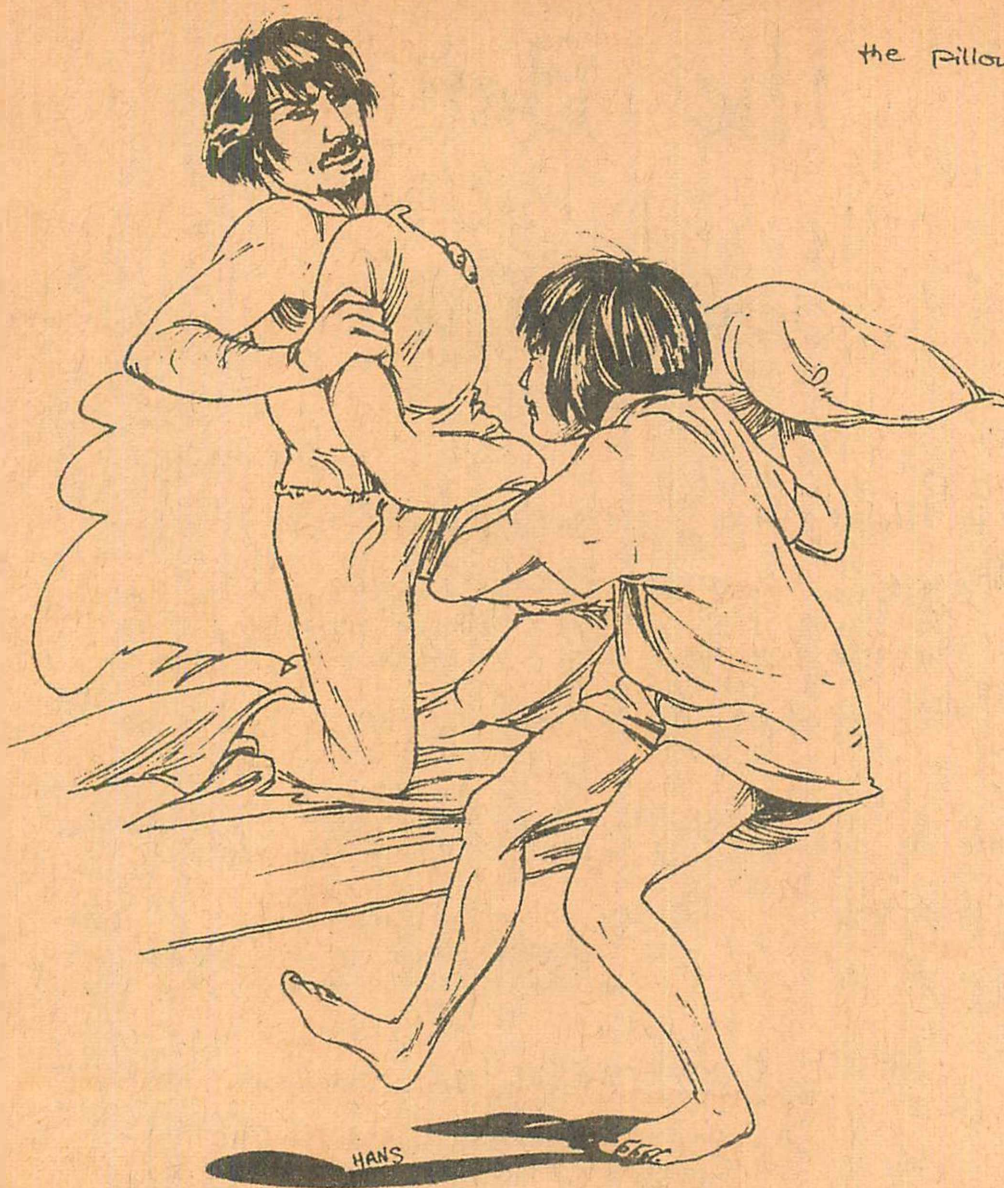
"Thanks a lot!" Jan twisted around and glared through the dimness at Korbas. "Well, I could always fight him into bed, in the unlikely event I was interested enough. I'm a better fighter than he is, even if I *am* a repulsive Terran."

"Kintam is not a better fighter than I am. He was just lucky on that last throw!"

"Ha! You weren't paying enough attention, oh mighty fighter!"

Korbas grinned, and simultaneously yanked the covers completely off Jan and shoved her off the side of the bed with a well-placed foot.

the pillow fight!



"Pay attention yourself!"

Jan let out an enraged yelp as she hit the floor. She bounced to her feet, grabbed her pillow, and began to wallop at Korbass with it.

He ducked away from the blows, narrowly escaping landing on the floor himself. "Pillow-fighter," he said, snatching up his own pillow and warding Jan off with it.

"Oh, yeah?" Jan backed off a step, and surveyed him grimly. Then she leaned forward, gripping the edge of the mattress, and began to heave it off the bedframe. "Go wrestle a mattress, then!"

Korbass flung himself across the bed to keep the mattress in place. He had learned how to cope with Jan's favorite method of ending an argument.

The Bet

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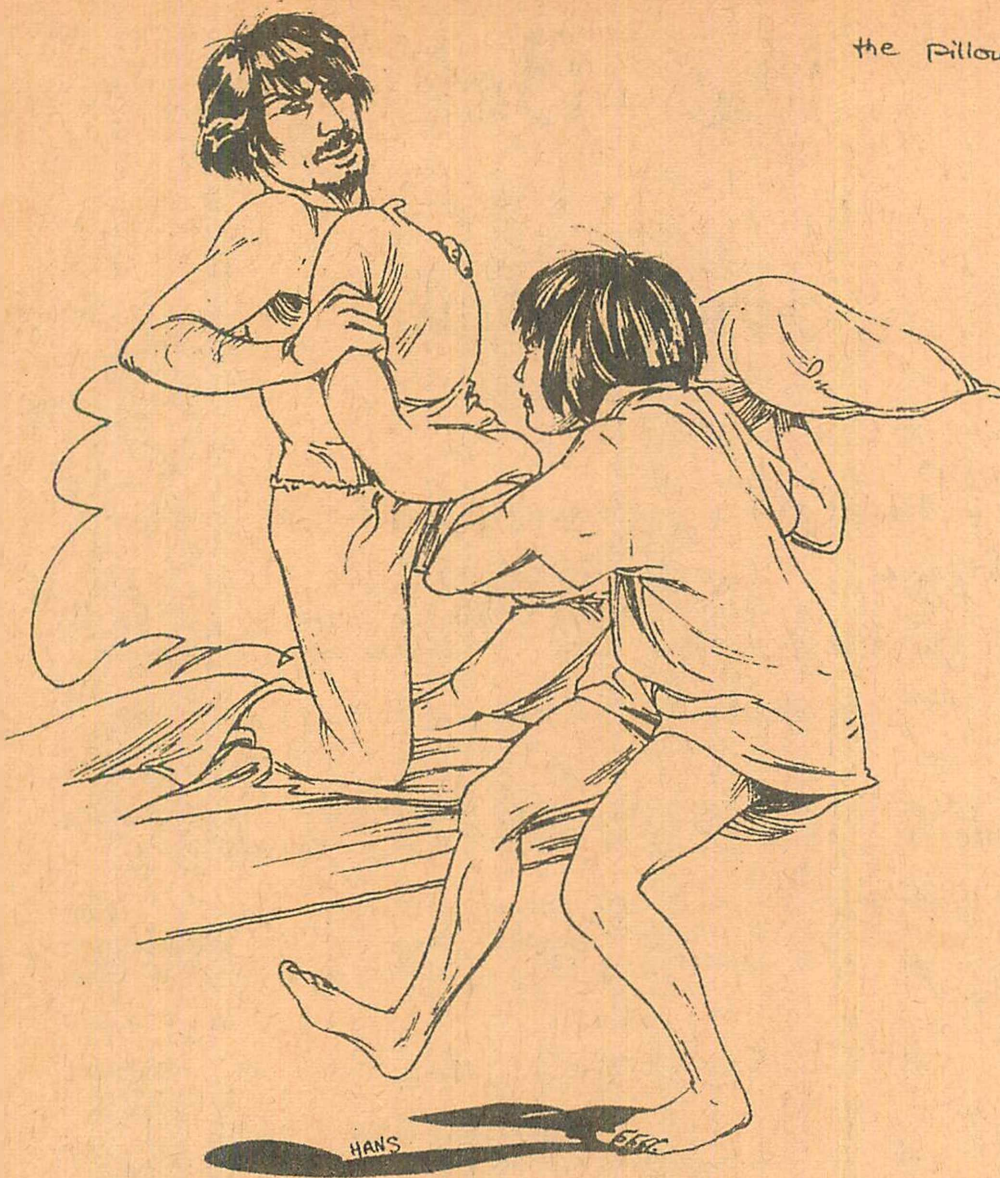
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"You dump it on the floor again," he said, holding the mattress down with his weight, "and you can just make the bed yourself this time. Even if you *do* do a lousy job of it."

Jan abandoned the mattress, and looked around for her pillow, which she had dropped to attack the mattress. Korbas whipped it away just as she was about to fasten her hand on it.

"You are transparent," he said, sitting up and pulling both pillows out of her reach. "Completely predictable moves--"

Jan leaped back onto the bed. Korbas rolled as she landed on the much-abused mattress. As Jan began to sweep her legs around to knock him to the floor, he continued into a backward roll that left him standing next to the bed.

He swiftly bent, picked up the blanket, tossed it over Jan, and gathered the ends together, leaving her writhing in a mass of woolly cloth. He sat on the most prominent bit of the package composed of Jan and blanket.

After a minute, the untidy bundle stopped heaving around.

"You rotten, nasty, horrible--" issued from under the blanket.

"Remember what Master Kinet said," Korbas told her, "about losing your temper." He slid off, and Jan emerged from the confines of the blanket.

"Oh, shit," she said, glaring in Korbas's direction, and groping around for the pillow.

"On the floor," he said. "Break? We have to put the bed back together, and there's early class tomorrow."

Jan sighed, and waved at her light. She sat, blinking, in the sudden bright glare, and wrapped a bit of her short, curly dark hair around her fingers. "Oh, all right. Break."

The two of them hastily remade the bed, and resumed their comfortable positions under the covers. The lights were waved off again.

"You're a creep, too," Jan crossly informed Korbas, several minutes later. "Now I'm wide awake. I think I'd *rather* go to bed with Kintam, at that. I might get some sleep for a change."

After their early class, as was their custom, a number of Master Kinet's students gathered in the cafeteria for breakfast.

"I don't see the purpose of having classes at the crack of dawn," Jan grumbled. She had already disposed of a large plate of eggs and fried meat, and was tackling a platter of toasted muffins.

"I agree." Xiowilli, the Andorian fight-student, began to help in the demolition of the muffins. "I hate trying to function on nothing but a small glass of protein drink until late breakfast. Yuck." She gave an exaggerated shudder, and took a large bite of buttered muffin.

Korbas, seated across the table from Jan and Xiowilli, grinned at them over his juiceglass. "If you're tired, Jan, it's your own fault."

"Mfflt!" Jan's indignant splutter through a mouthful of muffin and jam mingled with an amused comment of "Don't you two ever bother to sleep?" from one of the Klingons at the other end of the long cafeteria table.

"They were discussing fight techniques, no doubt," said Manardesa blandly. She turned to Korbas, who was seated next to her. "Pillow-fighting--" Korbas threw a mock-punch at her which she as casually blocked. "Spill juice over me, Korbas, and I'll drown you in the pitcher."

Jan, having finally swallowed the mouthful of food, repeated, more intelligibly, "My fault? You're the one who kicked me out of bed, you--"

Jan gritted her teeth until the laughter died down.

"Why?" Manardesa's honey-bronze face had resumed its normal, deceptive calmness, but her eyes were amused. "No doubt he had good and sufficient reason, but the details are always--"

"Actually," said Jan, tossing a fresh muffin in her hand, and gazing speculatively at Manardesa, "it was all Kintam's fault. Where is he, anyhow?"

Manardesa, her eyes on the possible missile in Jan's hand, reached for the segment of fruit by her plate.

"May I remind you two," put in a voice from the other end of the table, "what the latest Monitor's regulations said about food fights?"

Both Jan and Manardesa turned and regarded the speaker with disapproval.

"Wet blanket," said Jan.

"Coward," Manardesa added.

"You're not the one who had to scrub red sauce stains out of a clean white fight-suit." The dark Klingon pushed back his chair. "If you're going to fling food around, I'm going to leave."

"What, before you find out why Korbas and *terry*-Jan had a fight in bed about Kintam?" said Xiowilli. "You can always duck under the table if they throw things."

The Klingon resumed his seat. All the people sitting at the table turned to look hopefully at Jan and Korbas.

Jan and Manardesa had replaced the food on their plates.

"Well?" Manardesa said with an evil grin.

Korbas looked around the table. "He isn't here. . . and neither is Ruth, is she?"

"Such tact," Jan said. "How surprising." She instantly pulled both her legs back under her chair, just in case Korbas decided to kick.

"I think," Manardesa said, "Kintam's in the library. He had a paper due yesterday."

"Oh." Korbas's voice held full appreciation of Manardesa's statement.

"He's probably just about started the first sentence. I suspect," said Manardesa, "that he was expecting Ruth to help him with the historical research."

"She likes doing that sort of stuff," Xiowilli said. "What happened?"

Manardesa shrugged. "She hasn't been around much this past week."

"I saw her yesterday," Jan put in.

"Yes, but you have a lit class together, don't you? She hasn't been at our table for a couple of days." Manardesa's grin widened. "Yesterday Kintam finally had to go looking for her. Couldn't find her, either. He's really annoyed about the whole thing. Now he's stuck with the paper and no Ruth."

"I suppose," said Jan acidly, "that he expected her to be sitting on his doorstep. After the things he's said about Terrans--"

"He only said," Korbas said helpfully, "that they smell funny."

"After two hours of kershu fighting, *everybody* smells a little funny," Jan snapped.

"It's really too bad," Korbas said. "Ruth's a reasonably nice girl. For a--"

"Yes?" said Jan evenly.

"--non-fighter," Korbas finished hastily. "It's a pity she wastes her time chasing after Kintam."

"I can't imagine," said Jan, "why she bothers to spend so much time hanging around him. I know he's good-looking, but--"

Manardesa interrupted. "I asked her a while back why she bothered. And she said," Manardesa's voice took on the artificial tone of direct quotation, "'Every literature major should nourish a hopeless passion to their bosom--just like an asp.'"

"What's an asp?"

Manardesa shrugged. "Ruth says she finds fighters interesting."

"I'd be a lot more flattered," Korbass said, "if I didn't know that that girl finds some of the most peculiar things interesting. Kintam, for instance."

"She didn't say he was interesting," Jan objected. "Just that she wanted to go to bed with him."

"But Kintam hates Terries," someone said.

"*You* know that, and *I* know that. . ." someone else added.

"As I said," Korbass told Jan loftily, "Kintam wouldn't sleep with a Terran on a bet."

"Humpf," said Jan crossly. "You have a really high opinion of Terrans. I bet that if someone tried the right way, they could manage it. We're more resourceful than some people seem to think."

Korbass raised his eyebrows. "I suppose you think *you* could do it?"

"There are ways," Jan said darkly.

"Getting him drunk, or drugging him, doesn't count," said Korbass.

"Neither does knocking him down and tying him up," a voice added.

"That doesn't leave a lot of options," Xiowilli said. "How are you going to manage it, Jan?"

"Me?" said Jan. "*I'm* not interested in Kintam's body."

"So you admit you couldn't sucker him into bed with you?" asked Korbass. "All talk, no action--"

Jan drew her brows together. "I bet I could. If I wanted to. Which I'm not. It's not worth the effort."

Korbass shook his head. "I say there's no way a Terran could get Kintam into bed. Short of drink, drugs, or violence. And to that opinion," he said, staring hard at Jan, a grin on his dark face, "I adhere."

"Come on, Jan," said one of the female Klingons. "Agree you're wrong for once."

Jan looked across at Korbass's grinning face, and her never strong

control over her temper vanished. "Wrong, my foot. I bet you I could do it."

"What stakes?" asked Xiowilli with interest.

"A month's room rent," Korbass suggested. "I could use the extra money."

"Fine!" said Jan.

"You need a time limit," someone suggested. "Otherwise it could take years."

By the time Jan's flash of temper had cooled, the other fighters at the table had managed to come up with a set of ground rules for the contest. There was to be a two-week time limit, and no intoxicating drinks, aphrodisiacs, or mayhem was allowed. The loser would pay the entire rent on the dorm room for the next two months. The contest was to start in three days, to give people time to place bets.

Jan smiled weakly as everyone looked eagerly at her. Korbass smiled too--complacently.

"All right with you?" asked Korbass.

"Sure." Jan nodded. She poked at the remains of her breakfast, and laid down her fork. She felt extremely irritated, not only with herself, for getting into this, but with Korbass, Xiowilli, and, in a broadminded sweep of illogic, Ruth and Kintam.

Jan gave the wall clock an exaggeratedly casual glance. "Got to go," she said. "Math class."

She pushed back her chair, and, after dumping her tray on the conveyor to the recycler, wandered morosely out of the hall.

She walked out of the front door, and started down the side path to the mathematics building. "Shit!" She kicked at a stone.

"Jan!"

She turned. Manardesa was jogging up to her. Jan waited until Manardesa caught up.

"Jan. . ." Manardesa put a hand on Jan's arm and pulled her over to a bench on the edge of the path. "Wait a second. Sit down. Are you planning to go through with this bet?"

"How do I get into these things, anyway?" Jan plopped herself down on the bench, and swung her legs back and forth gloomily. "Where am I going to dig up the extra rent money?"

Manardesa, a nasty grin on her face, said, "Maybe Korbass should worry about finding the money."

"Oh, don't be silly." Jan's voice was cross. "Korbas was right, damn him. Kintam really doesn't like Terrans. How the hell would I manage to get him into bed, short of holding a blaster to his head?"

Manardesa shook her head, causing some of her dark, bronze-brown hair to work itself out of her short ponytail and fall around her face. "Use your head, Jan." Manardesa pulled the fastener off her ponytail, and began to gather up her hair again. "What does Kintam like?"

"Kintam," said Jan. "And fighting." She paused, thinking.

"And collecting videotapes of famous fights. And first editions of obscure fighting manuals."

"So?"

"So Kintam has expensive tastes. Offer him half of the profits."

"Are you crazy? That's dishonest! Besides, I bet it wouldn't work. Not for half of a hundred credits."

"Make some side bets. Tell Kintam how much money everyone else will lose."

Jan looked at Manardesa suspiciously. "I was going to ask why you should care one way or the other, but I think I just guessed. You're really planning to clean up on this, aren't you?"

"People always underestimate aliens," said Manardesa. "I decided to back you."

"Suppose Kintam won't do it? Won't you lose a lot of money?"

"Not at the odds I'm going to be getting."

"Thanks. How flattering."

"Cheer up." Manardesa finished re-tying her ponytail and stood up. "If we pull this off, you and I and Kintam will win enough money to make everyone else very irritated with us."

Jan tucked one leg up under her, and considered. "All right. I'd *love* to annoy certain people--mentioning no names, you understand. Where's Kintam? Any idea?"

"You might try the library. I told you, he had a paper due yesterday."

Jan uncoiled herself and rose from the bench. "Thanks for the advice. I think." Callously consigning her math class to function without her presence, she headed towards the library.

Jan finally ran Kintam to earth in one of the library's second-

floor study cubicles. He was sitting at the desk, viewer on, books open, notes neatly stacked. He was reading the latest issue of *Kershu Kritiques*.

"Hi, Kintam." Jan walked in and sat down in the extra chair crammed into the cubicle.

"What do you want?" Kintam looked up from the magazine. "You're sitting on my research notebook."

Jan shifted her weight, pulled the notebook off the chair, and tossed it onto the desk. "I just want a little of your valuable time."

"I'm writing a paper."

Since most of the fight-students wrote papers with the same attitude of eager diligence Kintam displayed for the project, Jan saw nothing odd about this statement.

"Well, stop for a minute." She regarded the cluttered desk. "Couldn't find Ruth, huh?"

"Where did she disappear to, anyway?"

"She didn't tell me. She probably found something more interesting to do than admiring your--" At the sight of the frown that developed on Kintam's handsome face, Jan remembered that she was supposed to be persuading him into something.

"If you're just going to be insulting," said Kintam, ostentatiously returning his attention to the pages of *Kershu Kritiques*, "then go away."

"Uh, Kintam, actually, I've got a proposition for you. A business proposition."

"If," Kintam slowly turned a page, "this is anything like the last bright idea you and Korbas had--"

"Money," Jan said hastily.

"How much?" Kintam said without thinking. "And for doing what?" he added warily. He put down the magazine and swung around in the chair to look at Jan.

Deciding that little would be gained by finesse, Jan said, "Korbas bet me 100 credits that I couldn't get you to go to bed with me--"

"He was right."

"Will you listen? And it was in front of half the fight-class, so I got stuck with this stupid bet--"

Kintam shook his head. "Are you out of your crazy terry mind?"

"How about for half of it?"

"Sleep with a *Terran*? For *money*?" Kintam said in tones of disgust.

"Well, you sure won't do it for nothing," Jan responded.

"That's the most repulsive idea you've come up with yet," Kintam said. "Will you get it through your head that I don't like Terrans? They look funny."

"Shut your eyes, then, and pretend that I'm a Klingon," Jan said impatiently. "Think of the money."

"It's not," Kintam explained, "that I couldn't use the money. There's this film. . . . Everyone would laugh their heads off if I went to bed with you. Forget it."

"Oh, no they wouldn't. They'd all be too annoyed to laugh. 'desa's conning them all into betting with her. And *her* money is on me. Not on Korbas." A cunning look crossed Jan's face. "You know, Kintam, if we work this right, we can turn this whole mess into a joke on the others. Particularly Korbas."

Kintam ran his fingers through his black hair. "Well. . . ."

"Right now," Jan said, "all our dear friends are laughing at us. Me because of this stupid bet deal, and you because of you and Ruth starting this whole thing in the first place."

"Oh really," said Kintam.

"Oh, stop scowling. They can't think it's any funnier than they do now. And you'll have an extra fifty credits."

Kintam's eyes met Jan's. "How many people did Manardesa make side bets with?"

"Lots," said Jan. "I bet Korbas's making side bets, too."

There was a brief silence. Then Jan grinned broadly. "Come on, Kintam. I'm not that repulsive. After all, if I can stand it, you can. Be strong."

Kintam ran his eyes over Jan. "Oh, all right. But just this once." He gave his desk a fulminating glare. "I don't suppose you know anything about the agrarian movement of the early Imperial hegemony?"

"God, no!" Jan picked up *Kershu Kritiques* and began leafing through it. "Those new regulations on tournament techniques are the most idiotic--" She stood up, and tucked the magazine under her arm.

"Give me a call when you finish that paper, and we'll set this up. There's a time limit. They gave me two weeks."

"All right. Anything to get you out of my hair. Go away." Kintam began making vague, poking motions at his piles of books and notes.

Jan stepped out of the cubicle. "Next time," she advised, "try being a bit more pleasant to Ruth. She *likes* early Imperial hegewhatsis."

Kintam turned, preparing to launch a notebook at Jan. "Hey, give me back that magazine!"

"You can have it back when you're finished with your paper. Otherwise you'll never get done, and I want to finish up this bet too." Jan moved back several bounces along the hall. She called, "Besides, you know what Master Kinet said about all of us keeping up with our academic courses."

Kintam hurled the notebook and two history tape cassettes at Jan's retreating form. She stooped, scooped up the tapes, and flung them back.

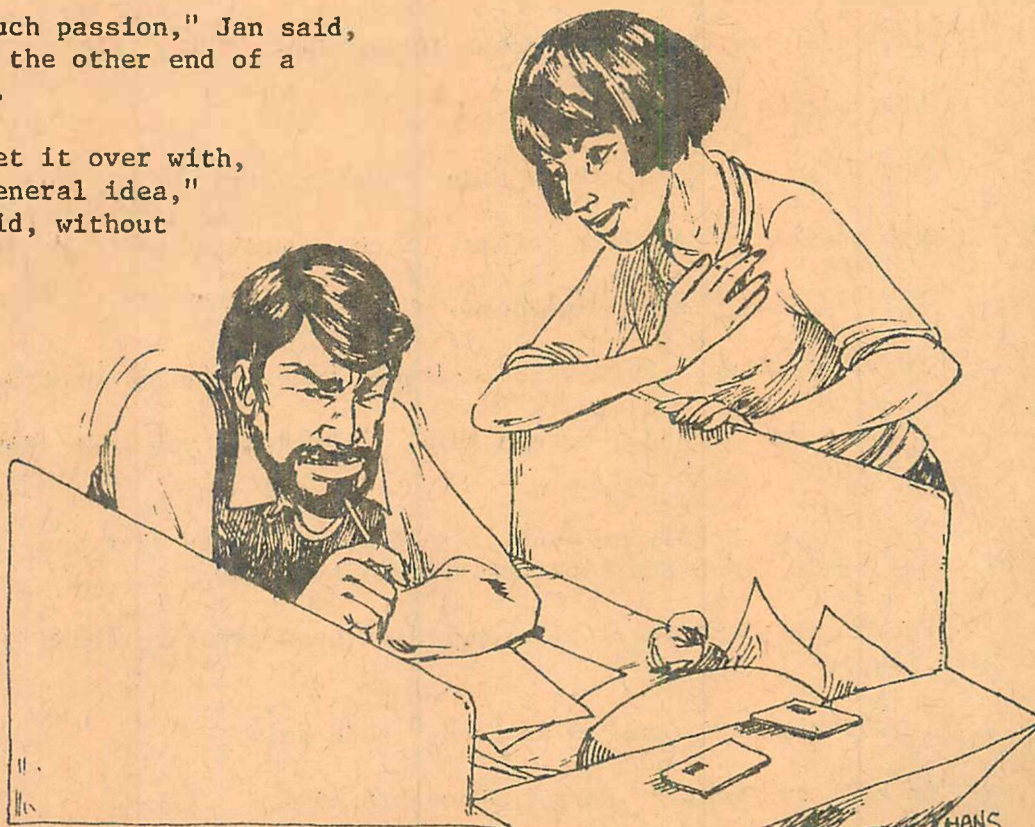
Kintam ducked inside the study cubicle and slammed the door. The tapes banged into it and fell to the hall floor.

After prolonged, argumentative discussion, Kintam and Jan finally managed to come to an agreement as to time and place. As Kintam put it, "The sooner, the better."

trying to convince
Kintam--

"Such passion," Jan said, safely on the other end of a visiphone.

"Get it over with, was the general idea," Kintam said, without heat.



"Fine with me. So, we'll just slither off right after the movie and disappear. I'm going to *enjoy* confronting Korbass the next morning. He doesn't think I'll really be able to persuade you into bed with me."

Kintam grinned. "Too bad for him. See you tomorrow at the theater."

Jan nodded, and flipped the viewer off.

The Arbara University theater was showing what several of the fight-students irreverently called 'inspirational films'--historical kershu fighting epics. The quality, both of the film and the fighting, ranged from appalling to excellent. Most of the fight-students went, in a congenial gang, to all of them.

As Jan and Korbass approached the group of their friends and classmates standing outside the campus theater, Jan scanned the group for Kintam. She didn't see him, but she noticed someone else.

Manardesa stood talking to a person who was comfortably propping up the wall of the building. It was a female Terran of medium height and build. Her waist-length, soft brown hair was pulled forward over one shoulder, half hiding the inscription on the front of her deep violet tee-shirt.

"Which one is that?" asked Korbass, who had also spotted Manardesa's companion.

"It's the one that says 'Token Incompetent'," Jan said. "Oh, shit."

"What's the matter?"

"Nothing," Jan said with a sigh. "Hello, 'desa. Hi, Ruth."

Ruth smiled. "Hi, Jan, Korbass. I can't wait to see this movie."

"That does it," said Manardesa. "I'm leaving."

"It is supposed," Ruth said in dreamy tones, "to be *dreadful*."

"I don't understand," Korbass said. "Why don't you ever come to see the good ones?"

"They're not nearly as funny," said Ruth. "That last one, 'My Hand is My Blade', was the funniest thing I ever *saw*."

"Yes," said Manardesa, "I thought you were going to choke to death on your popcorn."

"I just hope this one is as good," Ruth said.

"As bad, you mean." Korbass shook his head.

Ruth looked past Jan, and her lips curved up and the corners of her

eyes crinkled. She shot a sidelong glance at Manardesa.

"Hi, Kintam," Jan said in resigned tones. She turned, giving Kintam a chance to see that Ruth was standing there.

"This movie must be worse than I thought," Kintam said. "Where did you disappear to for the last week, anyway?"

Ruth pushed herself away from the support of the wall, and turned to Manardesa. "How touching. I was missed. What was the paper about?"

"Pre-hegemarian somethings," Jan said helpfully.

Ruth covered her eyes with her hands, and uttered a faint moan.

Manardesa, who had been watching Ruth carefully, jabbed her elbow into Ruth's ribs. "Will you clowns come on?" she said in a firm voice. "I want to get a seat, even if you four don't."

As the group walked over to the main door, Manardesa and Ruth moved to form one little group. Jan, who wanted to talk to Kintam, slowed to walk beside him. Korbass wound up, for no reason he could see, by himself.

Jan, after a quick look ahead at Korbass, said, "Well, Kintam?"

"I thought we could duck out during the end credits," said Kintam. "Everything's confused at that point, and nobody'll notice."

"Fine," Jan said. She sighed. "I suppose Ruth *would* have to pick today to show up. I don't know how I'm going to explain this to her."

"Don't," Kintam said.

"Somebody'll tell her. Probably Korbass. Sometimes I wonder about his sense of humor. Do you know what he did?"

"What?" Kintam knew a clue when he heard one.

"He started crossing the days off on the calendar this morning," Jan said, her eyes kindling with indignation. "I'll 'only twelve more days to go' *him!*"

Kintam looked ahead. "I wonder what's so funny?"

Jan followed his gaze. Ruth had apparently pulled another rotten, involved joke, as she was laughing. As Jan and Kintam caught up to them, Jan heard Manardesa say "Ruth!" in warning tones.

Korbass looked around at his companions suspiciously. "What's the matter with you people today?"

"Nothing!" said Kintam and Jan promptly.

Manardesa and Ruth looked at Korbas with expressions of puzzlement. "I don't know what you're talking about," Manardesa said. "What's wrong with you, Korbas?"

"He fell out of the wrong side of the bed this morning," Jan chimed in.

"I thought," Kintam said loudly, "that the idea was to go inside and see a movie. Goodbye." He went over to the ticket booth, and looked back at the group. "Any of you joining me?"

Manardesa, Jan, and Ruth immediately joined him in line. Korbas followed more slowly.

After the movie, which was as funny as even Ruth could have desired, Jan and Kintam jumped up while the lights were still dim.

"See you later, Korbas," Jan said. She looked back as she and Kintam began to rapidly ooze up the aisle. Korbas had been waylaid by Manardesa and Ruth. "You know," said Jan, as she and Kintam walked away from the theater, "a person with a nasty, evil mind might say that Manardesa deliberately sat where she'd block Korbas."

"I'm sure she did," said Kintam. "It sounds just like her."

Jan and Kintam were sitting at their group's usual table the next morning, contributing useless bits of information to the lively discussion of the previous night's movie, when Korbas came up with his foodtray.

"Where the hell did you disappear to?" He slammed his tray down and sat opposite Jan. "You didn't come in all night."

Jan slowly finished her remark to Ruth on the likelihood of kershu fighters leaping a three-story building as part of a combination move. She exchanged a conspiratorial glance with Kintam, turned to Korbas, and held out her hand, palm up.

"Pay up," she said, a malicious smile on her face.

A dead silence fell over the table's dozen or so occupants.

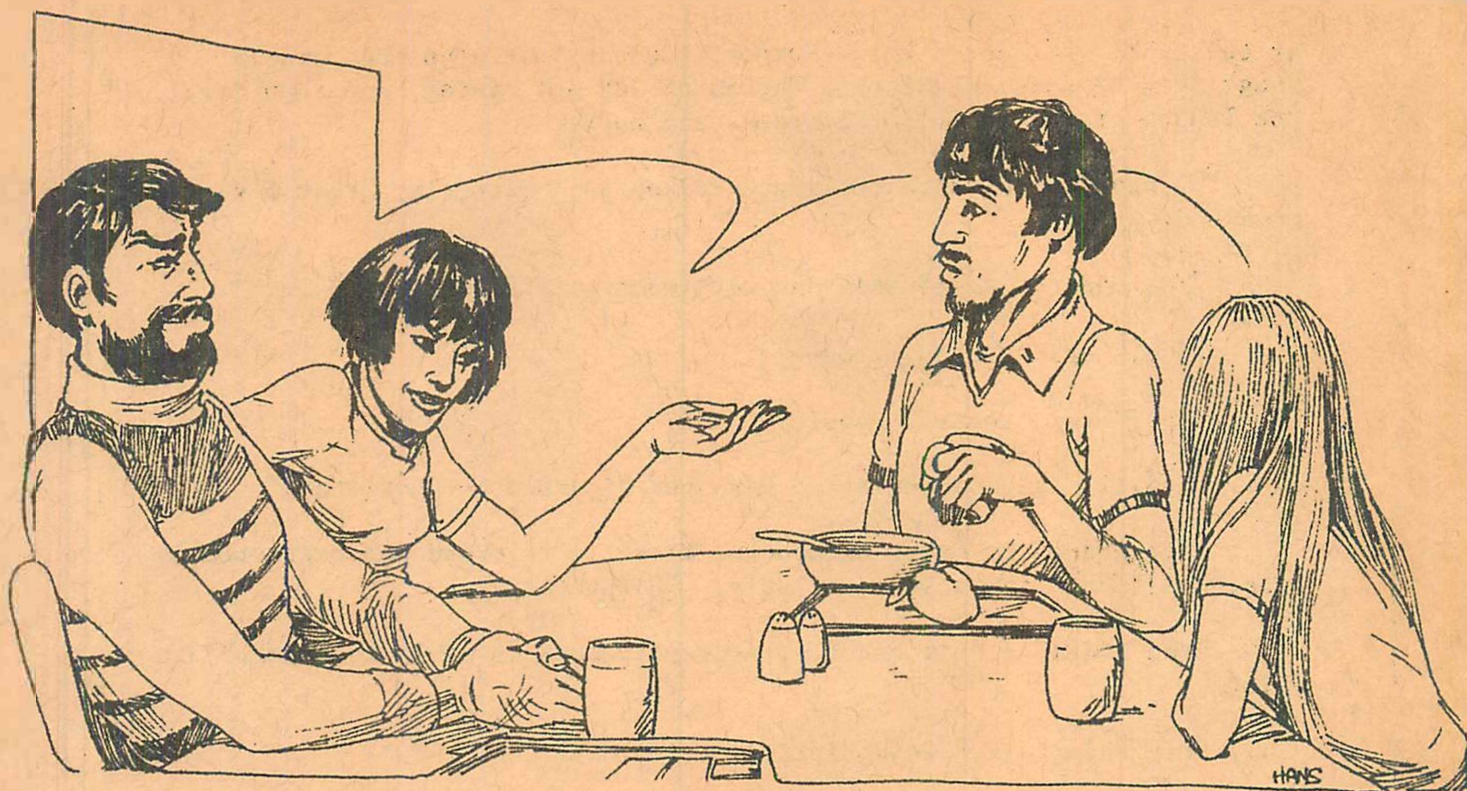
Korbas stared at Jan blankly. "What?"

"You owe me two months' room rent. Cash will be just fine."

Korbas made a strangling noise.

Kintam interpreted this as a question. "That's right," he said. He turned to Jan, and gave her a brilliant smile. "Maybe it should be two hundred credits. After all, the bet only called for--"

"This is a joke, isn't it?" Korbas said hopefully.



Pay up!

"I never joke about money," Kintam said cheerfully.

There was another moment of silence. Jan had just enough time to recall that Ruth was sitting at the table before everyone exploded with disbelieving queries and ribald jokes.

Jan ignored the questions directed at her, and looked over to where Manardesa and Ruth sat. Manardesa looked smug. Ruth was busily scribbling on her napkin.

Something clicked in Jan's mind. "Uh--Ruth?"

"Yes, Jan?" Ruth's face was bland.

"Aren't you--uh--don't you want to know what's going on?"

"I hope you both had a good time," Ruth said. She turned back to Manardesa. "How much did you say we made?"

Jan and Kintam looked at each other. Jan thought Kintam seemed rather shocked.

Korbas gave up trying to fend off the remarks of the other fighters

at the table. "I don't know--Kothor, you can just stop that stupid laughing!" he said. He looked across at Jan and Kintam, and then down the length of the table to Manardesa and Ruth.

"I have the strange feeling," Korbas said bitterly, "that I've been had."

"Too bad for you," said Jan with some satisfaction.

"But," said Korbas, "how--"

"Yes," said several people. "How?"

Xiowilli came wandering up with her breakfast. "How what?"

Enlightened by eager onlookers, Xiowilli regarded Jan respectfully. "That was fast," she said admiringly. "However did--"

"You people's opinion of my attractiveness is truly touching," Jan said.

"Let them talk," said Kintam expansively.

Jan turned. "Nobody's casting aspersions on *your* appeal. In fact, it was all your fault to begin with."

"He can't help it if his manly beauty causes strong women to faint," Ruth said.

Kintam glared at her, and several of the other fighters around the table laughed.

"I'm glad," Manardesa said, "that you're all being such good sports about losing."

For a third time, silence descended on the table.

"Let this be a lesson to you," Manardesa said, "not to underestimate an opponent."

"Even a Terran," said Jan.

"Especially a Terran," said Ruth.

"I still," Korbas said, "want to know how you managed to pull this off."

"Well. . . ." Jan grinned. "Kintam will explain it."

Kintam choked on the *chai* he had just started to sip. Jan poked him in the gut helpfully.

Xiowilli said, "It wasn't drink, or drugs, or physical force, or

"

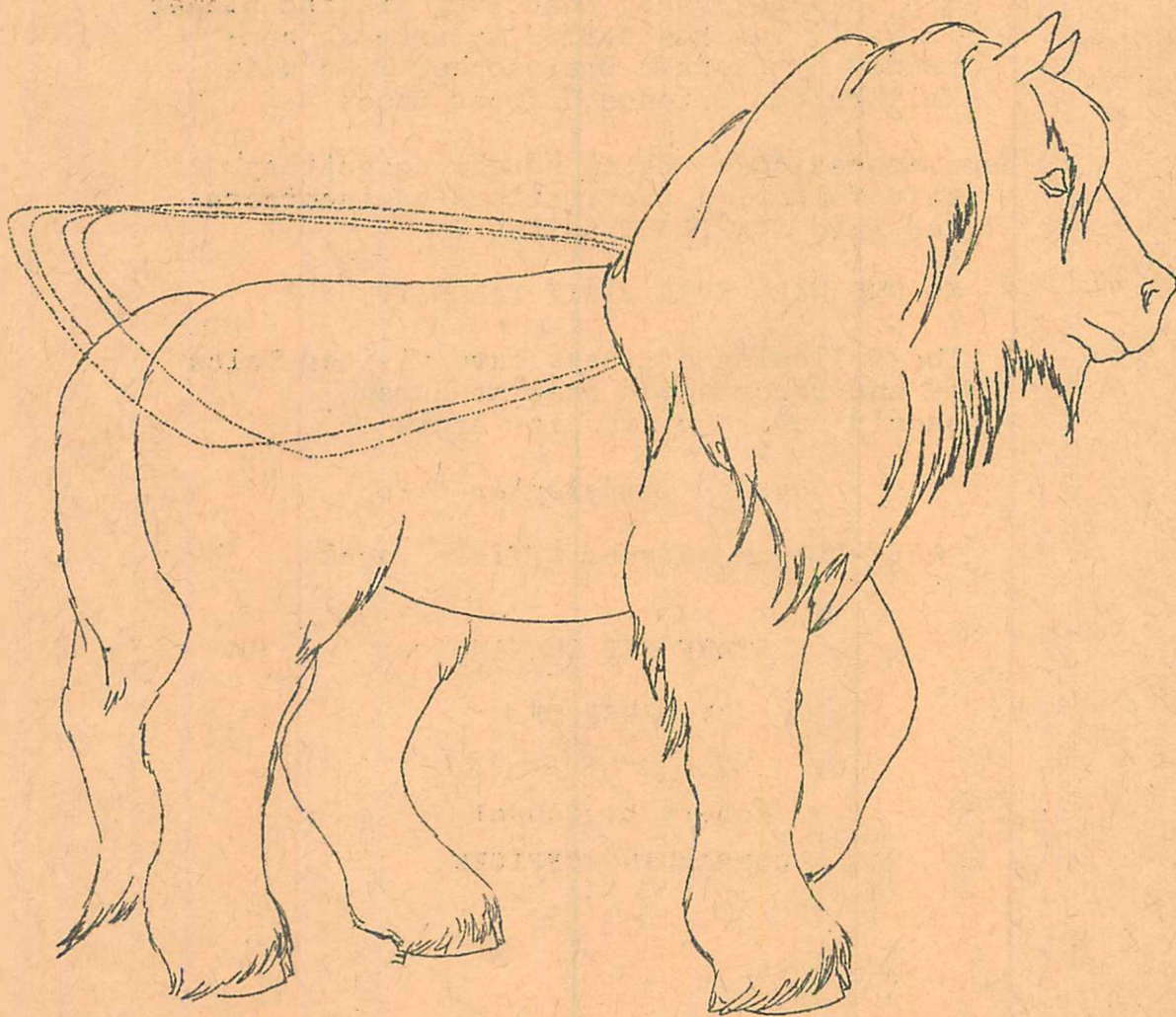
"Or her *beaux yeux*," Ruth interjected, drawing several baffled looks.

"Oh, shut up," Korbas said. "Kintam?"

"Let Jan explain it," Kintam said. "She's the fast talker."

Jan let her eyes travel around the various expressions on the faces of her companions. "It was simple," she said. "I asked him."

She always regretted not having a camera there to catch the expression on Korbas's face.



TOP SECRET

For eyes of STARFLEET Command only

Subject: Talos IV in third quadrant of
vernal galaxy.

Known facts: Detailed information cross
reference with 3XY phagrin level-mass
computer.

The only Earthship that ever visited planet
Talos IV was the U.S.S. *Enterprise* com-
manded by Captain Christopher Pike with
Half-Vulcan Science Officer Spock.

Recommendations: Be it hereby noted that
said following instructions be incorpora-
ted into STARFLEET policy --

NO ONE WILL EVER VISIT TALOS IV.

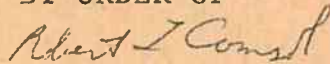
The following officers have visited Talos
IV and recommended that no human
should ever visit it again --

Captain Christopher Pike

Half-Vulcan Science Officer Spock

STARFLEET COMMAND

BY ORDER OF



Robert L. Comsol

COMMANDING OFFICER

Notes on THE TALOS REPORT

Ruth Berman

In the Talos Report, the double emphasis on Spock's being Half-Vulcan seems odd and unnecessary. Possibly it looks forward to later sections of the report. Although the report did not explain why Talos was being put off-limits, it may well have hinted at the effects of Talosian illusion-casting. If so, it would also be relevant for the report to note that a being with some telepathic power was as much deceived by the Talosian illusions as the non-telepathic humans. Perhaps the report went on to recommend that non-humans ought to follow the human decision to stay off of Talos IV.

But would Pike--and Star Fleet--have known of Spock's telepathic powers? Kirk did not know about them in "Where No Man Has Gone Before." The *Enterprise* computer, asked to name crewmen high in ESP ("Where No Man Has Gone Before"), listed only Gary Mitchell and Dr. Elizabeth Dehner. It's true that Kirk was then new to his command; Pike, who had known Spock for much longer, might have known of the "mind-meld." If he did, it is possible that he would have avoided putting the information into the ship's computer and yet been willing to put it into the Top Secret Talos Report. Information in the computer was more or less public, and Spock, as is well known, wanted privacy in such matters; a Top Secret report would not be so much of an intrusion on his rights.

Spock explicitly mentioned his reluctance to attempt the mind-touch off Vulcan in a line in the script of "Dagger of the Mind," although I think the line was cut before the show was aired, as I don't recall hearing it: "It is a *hidden* thing to us, part of our *private* lives." In "Devil in the Dark," Kirk mentioned Spock's reluctance, sympathizing with the importance of Spock's willingness to attempt a mind-touch with the Horta:

SPOCK

You are aware of the Vulcan technique of the joining of two minds.

KIRK

I know it's a terrible, personal lowering of the mental barriers.

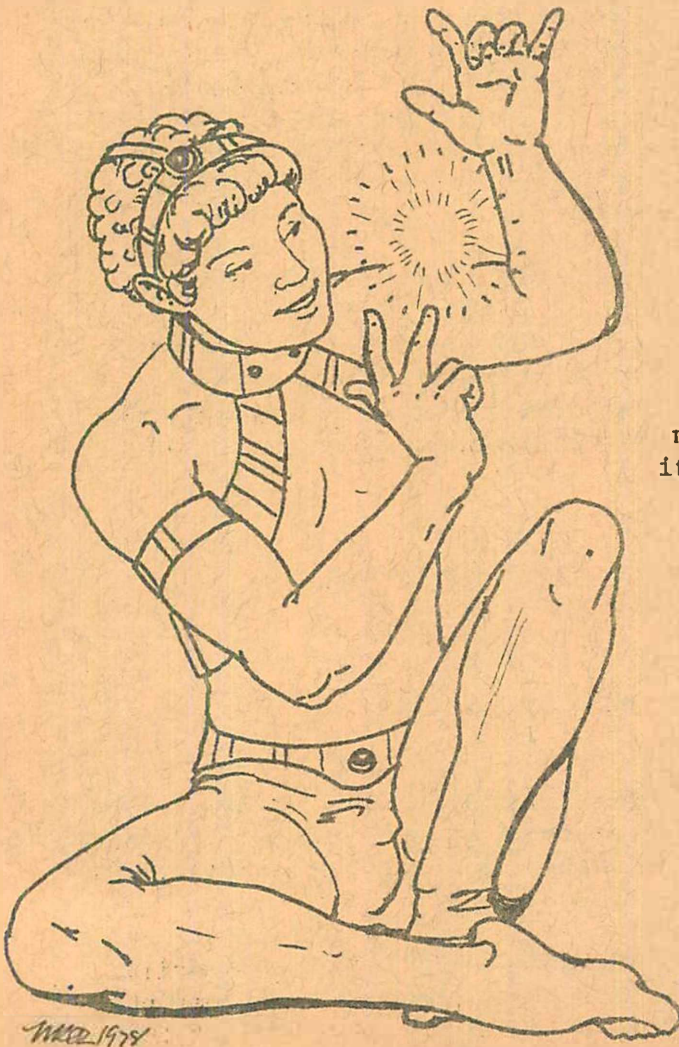
(In the script, Kirk only said "Of course," and Spock himself went on to remind him of the "terribly personal" nature of the technique. The change in the lines during production got the information over more swiftly, and showed Kirk's compassion more clearly to boot.)

Still, a reluctance to attempt the mind-touch is not necessarily the same thing as a reluctance to let anyone know about it. It remains uncertain whether Spock's telepathy was on record or not. The fact that

the mind-touch was an important part of the rituals surrounding *pon-farr* suggests that Spock would have wanted the mind-touch kept unknown to outsiders; he could only bring himself to discuss the *pon-farr* with Kirk with the greatest difficulty ("Amok Time").

If Pike did not know of Spock's telepathy, another possible explanation of the stress on Spock's being Half-Vulcan is political. Pointing out Spock's presence may have been intended to give the report a weight with the Vulcan government, and perhaps with other non-human governments, which a purely human report would not otherwise have. The recommendation that *humans* not visit Talos is an indication that Robert L. Comsol had command over a "Star Fleet" which was made up of humans only. The absence of any mention of the Federation is also interesting.

Possibly the Federation did not exist at the time. The fact that Kirk was surprised, but not incredulous, when Zefrem Cochran, who didn't look a day over 35, said he'd never heard of the Federation ("Metamorphosis"), suggests that the Federation was new. However, Gene Roddenberry has said in various speeches that the Federation is old, much older than Earth's membership in it.



It may be that Earth had not yet joined the Federation when the *Enterprise* first visited Talos. Or it may be that the Federation lacks a central authority. (The term "federation" implies a bond much less close than that of a "union" as in the United

States or the United Kingdom of Great Britain.) If the Federation has (or had in Pike's time) no unified military branch to carry out its rulings, it would depend on the cooperation of the individual fleets of member planets, among which "Star Fleet" was the name of a united fleet from Earth and Earth's colonies.

Comsol of Star Fleet apparently did have command over more planets than Earth alone. The Talos Report named the *Enterprise* as the only Earthship to visit Talos IV; therefore, presumably, Vina's ship, the S. S. *Columbia*, was not from Earth, although it carried humans. So Comsol had authority

over Vina's home planet, at least, as well as over Earth, in recommending that humans stay away from Talos.

It seems that later on "Star Fleet" came to be used as the name of all the Federation ships, including, for example, the Vulcan ship *Intrepid* ("Immunity Syndrome"). (A Vulcan ship with an English name also poses interesting questions. A gesture towards interstellar amity on Vulcan's part? Translation of a difficult-to-pronounce Vulcan name into its English equivalent when speaking to humans to speed communications?)

But when Spock joined Star Fleet there were evidently sharp divisions between Earth and the Federation, perhaps divisions among all the Federation members. Sarek's unwillingness to let Spock join "Star Fleet" ("Journey to Babel") may have been based on his distrust of a purely (Spock excepted) human organization's fairness. Spock's status on Vulcan as a living legend ("Amok Time") may have been partly his rise through the ranks of a pack of humans without giving up his status as a Vulcan.

In fact, the emphasis on Spock's being Half-Vulcan in the Talos Report may be a direct result of Spock's emphasis on it. It's a curious paradox that if Spock had stayed on Vulcan and gone to the Vulcan Science Academy as his father wanted, he might well have found himself behaving in a far more "human" manner and throwing all the emphasis on his identity as Half-Human instead. When T'Pol challenged him, "Are thee Vulcan, or are thee human?" ("Amok Time"), he evaded the issue by asserting the one without denying the other: "I burn, T'Pol. My eyes are flame."

It would be interesting to know what Robert L. Comsol thinks of the whole situation, and of Spock in particular. He was apparently alive at the time of the *Enterprise's* second visit to Talos IV. The order to the *Enterprise* to turn back (a Talosian illusion, as it happened, but good enough to fool the ship's personnel) was signed "Comsol." (The *STAR TREK Concordance* suggests that "Comsol" is a bureau, perhaps the office of the commander of solar forces, and it could well be so. But it could be Robert L., too.)

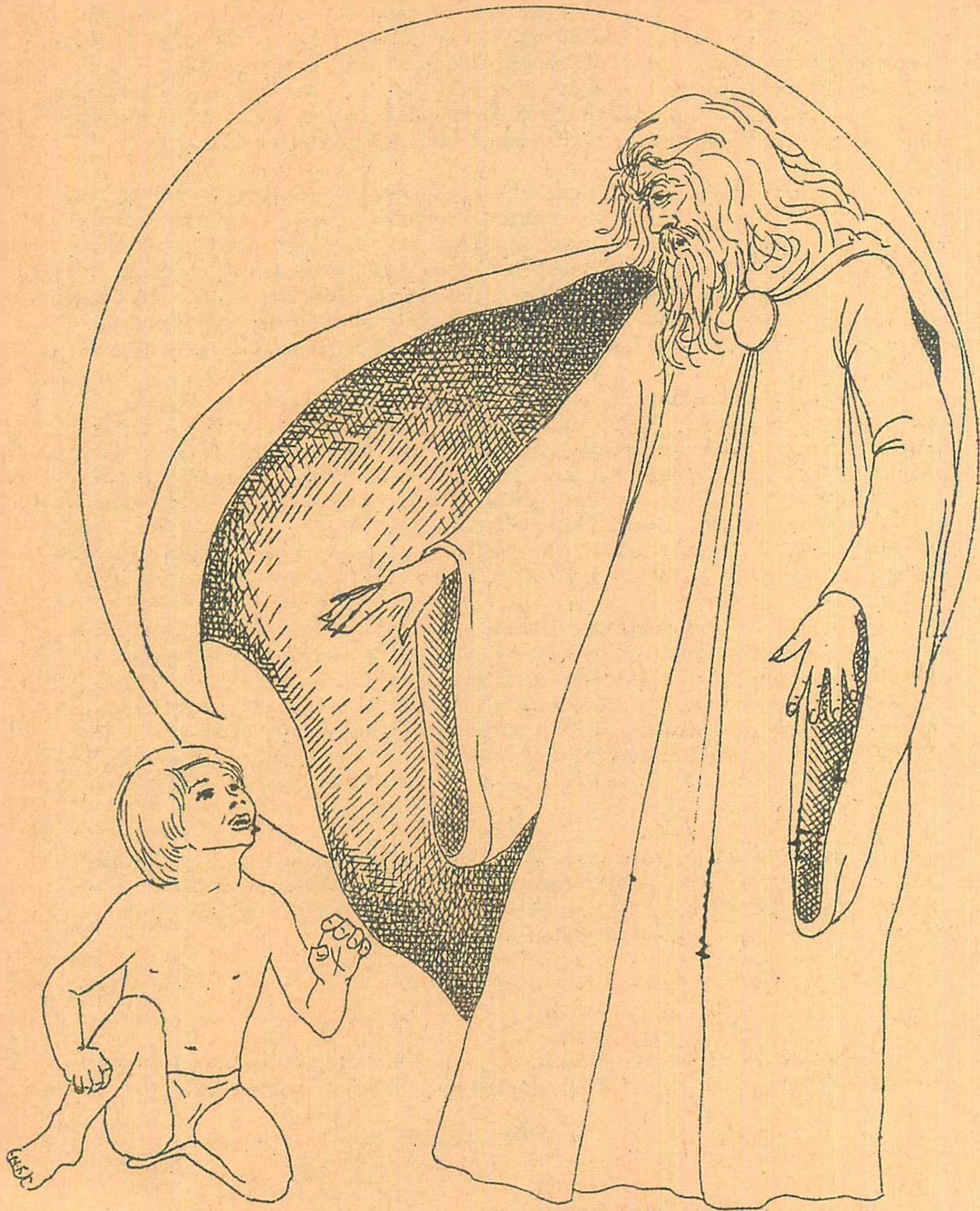
It would also be interesting to know what makes a galaxy vernal and what a phagrin level-mass computer is. I won't swear absolutely to the spellings; reading a text so teeny (on a film clip) is difficult. Perhaps even in the Federation they have typos?

No mind can reduce this mess to any controllable order; you're better off to spend your effort devising a plan to go mad on.

The Eunuch, Act I, scene 1--

Terence

Quoted for us by Ruth Berman



Van Lewis '79

THE GUARDIAN

Out of the shifting mist and shimmering light
Into the Chamber of Crystals
Came Mhen-Jahoda,
Guardian of the mountain;
Wrapped in a Robe of Contrasts
That echoed with its slick sheen
The raveling derangement of Belamen, the land.

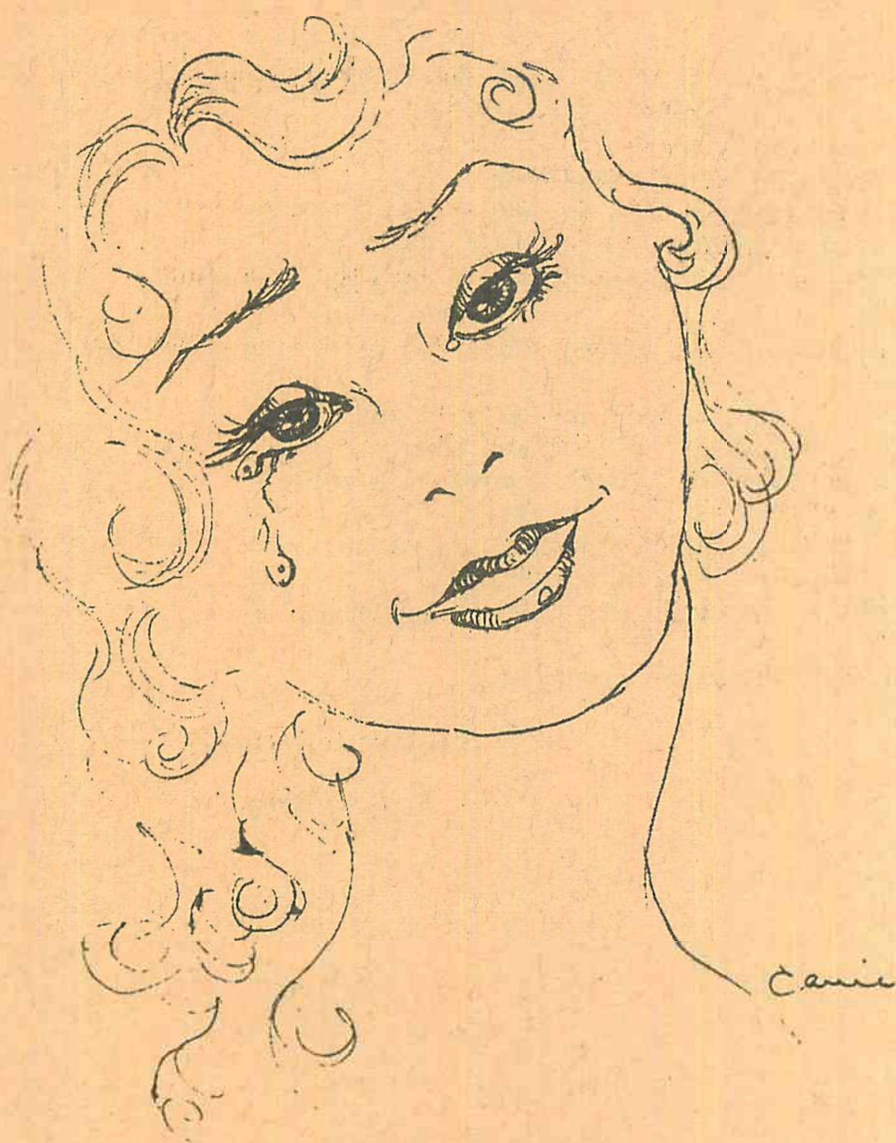
The child who waited shuddered with nightmare fear.

His face, planed with shadows and light,
As craggy as his mountain home,
With eyes that swept through the soul,
A mouth that did not smile;
The hands, long-fingered and brown,
Wove spirals and mesmerized
Until the child was utterly beguiled.

Thus the lessons began.

Stephanie Spearman &

Julie Driver



Mudd in Your Eye

Marian Lois Turner

Yeoman Isobel Schuster found life in the Star Fleet a pain. A big pain. Guess where. In theory, doing a hitch on a starship was thrilling beyond measure; in practice, it was just a hitch. The monotony of duty seemed endless; then hostile forces would be encountered and the fear, tension, and exchange of fire seemed equally infinite.

Bel didn't know how she'd last long enough to muster out. Still, just when she thought she'd reached the end of her tether, something would come along and give her a little slack. Once it was the time Chekov's pet fleenar got loose; once it was the time the hybrid popping corn in the hydroponic garden got out of hand; sometimes it was shore leave.

Bel Schuster was up for shore leave on Llannonn, a planet which had only recently allowed itself to be utilized for that purpose. At that, only one edifice had been made available for Star Fleet use.

Bel, though usually a hound for shore leave, was less than ecstatic at this prospect. Restricted shore leave was less getting away from it all than taking most of it with you. Beaming into a strictly proscribed area with a number of fellow Star Fleet personnel and behaving according to regulations until time to beam back aboard ship was not Bel's idea of satisfactory R & R.

As she stepped onto the transporter dais, Bel felt a measure of comfort in the fact that she had never shared duty or leave with any of the others about to be turned loose on a short leash. She had met most of them in passing, or had seen them across a rec hall, but the contacts had been brief and the memories hazy. Nothing strong enough to lash her to anybody's side, at any rate.

She debated and decided against taking this opportunity to formalize her somewhat ships-in-the-night acquaintance with Lieutenant Tetra, the senior officer on leave. Bel knew, from Riley and Sulu, that the lieutenant was sometimes more human than Vulcan. She also knew that the

lieutenant preferred to keep this *penchant* from her cousin, Spock. For this reason (and in fear that she and Tetra might dislike each other on more familiar terms) Bel had refrained from drawing attention to Tetra by communicating with her face-to-face.

The transporter room shimmered and disappeared. There were the usual few seconds of unmarked and unmarkable nothingness, and a new location shimmered into view.

Jok'rel's Travelers Inn was comparable to any other Travelers Inn in the Federation Network. A honest but superficial effort was always made to incorporate a feel of the surrounding locale, but the stamp of Travelers Inn pre-fab hominess was unmistakable.

Bel and her group materialized in the lobby and, like some great and many-headed animal scenting water, moved to the dim and crowded bar-parlor.

Six brief hours, Bel thought, detaching herself from her group to settle in an almost lightless corner. Should she spend the time trying to raise the price of liquor by shortening the supply, or take time out for the official see-the-sights-and-local-shops tour? Llannon, according to the brochures, was a planet of uncommon interest. It consisted of three sociotypes ruled by the Grand Council, a group made up of sages and bright young lights of all three groups. There were the rurals, the urbans, and the wanderers. The three types had equal power, and seemed contentedly symbiotic, though most visitors had heard little and understood less of the role of the wandering tribes.

Bel wanted to see one of the farms where, it was said, fields could be made to yield six different crops in a standard year. She wanted to really see the city, with its pastel soapstone towers and low-flying land-cars. She wanted to meet some people.

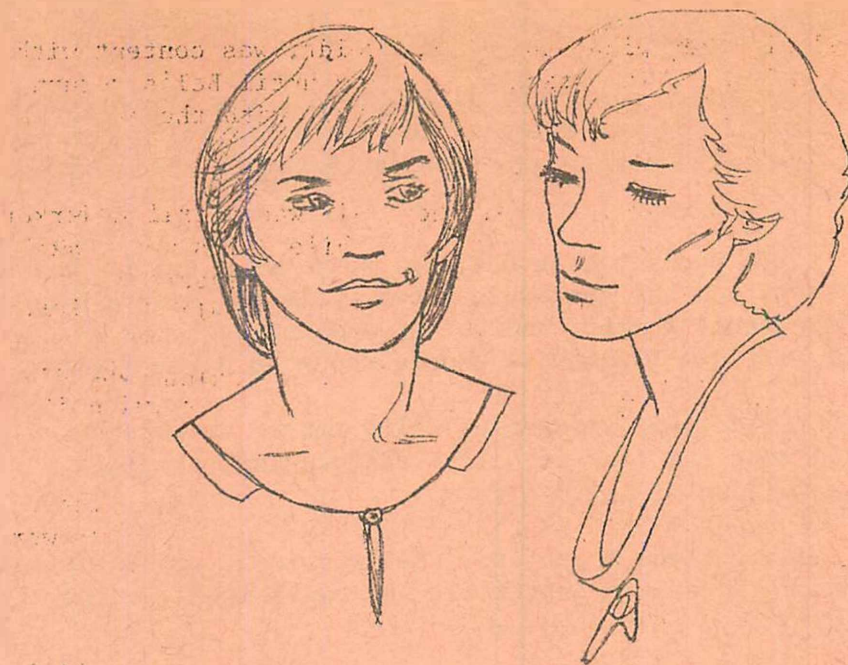
As usual, the only locals who weren't holding aloof from the uniforms were trying to sell them something, or hustling foosball and other games of chance.

Bel ground her teeth and took a pull at the tube of domestic whiskey she'd dialed from the table dispenser.

A couple more pulls and she began to see a way.

A party of natives occupied a nearby table. Bel's eye fell upon a girl who was odd wheel in the group, which was paired by sex, but not in the combination generally accepted, even in Bel's time, on Terra. Bel, having taken perhaps one too many pulls on her whiskey tube, failed to notice.

The girl noticed Bel's slightly glazed interest. She whispered something to her companions, who laughed, grinned toward Bel, and sent the girl on her way with claps on the back and unintelligible but obvious words of encouragement.



"I saw you looking at me," the girl said in the Federation *lingua franca*.

"I was thinking about something," Bel said.

"Something about me?" the girl asked coyly.

"Something about both of us," Bel said. Then she got it.

"No, no," she said. "Something else. Something else altogether."

The girl looked disappointed. "Should I leave?"

"No. . ." Bel hated to abandon a workable plan. "Listen," she said. "How would you like to make some clear profit for a little less than six hours' easy duty?"

The girls left together and were gone for several minutes, during which time the couples with whom the native girl had been seated finished their drinks and departed.

When Bel and the native girl returned, there was no one remaining who had marked their exit. No one marked their return, either--except for one man, in a corner even darker than Bel's. He sat up sharply when he saw the girls slip back into Bel's booth. He wore an expression of puzzlement and intense and rapid thought, which changed to one of wolfish delight as light evidently dawned. He pulled gloatingly at the dark mustachios which framed his gleaming grin, and eased from the bar-parlor to a more advantageous post behind a potted plant in the lobby.

Bel was pleased with her plan; the girl, Freltdt, was content with her payoff. All she had to do was stick to the Inn until Bel's return, keeping away from illuminated areas and close contact with the other *Enterprise* crewmembers.

Freltdt was a little younger than Bel, her hair was a trifle darker and quite a bit coarser, and her eyes were brown while Bel's were hazel, but she was of Bel's height, weight, and build, and her features were close enough to pass in a dim light with people who knew neither girl.

"I like this," Freltdt said, fingering Bel's tunic, which she now wore. "Maybe I could make one like it. If I changed the trimming it wouldn't look like a uniform at all."

"I'll see if I can get you a pattern," Bel promised, adjusting the belt of Freltdt's flowered dress to better fit her own slightly narrower waist. "Now I'm off."

Bel hadn't been gone for half an hour--the tour hadn't even been announced yet--when communicators started beeping all over the bar.

The shore party was being re-called.

The senior officer on leave, Lieutenant Tetra, a half-human, half-Vulcan, who had been improving the shining hours by observing the effects of alchoholic stimulants on various human types, called roll.

"Where's Yeoman Schuster?" she asked anyone who might be listening.

Someone pointed to Freltdt in her dim booth.

"Yeoman Schuster," Tetra called.

There was no response from the shadowy figure.

Lieutenant Tetra catalogued this as one more effect of alchoholic stimulants on a certain human type and threaded her way to Freltdt's table.

"Come with me," she said.

Freltdt looked her over and smiled.

"Don't mind if I do," she said, and followed Tetra back to the group.

Tetra gave the go-ahead signal to the transporter room, and the shore party, minus Bel but with the addition of Freltdt, left Jok'rel's Travelers Inn for the *Enterprise*.

* * * * *

Captain Kirk, on the bridge of the *Enterprise*, had things on his mind. He had been slipped the word by a friendly Grand Council member that Terrans, and all Star Fleet personnel by association, were shortly to become *persona non grata* on Llannonn, and had instantly ordered the shore party back aboard.

It had taken a lot of hard-core diplomacy to open Llannonn to shore leave status in the first place and now, for reasons as yet unexplained to him, the gain had been lost.

Captain Kirk didn't need an emergency.

His command chair began to beep.

"Captain Kirk, this is Lieutenant Tetra, in the transporter room. We have a problem."

A song from the old Terran show, *The Wiz*, flitted through the captain's mind: "Don't bring me no bad news."

"Yes, Lieutenant Tetra," the captain replied.

"We've just transported up, sir, as ordered, and. . . we seem to be one short."

"Didn't you count bodies, call roll?"

"Yes, sir, but--"

A background whimpering escalated to a whining shriek. There were calls of "Lieutenant Tetra! For God's sake, pinch her neck or something!"

"Excuse me, sir," Tetra said.

There was a brief pause, silence, and Tetra returned.

"The fact is, sir," Tetra explained, "Yeoman Schuster seems to have changed clothes with a native girl. Apparently, Yeoman Schuster is now somewhere on Llannonn and we have a native on board."

"Yeoman Schuster?" the captain asked, with a weary air of predestination.

"Yes, sir."

"Yeoman Isobel Schuster?"

"Yes, sir."

"Bel?"

"I believe she is so called by her intimates, sir."

Kirk wondered briefly if Bel could be the cause of the current trouble between Llannonn and the Federation, and decided not. Bel might be a malcontent, but she was a responsible malcontent. She would never do anything to the discredit of the Fleet. She didn't like being in the service, but would defend it to the death. Her psychological profile showed that plainly. Too bad her profile hadn't been more well-defined before she entered the service, or at least before she had signed aboard the *Enterprise*.

Kirk sighed deeply.

"All right, Lieutenant Tetra," he said. "I'm on my way."

Lieutenant Tetra contacted Sick Bay to report a once hysterical, now unconscious, alien female, possibly needing medical attention. Then she directed the transporter room security force to restrain the shore party from leaving.

"The captain may want to ask some questions," she said, a typically Vulcan understatement.

When Kirk entered the transporter room, McCoy was bent over the prostrate but conscious form of Freltd.

Kirk turned to Lieutenant Tetra.

"What, exactly, happened?"



"We beamed into Jok'rel's Traveler's Inn, seated ourselves at various tables in the bar-parlor, and began to consume or to observe the consumption of native food-stuffs. During the time we were on the planet, a total of twelve natives approached the table at which I was seated, offering goods and services for purchase or hire. At 2100 hours, we were notified of the cancellation of shore leave. When I called roll, I found Yeoman Schuster had failed to respond. This female was pointed out to me as Yeoman Schuster. As she was wearing a Star Fleet yeoman's uniform, I approached her. She accompanied me to the beam-up point. When she found herself here, she reacted with shock and distress, finally becoming violent and necessitating my employment of the nerve pinch."

"...Thank you Lieutenant." He *had*, Kirk reminded himself, asked for an exact report.

"Does anyone else have anything to add?" he asked the company in general.

No one had.

"Very well, you are dismissed." The captain stayed them with a gesture. "But I must ask you to consider this entire incident as classified until further notice. If I hear one word about this on the grapevine--and I would. . . ."

He let them each supply his or her own "or else", and let them go.

"Lieutenant Tetra, you will remain."

"Yes, sir."

Kirk squatted by McCoy and tried to give Freldt a reassuring look.

"How is she, Bones?"

"Oh, fine. She's a little shook up, of course--who wouldn't be? How many people on Llannonn have ever seen a starship, much less been unexpectedly transported aboard one? And then, when she reacts as anyone normally would under the circumstances, a girl half her size touches her and she wakes up on the floor."

"At the time, it seemed the logical thing to do," said Lieutenant Tetra, with no remorse.

"Is she capable of answering questions?" Kirk asked.

"No response," said Freldt. "Don't ask."

Kirk, unsure of his next move, rose and held out a hand to the girl on the floor.

She took his hand and let him help her up. Then she held out a hand to McCoy who, irritated at the implication but too well-aware of protocol to refuse, let Freldt help him up.

"I don't think you understand," said Kirk, with masculine charm that was utterly wasted on Freldt. He tried to explain.

"One of my crew was stranded on your planet, probably off-limits, in territory not sanctioned by or answerable to our Federation. It's imperative that she be found as soon as possible. Now, if you have any information that will help us locate her, in the name of whatever God you worship, tell me what you know."

This conjuration, Kirk knew from previous dealings with Llannonn, should have worked powerfully on the girl, but she merely avoided his eyes and muttered, "No response. Don't ask."



"If I may, Captain," said Tetra, "allow me to point out that Yeoman Schuster's communicator is also missing. It's possible that Yeoman Schuster retained the device but was too far from the beam-up point to return before we beamed aboard with--" she nodded to Frelt, "--her. Yeoman Schuster may now be waiting at the appointed site, or may be returning to it as quickly as possible."

"Good point, Lieutenant." The captain turned to the transporter technician on duty.

"Scan the area immediately surrounding the beam-up coordinates."

"Aye, sir." There was a pause, filled with the sounds of active machinery. "Sorry, sir. Nothing."

Kirk nodded. "Continue to scan and notify me when you find something."

"Aye, sir."

"May I also point out," said Tetra, "that it is equally possible that this person is wholly or partly responsible for Yeoman Schuster's disappearance."

Kirk was about to state his opinion that the greater likelihood was that Yeoman Schuster was responsible for the girl's problem rather than the reverse, but Tetra interrupted him.

"With all due respect, Captain, we cannot let this person's youth and seeming confusion blind us to the fact that a valued member of Star Fleet personnel has vanished, and that this girl is dressed in the missing yeoman's clothing. Obviously, she is meant to serve as a decoy to prevent an alarm being raised by the yeoman's absence."

Kirk had been displeased by the interruption, McCoy by the speech; but, while the doctor's distaste had flared into his face and remained there, the captain's had been replaced by well-hidden amusement. He did, after all, have a deeper sympathy with Spock, his half-Vulcan First Officer, than the doctor could ever know or understand.

"Now, Lieutenant," he said, managing to put a protective arm around Frelt's shoulders and seem to stand between her and the coldly threatening Vulcan at one and the same time. "I'm sure you're wrong. If--I say *if*--this girl has had anything to do with Yeoman Schuster's disappearance, it was because she simply failed to realize the magnitude of her action."

He slid a glance at Frelt, who was chewing thoughtfully on the inside of her mouth. He signaled the others to maintain silence.

At last Freltdt looked up.

"Promise you won't be mad?"

Freltdt was placed in guarded quarters until Star Fleet Command could be contacted for advice on handling what could develop into a ticklish situation. There was no way for Kirk to know just how serious a breach had been opened between the Federation and the Llannonn central government, nor how it would be affected by a stray yeoman out-of-uniform and what amounted to the kidnapping of a Llannonn native.

Kirk, McCoy, and Tetra had just left Freltdt's quarters when McCoy snapped, "Would you two mind telling me what was going on in the transporter room? Tetra, it isn't like you to jump to a conclusion and then push it as a fact, any more than it's like you," he continued to the captain, "to dismiss a reasonable theory out of hand."

Kirk grinned. "It worked, didn't it?"

"What worked?"

"The good-guy/bad-guy approach," Tetra replied. "Or, as some of you United States Terrans used to call it, the old Mutt-and-Jeff routine."

The doctor's face displayed that look of blank astonishment so dear to a Vulcan's heart.

"The old--" he relaxed into a Georgia grin. "Of course. Beautiful! But, Jim, how did you know it was a routine?"

"I didn't at first; not until Tetra clued me in."

McCoy showed his puzzlement. "How? When?"

"When she referred to Bel Schuster as a 'valued member of Star Fleet personnel.' Bel may be valued in many capacities, but as a member of Star Fleet personnel. . . ."

"Good point."

When Bel left the bar-parlor of the Travelers Inn, she glanced quickly around the lobby, overlooking the man lurking behind the potted plant. She stepped smugly into the street, much pleased at the prospect of nearly six hours on her own.

In fact, she had less than six minutes.

She was passing an access corridor in one of the reinforced soap-stone munipicle buildings when a strong, albeit pudgy, arm shot out and pulled her into the dim passage. A hand was clapped over her mouth before she could scream.

She filled this aural void by biting the hand, causing its owner to scream for her.

The abductor shifted his grip to the junction of Bel's neck and shoulders and pinched.

"Ouch!" said Bel, and gave the man an elbow in his soft, slightly bulging breadbasket.

She made a lunge for the street and was jerked back. Her head struck a wall, and she lost consciousness.

Bel woke with a damp, cool cloth on her head and with her hands being gently rubbed. A deep voice was crooning, "That's it. That's my girl. Wake up. Wake up for Harry."

She opened her eyes a crack and saw a portly, moon-faced man with a heavy black handlebar mustache and thinning black hair kneeling by her bed with both her hands in his.

When the man saw she was awake, he breathed a somewhat whale-like sigh of relief and briefly closed his dark, long-lashed eyes.

Bel licked her dry lips, and the man pressed another damp cloth to her mouth, then lifted her head and gave her a drink of the local whiskey diluted with water.

Bel struggled to orient herself. "Who are you?" seemed as good a question as any.

"Harry Mudd," the man said, in a phoney, fruity voice, "at your service, as it were."

"You rescued me?"

Harry Mudd avoided Bel's eyes.

"Er. . .in a manner of speaking, yes." He shrugged elaborately, attempting an expression of fawn-like innocence. "It was the least I could do; I mean, it's remotely possible that an ungenerous nature might hold me responsible for your. . .accident."

"You. . ."

"Now, now, my dear young woman," Harry protested, growing somewhat defensive, "it was an *accident!*" He rose and seated himself next to a shaky table which held a primitive lighting device and a roll of whiskey tubes. "I was only trying to prevent your getting away. It was purely by unhappy chance that your head hit the wall. I can hardly be held responsible for the vagaries of Fate, now can I?"

Bel didn't answer.

"Can I?"

The little-boy act was so transparent but, at the same time, so good, Bel had to move her head and feel the pain to retain a clear grasp of matters.

"One thing," she said at last. "Why? I couldn't've looked like a good mark for a robbery; and even if you'd robbed me, it wouldn't make sense for you to carry me off to tend my wounds. As for rape. . . ."

Harry made a face indicating violent distaste and a gesture of denial.

"So why? --And why are my hands tied?" Bel tried to swing her legs off the cot. "And my feet. Why am I trussed up like a Christmas turkey here?"

"Well. . . ."

"Cough it up," said Bel, who had the measure of the man, she thought.

"Not so fast!" Harry was indignant. "There's a correct approach to these things and an incorrect approach. This is a matter of some delicacy."

"Are we on a ship?" Bel asked abruptly, throwing Harry off the track.

"What? A ship? No. . .no, of course not. . . Why?"

"I thought maybe I'd been shanghaied."

Mudd opened and closed his mouth a couple of times. Then, with a show of infinite patience, he began his explanation.

"I saw your shore party beam down," he said. "It was a bit of a nasty shock to me, I don't mind telling you. I don't follow the local news as closely as perhaps I ought to, and I didn't know. . .that is. . . I wasn't expecting. . . ."

"The Law?"

"Er. . .something like that. At any rate, I quickly saw that it was only a matter of time before I would be able to make my escape--er, that is, my exit--and settled down to wait." Mudd's face took on a look of half-amusing, half-repulsive slyness. "Then I observed something very interesting. I saw a Star Fleet yeoman and a native female leave the bar and, not long after, return--wearing each other's clothes."

Bel was about to give Harry credit for more power of observation than she would have dreamed he possessed when he continued. "The native girl. . .she and I have been known to steer business one another's way.

Different sorts of business, of course," he assured Bel virtuously. "Now why, I asked myself, would a member of Star Fleet want to put on native clothes and leave the protection of Federation diplomatic soil?"

He cocked an eyebrow, obviously pleased with his question.

"Did you answer yourself?" Bel asked.

Mudd was smug. "Yes, I did."

"And the answer was . . ."

"Oh, come now," Harry chided jovially. "Don't make me say it."

Bel felt she was in no position to flaunt her ignorance, so she said, "But you're so proud of it. Go on. Say it."

Harry chuckled. "I'm right," he said in a voice thick with delight. "I know I'm right. You're not a yeoman."

You can say that again, thought Bel.

"You're not even in Star Fleet!"

I wish, thought Bel.

"You're some kind of VIP," Harry announced, "traveling incognito. And that wasn't a shore party, they were your honor guard. You got tired of it--heavy rests the head that wears the crown and so on--and conceived your little plan for slipping away and mingling with plain folk for a while, with no one the wiser, eh?"

Bel thought Mudd had been viewing too much cheap fiction, but very wisely restrained herself from telling him so.

She breathed easier, though. A simple misunderstanding, easily rectified, one Terran to another.

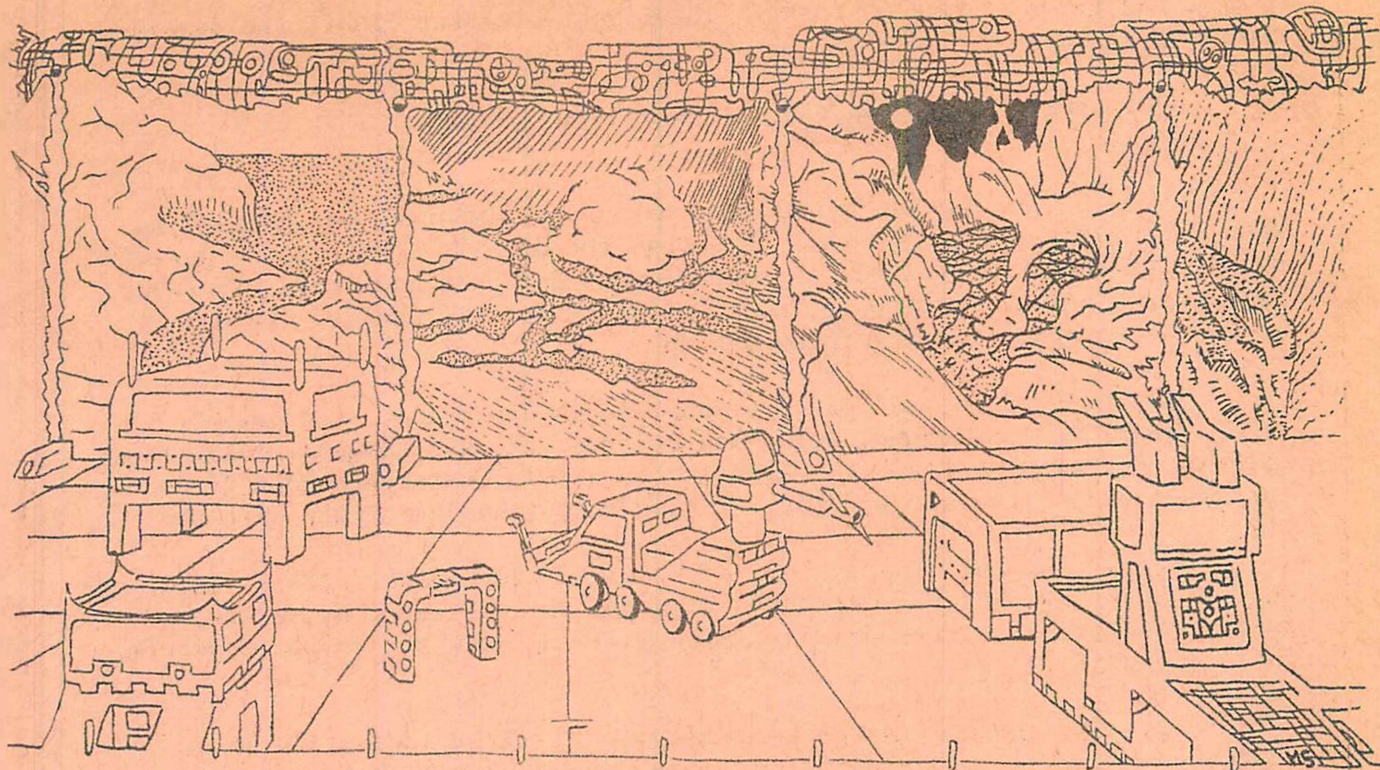
"That's very good," she said. "That's a good interpretation of events. Very ingenious . . ."

"You're not going to tell me I'm wrong, are you?"

Suddenly, Harry Mudd didn't look at all amusing. He looked dangerous. Ruthless. He looked like a man who was his own prime interest and only care.

"Because," he continued, "if I'm wrong, you would be worse than useless to me, wouldn't you? You'd be a liability. And, much as it would pain me to do so, I'd have to dispose of you."

"You mean . . ." the words sounded absurdly melodramatic, "kill me?"



"Oh, no," said Harry softly. "I detest violence--and, incidentally, I don't much fancy life imprisonment. No, I'd simply sell you to some people I know. If I'm wrong about you, I'll need the money."

"Harry," said Bel, "you have my congratulations. You have penetrated my disguise. I'm not at liberty to reveal my true identity, but that's a small matter."

"Of course." Mudd was again smiling and magnanimous. "So long as you continue to cooperate, we'll get along just fine. And, may I add, we'll both get what we want. You will be returned to the security of Star Fleet escort and I . . ." Mudd's eyes slid toward the boarded windows with mixed fear and loathing. "I shall be liberated from this benighted planet."

He looked back to his captive, and became faintly avuncular.

"You look terribly uncomfortable, my pet. Allow me. . . ." He helped Bel to a sitting position. "May I offer you another tot of whiskey, my dear? --Un-watered, this time . . . not bad stuff. . . ."

Bel accepted the tube he offered. Harry took one for himself.

"And may I propose a toast? Thank you. To Star Fleet, the secular Savior of mankind."

Harry Mudd threw back his head and began to laugh.

Captain Kirk sat on the bridge, making an elaborate and convincing show of having nerves of steel. Although the details of the shore party's re-call had been suppressed, an announcement had been made that all shore leaves on Llanonn were to be rescinded until further notice. It was obvious to the crew that Something Was Up.

When he felt he had put in a long enough appearance, the captain turned over the conn to Mr. Sulu, and ordered that all communications from Llanonn and/or Star Fleet be channeled to him in Conference Room B. He left the bridge, taking Mr. Spock, Doctor McCoy, and Mr. Scott with him.

Once in the conference room, Kirk called Lieutenant Tetra to join the conclave, and checked yet again with the transporter room to verify that Yeoman Bel Schuster had not simply wandered back to the Inn wondering where everybody was.

This call to the transporter room was the first indication Spock or Scott had had of what was going on. Spock, predictably, heard it impassively; Scott, perhaps just as predictably, was shocked.

"You mean to say," he cried to Kirk, "that poor wee lassie is lost, all alone on some heathenish planet that hardly knows what a Terran is, let alone how to treat one?"

"I believe you are over-reacting, Mr. Scott," said Spock. "Terrans, while only recently welcomed as a group, have, in fact, been a common sight on Llanonn for some years. As for Llanonn's being 'heathenish', that is merely a xenophobic term describing the worship of someone else's God."

Scott looked vaguely disgusted. While he was genuinely concerned for the safety of the yeoman, he rather enjoyed being carried away by the drama of the moment--a luxury Spock neither appreciated nor tolerated. But Spock, he knew, was right.

"Then tell me this," Scott said. "Does anyone know what happened? Was she arrested, or--"

Lieutenant Tetra entered, and Kirk had her repeat what she knew of Bel's disappearance.

"I've requested instructions from Star Fleet Command," the captain said, "or enough information on our status here to enable me to take steps on my own initiative. As it is, I might be putting Yeoman Schuster into greater jeopardy than she may be in already by requesting the Grand Council's help in locating her."

"As matters stand," said Spock, "all we can do is wait for instructions, information, or for Yeoman Schuster to return to the spatial limits within which the Llannonn Grand Council allows us to operate. The last alternative may not be realized for . . .four hours and thirty-eight minutes."

Kirk nodded, and added, "If then."

There was a pause, then Kirk said softly, "If it were anybody but Bel."

Even the Vulcans shared the captain's wishful thinking. None could help but recall the time Bel's fencing lesson with Sulu had turned into a running mock-battle--literally running.

Loose on Llannonn. Anybody but Bel.

Lieutenant Uhura interrupted from the bridge.

"Captain," she said, "I'm picking up communicator transmissions from the planet's surface. Coming from outside our proscribed area."

"Acknowledge the transmission and channel it to me here."

"Aye, Captain."

There was a brief pause before the computer gave its go-ahead signal.

"Yeoman Schuster," Kirk began, hoping he was, indeed, speaking to the missing yeoman, that she was alive, well, and capable of returning to the Inn with minimal delay. He got no farther, as a voice cut him off. It was a voice from his past, a voice he'd hoped and thought never to hear again.

"Jimmy, dear friend, this is Harcourt Fenton Mudd--Harry to you."

If Kirk hadn't been too stunned to look around the table, he would have seen McCoy's eyebrows completely disappear into his hairline, Scotty's mouth fall open and close with a snap, and the Vulcans displaying the total deadpan that signified the forcible exercise of facial control.

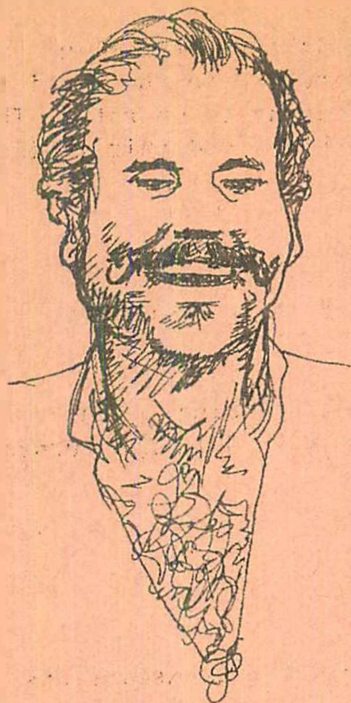
"Harry . . .Mudd?" Kirk repeated, somewhat dazedly.

"The very same. You may be wondering how I acquired one of your communicators. . . ."

"I assume you are or have been in the company of one of my yeomen."

"Or," Spock interjected, "in the company of some third party who--"

"Spock!" Harry gurgled. "You there, too? Delightful! It's like old home week. As it happens, Jimmy's right. Your 'yeoman' is with me



right now. Just a moment, I'll try to persuade her to speak to you."

"Harry Mudd and Bel Schuster," said Kirk, and McCoy said, "Oh, my God."

Back on Llanonn, Bel realized that she had stalled as long as she could. So far, Harry had been almost courtly, but it was obviously not safe to push him too far, and any vacillation at this point would constitute that push.

So, when Mudd handed her the communicator and warned her, "No tricks, now," she knew the time had come for fast thinking, fast talking, and devout prayer.

She spoke into the communicator.

"Jim," she said, "it's me, all right."

Kirk and the others traded odd looks.

"Yeoman Schuster?" Kirk asked, while Spock fed a request to the computer for a voice-print identification.

"You can drop the 'yeoman', Jim," Bel said, trying not to let Kirk get in a word before she'd at least tried to slip him the lowdown. "Mudd figured it all out. I changed clothes with a native female and went off-limits. Mudd was paying attention and guessed my real status. I had to confirm, Jim. It was either that or be sold to the local version of the gypsies."

"I . . . see."

Spock nodded, assuring Kirk that it was, indeed, Yeoman Schuster speaking.

"Me again," said Harry. "Now, my terms."

"Your terms."

"Of course. I am prepared to deliver your . . . 'yeoman' . . . to your area of authorization in return for a certain consideration."

"And that would be?"

"Nothing much. It's just that. . . . I've wearied of this planet. It would please me to transfer my address to a more congenial location."

"Put your foot in it again, did you?"

Mudd gritted his teeth audibly, but continued with forced geniality, "Now, Jimmy, a little courtesy, if you please. I'm not asking for much. Just immunity from prosecution and passage to a planet where my . . . talents . . . will be more appreciated."

"That's a tall order," said Kirk.

"Really? In exchange for the life of a Federation VIP?"

Kirk was again at a loss for words.

"I'll tell you what, Jimmy-lad. I'll give you some time to think. Not much time, mind you, but some."

"Harry--"

"I'll be in touch."

Mudd broke contact.

"Harry . . . Mudd," Kirk repeated.

"Is this," asked Tetra, "the same Harry Mudd I've heard so many stories about, here and on my last ship? Half-pirate and half-clown?"

"A recognizable description," said Spock, "though it would be a mistake to underestimate his potential. He is not, strictly speaking, intelligent; but he has a certain sly cunning, and could be dangerous if cornered incorrectly."

"Something like a rat," said McCoy.

"Aye," said Scotty. "But, Captain, ye dinna think, do you, that Bel's taken up with him on purpose? It wouldn't be her idea of a joke? Some of the things that've happened aboard ship. . . ."

"No, no," said Kirk, waving down the suggestion. "Some of Yeoman Schuster's attempts to break monotony have gotten out of hand, but that's exactly what happened: things got out of hand. I would imagine this is another such case."

Spock nodded, while Tetra casually avoided the eyes of the others at the conference table.

Lieutenant Tetra had a closer knowledge of some of those attacks on monotony than she wanted anyone to know, particularly the one involving Chekov's fleenar, and the one in which Riley's



Universal Glue had been followed by Riley's Universal Solvent. That damned human half of her. . . .

"I must agree," Spock was saying. "Based on what little we know about the current situation and on our experiences with Yeoman Schuster, it is reasonable to assume that the yeoman merely intended to slip off-limits for a time, and that what Harry Mudd told us of his part in this unfortunate state of affairs is, for once, the truth. The question is, what do we do about it?"

"What do you suggest, Mr. Spock?"

"The most logical course would be to provide the native female with civilian clothing from the ship's stores, retain Yeoman Schuster's uniform, and return the native to Llannonn--I can remove any memory of contact with us from her mind. There would be a gap in her memory, but I believe that is not uncommon among habitues of bar-parlors."

"And Bel?" asked Scott.

"There are more important matters at stake than the recovery of one yeoman."

"Why, you miserable, cold-blooded--" McCoy began, but Kirk cut him off with, "Bones!" He paused, then said, regretfully, "Spock's right."

"Jim!"

"He's right. I don't like it, but he is right. We can't beam Bel aboard because she's outside our limits of operation. We can't ask the Llannonn government for help because there's been some sort of breakdown of goodwill on their part. We can't make a deal with Mudd because we can't back up any promises we might make to him. Knowing Harry Mudd, he'll expect some proof that he isn't walking into a trap, and a trap is exactly what it would be: we can't grant him immunity or give him passage, because Star Fleet won't authorize it, because Harry has nothing to bargain with, because that isn't a Federation VIP he's holding, it's Bel Schuster."

"Tortuous," said Tetra, "but logical."

McCoy was smoldering. "So we're just going to sit here waiting for orders while that reprobate sells one of your crew into slavery? A human being, whose only crime was natural curiosity?"

Scott was verging on tears, and Spock looked faintly bilious.

Tetra had been thinking. She recognized the soundness of Spock's reasoning, of course, and would support it if no preferable alternative were found. Still, Bel was a fellow crewmember, a fellow female (Tetra silently forgave herself the contradiction in terms), and a kindred spirit. Tetra would have felt the absence of one who, Mr. Kyle claimed, knew all the words to the St. Trinian's fight song and could sing it to her own accompaniment on tuned Saurian brandy bottles. People like that were rare.



So Tetra spoke.

"Captain," she said, "if I may venture an opinion, it seems to me that Harry Mudd can hardly expect us to do more than make brief, tentative arrangements with him, so long as he remains off-limits. It's dangerous enough accepting his communicator transmissions; our transmitting guarantees from the nearest Star Base, or whatever he may have in mind, would be completely out of the question."

"I don't follow you. I mean, you're right, but it's a moot point."

"What I mean, sir, is that, in order to give him the proof he will want that his demands will be met, he would have to return to the Travelers Inn, taking Yeoman Schuster with him in case she might escape."

"Yes."

"Then why couldn't we tell him so? --You said you had signalled Star Fleet Command."

"Yes." Kirk was beginning to see it.

"Then why not tell him so? It wouldn't be necessary to let him

him know you signalled before his call and not after."

Kirk grinned and nodded. "And," he took up the story, "as soon as he comes within range, we beam him and Bel aboard and return the native female, minus certain memories, to Llannonn. It might work. It *will* work."

"It's a dirty trick," said Scott, out-doing the captain's grin. "And I'd like to be operating the transporter controls when we play it."

Harry Mudd was delighted with himself. He all but crowed.

"Marvelous!" he said, rubbing his hands like a Charles Dickens secondary villain. "It's marvelous! Just when this planet was becoming impossibly . . .er . . .dull . . .a ticket out lands right in front of me. And," Harry sat next to Bel and pinched her cheek, "such a lovely ticket, too."

Bel tried to smile, but gave it up for a bad job.

"Something wrong, my pet?"

Rather than throw up, Bel said, "Isn't it time we left?"

"Left? Left for where?"

"Well, we can't stay here. The Llannonn authorities probably know there was an unauthorized transmission from this area by now. If we send again from here, they'll zero in on us for sure."

Harry slumped against the wall, worried. "I hadn't considered that. That's a very good point."

"It seems to me that the safest place for us would be back at the Travelers Inn."

Harry started to object, but Bel hurried on.

"That's the one place we can transmit to the *Enterprise* without being arrested, Harry. And, when the okay comes from Star Fleet Command, we can get off-planet immediately. We couldn't be beamed up from anywhere else on Llannonn: it's forbidden."

"Almost everything is," growled Harry.

"So we go to the Inn, call the *Enterprise* from there, and beam up."

Harry, devil that he was, saw the catch.

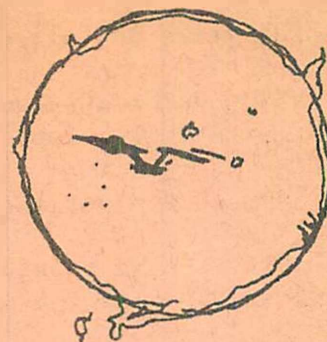
"But, if I take you to the Inn, what's to stop Kirk from beaming us up without meeting my demands?"

"Good point." Bel was beginning to see life with the gypsies as a very real possibility. She knew Star Fleet wouldn't cough up for her; she knew Captain Kirk's hands were as tightly tied as her own; and she wasn't

altogether sure that, considering her record, her superiors would take her back if they had the chance.

She decided to try a bluff.

"Look, Harry," she said. "I like you. You've treated me as a person of my rank should be treated, and I like that. You've got a good scheme here, and I admire you for it. I'd also hate to see you lose when you're so close to winning."



Bel spoke with the confidence and skill possible only to someone who had had plenty of practice talking her way out of serious consequences. Mudd, to be sure, had had plenty of practice *trying* to; but, while Bel had always succeeded to some extent, Harry had invariably failed.

In other words, he bought it.

"What do you mean?" he asked attentively.

"I mean, if you make it impossible for the *Enterprise* to recover me and meet your demands, you'll be in much hotter water than you are right now. You have no choice but to take me back to the Inn. In return, I promise to use every ounce of influence available to me to see that you get what you want."

Harry hesitated. "I have your word?"

"My word of honor. I'll do everything in my power."

"How do I know I can trust you?"

"What choice do you have?"

Harry nodded and stuck out his beefy hand. Bel took it, and they shook.

Bel felt like a four-star heel about making such a sucker out of Harry, but she really did intend to point out to the captain that she'd been well-treated, which was all she had it in her power to do. And her head still hurt from its contact with that passage wall. Besides which, she told herself, Harry Mudd would sell her in a minute if he knew who she really was. No, the more she thought about it, the better she felt about pulling this stunt.

Harry Mudd seemed to have that effect on people.

The quartet around Conference Table B were beginning to fidget. There was still no word from Star Fleet Command, still no official statement from the Llannonn Grand Council to back up the hint Kirk had been

slipped, still no follow-up call from Mudd.

"You don't suppose," McCoy ventured, "he's found out about Bel and sold her to those people Bel mentioned?"

"That is a possibility," said Spock.

"It is also possible," said Tetra, "that they have both been apprehended by the Llannonn policing force and are now incarcerated. Or dead."

"You'd like that, wouldn't you?" McCoy snarled. "Both of you. It'd solve the whole problem, wouldn't it?"

"I, for one," said Tetra, "wouldn't like it at all; I merely mention the possibility."

"Doctor," said Spock evenly, "you are overwrought. Waiting seems to wear at the serenity of most humans; if you find it necessary to relieve your tension, I suggest you employ a method that does not include making remarks which you as well as I know to be baseless."

McCoy reddened and dropped his eyes from Spock's. "Sorry," he said.

"An apology--"

"I know," McCoy broke in, irritated but beginning to lose steam, "an apology is not necessary, but I apologize anyway. Not for you or for Lieutenant Tetra here, who don't require it, but for me. It doesn't mean anything to the two of you, but it means something to me, all right?"

"Assuaging guilt feelings?" Spock asked, with genuine curiosity.

"No, dammit," said the doctor, while Kirk sat back and observed with fond interest. "Well . . . partly that. Partly, I like to make up for my mistakes, and the only way you can make up for words is with words. Besides, it's just plain good manners. You understand that, I suppose? Protocol by any other name?"

Spock nodded. After a moment's silence, he said, "Proceed."

"Proceed?"

"Lieutenant Tetra and I are waiting."

"Waiting for *what*?"

"For your apology."

McCoy opened his mouth, though not to apologize.

Uhura called from the bridge to report another communicator transmission, as Scotty called to report Bel's communicator was within assigned Federation coordinates.

Kirk told Scotty to stand by and accepted the transmission.

"Jimmy," Harry said quickly, "no tricks, now." He continued more slowly. "I have the word of my hostage--my fair hostage--"

Communication was abruptly terminated.

Kirk made a move to re-establish contact, but had stopped himself even before Spock said, "Captain, Mudd may be evading local detection. If we were to call . . ."

"It might lead someone to him--and to Bel. Yes, you're right."

He looked around with a humorless smile. "Back to waiting."

They waited no more than half an hour before Uhura called from the bridge.

"Captain, I'm receiving an official transmission from Llannonn."

"From the Grand Council?" Was this the order to depart he'd been warned of?

"No, sir," said Uhura, "from Desk Sergeant Pel Darzin at the . . . Meadow of Flowers Police Station."

"Repeat?"

"That's how it translated, sir: The Meadow of Flowers Police Station."

". . . Acknowledge. I'll take it here."

"Aye, aye, sir."

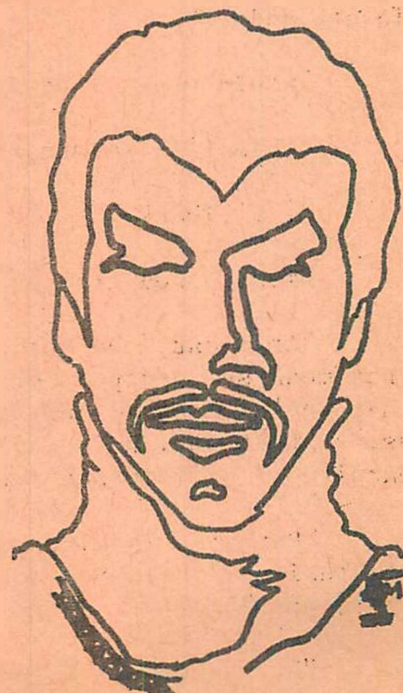
McCoy spoke softly, "Wonder which one of them is under arrest?"

Kirk switched on the speaker.

"This is Captain James T. Kirk, of the Starship *Enterprise*," he said, bracing himself.

The Desk Sergeant, looking as if he were far out of his depth, introduced himself. "I have been given the honor," he said, "of expressing the thanks of the people of Llannonn for your prompt and effective work in the apprehension of the criminal, Mudd."

". . . You're quite welcome."



"I have also the honor of asking you, and any other parties involved in the business, to descend to this location to receive the personal and official thanks of the Grand Council," the sergeant paused for breath, "which will be given directly after the trial."

"The trial?" Justice was swift on Llannonn. "Whose trial?"

"Why, Mudd's, of course."

"Of course. Er, give your coordinates to my transporter tech and we'll be there as soon as you like."

"Thank you, Captain. I have one final happy message to discharge: The Grand Council appreciates your delicacy in removing your personnel from Llannonn, but your assistance in bringing the criminal, Mudd, to justice exonerates you from the shame of his crimes; your people are most welcome to return, and the Grand Council hopes you will carry their plea to the Federation for closer diplomatic ties."

Kirk was completely stunned. It was all he could do to ask Sergeant Darzin to convey his best wishes, and those of the Federation, to the Grand Council, along with assurances of continued good will.

"Then," he ended, "the shore parties will resume immediately?"

The sergeant nodded.

"And the trial," the captain continued. "When does that take place?"

"Oh," said the sergeant, "it's taking place right now. I would imagine it's very nearly over. If you hurry, you may be able to hear a witness or two, though that's merely a formality. Would you be interested in attending?"

"Would we-- That is, yes, Sergeant Darzin, we'd like it very much."

"Then I'll inform the judge. He won't mind waiting a bit."

". . . Thank you."

Kirk looked grim as Pel Darzin terminated contact.

"At least," he said, "there was no mention of Bel Schuster. Does that mean she escaped, or Harry never brought her with him at all, or that she's captured and isn't claiming or admitting any connections with us, or that she, being out of uniform, is being held as a spy and we can't enquire of her without seeming to admit she's a spy. . . ."

"Perhaps, lacking sufficient data to form a plan or, indeed, any conclusions," said Spock, "it would be best to, as you humans say, play it by ear."

"Er . . . perhaps you're right, Mr. Spock. Shore leave will continue

to be rescinded until I've made sure I wouldn't be sending my crew into some sort of trap. I will beam down immediately. Lieutenant Tetra will accompany me, in case she is needed to testify regarding what took place in the Travelers Inn. McCoy, you come too, in case we need you to testify for the good health of our friend in detention quarters."

McCoy nodded.

"Spock, I'd like you to come along. I may need your sound advice on this one."

"Affirmative, Captain."

The captain's party materialized in an informal courtroom that looked more like somebody's aunt's front parlor. There were two sofa's--full of what turned out to be accusers. The arresting officers, who were also judge and jury, were seated in occasional chairs scattered casually around a high coffee table. Harry Mudd was standing in an iron frame pyramid, chained to it hand and foot.

Bel was in an overstuffed armchair drinking hot chocolat.

The *Enterprise* party exchanged looks.

"Ah, Captain Kirk," said the Desk Sergeant, acting as diplomat *pro tem* and usher. "Please, be seated."

He tugged another sofa into line, to afford the captain and his party a good view of the proceedings.

The ranking arresting officer waited until the newcomers were comfortable, then proceeded.

"Next witness."

A native male, on the far end of one of the accusers' sofas, rose.

"The accused," he said, "presented himself to me as an authorized representative of the Terran Historical Monument and Realty Agency, Deep Space Franchise. Knowing the Grand Council had approved shore leave for the crew of the Federation star ship *Enterprise*, I invested heavily in the goods offered by the accused. But, when I approached the Terrans with my merchandise," the native grew heated and continued with infuriated trembling, "thinking to give them the chance to ease their homesickness by providing them with ownership of meaningful and desirable pieces of their home planet--Grant's Tomb, the Kremlin, choice building lots on Atlantis--"

The other accusers were nodding, grim-faced. A female from the center of the other sofa broke in.

"--Mount Rushmore," she said. "I paid a pretty *kreelp* for that one, I can tell you."

The presiding officer tapped a sugar spoon against the side of his teacup to bring her to order.

"You've had your turn," he said rather irritably. "And I can tell you I've heard all I intend to hear about Mount Rushmore."

He nodded to the standing witness. "Continue."

"The Terrans laughed at me. Ridiculed me. Called me a con artist. Offered to buy me a drink and asked my price for the Brooklyn Bridge, as if it were a joke."

The female from the other sofa stirred, and the presiding officer glared at her. "We know," he said quellingly. "And we've heard all we want to hear about the Brooklyn Bridge, as well."

He motioned the standing native to be seated, and began to read from his notes.

"So," he said, looking up, "Mudd's crime was reported to the Grand Council. The charges were fraud and causing citizens of Llannonn, acting in good faith, to lose face to him, to each other, to themselves, and to our visitors; interfering with free trade; and operating a communications device without proper authorization. This last charge was, of course, added after his arrest. Charges having been placed, the Grand Council protested to the Federation, demanding assistance in tracking down the criminal and bringing him to justice. After due consideration, it was decided that a contingent of officers from this station be sent to the Travelers Inn, the only cleared and authorized Federation beam-down point, to await whomever the Federation might send. Officers were to be on duty at all times, so that no time might be wasted, and the criminal given as little opportunity as possible to add to his crimes."

The officer pushed aside his notes and his face took on a look of humble awe.

"I was fortunate enough to be one of the first contingent," he said, and the others around the coffee table nodded agreement, their faces reflecting the expression on his. "We did, indeed, meet the Federation agent," he went on. "But not beaming down. No." He looked around for effect. Only he and his fellow officers knew the part of the story he was now telling, and the others were listening as avidly as he could have wished. "We met the agent as she brought the criminal to us. He came walking tamely into Jok'rel's Travelers Inn with her, and used a communicating device not registered to him, thus giving us immediate cause to hold him until formal charges could be processed, and she did this," he paused, as if he were reading the last sentence of a mystery tape, "with both her hands tied behind her back."

McCoy choked, Kirk shielded his face with his hand and tried desperately to control the heaving of his shoulders, and the Vulcans were under some strain to do no more than lift eyebrows.

"I should have known," Mudd snarled, "when you were impervious to my deadly Vulcan nerve pinch."



"Did it never occur to you," Bel asked, "that you might just have done it wrong?"

Harry sneered.

"Mudd is obviously guilty," said the ranking officer. "We will now pass sentence."

"Just--just a minute," Kirk protested. "Please! I'm sorry, but . . . isn't this a bit . . . informal?"

"I have studied Terran law," said the officer/judge, "and I realize we must seem precipitous to you. But we have no time for games on Llannonn. The man is obviously guilty, and must be punished. I have been instructed by the injured parties that the standard penalty will be acceptable, though it's far better than he deserves. Harcourt Fenton Mudd, I hereby sentence you to be sold to the Meadow of Flowers

wandering tribe. Your price, as well as most of your first year's earnings, will go as financial restitution to your victims. After that, you're on your own. I hope they'll chain you to a wagon and relieve the rest of Llannonn from your presence."

"Sir," said Kirk, trying to walk the thin line between firmness and subservience, where no thin line existed, "this man, as a Terran, surely should be brought to Federation justice."

"To us, our justice is first."

"There are others who have suffered the same fate as your citizens," Kirk didn't know this for a fact but, knowing Harry, it seemed a reasonable assumption. "They have a prior right to prosecution."

"To us, our justice is first," the officer repeated.

"I'm afraid," said Spock, "there's nothing we can do, Captain. Except report to Star Fleet Command. Then, I suppose it will be up to the diplomats."

"Jimmy," Mudd pleaded. "Jimmy-lad, you can't let them do this to me, *please!*"

"Silence!"

A baliff type raised something that seemed perfectly harmless to Kirk, but quieted Mudd immediately.

"Oh," Bel chirped brightly, "don't forget Freltdt."

"Who?" Kirk asked, as her reminder had been directed to him.

"Freltdt. The girl I changed clothes with. If she was in the Inn, wearing my uniform, and the shore party was recalled (which is what I'm told happened), she must've been beamed up in my place. Wasn't she?"

Kirk had nurtured fond hopes of keeping that entire aspect under the proverbial rug.

"Wasn't she?" repeated the ranking officer.

"Yes," said Kirk. "Yes, indeed. And we've treated her very well, haven't we, Doctor McCoy?"

"Yes, indeed," said Doctor McCoy.

"Excellent," the officer/judge approved. "She has served Llannonn well in this, even though her previous association with the criminal, Mudd, would otherwise have caused her to share his fate." He explained to the Terrans, "Shame comes easily on Llannonn. Fortunately, it is expiated with equal ease."

The non-Llannonnites, including Mudd, stored this for future reference.

"Can you bring the girl down to us now?" the officer asked.

"Yes, of course." Kirk flipped open his communicator and ordered the girl beamed to his coordinates.

It was expected that it would take Freltdt some time to gather herself and descend, so fresh tea and chocolat were handed around. Kirk and McCoy also had cake, while the Vulcans preferred the Llannonnite version of watercress sandwiches. Bel took muffins.

Freltdt arrived not very long after, dressed in her own, personally modified yeoman's uniform. The decolletage had been lowered, the hemline raised, The insignia had been replaced by a brooch Bel recognized as her own, which she had pawned to Riley in a moment of severe financial distress that very morning.

Kirk remembered the brooch, too; he had been present when Bel had won it in a dirty limerick contest on Tozz. He wondered wildly if it would hurt the newly-restored relations with Llannonn for one planetary heroine to attack another in public.

Bel, however, summoning more emotional control than any Vulcan ever could, smiled.

"I see Riley's been teaching you poker," she said.

"Yes." Freltd explained to her countrymen, "Funny game. You play three hands, then you scream and tear the cards with your teeth."

"I take it you won," Bel observed drily.

"Yes, but I didn't care for chewing the cards."

"Poker's one of those things you have to acquire a taste for," said Bel, and Freltd looked as though she were considering the possibility.

"Kirk!" Mudd whispered frantically, making what come-hither gestures he could with his hands chained. He rolled his eyes fearfully toward the baliff type, but she was apparently unconcerned with him, now that the trial was over.

Kirk crossed to the prisoner. Bel followed him.

"Jimmy, dear boy," Mudd attempted to fawn, but was neither built nor positioned for it. "Jimmy, you can't leave me like this. You've left me in some rather awkward situations before, but this . . ." Harry remembered a silly little scruple by which Kirk seemed to set great store.

"Jimmy, they're going to sell me. Like a piece of property. Slavery, that's what it is. Unless you do something to intervene, you'll be participating in the slave trade, and making the entire Federation party to it!"

"Nonsense," said Bel. "They won't be selling you so much as renting you out. The judge tells me that, after a year of earning money for the benefit of your victims, you'll be free to stay with the tribe (if they'll have you) or to return to stably populated areas. Even if the tribe decides to keep you, I have every confidence in your ability to escape, if that's what you want to do. You were willing to sell me; turn-about is fair play."

"You!" Mudd's voice dripped loathing and hinted deep wounds. "You promised to help me! You swore you'd do everything in your power! And what have you done? Hobnobbed with the arresting officers and the witnesses and probably prejudiced them against me!"

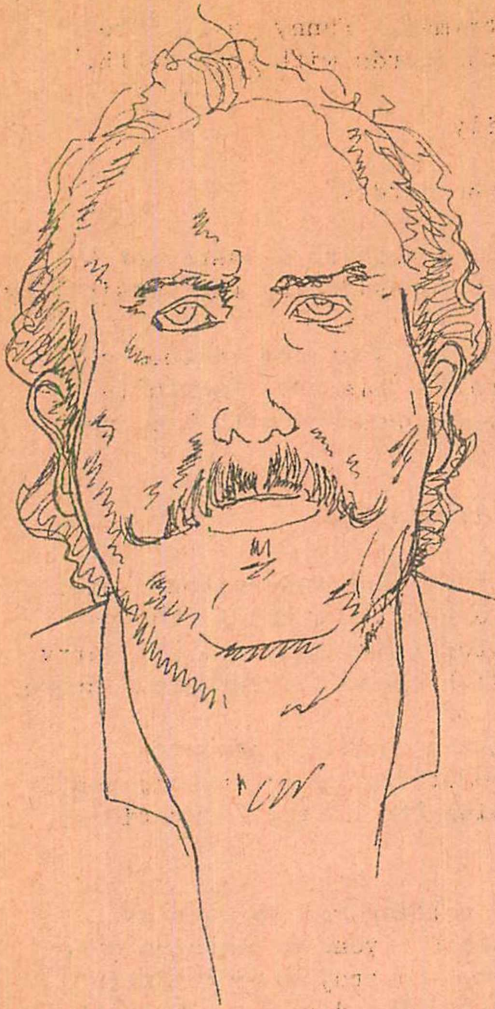
"It would have been impossible to prejudice them *against* you," Bel pointed out, with some justice. "Actually, I did use my influence, and I did sway the court's decision."

"Aha!"

"The victims wanted you skinned alive and drawn through town in a barrel studded with sharp nails, pulled by a chemically maddened beast of drayage."

Mudd swallowed audibly.

"I asked them not to," Bel said humbly. "I told them it was a horrible and cruel punishment, that the Federation would frown on it,



that I would be personally displeased--and that, if they wanted financial restitution that would mean something, the standard penalty was made to order. Harry Mudd? And a tribe of wandering gypsies? Money?"

Kirk nodded and Harry, Lord love him, began to think.

"By the way, Harry . . . old chum," said Kirk, evilly. "I really must, in the interest of honesty, tell you something."

Mudd looked up apprehensively. "Yes?"

"Bel," the captain began, and was astonished to find Bel punching him playfully on the arm.

"Jim!" she objected, laughing. "You can't tell him who I really am. If you reveal my true identity, he'll trade the information for leniency. Why, if the Llannonnites knew who had really come to their aid. . . ."

Kirk got the message. "Good point," he said. "The news would be sensational."

Harry writhed and cursed under his breath, so near (he thought) to great wealth and yet, as he usually was, so far.

"We'll meet again," he vowed to Bel. "You haven't seen the last of Harcourt Fenton Mudd!"

"You know," Bel said in surprise, "I hope you're right. There just aren't enough characters in our well-ordered society."

"Oh, I don't know," said the captain, counting those on his ship alone.

Bel continued, for a period of 36 hours, to call the captain "Jim" and to behave in a suspiciously over-discreet manner. When Scotty asked her how it felt to, as it were, fall in the outhouse and come out smelling like Mata Hari, Bel merely said, "Ahhh!" in a very obscure and meaningful way.

At last, Star Fleet Command answered the captain's several requests

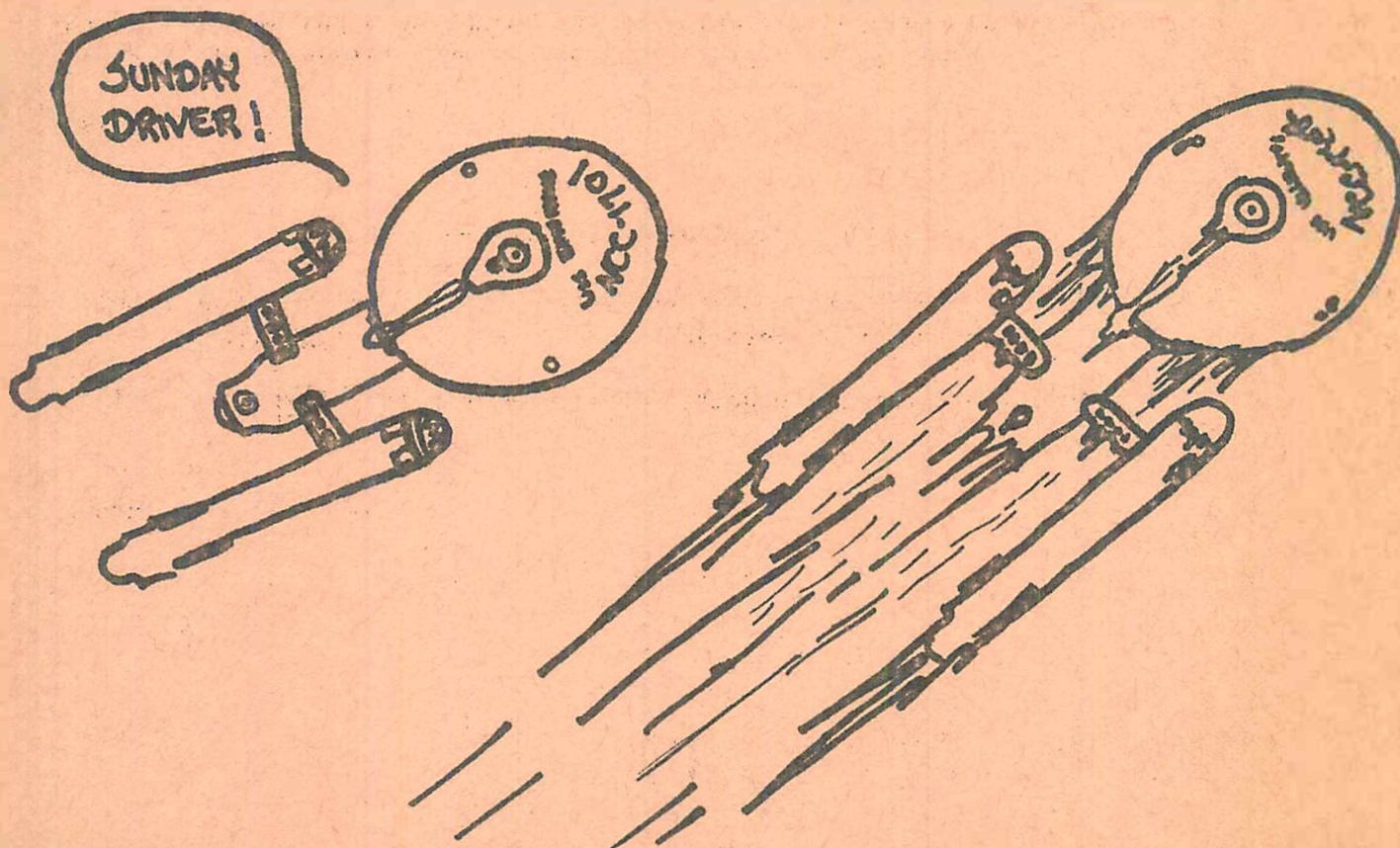
for information. In a singular departure from S.O.P., the Federation Intelligence Agency not only flatly denied any connection with Bel Schuster, but offered to supply proof.

"Knock it off, Bel," he was said to have told her. "We know you're not a real spy."

"Okay, sir," Bel was said to have replied impenitently. "But you've got to admit, sir, it was a helluva good try. It was worth a shot, am I right?"

Kirk, rumor continued, struggled between amusement and annoyance, confined Yeoman Schuster to quarters for two weeks, and recommended her for a citation due to her part in re-establishing relations with Llannonn --and for a transfer.

Neither came through.



CYLONS IS GOLDEN

or

CATTLECAR: MORONICA Rides Again

Speaking of Galactican measurements, how about:

the EXXON, a liquid measurement. Colonial Vipers get two hundred light-years to the exxon.

the icon, which is the number of people who can be jammed into the *Galactica's* non-denominational chapel at any given time.

the righton, which is the distance between a person's fist, when held at eye-level, and the tip of his/her nose.

the walkon, which is the distance from one side of the *Galactica's* control room to the other, as measured by extras who are trying to look busy.

Not to mention the Arrghon, which is the volume of sound produced by the groans of the hapless audience at the idiocy on the screen.

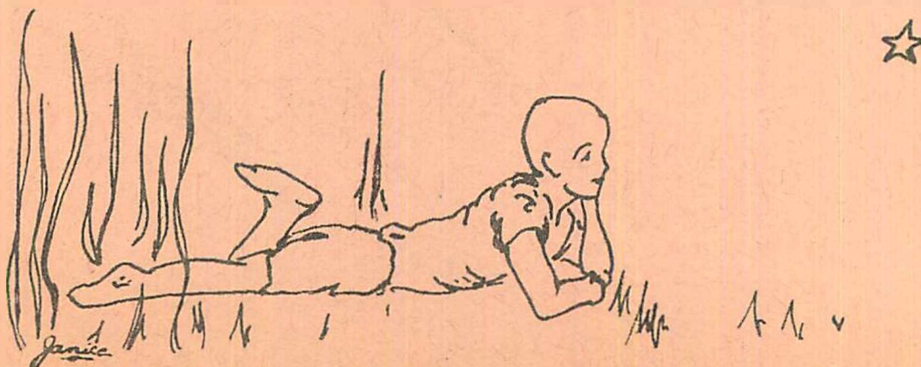
--Sandra Wise

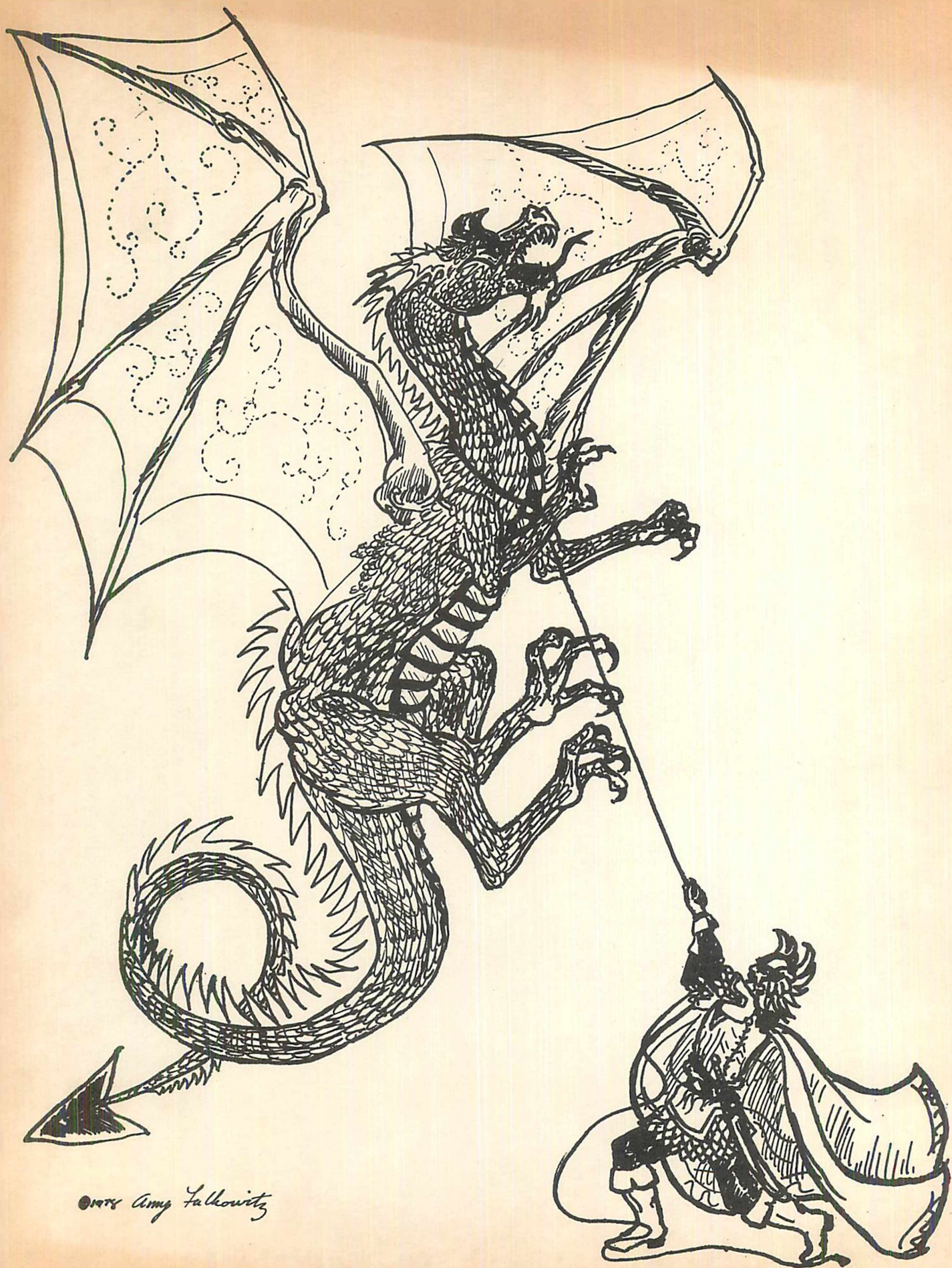
And, from another source, we get:

the addon, a massive unit, used to measure how far an expanding suburban family can go into debt.

the Anton, another massive unit, used to measure the weight of Russian plays.

--Marian Lois Turner





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