

The



# NEOLITHIC

Borogove in orbit  
"Creeping encroachment!"

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This is Neolithic, a monthly magazine. Neol, with All Mimsy, will go to all who send contributions or letterofcomments (sent at the rate of four a year), five cents in postage (also sent four times a year), or who trade on an all-of-ours for all-of-yours basis. Neol comes from the basement of Ruth Berman at 5620 Edgewater Boulevard, Minneapolis 17, Minnesota.

I'm not quite sure when I first read "Zeepsday" by Gordon Dickson (F&SF November, 1956), or when I first realized that a story written in the form of the transcript of a trial could be produced as a one-act play. I rather think that I first read it about a year ago, and I'm nearly sure that I was visualizing "Zeepsday" as a play from the first reading. In any case, it is the custom here at U. High to have each speech class put on several one act plays. The people who want to direct volunteer to direct, pick a play, and select their cast from their classmates. The student teachers get stuck with left-overs and a large amount of judicious haggling makes sure that each play has some good actors and that each person has a part to act.

So, when last fall came, I had vague ideas in my head of doing "Zeepsday" in the spring (which is when these one-acts are put on). The vague ideas began to take form when I found that one student in the speech class was from Italy and another was from Switzerland -- two lovely accents just begging to be used as BEMs.



Spring burst in (actually, spring quarter burst in; spring takes a while to appear up here), and we did not begin work on the one acts. We were still busy rehearsing the speech class play. My desire to put on "Zeepsday" cooled as I saw that we would have only three weeks for rehearsal, that the three weeks would be reduced by holidays and assemblies, that I would have to cut the size of the play's cast, and that my own end-of-the-year-rush school-work was very heavy. However, I wasn't worried enough to back out after babbling to Miss Osborne (the speech teacher) about "Zeepsday" all year.

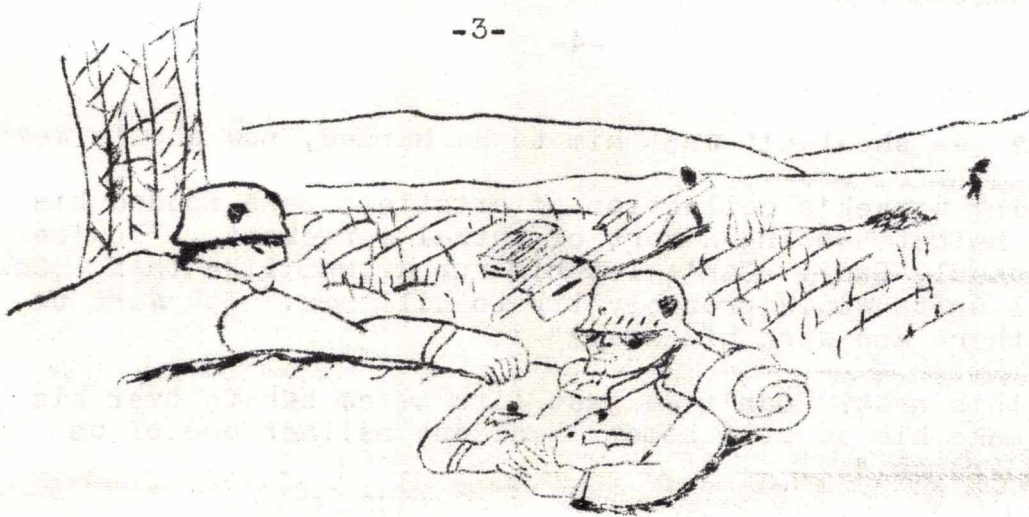
So I went ahead, cut down the cast, vowed that somehow I'd get it ready in time, and got my cast-members. When we started rehearsals I had only two large worries: Miss Osborne and the girl from Switzerland had both confided to me, with shy looks of sorrow at this blow to my sensibilities, that they simply detested science fiction.

Now that it's all over I had a wonderful time.

I was playing the role of the judge myself, partly because I didn't want to saddle anyone else with the biggest part at that busy time of year, and mainly because I didn't trust anyone else to do it right. It was on Monday that I told the cast firmly that we must all have our lines by Friday. The Bailiff pointed out to me that much of the cast would be out of class Friday for the senior class play, including me. "All right," I said, "have your lines next Tuesday." That night and the next day I blocked out the action. Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday we gave performances of the senior class play and nothing else. Tuesday no one had his lines memorized. Everyone glowed about the patient, forgiving attitude I took. It wasn't till later that they realized I hadn't known my lines, either. That was the first week.

The second week we rehearsed and memorized lines. The third week we rehearsed and memorized lines.

Dress rehearsal came the fourth week. I had my own lines by then, but the hero and heroine were still shaky in parts, the heroine shaky in a few parts, and the hero wabbling all over. The kindly student teacher who had come to work lights for us at the dress rehearsal gave me a pitying look. I daresay that his look was the more pitying because our villain, the boy from Italy, just hadn't been able to make it to the dress rehearsal. The student teacher suggested we use our scripts and call it a "radio play". We did. And you know what? The play went over well, the villain was delightful, I could have throttled the hero for muffing some of his lines, and I was voted the "best director" for being so patient. You never can tell.



ROAD TO ROUEN  
Dick Schultz

"Yoo! Hans! Wake up! Wake up, quick! Have you got good eyesight?"

"Hah? Hoo? Wha -- what you want?" A large blonde soldier tilted his helmet back out of his eyes and blinked at his surroundings. "What the hell you wake me for, Rudi? Of course I got good eyes. You think Major Hoss gave me a spandau because I'm blind? For what reason you have to wake me up?"

Stretching out a short arm, the reclining figure pointed to an object behind Hans. "If you'll get up and look behind you, you'll see a rather odd sight. I see a little man with a red beard, yellow pants, a red shirt, and a long, peaked, green hat out there."

"Huh? You're as soft in the head as our beloved Fuehrer. You'll be chewing the carpet next. Who but a lunatic would be running around this part of France right now? Hasn't everyone heard about No-man's land by now?"

"Evidently our little man hasn't. No, no, not there. To your right. Yes, that's right. Just to the right of that dead cow on the slope there. You see him?"

"Hmmm. You're right, Rudi. He is rather strange looking, isn't he?" Hans stood up and looked down at his ~~dark-haired~~ comrade. "Oh, hell, Rudi. He's probably just some simple-minded son-of-a-French peasant. Or just plain weak in the mind. He's just a harmless old fool." Glancing down again, Hans barked out, "Which is what Schneider won't be if he finds you with your helmet loose!"

Casually repairing the omission, Rudi continued with, "Harmless or not, do you think we should let him go on running around



out there? We shouldn't want him to be harmed, now should we?"

Rubbing a week's collection of bristles, Hans nodded his head, his helmet bobbing a sort of mutual agreement. "You're right as usual, Rudi. Can't let him run around like that. One of those fool units would probably try to kill him. You want to walk out there and warn him away?"

"In this heat? Can't we just fire a few bursts over his head and make him scuttle home? Besides, neither one of us knows any French."

Hans sighed, tilted his issue coat scuttle back on his head and laid himself down behind his light machine gun, or 'spandau'. A grunt, a little fidgeting, and then an inhalation.

KeePakaPakaPakaPakaPakaKepow! Suddenly there were just echoes and a little dust in the distance. Hans got up, brushed himself off, and sat back against the bole of a tree.

"Didn't hit him, did you Hans?"

"Eh? Oh, no. Didn't even come close. But he'll know enough to stay home now." Something kept nagging at Hans's mind, but he dismissed it. He was sure that the peasant resembled someone, but he wasn't sure who it was, and before he was called up for the Wehrmacht, Hans had never gotten ten kilometres from his home village in Eastern Prussia. Hans waved his hand to clear the cobwebs and asked, "Say, Rudi, you have any more cigarettes?"

Rudi got up and took out a battered box. He gave one to Hans and sat down against an adjacent tree. "Yah, I got a few packs off of that British motorcycle scout Frank picked off yesterday." At Hans's quizzical look Rudi stated, "Well, he couldn't use them anymore."

Hans continued puffing at it, then said, "Racuck said we'd be moved up to help take Rouen today."

"Humph. Anytime that blabbermouth says anything I always take a grain of salt. Hope we do, though. Those who take a town always get first pick of the wine and wo--"

"SWINEHUNDS!"

Hans dived for the spandau and Rudi threw himself flat, losing his helmet in the process. The helmet spun on some pebbles

while Hans and Rudi gaped amazed at the apparition before them. Dirty, streaked, and madder than a wet cat stood the little r they'd shot at. Rudi got up and brushed himself off while the little gent exploded with expletives. But Hans dropped the to the ground. For Hans remembered where he had seen such creatures before: this...this was a kobold, or gnome.

"You dogs! First you drop fire sticks on my burrow, then you trample my clover fields, now you hurl missiles at me! For this you'll go under the hill, you will."

Rudi didn't know what to say; Hans did. He had a momentary vision of being dragged into the little people's burrows to be confronted with the true shapes of the imps. Blanching pale, Hans amazed Rudi by dropping to his knees and clasping his hands before that ridiculous figure. "Oh no, no no, ~~NO~~ Sir, don't blame us. Please, sir we're only doing what we're told to do. Honest. We've been told to shoot at everyone by our superiors."

"Bah! If you're not the cause of this, who be the cause of this...this horsefeathering?"

"It's...it's all Adolf's fault. That's it. It's all because of Hitler that we're here."

The little kobold tugged at his long beard while Rudi was treated to the unusual sight of big, stolid Hans shaking like an aspen leaf in a gale. Lips pressed tight, Hans had closed his eyes at that last statement and started praying to other gods than those the village priest told of.

"Hmmm. Hitler, did you say?"

Hans expelled his breath with a whoosh at that. He was saved if he played his cards right. Blinking his eyes open, he blurted, "Oh yes, sir. He put us in this army and told us to go fight."

"Where is this Hitler?"

"He lives way to the east, sir, in a place called Berlin. Or else in his summer house in Bertchesgarten. That's to the southeast, sir."

Rudi stood open-mouthed at this groveling. One can hardly blame Rudi for his surprise. One doesn't hear much of kobolds or gnomes in a big city like Dresden. But at least Rudi had the wit to let Hans do all the talking.



"Ye be sure now that this Hitler fellow be the fault of this? I warn you, if you lead me falsely, you'll pay dearly," calmly commented the kobold.

"Oh no, sir, no sir. We're telling you true, aren't we, Rudi?" To which Rudi dutifully nodded his head. Then, quick as a flash, the kobold turned and run suddenly out of sight -- toward the east.

"What in the name of my dear blessed aunt was that, Hans? And why the exhibition?" queried Rudi.

Shakily sitting back, Hans replied, "That, my dear comrade, was one of the demons of the earth. That was a kobold, a gnome, you understand?"

"Hmmm. I'll skip that for a moment. Where did he go, though?"

"Where did he go? Why to see our dearly beloved Fuehrer, of course. Brrrr. I'd hate to be in his boots when the kobold catches him."



"Why, Hans, what on earth can a little old man do against our Fuehrer? Make him lose the war or something? Next thing you'll tell me is that the English won't surrender or that we'll attack Russia!"

Rudi was about to laugh at his own joke when he spied the pasty complexion of Hans's face.

Tremblingly Hans commented, "Maybe he will..."

DAS ENDE

#### CLAY TABLETS

from E. A. ARNASON, undated

My friend, co-author, and chief nemesis, Geo. Karg, read NeoLithic yesterday and was perturbed enough to speak to me about it. "You idiot," he remarked, "what the blank do you mean by saying it was cube chess? It was blank not." (I might as well add that those "blanks" do not denote omissions; at present "blank" is George's favorite verbal mannerism).



"What was it that Pren was playing?" I asked (the triple-chess had been one of his additions).

"Vegan triplechess."

"What's that like?"

Karg meditated. "Three players. Two opponents, and a side shifting, half-neutral third player. Each player makes six simultaneous moves anywhere on nine boards of nine by nine square. The opponents have eighty-one pieces -- you know -- greebles, vorks, porkanus -- the usual --; the shifter has only three pieces, but they're aighasti, which makes up for everything. Naturally, the shifter wants a tie, while the opponents want complete victory; but it takes both of them to get the shifter, and neither of them can win without the shifter. Very interesting."

"Okay, Geo., if you say so," I said, a nasty note in my voice. "But who was Pren playing with? There must have been two of them."

"There were. Loy Ril and Loy Maar."

"Where were they?"

Karg smiled and drifted off.  
[When confronted by the above, Karg, as expected, denied everything. Karg and Arnason inevitably produce entirely different versions of their private conversations. It is thought, by some, that either Karg or Arnason is a psychopathic liar. Unfortunately, it is impossible to tell which. Perhaps both.]

from BOB PATTRICK, April 18, 1960

PICTURES AT AN EXHIBITION has always been one of my great favorites. "Gnomus" in particular is a delight. Now, of course, it has both Ozish and Tolkienish overtones to me. Gnomes, dwarfs, elves and giants, as well as trolls, bronies and kobolds are all supposed to be related - according to Teutonic mythology. However all the writers - from Shakespeare in THE TEMPEST (Caliban is a sort of gnomish creature) and MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM, through Wagner in his RING trilogy, Baum in LIFE AND ADVENTURES OF SANTA CLAUS to Tolkien, all make the Elves somewhat superior to all the others. The Irish sort of lump them all together, without making such fine distinctions. But other than this, giants usually tend to be stupid or wicked or both. Rarely kindly. Dwarfs and gnomes are smarter than giants, but rather surly towards other races. Elves are often mischievous and very clever and very stand-offish. The Brownies, house elves, seem to be the most



kindly inclined towards men and animals. Of course, this varies somewhat from writer to writer. But the general pattern is much the same.

PICTURES, of course, includes that other fine witch, Baba Yaga. Sometime I hope some ambitious studio will do this piece as an animated cartoon. NOT DISNEY.

Wish Tolkien would give us another Hobbit adventure, instead of more of the old tales of the First Age (which is what THE SILMARILLION would be). Surely one of those Tookish descendants would have gone adventuring in the name of King Elessar to the unknown realms east and south. Much as I like the RING, I still prefer THE HOBBIT. If this be treason...

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