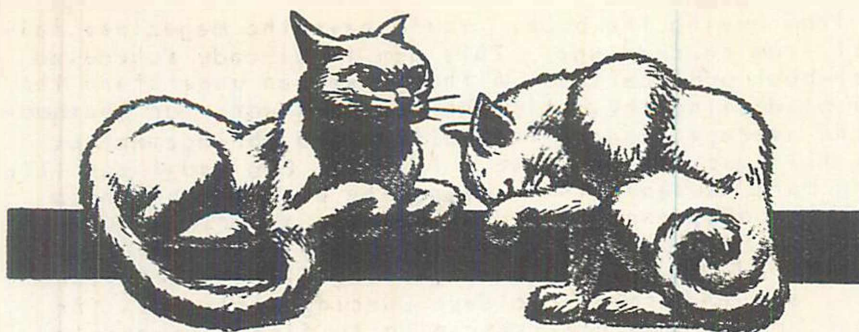


ARB

35¢



the unusual in imaginative fiction



Editorial

The last issue of ORB was the last regular issue. Supposedly, this one was, but obviously it's a trifle too late to be considered remotely "regular." I entered the University of Chicago in September, and the stresses on time are uncomfortable, without trying to keep ORB on schedule.

With this issue, ORB will start publishing on the spur of the moment. I lack both time and money to do otherwise.

Already, in our first two years of publication, ORB has "arrived" in many ways. We have, in the opinion of many, surpassed anything previously published in the field of amateur fantasy publication. Our subscription list has never been huge, but it has been remarkably constant. "FIRST GENERATION" by Betsy Curtis has been scheduled for publication in a Shasta anthology. As our quality improves, others will also be chosen. Your candid criticisms will help us improve. Our thanks for your confidence.

*

I was privileged to be able to see the advance showing of a new play, an allegorical fantasy, by Tennessee Williams, entitled "Ten Blocks on the Camino Real." The main character is Kilroy, an American prize-fighter. Woven around his arrival and subsequent death in a small tropical village is a strange phantasmagoria of characters. Some with a message, some merely observing: Casanova, aging, pursuing the eternal flirt, Marguerite; Esmeralda, the gypsy's daughter--worldly, yet eternally naive, and the gypsy, cynical, worldly, and very human.

All these people are trying to escape death, characterized by two hideously ghoulish street-cleaners. From the beginning of this short work, the plunge into bizarre emotion never diminishes. As a cross-section of Heaven and Hell, and as a penetrating, yet sympathetic, look at humanity, the play is quite successful. Yet any deeper significance, in spite of the heavy symbolism involved, is to me unapparent.

*

I've seen a copy of Curme Gray's new Shasta novel, MURDER IN MILLENNIUM VI. As avant-garde fantasy, it is not the best butter; as a sign of the new trend in science-fantasy, it is important. This is the first attempt made by a professional publishing company to bring "different" literature to the mass reading public. MURDER etc. is difficult to understand. The writing technique is obscure and involved. If you have the time to read it slowly, and for best results, twice, you will be better rewarded for your troubles. Underneath the turgid writing style is a unique novel of the far future, when only one family has even heard of murder, and the elimination of the ruler of the world would make the head of that family supreme . . .

*

Shasta will also publish Alfred Bester's marvelous new novel, THE DEMOLISHED MAN. This is a mile-stone in science-fiction. GALAXY has already serialized it, but don't let that

stop you from buying the book. You'd have the magazines falling apart from re-readings. This gem is already scheduled for pocket-book publication. Although we can understand the necessity of dulling the brilliance of this work for consumption by the average reader, the editing and abridgement of this work fills us with remorse. Frankly, ORB and I can think of nothing more nauseous than seeing the Bester book among other pocket-books, anemic, and wrapped in a luridly come-hither cover. Eventually MGM will probably buy movie rights and advertise THE DEMOLISHED MAN starring Elizabeth Taylor, Dan Dalley, and 50 Gorgeous Goldwyn Dancing Girls 50. The things that crass commercialism can do to fine workmanship. I feel ill . . . Buy the book now!

*

In this issue we're proud to present "Perseveration" by H. B. Fyfe. Mr. Fyfe has appeared in many anthologies, and most of the better science-fiction pulps. He was born in Jersey City in 1918, and has spent most of his life there. He is 5'9", 175 pounds, with hazel eyes and "retreating light brown hair."

He worked for Stevens Tech in Hoboken, N.J. before and after the big hate, earning a Bronze star and combat badge between times. He dabbled with stf before the war, and afterwards took a B.S. in writing at Columbia, despite a vague prewar notion toward a Chem E. Now supposedly working on an M.A., but neglecting it in favor of writing science-fiction.

Fritz Lieber, Judith Merrill and Frederic Brown did the farce printed in this issue for the activities night of the Nolacon. We think it delightfully wacky, and hope you enjoy it. At the convention, the Robot was played by Shelby Vick, the girl by Judy Merrill, the android by Joe (Hunkaman) Cristoff, and the poet by Fritz Lieber.

Our nomination for anthologization is IN THE GLOBE OF CHANGING GLASS by David R. Bunch. We find the treatment of this fragile little fantasy the most unusual we've seen in a long time.

One other comment: DIARY. This was written by a fourteen-year-old girl. As a story, it lacks many things; but the excellence of writing when compared to that of the normal individual of that age is worth noting. And, somehow, it gave me the impression that- though bombs may fall, and animals mutate, fourteen-year-olds will be the same for eons to come.

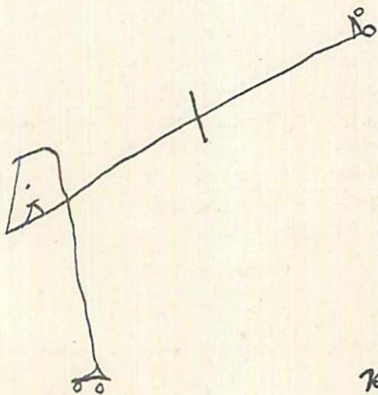
*

Our next issue will be out in the middle of August, unless a surfeit of money forces me to publish one sometime in June. It will be the Convention issue and may (no joke) have three-dimensional illustrations.

'til next time--

Bob

P.S. the new heading for the editorial is courtesy Hannes Bok and Mary Gnaedinger, editor of FAMOUS FANTASTIC MYSTERIES. --The insert is especially for you, and suitable for framing. bj



Ray Nelson

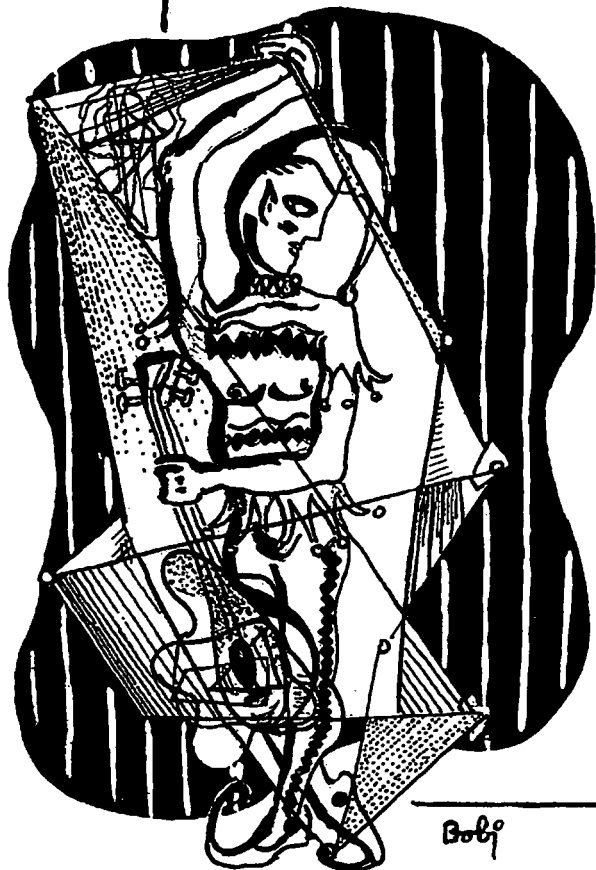
Orb . . . vol. 3, no. 1, ^{whole} number 10.

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Perdita Nelson, Lee
Hoffman, David Eng-
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son. Layout by Bob
Makeup and Lettering
by Perdita.

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A-poll highlights

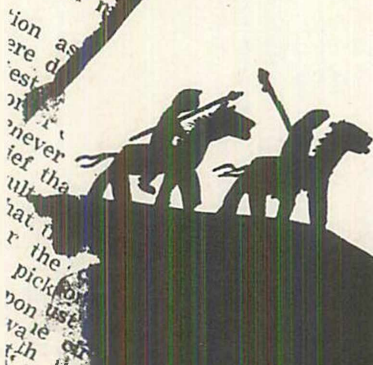
1. Most common mistake: Russian proposal is identified as American.
2. Most interesting attitude: American position is approved of while misidentified.
3. Errors are not random: Students share common mistakes.
4. Most interesting: Students can control A-bomb.

PERSEVERATION

H.B. FYFE

Committee for International Understanding and

have asked several questions about certain or International Understanding. The formal interview, gave the following and why did you choose this particular to investigate the problems surrounding the position of the US and the Kingdom at that time. Most of the complications and misunderstandings associated with the maintenance of atomic energy and its use when we had an exclusive monopoly on its production and In a poll devoted exclusively to atomic energy and its control, did you ask so many questions on Russia's entry into the war with Japan? Japan took place in this event in assessing the associated with the bomb the poll



What are you gathered? The representative E. Gross which we did can the bomb policy America's support the relation of student who died was un- people the city, papers read! Not only suggestions: Scientists like the

Survey said it was heavy under 6

...correct answer to... consistent choices. The... estimation of the effect... of justification versus jus... policies as covered on the test... Much can be learned about the... common attitudes and misconcep... students shared by large numbers of... tions on which incorrect answers dea... fell predominately to one cate... gory. Mistakes made by most peo... ple indicate an underestimation of... the lethal power of the bomb, but... part played by the bomb in bring... ing the war to an end. Most (68.3) formation... were made that by to one-ha... know and almost as vious questi... of the A. questions on... the war shows that a s... saying ture of recent his... ed. For seven out... dents, this bears i... use the reality of recen... of Russia for contin... energy by internat... tion, and America's eq... nce for control by inter... nership, this confused... the two countries whe... the great majority of... approved of what are... the Russian proposals... that there could be... of agreement on this... that our government... gged to unceasing ef... lie. Bom... inadequate reading. St... of avail. the G... erial are all re-bomb... performance America... out more in-... ity of Chi-tified the... ues from posal. Refe... entire-utes to Midd... cal Sciences... choose answers... reasons 1... ed that th... as a we... usury. (2... Hirosi... 7,230 ft... and the... rget because... ation (243,000... its heavy... only 6... war

And then there came to rule in the land of the Slofs that famous tyrant whom men later called Jostylin the Perseverator, and a mighty conqueror was he in his time. Warriors and tribes trembled before him as the leaves of the forest, nor durst any long withstand him.

For such was the fame of this king, and such was his determination to persevere until he had made peaceful and orderly the known world, that in all lands arose warriors and soothsayers who yearned to follow Jostylin's flame-colored banner. These often--by fair words or by threats--delivered also their kinsmen to fight for Jostylin.

Yet men say of Jostylin that he conquered not only by cunning and fierceness at the head of his warriors but also, perhaps even more, because he was not easily daunted nor swayed from his purpose.

"We shall persevere until we have won the field!"

This was Jostylin's slogan, which he shouted to his captains when they approached him with tales of the boldness of the enemy or the numbers of his archers and spearmen.

Nor would the Lord Jostylin rest him from his conquering while yet remained a tribe that took him not for overlord. He laughed loud at the threats of his neighbors, saying that they would yield in the end, that he had learned how men ever spoke boldly but crumpled before his onslaught.

Now, among the wise men and elders of the Slofs was an ancient who was named Rhazoun but whom men called the No-Sayer, for seldom did he agree with whoever led the Slof horde. He had not agreed with Jostylin's father--whom Jostylin had himself slain for his red mantle of leadership--nor with Jostylin's grandfather, who had bequeathed the right to rule in like manner.

Certain it was that he did not agree with Jostylin that the way to make the world a peaceful domain was to persevere in conquering.

"For look you, Lord Jostylin," said Rhazoun, "no man lives out his years without some misstep."

Jostylin yawned, and looked to his courtiers and captains, who also yawned at the old man.

"What of the day you stumble, Lord Jostylin?" asked Rhazoun nevertheless. "The day you face a battle array mightier than your own, the night you ponder sleepless to outwit a more clever general?"

"There are none such," smiled Jostylin, smoothing his thick mustache.

He laughed scornfully, and his courtiers laughed also at the old man.

"And were there," said Jostylin further, "I should persevere in the same manner as always."

"Perseverance with no gain is useless," Rhazoun told him. "The day may come when men will unite against you; and make a strong stand in the face of your warriors."

"Never!" retorted Jostylin. "For Jostylin has servants among the men of all tribes. There will be naught to deal with but vain threats. My enemies must give way or seek council with my captains."

"And our council is like the warfare of others," added one of these.

And Jostylin marched forth to new conquests.

But when his warriors had ravaged the land of Powlya, Jostylin faced another mighty conqueror. The three tribes of the Phachisti were not unrelated to the Slofs, and their king boasted that he would overthrow Jostylin. Such was his arrogance, indeed, that he made bold to attack in the same summer another tribe, the men of the land of Kapytah beyond the western mountains.

Jostylin sent his horde of fighting men against the Phachisti who, contending also with the Kapytahlites, were utterly routed. Jostylin seized the choicest of their lands, to the discomfort of the Kapytahlites.

"What say you now, old man?" he demanded after his triumph. "Shall I not always conquer as I always have?"

"No," said the No-Sayer.

"You jest, old man! Who can stop me?"

"The Kapytahlites."

"That...rabble?" roared Jostylin, and spat upon the ground. I shall subdue them as soon as I have counted out the spoils of the Phachisti!"

"Then beware, Lord Jostylin!" Rhazoun warned. "For it is said that the men of Kapytah undid the Phachisti by magic and incantations, so that they fell even before your warriors struck."

"I do not believe it!" quoth Jostylin haughtily. "And therefore it cannot be so!"

But he stayed his hand, and sent certain of his henchmen to seek out sorcerers and necromancers that he might hire them to ferret out the secrets of the Kapytahlites.

"It is unfitting that I lack aught which is possessed by my enemies," he told his captains.

And while the sorcerers gathered from all corners of his realm, he marched against the smaller tribes on his borders. Thus did Jostylin overthrow the Bolghieri and the Maghiars and the men of Jechow, and take their gold and jewels for a spoil, and their young men and women for slaves, and the fruits of their fields for his horde.

Then, returning in triumph, he set about gathering a greater host to send against the Kapytahlites. He impressed into his companies every man of his realm who could bear arms. Yet more--he took even slaves and captives from his conquered lands and set them in the forefront of his host.

"What say you now, Rhazoun?" he challenged as they rode out to view Jostylin's army. "Have I not prepared the way for new conquests such as were never seen?"

"No," said Rhazoun. "You will do the same as of old, except that this time the Kapytahlites will resist you. They are now determined against you and the servants you have sent amongst them. Lord Jostylin, you always use the same strategy though your foe be ware of them at last."

"How now?" said Jostylin. "Have I not added sorcerers to my train?"

"Mountebanks that style themselves so, but who cannot perform any real necromancies as can the Kapytahlites."

"Ho! I will show you! You there!" roared Jostylin, turning in his saddle.

A pair of sorcerers rode up from his train.

"That hill we are passing," said Jostylin, pointing.

"Move it to the other side of the road!"

The first sorcerer clutched his robe, wide-eyed, and made protest.

"My Lord Jostylin!" he wailed. "It is impossible!"

"Dog!" cried Jostylin. "Will you tell Jostylin what is possible? It is for you to make my commands possible!"

And he called up one of his guardsmen to strike off the head of the sorcerer.

"Admit first," said Jostylin, staying the fellow's sword with upraised hand, "that you are wrong and no true magician!"

The shivering sorcerer stared askance at Jostylin's white-toothed smile, and bethought him of how the Lord of the Slofs had been known to impale upon sharp stakes those who displeased him, or to have them starved in cages on the walls of his cities, or otherwise to amuse himself with them. He dismounted and groveled in the dust of the road.

"It is even as the Lord Jostylin says!" he cried. "I am a sham and a fake and deserve naught better than death! Truly, if Lord Jostylin says it is possible, then it is possible; and it was no less than base treachery that I did not move the hill, which I must surely have done were I not a beastly spy in the pay of the ravaging Kapytahlites who are forcing Lord Jostylin to defend his land against their outrages!"

Jostylin lowered the hand that had stayed the guardsman.

"It is indeed possible, Lord Jostylin," quavered the other magician, sore afraid as he watched the head kicked bouncing into the ditch, "but there needs must be time for the spell to take effect."

"How long?" demanded the Lord of the Slofs.

"Till....tomorrow?" gasped the sorcerer, trembling and pale.

"Very well," said Jostylin, lifting his reins. "But if word is not brought me tomorrow that the hill is moved--!"

He rode on, and the next day word was indeed brought to his tent--which cost the poor magician much gold and sundry items of his trade such as love-philters and spells to say against the fever--but Jostylin was eager to begin the march. He stayed not to view the hill, though he had the tale chanted by bards to add to his fame for infallibility.

Then, in accordance with the customs of war, he sent forth criers throughout the land, that they might call the Kapytahlites all manner of names and to tell all men of their perfidies, while saying that Jostylin desired only peace.

Some there were, in sooth, who traveled to the land of Kapytah, or near it, or listened to tales spread by foreign criers against Jostylin. Yet when any of these raised his voice in treacherous doubt, Jostylin's captains fell upon him and silenced him and made of him an example to Jostylin's advantage.

So when Jostylin was ready to march, he gave out that he would not march that summer. And when he judged that the Kapytahlites were unwary, then did he march.

Rhazoun he left behind, that he might not be plagued by arguments.

When the host reached the borders of Kapytah, Jostylin lay siege there to a city that he caught unready. The garrison sent messengers to tell of their plight, then made fast the gates to resist what time they could.

The Lord of the Slots bethought him of his necromancers, and ordered a blight cast upon the city that his warriors might more easily scale the walls. This was done, and the weakened defenders were driven back to the citadel, where they took time to laugh ere they died at those of Jostylin's men who sacked the city and fell dead of the same spell.

Jostylin shrugged at the cost of his victory and determined to persevere. He pushed forward while the Kapytahlites appeared to flee before him.

This, however, was but a ruse, for they were exceedingly wroth with Jostylin.

They summoned up their own sorcerers who, in sooth, were to Jostylin's tawdry magickers as are grown men to sucking babes; and these straightway began to conjure up all manner of evils against the lands of the Slots.

They caused fires to fall from the skies upon Jostylin's fields and his castles and on the workshops of his artisans and armorers. And dust, as from the fires, settled everywhere, making men sickly and old overnight and smothering them quietly in stealthy death. Throughout all the land, moreover, spread plagues and madness and famine, called down by the sorcerers of Kapytah.

In the end, Rhazoun gathered together his tough old strength and rode after Jostylin to make him ware of these matters.

He found the Lord of the Slots encamped deep in the country of his foes. Sentries challenged in the dark of dawn as he rode in, and led him before Jostylin where that lord broke his fast with his captains at his tent.

"How came you here?" he asked the old man.

"By slipping like a thief between the Kapytahlites who circle wolf-like about your camp," answered Rhazoun boldly.

Then Jostylin cursed his enemies with many a round oath, that they came not forth to offer mass battle on his own terms but instead wasted away his warriors in small skirmishes. Nor would they heed his demands that they treat with him, for as was well known, in all discussions Jostylin persevered unto the weariness of all others.

And Rhazoun told whereof he had seen ere he rode out: of plagues and blights, of fires in the skies and sickening dust.

"And now, Lord Jostylin," he pleaded, "will you not heed the voice of reason and return home ere it is too late?"

"Never!" cried Jostylin, and his face grew black. "Never!"

I shall persevere until I force the Kapytahlites to join battle!"

And he named his enemies many foul names, nor left off whilst yet he had breath.

"Now, truly," said Rhazoun, "this is folly! Useless perseverance without gain is not perseverance."

And his words are yet spoken as a proverb, though no one now living can fully explain the meaning.

"It is time," warned Rhazoun further, "to change the order of battle. It is but folly to persist in strategy that gains no end, however successful it has been in the past."

"Nonsense, old man!" growled Jostylin. "Have I not won great victories in my way? Have I not conquered the Bolghieri and the Powlyans and many others?"

He would hear no more, but sprang up to command that his host march forward. Nor would he allow Rhazoun in his train, but ordered that he be left behind.

But as he advanced, lo! -- his host began to dwindle.

One day, a company fell by to plunder a town and, weary of the march, returned not.

Others, seeing the riches of the land of Kapytah, were moved to doubt Jostylin, and stole away by night.

Again, many captives from his other wars bore hatred in their hearts for Jostylin. These began to murmur against being placed ever in the hot of the fighting so that they died in place of the Slots, and they forsook Jostylin for the Kapytahlites when they could.

Another day, the host marched through fields that were blighted by sorcerers of both sides, and many fell sick.

Yet again, Jostylin seized as in triumph a city deserted by the Kapytahlites so that it lay thick in strange dust; and when they had rested in this accursed place, the warriors weakened and lost the hair of their heads and beards. In the space of few days, they grew old in looks and spat blood and died.

It is told that Jostylin himself was stricken here, that he put away the food brought him, and railed at his unfortunate captains and sorcerers, and tore out his hair by handfuls, and turned his face to the wall to die. At least such is the tale told by Rhazoun, who was found by the Kapytahlites nigh unto death.

He said unto them that he had seen the corpse of Jostylin lying black and deserted among heaps of his dead warriors, the stench of which came out of the city to assail the nostrils. And it is said that he explained how perseverance can be folly.

"For the Lord Jostylin had in his mind that he could ever seize what he would by force, and men would ever yield before his threats," said Rhazoun. "When time came that he faced at last a foe that was ware of him, he knew not when to hold his hand. He was blind to the need for changing his manner."

The Kapytahlites hearkened to him, for they had heard his name and moreover he looked nigh to dying. They strove as best they might to save him; but they were sore pressed with other affairs for their land had suffered also. Jostylin's host was stricken and dead, but the stench of their dying spread plague through all the lands, from which the Kapytahlites were many summers recovering.

For the lands of the Slots and of the other tribes under Jostylin lay in blighted ruin, so that there was no mercy from the famine that followed; nor could the Kapytahlites--even by aid of such of their sorcerers as still lived--do aught but grub for wherewith to live from day to day.

Thus it is said, they forgot the whereabouts of Rhazoun; but some there are who hold that he only hid away to sleep and regain his strength, and will someday return to the world of men to teach again of the marvels by which these ancients lived and built and made war. It may well be, for no man knew how old was Rhazoun, and he had the look of one who would live forever.

So ended the reign of Jostylin the Perseverator, because he was over-greedy of conquest and could not believe that any would resist him; and so was Rhazoun forgotten and his wisdom lost to men; and so did the sorcerers of Jostylin and the Kapy-tahlites lay waste their lands for that Jostylin forced them to use their powers for evil.

9

SONG AT MIDNIGHT

ROBERT E. HOWARD

I heard an old gibbet that crowned a bare hill
Creaking a song in the midnight chill;
And I shivered to hear that grisly refrain
That moaned in the night through the fog and the rain.

"Oh, where are the men who came to me
And danced all night on the gallows tree?
Gallant and peasant, man and maid,
Many have walked in that long parade.
My chains are broken and red with rust.
My wood is scaled with the moldy crust.
Have men forgotten their debt to me,
That they come no more to the gallows tree?"

The drear wind moaned for a dark refrain,
And a raven called in the drifting rain:
"Oh, where are the feasts that awaited me
Long, long ago on the gibbet tree?"

A slow-worm spoke from the gallows foot:
"Death is spoils for a crow to loot.
The winds and the rain they worked their will,
The kites and the ravens have had their fill.
But last of all when the chains broke free.
The fruit of the gallows came to me.
Men and their works, so swiftly past,
Come to a feast for the worms at last.
Here have I gnawed on this marrow good
Where now I gnaw on this crumbling wood.
For men and their works are a feast for me--
The bones, and the noose, and the gallows tree."

originally published in "The Phantagraph"
for August, 1940.

EDISON'S CONQUEST OF MARS

a collector's item from the early saturday evening post. first published in the late 1800's. originally priced at \$3.50. I have the last 6 mint copies in existence.

\$2.00 - Bob



"you said A bad word!"

the prejudiced people

jim harmon

This is a story of a moment in space and time, when the last man looked quite steadily at the last woman on Earth.

"We are alone," he said.

She said "Yes. I know."

"There is no one on Earth but us."

"I know." Restlessly. "The others all passed away."

"Died," he said.

"What?"

"They died. They didn't 'pass away'. They died. You must realize that. We must. So few people do. They refuse to.

"So few people did," he corrected.

"Yes," she said.

They sat and looked through the window to the ash-colored clouds turning into rain and beyond them.

"Do you think it will ever stop?"

"The rain or death?" he asked.

"I don't know. The death. No, no. The rain, I guess.

-Do you think the rain will ever stop?"

"It always has," he said.

He sat listening to the pit-pat of the rain and the tonk-tunk of the mantle clock.

"What do you think it was?" he said. "Atomic radiation? Disease started by rotting bodies after the bombs fell? A plague spread by the enemy? An act of God? Why do you think everyone died? Everyone but us."

"What are you?"

He looked at her.

"Methodist? Presbyterian?"

"Jewish," he said.

"Jewish," she whispered.

After a time, his prediction came true. The rain stopped.

It became evident that it was a very fine day, with the sun shining, the birds singing, and everyone in the world dead, except one man and one woman.

She said, "I suppose we must go, too."

"Yes," gently. "Someday. But I think not soon. I think we should have died by now if we were going to because of it."

She looked at him. "I meant we would have to die before Jesus came for us - before Judgment Day."

Silence.

"Jew!" she said.

"So, I believe, was Jesus Christ."

"Nasty. A nasty, filthy thing to say."

The rain continued to drop from the roof punk-punk-punk and the mantle clock hit heavy hammer blows tunk-tunk-tunk.

She began to drum her fingers on her chair-arm.

He clutched his fingers around the sides of his chair hard.

Slowly, he began to tap his foot.

"You don't think we'll die?" she asked.

"Not of what killed the others."

"Are you sure?"

"It seems that we would have died with the rest."

"That's what I mean. Are you sure all the others are gone?"

Quietly. "I'm afraid so. As far as I traveled there was no one, no radio, no telephone answered my call."

"It was the same with me. Until I met you. Then... this is the end."

"It needn't be."

"What?" she said.

"I said, it needn't be."

"Yes," she said.

Thunder roared distantly. Faint flarings of yellow illumined the frame of the window.

"It's getting late," she said. "Soon it will be dark."

He said "Yes."

"Soon it will be time to go to bed."

"Yes."

She walked to the door and into the next room.

There was a cabinet of shelves and drawers. The shelves held cans of fruit and meat and vegetables. The drawers contained forks and spoons and knives. She opened a drawer and took out a knife. It was quite sharp.

She called out to him. "Come into the kitchen. We should eat something today."

His footsteps came thud-thumping before him.

She waited.

He came through the doorway and she drove the knife hard into his breast. He fell bloodily in death. The last male human lay dead at the hands of the last female.

"Jew," she breathed.

xxxxxShexbauxshedxbaekxaxlock of hair and tried to stop breath-

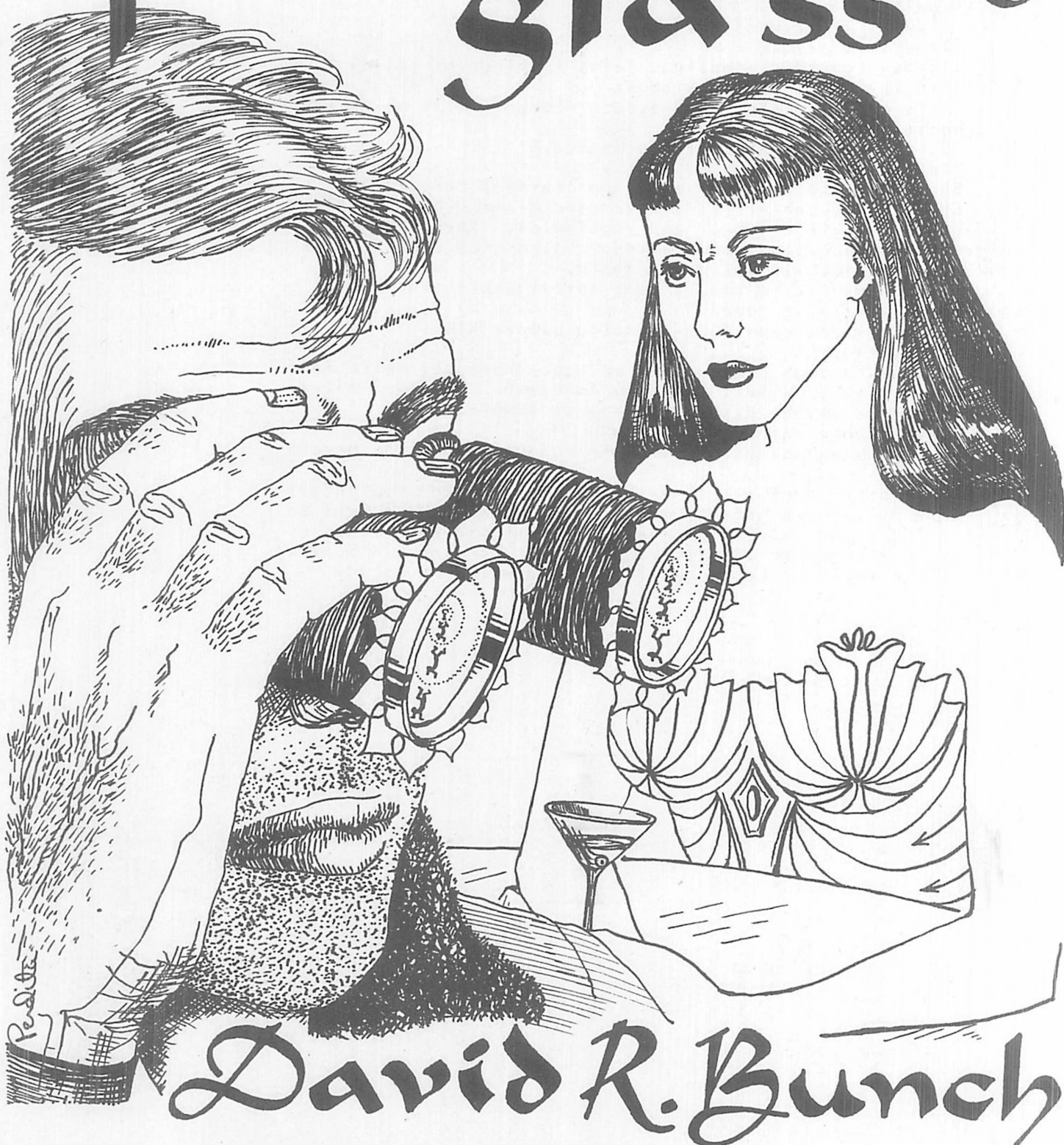
She brushed back a lock of hair and tried to stop breathing so hard. It was getting quite dark now and there must be light. There must always be light now that she was alone. That was really quite simple. There was a kerosene lamp here and a whole world of kerosene that nobody would be using.

AND IF
YOU
WENT
MY

OPINION...



In the globe of changing glass



I had just reached the stage of the all-right place down at Baver¹. So I looked the dwarfish bartender hard in the vicinity of his bearded angular face and told him straight, "No more for me of your rot-gut stuff. I'm leaving." What I did then I couldn't have done better with wings. I went out of that cheap dive--out of that dump town where I'd waited month to month for payments on the sick leg from Guadal--went past all the nylon-gabardine peopled streets where I'd slipped bar to bar while the years died--fled like a phantom with the battle jacket, good finally for no more than the price of a citizen's frown, ragged on me--I just left. But I didn't walk on the memento-limp as I went up the road. . .

I stopped at the place that was all pink lights, one that was like a giant globe of frosted glass set down on two great green legs that could pass for jade, almost. Across the door a quavering neon sign said Varieties in a soft blue color, and the door that opened for me was like the swinging in of a piece of light. When I was inside, a little man clad in pink jacket and trousers hurried toward me. He could not quite cloak his surprise at something, and his fat, block hands began to clutch the air by square handfuls. Except that I felt just right for the occasion, I would have thought he wanted me to go. But I stayed, and he smiled, and if his smile were fiendish--well, it may have been. But soon he'd made a brave show of letting me feel that I was not out of place, and then he excused himself. "Since you're here I'd better go upstairs to wake up some of the acts," he said.

Left alone, I looked intently about in the pink glow, and it was a moment before I guessed that the tables and chairs were of pink glass, making them hard to see. I groped forward then, sat at the nearest table, and a man soon came toward me. He was small and baldish and had a short black beard hanging from an angular face, much like the man who had but a moment ago disappeared up the stairs. He was dressed to fit into the pink atmosphere in such a clever way that it was hard to judge the rate at which he moved. I was a bit startled when a dark beard at once tipped toward me out of the pink air and said, "We've been expecting you, sir, and this is your table.## He called my name and stood up straight, smiling a waiting smile that looked different done in pink. "Which one, sir?" he asked then.

I was surprised to hear myself say, "I'll talk to only Lucinda tonight, if you please." Indeed, I knew no Lucinda, though I liked the sound of that voluptuous name and had heard that it meant "bringer of light." Suddenly I wished to talk with a woman who had a name of that meaning. It could mean so much so many ways, and I hoped that it would. I began to wonder if she would be dressed in pink, and I hoped that she would not, because I wanted to be able to see her. But yes! she came barely discernible in a pink evening gown. Seeing my look of concern he said, "Don't worry, sir."

I stood while he seated Lucinda. Then he hurried away, and I heard the click of a switch. Suddenly the room was a soft and restful lavender, very cool, and almost unworldly in its influence on the mind. The glass tables and chairs changed color, becoming lavender as easily as they had been pink.

Then I beheld Lucinda! "Lucinda!" I cried, and she said, "Darling!" Her eyes breathed once or twice then, that voluptuous closing and opening of lashes and the slow swing of the glance which so few can do well, and I felt as though I had been taken half into her beating gaze. But coolly I lit her cigarette and had the presence of mind to say, "Why is it called Varieties?" "Darling," she said, "didn't you know--don't you know? It is the lights." And I said, "Oh--"

Then the man came back with little things on stems, and in them something sloshed that looked delectable and tasted like martini. But I had the notion that these were somehow different and pink tasting, sort of nostalgic-mildish, like June wild roses smell.

"He made them in the pink mixing room," Lucinda explained --"I think he forgot it was you and I'm Lucinda and he should

have been in the lavender mixing room." Then she laughed before she started to cry. "Damn, damn, damn, damn," she wailed.

"But it is quite all right," I said, trying to sound gallant. And then I asked the most stupid of all the questions. "Why am I here?" I asked.

"Darling!" she said, and she wiped her eyes with her wrists, gracefully.

"I mean," I said, "I don't quite understand."

"Perhaps you should know, or else you shouldn't have come here," she said, and she did not pout anymore. She let her eyes breathe once or twice and went ahead drinking.

Then the man came oozing suavely by again, and he carried more things on stems. "The show is just now ready to begin," he said, placing our drinks just so on the lavender-glass table and bowing deep in a practiced, flowing way.

When a place in the wall swept back, I saw a stage that for a moment made me forget Lucinda. Glass over pink water was the floor, and the walls and ceiling were also of pink water held in such delicate colorless glass that magic widths of liquid seemed to surround the air. Across the water of ceiling, walls, and floor, things shaped and moved in a panorama that was hard to believe. I looked at my drink. "No, darling," she said, "it is the lights."

Then the show swept on to the stage, and no one opened with jokes. It was not that kind of show. There were so many things bewildering and unusual in this show, but none of it was meant to be farce, I was sure. And out of all the wonderful acts seething before me on that pink, almost fairylike, stage I picked the man who walked on his hands. This man who went upside down pumped uneven legs as he kicked a giant bubble along in the rose-colored air, and in the bubble there was something that looked like a tornado done with pink wind. Then all at once I could see the bubble in detail, and a whisper of sound at my side let me know my attendant had given me glasses, had put them in my hands, had deftly raised them to my eyes. And I perceived then that the tornado was not really a tornado at all, done with pink wind in the bubble, but a small crippled man walking upon his hands! This man also was beautifully pumping uneven legs, kicking a bubble. In his bubble I felt sure there was a tornado, because it looked more concentrated, more meaningful than the first.

Perhaps I shouldn't have, but in my impatience I snapped my fingers, and the fury of lavender air pushing toward me told me he was trying to please. "I'm sorry, sir," he said over and over, and he was so sorry that he had been late with my new glasses that he allowed the upper part of his body to bounce up and down, making dips that almost touched his beard to the floor. Then he gave me the glasses and helped me to adjust them. "Are they all right, sir?" he asked many times, and I said, "Oh, yes," and tried to tip him, but he would have none of it. "Oh, no, sir," he said.

So I got down to the business of looking into the glasses, but I soon saw that they really wouldn't do at all. So I snapped my fingers and snapped them.

And I heard Lucinda say, "Darling! darling!" several times.

"Yes," I said, "yes, Lucinda," But it was as though she were not near me.

"Please, darling, please quit snapping your fingers, and look at me," she begged. And she wept and shouted, "Oh damn, damn, damn, damn."

"Yes, Lucinda," I said, "yes." But he was always pushing toward me through the lavender with different glasses, so I knew that I had been snapping my fingers. I was deep inside the juggled bubbles now . . .

But after awhile, way far deep into the hours when I watched spheres no larger than grains of sand, still hoping for the last bubble or a dead juggler, the little man said, "This is the last pair, sir. Sorry, sir. The show is changing soon, sir." So I took this last pair of glasses and looked as hard as I could far into the act of a man walking

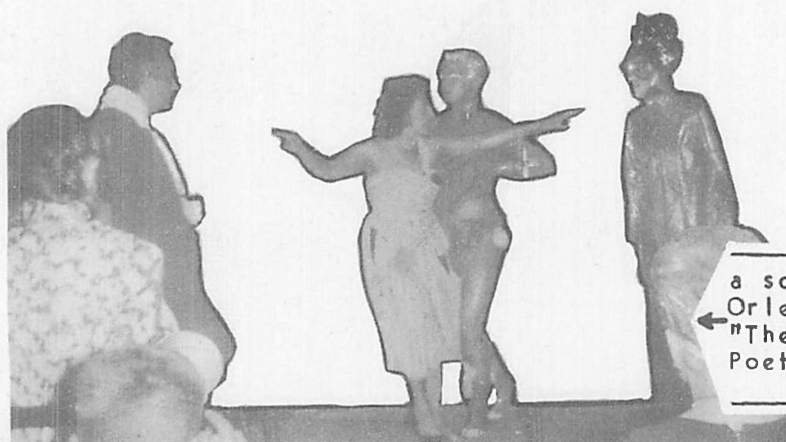
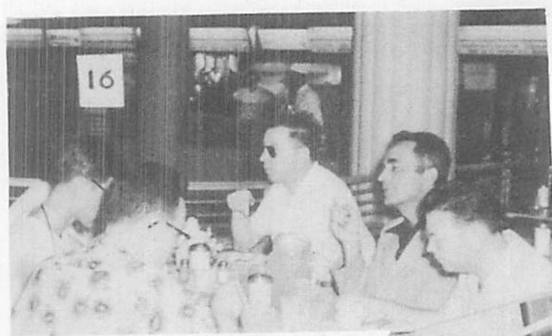
upside down, looked at a bubble much smaller than an onion seed. And I saw a familiar concentration dissolve into a tiny figure pumping his legs while he cavorted on his hands . . .

Then I heard the click, and the yellow lights came on just as the doors slid past the pink stage, blotting out the actors and the strange, swimming shapes. I placed the last glasses aside, upon the big pile of glasses I had used, and I saw that the pink Lucinda looked different in the yellow light--unrecognizable almost, so changed from what she had been in lavender. In short, she seemed quite faded in the yellow light like daylight, but she looked somehow ever-so-wise; and I felt very old. "Darling," she sighed, "oh, darling." "Why is it called Varieties?" I asked.

She scooped up a handful of opera glasses I had used, and a great gleam of seeing held her pink-yellow face for a moment. "Darling," she said, "darling, I know now what you did!" Then she arose quickly, and I saw, for just a little while, how in a kinder circumstance she might have been truly as beautiful as a pink and yellow flower waving along a yard. "You looked in all the bubbles, darling," she cried. "The trick of lighting was for you--" But she never told me the rest. She broke off and started raving, "Damn, damn, damn, damn," as she threw herself about the tables and kicked the glass chairs. Her gown was a swirl of dirty color in the yellow light.

Then she was gone--everyone was gone--and the little man stood at my side, wagging the short dark beard at the end of the angular face.





← a scene from the play presented at the New Orleans science-fiction convention, entitled "The Robot, the Girl, the Android, and the Poet." Script for play on following pages.

by bob

"I remember Squeezebox"

Conventions are fun! Anything can happen at a convention... you might meet sexy penguins... lady lion tamers... pro authors... unusual people like fans, their wives and friends, movie magnates... in short, just about anybody.

Scattered about are pictures from the convention held on the Labor Day Week-end, 1951, in New Orleans. We saw the sights, met interesting people, saw a couple of movie premieres... and we met squeezebox.

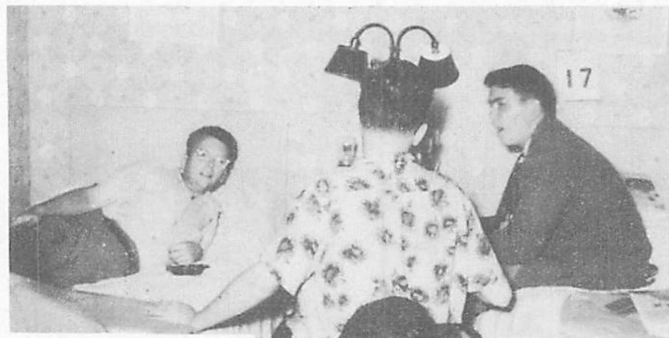
Squeezebox was lying in a bed, soaked to the gills, at one of the after-hours tete-a-tetes that are inevitable companions to a convention. That wasn't his real name, of course. But some other well-oiled fan remarked that the way other people of questionable sobriety were piling in on the poor boy, resembled an Abbot and Costello comedy wherein the main character was titled "Squeezebox" and since that character occupied the only decent bedroom in a very leaky hotel, during a rainstorm, all the hotel occupants moved into his room. The brawl attended was perhaps the most unique part of the convention, and Squeezebox was, I think, the most unique part of the brawl. That's why we're titling this opus, "I remember Squeezebox." People kept saying, "Squeeze over, Squeezebox." And he would.

The above happened in the by-now-famous Room 770. This 72-hour marathon was undoubtedly the crowning extravaganza of any convention yet given. The scheduled program was also quite enjoyable, and everyone enjoyed his brief stay tremendously. Among the outstanding attractions were Fritz Leiber's featured speech: "The Jet-Propelled Apocalypse," and Bob Tucker's hilariously presented speech-with-slides, "Through Darkest Fandom With Birdie and Camera."

In 1952, the 10th Annual World Science-Fiction Convention will be held in Chicago on August 30, 31, and September 1. It promises to be the most lavish and entertaining convention to date. One you won't want to miss! Send your Dollar now, for membership (with benefits including pre-convention bulletins, badge, convention program, etc.) to:

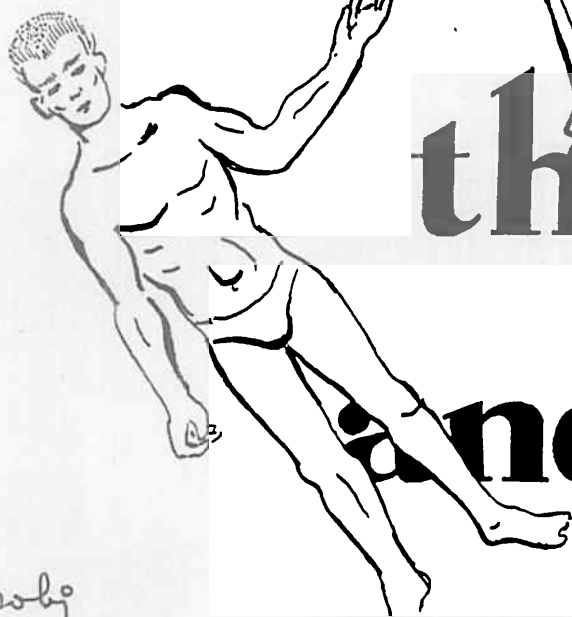
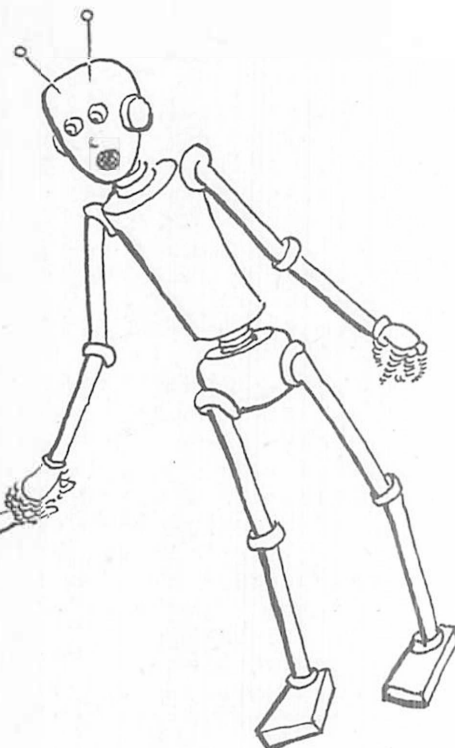
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There will be something everyone will enjoy! Send that \$ now!



the robot, the girl,

a farce in one act by:
fritz leiber
judith merril
and frederic brown



the android and the poet

DRAMATIS PERSONAE
(in order of appearance)

19

the girl
the robot
the android
a voice
the poet

SCENE
the interior of a bar, deserted

(Enter the girl and the robot, girl drooping, tired, and woebegone; robot squeaking at each step. They look around, girl unhappily, robot stiffly. Girl sighs and turns to robot, with shrug indicating defeat.)

GIRL: All right, you win. We've tried every bar on Bourbon Street, and there isn't a man in one of them!

ROBOT: (speaks mechanically throughout) I told you that we had won. The Revolution of the Machines is entirely successful. There is no man left alive in the Universe. Now will you be mine... darling?

GIRL: (with disgust) You creak!

ROBOT: I need oiling. (Pulls out oil can)

GIRL: So do I! (opens a bottle and takes a swig)

ROBOT: Here, help me. (she takes the can and oils him. He leans forward to embrace her, and squeaks loudly) Sorry. You missed my universal joint.

GIRL: (looks around, then doubtfully:) You could call it that.

ROBOT: No, here. In my back.

(She takes care of it and puts the oil can on the table)

GIRL: All right, what do you want now?

ROBOT: You! I will take you far away. I will take you to the place where I was made. We will live in my ancestral home, and make little robots. You and you alone will be in charge of the assembly line.

GIRL: That's the first time anyone ever handed me that line!

ROBOT: Will you go away with me tonight?

GIRL: (takes a swig again) Why not?

ROBOT: (with studied ecstasy) We'll have our own power house! We'll build the best little robots ever made.

GIRL: I can hardly wait.

ROBOT: Wait for me here... darling. I'll get my spare batteries.

(He goes. Girl sits, with bottle. Enter the android. Girl looks up; jumps up, overjoyed.)

GIRL: But I thought you were all dead.

ANDR: That's just robot propaganda.

GIRL: But you look pale. Are you ill?

ANDR: Of course not. I'm just out of chemicals.

GIRL: What! Aren't you a man?

ANDR: Certainly not. I'm not one of those unpredictable, emotional, murky creatures. I'm an android. I'm clear. Now will you be mine?

GIRL: You mean all I'd get is dianookie all the rest of my life?

ANDR: (Hands her red test tube) Here, help me charge up. I'm supposed to get these chemicals in the back of my neck.

GIRL: (follows instructions) Is that all right?

ANDR: I feel like a new android.

GIRL: That's nice. Anything else you want?

ANDR: You! I will take you far away. I will take you to the tank where I was synthesized-- We'll live together in dear old Vat 69.

GIRL: That's better than the last offer I had.

ANDR: We'll have our own test tubes and make little androids.

GIRL: I can hardly wait.

ANDR: Stay here, darling. I'll get my-- (sees oil can) You've had a robot here!

GIRL: No, no!

ANDR: Don't lie to me!

GIRL: Darling, how can you believe I'd fall for a hunk of chromium?

(Enter robot, with batteries.)

ROBOT: -So! (puts down batteries.) So this is how you carry on when my back is turned!

ANDR: So this is the hunk of chromium you couldn't fall for!

ROBOT: Don't call me names, you plastic monstrosity.

(They slowly and menacingly advance toward each other.)

ANDR: See here, you traveling tinshop!

ROBOT: Watch out, you walking laboratory.

ANDR: Junkheap!

ROBOT: Stinkpot!

GIRL: (coming between them) Wait! Don't fight. Let's work this

out like civilized creatures.

21

ANDR: All right.

ROBOT: QX.

GIRL: Let's think it through carefully.

ROBOT: You think, I'll skren.

ANDR: You skren, I'll varish.

ROBOT: Pardon me while I skren. (sits, goes into trance.)

ANDR: Excuse me while I varish. (same)

VOICE: (offstage) The last woman on earth sat alone in a room.

There was a knock at the door. (knock)

GIRL: Come in.

(Poet enters.)

GIRL: You are a man, aren't you?

POET: I am a poet.

GIRL: Is there a difference?

POET: A little.

GIRL: Not any important difference, I hope?

POET: This is no time for trifles. Cosmic issues are at stake.

(sees robot and android; registers fright.)

GIRL: You don't have to be afraid of them. They're skrenning and varishing. They can't hear a thing.

POET: But what's a decent girl like you doing associating with things like that? Don't you realize-- You're sure they can't hear me?

GIRL: Quite.

POET: Don't you realize that these unspeakable things destroyed humanity, crushed beauty, burnt the books? Soulless things of metal and plastic--

GIRL: Yes, dear...but...what do you want?

POET: You! I will take you far away. I am a sorcerer with words. I will take you on flights of my imagination...

GIRL: A flying sorcerer!

POET: Will you go away with me tonight?

GIRL: Yes! Yes!

POET: We'll have our own little cottage. We'll have vines and flowers. We'll have a typewriter built for two, and every night, when the moon is bright, we'll...

GIRL: Yes....yes?

POET: We'll make little verses!

GIRL: (wilts) From bad to verse! Is that... all? Is there... something you forgot? (hopefully)

POET: (happily) That's all. What more is there?

GIRL: (looks around for bottle, takes another swig, and says determinedly) WE'VE GOT TO WAKE THEM UP.

POET: (horrified) What?

GIRL: (initiating suitable action on android with hypodermic) Yes, it's the only way. We'll have to do it in shifts. Mornings, I'll punch the press with him (points to robot), afternoons I'll visit him in the vat (indicates android), nights when the moon is bright I'll write with you (scornfully) and maybe (she finishes work on the android and looks dreamy and thoughtful) some nights, maybe, when there is no moon...may-be I can make out on the graveyard shift with the supernatural horror boys. (Sighs, and moves to robot.)

ANDR: (waking) My, that was a deep varish. (sees girl awakening robot) Oh, stop that-- why don't you let sleeping cogs lie?

GIRL: I have to wake him up, so we can all go together. I'm trying to work out a design for leaving.

ROBOT: My, that was a profound skren!

ROBOT: } (both turn; see man at same time) A man! (They advance menacingly.)
ANDR: }

(Poet retreats, terrified)

GIRL: Wait! (restrains robot and android) Hold on! That's no man. That's a fan.. I mean a ham.... I mean... well he says he's a poet, but the fact is.... (whispering) he wrote the script!

(All rush off, poet in flight, others chasing him.)

THE END

The Last Word

James Pinkham

Dear Reverend Moorehead:-

I read with interest your recent article entitled "A Minister Looks At Dianetics," however I find it necessary to address you in comment upon points raised in issue with Dianetics, contained in your article. The following are my own opinions, and as such, man or may not be in agreement with Mr. Hubbard's intentions and expressed beliefs.

To begin: If basics expressed in Dianetic theory seem at variance with Theology, still one must not overlook the impact upon humanity of the scientific and psychological considerations of the hypothesis. There are parts of Hubbard's 'scientific' claims which may be considered as not satisfactorily tested over long time periods, but some unusual at least temporary results have definitely been obtained, with apparent benefit beyond the scope of other psychotherapies. There are wide, unbridged 'gulfs' in philosophical statement of Dianetics, and some tendency toward weak philosophical explanation with which I do not wholly agree; but, for the lack of these, one must not assume that the entire hypothesis and resultant therapeutic mechanisms are therefore worthless.

As a layman and amateur in both Philosophy and psychology, I have examined, tested, used and experienced myself some of the benefits of Dianetic techniques of both simple and advanced structure, and have explored the philosophical and touched upon the theological aspects of the mind with which Dianetics deals.

I feel it necessary to suggest a re-statement for better understanding of Hubbard's statement that "Human basic Nature is Good." To re-state: "The basic nature of the human organism using optimum 'Mind' (not merely brain) is found to be good"- This is my own observation of a philosophical nature, and I am inclined to believe that this is what Hubbard intended in his statement.

The observed behaviour pattern of Man, for many centuries past, admittedly demonstrates the idea that "Man is basically evil," and on this I will agree, providing that we label the conclusion as a composite observation based on behaviour patterns. Let us now add to this pattern the substance and means with which you deal, and in which I firmly believe: That of "FAITH IN GOD"---- Is it strange that we now find a change in this behaviour pattern toward: "Man plus God exhibits a basically good nature"?

Therefore, if, as I firmly believe, 'Man' is the optimum organism when he is a part of 'God' then the basic nature of optimum man is good. --Any less than an optimum consideration would preclude a Basic level of approach.

I base the foregoing statements upon the belief that the optimum 'Mind' is a combination of 'Man as a physical being and Entity of 'Soul' as a part of 'God'--

In the field of aberration we find humans whose "Will" has been subjugated to a level from which they seemingly cannot rise. These beings are isolated mentally so to speak from an awareness of the Universe of God in their own thinking, and regrettably, to be sure, in many cases the suppressive effect of Evil aberration is so great that they cannot deal rationally with awareness of religious faith; Rational willingness to be aware is absent.



Ren Nelson:

Little Red Riding Hood Waiting for the Subway

It is these that can obtain the most good from Dianetics coupled with philosophical understanding, and surely we should not deny these beings the opportunity to reach a level of rationality at which they may perceive the existence and wonder of 'God.' Surely they need God's help, but rationality is the aid they need to permit them to accept such guidance usefully.

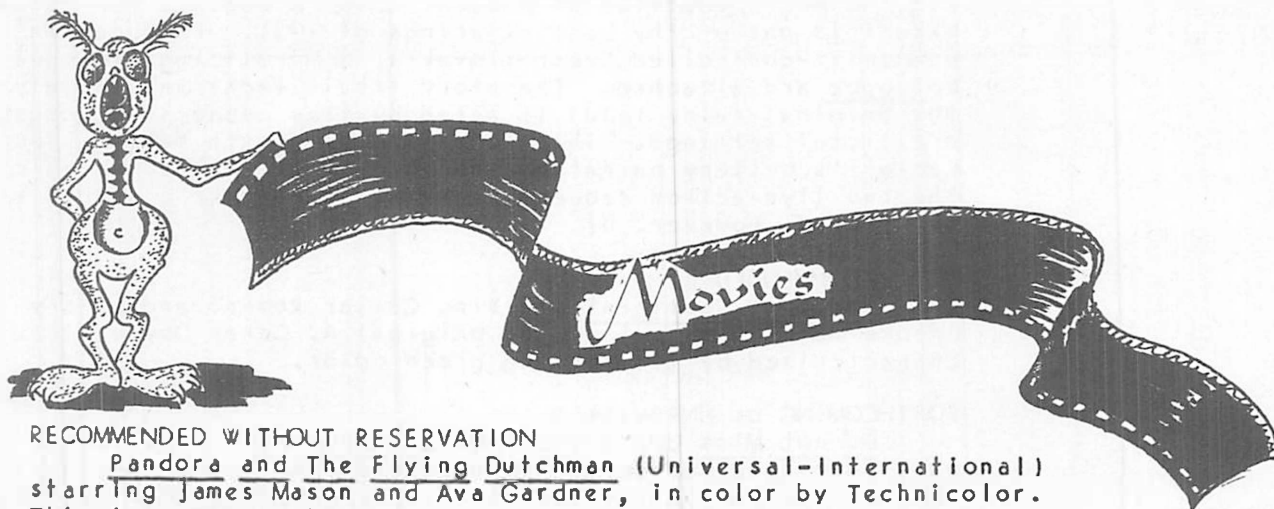
Dianetics is neither a 'Panacea,' nor an 'Only answer'; it is a means of psycho-therapy that helps to permit those unable to benefit from other answers to reach rational awareness and reality to welcome and use the benefit of the scriptures with understanding.

Yes--Man needs God to straighten him out-- but as of the old proverb of the man who led his horse to water and could not make him drink, some men, not all, need mental therapy to permit touch with reality sufficient to allow them to see their own need, as only man himself can do.

We,--both you and I,--are seeking after truth and understanding from a world that has admittedly "Gone Mad!" Regardless of what L. Ron Hubbard's original, intervening, or present purpose may be individually, he too as an organism has his aberrations, but the basic idea evolved into a useful therapeutic mechanism stands as a tool, and I feel that many of my associates in Dianetics share with me the approach that Dianetics can be (Not necessarily always is) used as a means of heightening individual awareness of Reality, environment, Soul and God, through heightened understanding, rational thinking, health and happiness. The latter--happiness being both a means toward further understanding and a result of understanding.

In closing--L. Ron Hubbard may or may not be doomed to his own failure by his own acts-- The name Dianetics may be so doomed also due to discredit, misunderstanding, and reactionary thinking. But the idea that through optimum awareness and rational understanding Man can be brought to see the need of the Universal Love of God, will never fail-- short of ultimate destruction.





RECOMMENDED WITHOUT RESERVATION

Pandora and The Flying Dutchman (Universal-International) starring James Mason and Ava Gardner, in color by Technicolor. This is a movie which will either completely enchant you, or repel you utterly. Ava Gardner does the best acting of her career; James Mason is more than capable. The rest of the cast is a collection of experienced and craftsmanlike artists. The story is one of love so compelling it bridges time. The colorful scene is the Spanish coast, never more beautifully photographed. The aura is of the fantastic become so real that the improbable is completely acceptable. bj

RECOMMENDED

The Tales of Hoffman (Lopert Release) with Molra Shearer, Robert Rounseville and Ann Ayers, in color by Technicolor. Offenbach's music gorgeously alive, accompanied by the best in the dance performed by the leading members of the Sadler's Wells Ballet. Main objections: the screen is so laden with symbolic furniture that the dancers have to look sharp to keep from tripping over it, and the last third of the picture, which is far too drab for a final act. bj

One Minute to Twelve is a Swedish film with spoken English dialogue dubbed in, rather than the equally annoying use of titles. Technically it's a science-fiction film; actually it is not. Somewhat like Britain's 12 DAYS TO NOON, it deals with the problem of whether atomic scientists must consider the relations between their work and humanity's welfare, or whether their work is an end in itself, with no relation to morality. The scientist, in this case, is strictly for science, but some personal problems involving his son who is falling miserably in following his father's footsteps, a niece who is following his footsteps well enough, but thinks more of humanity than she does of science, and a mild sort of secret enemy agent subplot brings humanity closer to him and in the end he explodes himself and the enemy agents with a miniature atom bomb, the results of his scientific work, and so saves Sweden and humanity from the horrors of atomic warfare at one crack. The acting is terrific, but unfortunately the dubbed-in English dialogue is apparently a pale replica of the original Swedish--for they jarringly do not match the emotional intensity of the actors' faces. The results to very sensitive viewers are frequently apt to be more amusing than serious. On the whole, however, it is a very thoughtful film, very well photographed and acted, and anyone interested in the social problems of the atomic era should see it by all means. Incidentally, the shots of the atomic equipment are real ones, not the fakes with lots of accessories added that Hollywood overloads this type of film with. -Robb Kidd

The 5000 Hats of Bartholomew Cubbins comes to the fantasy screen as The 5000 Fingers of Dr. T and deals in Technicolor, with Human actors, in the situations of an imaginative, dreamy lad who practices his piano under parental compulsion. Somewhat in the nature of The Secret Life of Walter Mitty, only they stick to the script in this case. -Robb Kidd.

The Emperor's Nightingale (Czech Import) A wistful charm, and the most beautiful of present color processes (Nu-Agfa), make this one of the best offerings of 1951. Produced in communist-controlled Czechoslovakia, a moralizing prologue and epilogue are attached. The story itself (adhering closely to the original fairy tale) is acted by tiny puppets in gorgeous artificial settings. This is definitely worth seeing. Boris Karloff's buttery narration and the slender thread by which the two live-action sequences are attached make a second viewing tiring, however. bj

NOT RECOMMENDED

The Lost Continent starring Caesar Romero and Hilary Brooke makes hash out of the original A. Conan Doyle plot. Characterized by its rotting green color.

FORTHCOMING or UNREVIEWED

Do not Miss UPA's THE THURBER CARNIVAL! This is the company that gave you Gerald McBoingboing and Mr. McGoo. We saw some rushes of the section based on THE WAR BETWEEN THE SEXES, and the rest of the film should be equally miraculous, especially if you like Thurber even a little. -Robb Kidd.

Also coming: de Sica's Miracle in Milan, a "peasant allegory" that is drawing hordes in N.Y., Cocteau's "The Desert Sands" - no information available, and Stanley Kramer's Sam Small story, "The Flying Yorkshireman," transferred to the screen. Kramer can usually be trusted to make an excellent film. There's also a possibility that Van Druten's "Bell, Book and Candle" will be filmed. If it is, it'll be fine entertainment! bj

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With the wrong end glowing DANGER
And temporary suns
Beginning.

Stormy pinions flapping
Thunder-bird on a Texas desert, sand flung
High on the stars, rain slopping...
CLEAR THE AREA!

Count - them - out - so - slowly -
Ten - nine - eight - six - four - two
FIRE!

The man-made thunders dwarf the battered lightning
And new Gods usurp the stars.

Mario Stanz

Diary

Carol Lowrey

My name is Linda Smith. Today, July 4, 1979, I was fourteen years old. My mother gave me this diary to record my life in, and it even has a lock. We live near the ruins of Washington, the old capitol. My mother told me that in the Last Atomic War, a year before I was born, the enemy bombed both east and west coasts. No one lives within two hundred miles of either coast, or of the Great Lakes. That is, except us.

Pa says we were caught here when the bombing started, and they just happened to miss us. But we can't leave for inland, because the radiation pits and bomb craters would get us sure. We call our town New Washington, and about 500 of us live here.

Besides me and my twin brother, Laredo, (my mother was born in Laredo, and she got homesick), there are thirty-four kids in New Washington. Ma told me there would never be any more, and I could tell she felt awful bad. Something about the radiation affectin' women or something. I'm going out to play now.

July 5 - All us kids went to Len Varden's fifteenth birthday party today. Funny we all were born either in May, June or July. Funny about Len, too. His twin sister Lynn was born on midnight, July 5, and he was born the morning of July 5. Jake Kane came in on midnight of the third, and his twin sister, Jerry, the 5th. Out of the 36 of us there are eight sets of twins. Ma says this is queer, too.

July 6 - Joe Christian was fourteen today. In the summer, it's one birthday party after another. I feel sick from eating so much cake, but I had to go to this one. Joe's mother teaches our school, and if us kids don't include Joe in everything, Whew! I feel sorry for Joe's kid sister, Arty, though. She's about a year younger than I am. I go places with her a lot, and she's fun. Joe and his mother never give her a chance.

July 9 - Arty is thirteen today. Us kids all come to her party without urging, and this makes her Ma mad. Arty's a good kid, why shouldn't we come? My ma likes Arty the best of all my girlfriends. She says all the others are either stupid or no good. If she blows off her trap where they can hear her, I'll run away from home or something.

July 10 - Marty North was twelve today. She runs around with a different bunch, but all us kids go to almost every party. There's not much else to do. Marty's about the only red-head, and she thinks she's too good for us brunettes. She's crazy after boys already. What a nut! She even made eyes at Laredo after I'd told her he and Arty were engaged.

July 13 - A quiet kid named Pete Shane was twelve today, so all of us trooped over to his house for more cake. It's getting hot, and after the last birthday, the nineteenth of July, the summer Dust Storms will drive everybody inside. I asked Ma why there was two of us kids in every family, and she said that before they found out about the radiation, there was something called Birth Control. Sounds funny to me.

July 14 - JoAnn North, Marty's sister, was eleven today. She's blond, and tries to act just like Marty. Heaven forbid another one! One of the olders went out in the Dust and died. Us kids don't mind it, but our parents say it's full of secondary radiations. Whatever they are. Pa and Ma are fixing our house up for the summer. We all live in plastic domes with no windows at all. There's a queer ventilation system, and nobody pokes their head out till school starts in the middle of November.

July 19 - Delaney Jones will be fourteen today. None of the Olders have been out for a week, now, and they try to keep us kids from going to Delaney's party. But the dust doesn't bother us, and she'd never understand why we didn't show up. Laredo and me and Arty, and Arty's brother Joe don't intend to be shut up all summer. Like last summer, we'll sneak out and play tennis. The dust turns the sky pale yellow, but we don't feel anything. Our parents and the other Olders hibernate. Joe is halfway likeable on the tennis courts, and sometimes some of the others sneak out and join us. Most of the summer we're alone, though.

July 20 - Today was a carbon copy of all summer. Laredo called Joe and Arty on the visi-phone, and we met at 9 o'clock on the courts. We got back at 9 at night. All summer we do this.

July 27 - I was suprised at the Olders. They got real ambitious, and they're building connecting tunnels under the domes. Using electronic equipment it shouldn't take long. Then we can live underground like moles (extinct) all summer. I was reading one of the old books last night, and I asked Ma what dogs and cats were. She seemed sad about that, too, like all the Olders are sad most of the time. She told me that Inland there might be some, but out here all animals were extinct. She's nuts, but I didn't tell her so. Out on the tennis courts in the summer there's an animal that looks something like a cat. We call it a catlin, and it's awful friendly. It's about four feet long, and all pale dusky yellow. It has big green eyes, but no tail. It has a flap of skin between its front legs and its body, and I've seen it glide like the extinct flying squirrels were supposed to. It probably lives in the trees, 'cause the ground is full of radioactives most places. So are the trees, for that matter, but less. Joe calls the catlin a 'mutation' and says it's different than its parents. If that's what it is, then what are we?

July 30 - Our catlin had cubs. Guess that blows up Joe's 'not like their mother' routine. But he says that mutations can breed true, and that unless man can adjust to radioactivity we will lose our domination of the earth. If you ask me, he's just trying to get out of admitting he was wrong about the catlin.

August 1 - Laredo has been fooling around with the old science books, and he told me that he thinks Joe is right about the catlin. But everyone ducks answering my question. I think that if the catlin is a mutation, then so are us kids. We can live in the dust, and the Olders can't.

August 12 - Project Mole is completed, and the Olders are happier than I ever saw them. They get together in big groups and talk and laugh and try to forget the world outside. I think this is silly. They have to live in the world; running away won't get them anywhere.

August 17 - Laredo and I were listening in on one of the Older meetings, and Mr. Christian, Arty and Joe's father, said he wanted to lead an expedition into the Crater Country and try to reach Inland. He said anything was better than this hell-hole. I don't see anything wrong with New Washington, and nobody knows what they'll find Inland. I have a persistent hunch it won't be good, either. I like it here, and I don't want to leave. For once, Laredo agrees with me.

August 21 - Almost all of our population (450 out of 500) want to go on that crazy expedition of Mr. Christian's. All I ever read out of history books shows that humans together fight wars if there's enough of them. We've had peace here, and it won't be long before us kids experiment with Atomics for something more than bombs. But the Olders have a hate that amounts to phobia for anything Atomic. That doesn't argue well for progress, and if the Inlanders are that way too, barbarism is on the way back. Gee, I sound grown up. But if the Olders don't, someone has to. Laredo is going around getting the kids' opinions. So far, all agree with us.

September 23 - As soon as winter sets in, the expedition leaves. About 20 Olders and all us kids are staying. By the way, with the excitement and all, no one has thought to find out what the catlins eat or how many there are.

September 24 - Catlins eat grass! How times have changed.
 September 30 - One woman turned her tele-view outside and she saw our catlin. She screamed and fainted. When the men heard about it, they were all for going out and killing it. Our catlin never did anybody any harm, but they'd kill him just because he's different. I thanked God for the dust, 'cause the catlin's used to kind treatment, and he'd walk right up to his death.

October 3 - The Olders that are leaving helped us start all the greenhouses today. Plant culture gives us our food now, and we're strictly vegetarians. I guess every animal on earth is, now.

October 23 - Everything is in a rush, because the expedition plans to leave the minute the Dust lifts. Pa is going to stay, but Ma can't make up her mind. Laredo and I try to get her to stay, and I think she will. Joe and Arty will come and live with us, because both their parents are leaving. I'm glad.

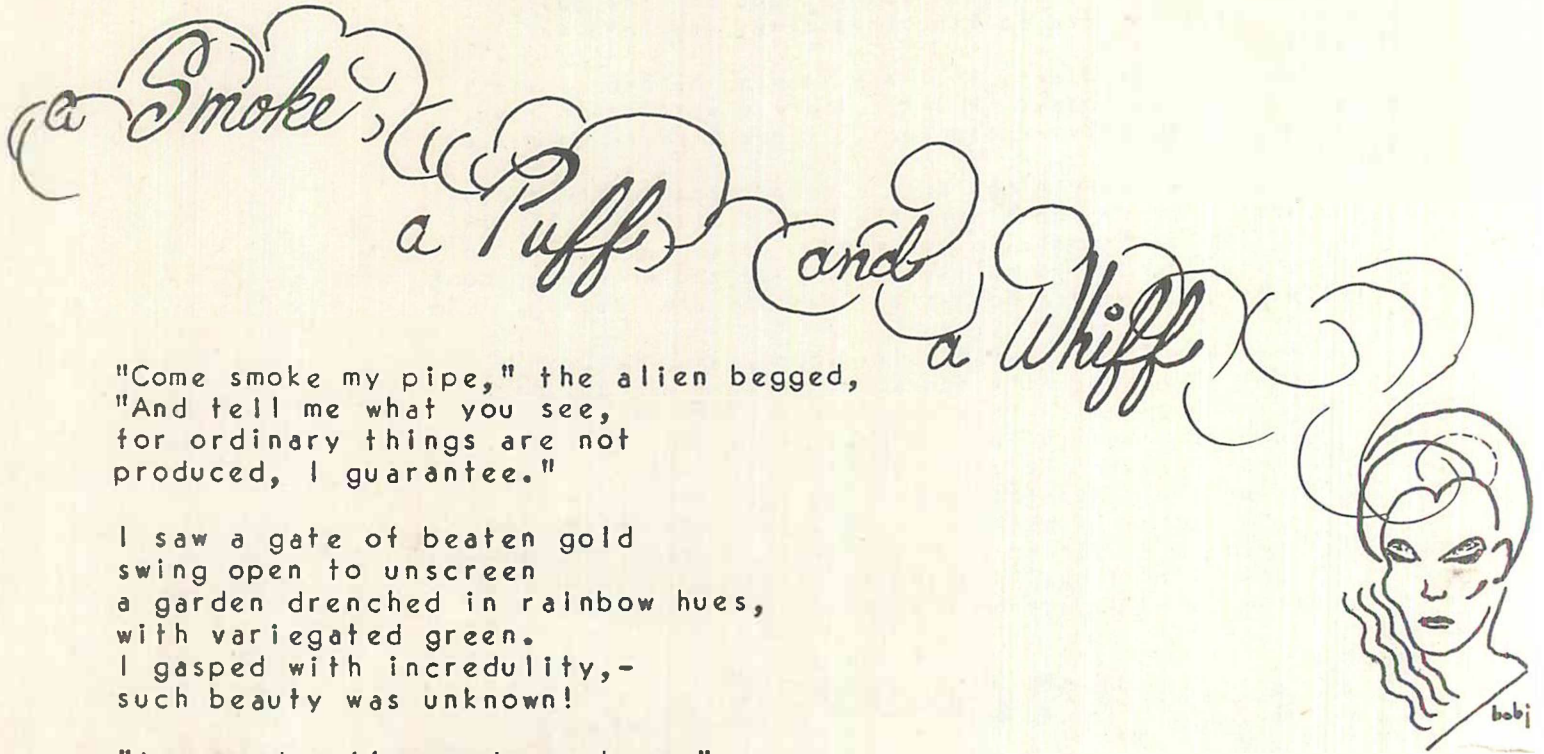
November 4 - The hot winds blew today, and the Dust will probably lift tomorrow. I'm sorry to see them all go, but I guess it's for the best. They could never have been happy here. Laredo says man in the old days looked to the stars. We have a veil of Dust to pierce first, but with the old books helping us, we can reach them too. Joe says atomics will help us. Since his mother's been busy, he acts almost nice. Arty says that when we've worked on the olders' science long enough, we should try to find their inland settlement. Some of them might want to book passage on the spaceship we're going to build.

Observations in a torture chamber by Sandy Charnoff

The drying modernes
 Spew forth arid air,
 The stance modernes
 Rise and fall
 In obedience to the master's inclination.
 The electrified permanent modernes
 Burn undulations
 Into brown hair, black hair, blond hair.
 The floors clump of bobbles and spent tresses.
 The magnet modernes salvage the bobbles.
 Blue-frosted priestesses
 Of civilization's trends
 Expertly anoint the sacrifices
 To the altar of Venus.



Now what
 did he mean
 by that?



"Come smoke my pipe," the alien begged,
 "And tell me what you see,
 for ordinary things are not
 produced, I guarantee."

I saw a gate of beaten gold
 swing open to unscreen
 a garden drenched in rainbow hues,
 with variegated green.
 I gasped with incredulity,-
 such beauty was unknown!

"A second puff can do no harm,"
 he coaxed with silky tone.

A silver portal coalesced,-
 strange music filled my ears,-
 my spirit soared on wings of light
 beyond the stratospheres!

"Oh, take another whiff," he smiled,
 "For everyone has need
 of newer realms to fill the mind."

I readily agreed.

A mouth appeared!

The gaping jaws
 loomed cruelly black and wide;
 I screamed in fear and sought escape,--

But I was locked inside.

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