

Surprise, surprise, this is POOR RICHARD'S ALMANAC #4, PUBLISHED on the FLAPress by one poor rich, brown by name, who is known to publish said quarterly publication quarterly, or as near as possible, for the Spectator Amateur Press Society, a division of Fandom Is A Way Of Making Enemy's, Inc. Rich Brown resides at 127 Roberts St., Pasadena, California; prefers red-heads, fanzines, and letters of comment from non-SAPS. Contributions, except for art, is earnestly not solicited. SAPS Mailing #49. PRA #4 is SIC; definately.

### Ego's Where I Go

the to-be-expected editorial of sorts

First of all, I'd better clear up a few things that I managed to goof-up in PRA #5, which, as you may know, preceeded this one.

To make a long story short; I intended that PRA #4 be a small-sized PRA, and be this first in the mailing. But it didn't pan out. So.

So I have another purpose behind this PRA #4. You see, through my Soamesian investigations, I have completely and thoroughly uncovered...Squink Blogg! And now, I feel, is the time that it should be revealed. And so it is that, in this issue, you will find "The Squink Blogg Caper," the largest and most completely devastating story of its kind! This is the story you have all been waiting for, the story that has been begged to have been written, the story that has taken mailings to prepare! And now, finally, for the first time anywhere (in startling black & white; frazzle-dazzle sound; and ghlorious Schmeckincolor) this fine story is being forced on you. Now, tell me, doesn't it make you SIC?

However, the story does have a redeeming characteristic. It's illustrated by my Soames Investigating Consultants Sexcretary (known as SICS; pronouced S-E-X), who is, of course, Bjo. Any excuse to get Bjo to draw is a Good Thing.

Advice To Pipple Who Laugh At The Proper Places: Get, and read, the stories of Richard S. Prather, the "Shell Scott" stories. I admit, quite freely, that most of my "funny stuff" is taken almost word-for-word from these stories. However, there are many more, and several especially funny bits that I'll never be able to cop; so read 'em yourself. Yes.

BJO FOR TAFF!!!

In the previous story, as you may remember, I had a hunch that Someone Had Control Over Squink Blogg. It is with that thought in mind, that we begin this story...

# THE SQUINK BLOGG CAPER

I lit the fourth fag in a row and let it dāngle from my lips. I sat in the only remaining chair in the office, half thinking and half-drowsing. Things seemed to be closing in around me. I'd been thinking about the case for so long that it seemed that every other Squink Blogg that filtered through my mind was Squink Blogg about Squink Blogg, if you know what I mean, Squink Blogg.

You might think it's easy being a Soames Op. Well, you're wrong if you do. Like, you'd prob'ly think the idea of eliminating certain fans as possible suspects would be an easy job, for instance. Generally, you might be right; but in the case of Squink Blogg, you'd be wrong.

For instance, I'd figured on eliminating all the New Members since I'd decided on starting on the case. You know; Terry & Miriam Carr, Dick Eney, Earl Kemp, Ted Pauls, Lar' Stone, Bjo, Guy Terwilliger, Bob Lichtman, and Lee Jacobs. Like that. Luckily, my mind snapped to instant alert; I was saved from the blunder I had nearly made.

Terry Carr, for instance (and it's a well-known fact), is known to be 90% of Fandom. The chances were, therefore, 9-to-1 that he might be the villian.

And Dick Eney had been in SAPS before; what better to avert all suspicion than to drop out before taking control of the monster!? And it was indeed odd that, all the time he'd been out, not a single Squink Blogg story had been printed!?

Earl Kemp and Lee Jacobs were nefarious one-shot men; there was no way of telling what particular brand of evil might lay behind the veiled eyes of fen who would participate in such blood-chilling activities.

Ted Pauls and Guy Terwilliger were known for their Publishing Giant Type activities; and what better form of labor than the gigantic hulk known as Squink Blogg to turn the crank?!

Lar' Stone, perhaps, forced himself to look at Squink Blogg for long periods of time; thus, everything else looked humorous in comparison, and so he was able to write such delightful humor.

Bjo Wells, yes, even my own sexcretary was under suspicion; she, too, was known for her control in fandom. If anyone could control such a monster, it was she. Hell, she had me wrapped around her little finger. Not that I'm really such a monster...

And for Bob Lichtman, I could find absolutely no motive; which made him doubly suspicious, even if he was a fellow SIC.

No, no one is above suspicion to a SIC. I was even beginning to wonder if I could be Squink Blogg. Luckily, there was



a knock at the door to interrupt my thoughts. Not being the last man on earth, I said come in. I noted that the shape implanted on the frosted glass window was one of the few that threatened to defrost it. Bjo came in.

"Rich," she said, before she'd hardly gotten thru the door, "there was a big box delivered to you..." she stopped. "What on earth happened to the office?" she asked.

"It's gone," I said. "They came for everything this morning. The chairs, except for this one, the desks, the wall-to-wall 100% silk rug, everything. They even took the bar, and that hurt most of all." I stood up, walked over to the curtain, and pulled out a bottle and two glasses. I poured a drink into her glass and handed it to her. I sipped at my own. Then I poured myself a drink, too. "I managed to get this before they took the bar away," I said.

"They?" she questioned. She still didn't understand.

I explained. "It seems that I was a bit behind on my payments. Even the manager of the building is threatening to throw me out. And personally, I think they're being very unreasonable. Three quarters of a year of payments is nothing to a Soanes Operative of my stature." I guzzled at my drink. "And the really damnable thing about the whole mess is that all of my creditors realize that."

"Seems a shame," Bjo offered, her voice poured thru honey.

"It is a shame."

"Isn't there anything we can do? Can I help any way, Rich?"

I chuckled. "All we need is several hundred dollars for rent, beans, and bourbon. I've even thought about putting on a turban and becoming a high-priced mystic. Records playing 'Swami River' and like that."

She made a face. "A very bad idea. Also unfunny. You're just discouraged, is all."

I said, "I'm never discouraged." I pouted, "You just don't appreciate me, is all."

"Yes, I do. So much, that as long as you're taking down the pictures I'd like the one of you there. Did Ted Johnstone take it of you?"

"No; as a matter of fact, it was taken on the spot, in Africa. I was doing some pre-Soanes investigations..."

"What a massive beast!" she exclaimed.

"Well," I said, "I know I'm no Terry Carr, but..."

"No, silly, I meant the elephant. You should have saved the tusks for this museum." She indicated the office. "Or maybe the whole head. Or the whole eleph..."

"I missed."

"You missed an elephant?"

"Yeah," I said. "I'm a lousy shot."

She shrugged, and put the picture back on the wall.

"I came to tell you," she said. "There was a big box delivered to you at The Inn Of The Prancing Pony."

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There should have been an illo here, but the publisher wouldst insert a note instead. Rich Brown, since originally cutting these stencils, has gone into the USAirForce. I don't know whether he'll try to keep up his APActivitty or not. His address now is A/B Richard W. Brown, AF19646261 FLT 627, Box 1501, Lackland AFB Texas. Be it noted. --Taj

Berry's already there, but when I left he was bickering with Pelz, Pfeifer and Lichtman, over their right to open it. I don't know how important it is as a clue, but I thought I'd better get up here and tell you."

"Good girl," I said. "It's pretty obvious that it's important, or they wouldn't be wasting their time with it."

"That's true, too," she observed.

"Tell you what," I said. "I've got a couple of things to attend to, here, so you go down and keep an eye on my package."

"Yessir," she said, but as she turned to go I latched onto her arm, pulled her to me, and kissed her. She looked at me in surprise.

"Isn't that what us defectives are supposed to do?" I asked. "It's part of the plot you know." She didn't look convinced, so I kissed her again. She still didn't look convinced.

"Besides," I added hopefully, "you remind me of my niece."

And I kissed her again.

And the hell with the plot-line.....

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On the way to the Inn I bumped into Wrai Ballard, head of the SAPS (Shhh!) Secret Police. After we picked ourselves up, we got to talking about the case.

I remember, because he said, "If you're really going to find out who has control of Squink Blogg, you're going to have to find out who Squink Blogg is, first."

"But my dear man," I replied, "I already know who Squink Blogg really is. The only obvious answer."

He looked somewhat flabbergasted. "Who?" he asked, quiveringly.

"Squink Blogg."

"Yes," he said, "Who is he?"

"I just told you. Squink Blogg is Squink Blogg."

Then he smiled at me, knowingly. "You really haven't been in SAPS long, Rich," he said, "so I won't hold this against you because of it. But it's a well-known fact that Squink Blogg is a pen name; probably for one of the Seattle people."

"Oh, is it now?" I asked, giving him my knowing look. "Is it really a well-known fact or is it just the impression they're trying to give us? Is Squink Blogg a pen name for one of the Seattle people, a supposed monster around which may be built all sorts of funny talk, jokes, poems, and the like? Or is that all a front, have the Seattle-ites been hiding this creature from god-knows-where, with a smile on their face but with malice in their hearts? I say, Squink Blogg is Squink Blogg!"

"And I think I know their purpose. And I tell you, Wrai, with tears in my eyes I tell you, for I'm partly to blame."

"Long ago, when fandom was but an infant and CRY was just nearing it's prime, there appeared on the scene Bill Meyers, a fan who contributed greatly to the CRY. His purpose, he said, was to



take over the magazine. It was but a passing remark, but like so many passing remarks in fandom, it became well-known. Others, myself included (in fact, Es Adams and I were the first after Meyers) continued with that aim. Eventually, of course, CRY took us over, and we continued as slaves to Its will. But it was this remark and the others that followed that caused the Seattle people to turn outward, to search for power..they wanted something to take over. Of course, that thing was SAPS. Only they set to with a will; and, I might add, with Squink Blogg."

"But-but..." Wrai but-butted, "Weber swore to me that Squink Blogg was a pen name."

"And Weber is to be trusted; however, I don't think Weber knows. Nor, for that matter, does Blotto Otto; they've both been convinced that it's a joke. And a good thing, too; if they ever suspected, I shudder to think what might happen to them. The Busby's and Toskey (and you notice who have been our OE's recently?) are greedy for power; they won't share it unless they have to. I think, though, the dam has finally broken; something has happened. Possibly Squink Blogg decided to strike out on Its own; I doubt that myself, but it's a possibility and must be taken into consideration. On the other hand, and more possibly, someone has taken over Squink Blogg - possibly one of the Seattle-ites breaking away from the rest, or possibly someone else. I don't know for sure. But there's a package at The Inn Of The Prancing Pony that will, if my hopes are fulfilled, prove my point and possibly solve my problem."

Wrai looked somewhat skeptical, but he was going my way anyway, so he came along.

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Ted Johnstone, my self-appointed Right Hand Man, departed from the small crowd gathered around the box and came over to me. "Otto, Bjo, Lar', Bob and I have been trying to hold them off; but unless you get over there quick, they'll prob'ly open it."

"Good job," I said, surveying the situation keenly. "Where's Soames?"

"Over there," Ted said, pointing at a table laden with beer-cans.

I nodded. "Go on back over there and hold 'em off as long as you can." He nodded, and I made my way over to Soames table without being noticed. He was a sight.

He wiggled his new moustache at me and said, "Greetinksh! I'm jusht finishing a cash. Wanna help? Help's you thinkle..thinkle, little star, except February an' it don't."

"Brother," I said, "you look like that case has just about finished you. Your eyes look horrible."

"Hah! Nothing..I said, that's nothing! You should see them from the inside!"

I didn't have much of a chance to talk with Soames because Ted Johnstone came running up.

"You'd better get over there, Rich," he said, "I think Bob Lichtman is breaking up?"

"How so?" -- I guess I felt like Charlie Chan, or something.

"Well, he's been helping us keep hands off the box. But he's also a Goon Operative and everytime Berry tells him to do something, he starts twitching all over from indecision. Also, he's a LNF; and I think he's thinking maybe he should be investigating the case for them."

"Mighod." I said. But it was for the best. I picked up a



spoon and a glass and cleverly clanged them together. All eyes were on me. Silence. I calmly lit a cigarette. It flared beautifully. Damn, wrong end again. I knew I'd get it some day, tho. Then, tongues flickered and I was nearly singed by the blaze of words that spewed forth from the various SAPSmembers.

"What's in the box..." Eva Firestone,

"We were going to open..." Bob Leman

"You said you were..." Lynn Hickman

"I still contend..." Coswal.

"You wanna buy some feelthy prozines?" Big Hearted Howard

"We thought you were..." John Berry.

I held up my hand.

"Hey, hey," I said, "let's have some silence." Everybody kindof slowed down a bit. It was down to a mild roar, anyway. Ed Cox calmly stepped forward.

"Maan," he said, "I don't dig this suspense bit. Like, why don't you open the box and get it over with?"

"No," I said.

Es Adams stepped up. "Open the box."

"No."

"Why not?"

"I Am Not Afraid." Several LASAPSmembers laughed. Well, I said to myself, I'm not the only one who listens to KFWD. I sat down at the table, giving a cold, calculating stare to each SAPS member. "As you know," I said, waving a copy of Wally Weber's CREEP for the benifit of neo-SAPS. "if you read my last story, I am now engaged in a case in which I intend to prove that Squink Blogg is actually controlled. As you know, that was the conclusion I reached at the end of the last case. Now that I have you all gathered here it is my hope that, thanks to my super-defective type brains, lots of guts and sheer ingeniousness on my part, I will be able to deduct just who it is that has this control over Squink Blogg... and for what purpose."



"But who could control Squink Blogg?" asked Ray Schaffer, "And for what conceivable reason?"

"I must admit that I don't know...yet...but I do intend to find out. Up 'till now it's all been speculation. But I think that whatever's in the box will help a great deal." I started to rise, but Karen Anderson fired another question at me.

"What have your speculations been? I mean, who do you suspect." I went down the list, explaining the many and various reasons. I was about half-way through when Racy Higgs interrupted me.

"Yeah, but who's your biggest suspect?" he asked.

A pity Donahoe isn't a SAPSmember, I thought, but I said, "Bruce Pelz?"

"Why him?"

"Well, it may not be a well-known fact, but Bruce has the Power Of Control every bit as much as Bjo Wells and Terry Carr.

But Bjo and Terry let it out, and Bruce kept his power a secret. He just made one mistake."

"And what was that?" asked Art Rapp.

"You remember Blotto Otto's comment two mailings ago on The Speleobem?"

"To be quite frank," Art said, "no."

"Well, in it he tried to compliment Bruce on the cover, but Bruce Pelz, through his power of control, kept him from doing it. If I remember correctly, Blotto Otto's no said something like "I can't say I like your cover. What do you mean I can't say it? I can too, if I want. I don't like your cover. There." You see? He was right at first, of course; he couldn't say he liked Bruce Pelz's cover, even if he tried to. He couldn't because Bruce Pelz..."

I broke off.

Out of the corner of my eye I saw L. Garcone plodding aimfully toward Bjo, a gleam glistening out of the middle of it's



big green eye. I remembered that Bjo had challenged it, more out of the unknowing innocence of a neoSAP than for sheer courage. Anyone else might have let this go; but not L. Garcone. He reached out a big claw and latched it around her wrist. Her face twisted up and she flashed a frightened, pleading glance at me. At me, Rich Brown, who used to like damsels in distress.

Well, here I go, I thot. L. Garcone was associated with a lot of nice fen, but he was also associated, because of its clawing drawings of neoSAPS, with dying like flies, fannishly speaking. Or, I thot, looking at its claws, caked with dried blood, not so fannishly speaking.

I had absolutely no desire to die like flies. Either way. So I walked over to it, tapped him on one of his monstrous shoulders, and told him to blow.

"Blow," I said in a brave squeak.

He straightened up and turned around, letting go of Bjo's wrist, spittle dripping precariously from the edge of one of its fangs. I was looking down into his puzzled green eye. Down at it's eye. Well, that was something, at least.

"What did you say?" It asked, cocking its massive head.

"Blow," It came out like a robin's egg exploding. He/it laughed. Oh, boy, this was comical. I laughed too. And talk about hallow laughs -- this one sounded like a dead man coming to in his coffin.

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I just lay there. I was in horrible shape. I was weak enough just from being tossed through the air. Then, reeling above me, spinning dizzily in and out of focus, was something that looked like a cross between Gargantua and The Creature From Inner Space. It really did look bad. In what appeared likely to be my last moment on earth I noticed that it was L. Garcone. Well, that's



just the way it goes sometimes. So he was a little tougher than I had at first thought. But at least I had confidence.

And I was as confident as hell that it was going to kill me.

But it didn't; it merely grunted at me. In a tremendous show of bravery, I grunted back. We sounded like feeding time at the zoo. He might have stepped on me then, but Guy Terwilliger offered him a chair, which he promptly ate.

I just lay there. Funny, when you're laying down all sorts of odd thoughts go running through your mind. For some reason, I felt I had to talk to Soames. I decided Soames should be informed of all of these developments. Then I noticed Bjo. Like I say, all sorts of thoughts were running through my mind... Anyway, I was Noticing Things. You know how it is. For instance, I noticed that she was wearing a bright red skirt and a flowing white blouse with long sleeves and a Byron-type neckline. It, ... I must say, looked a lot better on her than it ever did on Byron.

She was bending over me and she was saying, "Oh, I was worried. But it's all right now."

"I've got to see Soames and tell him about these developments," I said, trying to lift myself up. By George, if you don't think that's hard, you just try it some time.

"No, Rich, don't try to get up."

"I've got to see Soames," I said. "He can wrap up this case in no time."

"No, I won't let you."

"You know," I said, with an idiotic grin on my face, "you remind me of my niece..."

Poor old Soames. I never did get around to seeing him.

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After a while, Blotto Otto came over and asked me if I was ever going to open the box. I looked at the box. I hadn't particularly noticed it before. It was more of a crate. Only bigger. Not just big, either. Huge.

"We'd prob'ly have opened it without you," Blotto Otto said, "but it's locked."

"Of course," said I. "I got the key in the mail a couple of days ago. I've been trying it on every lock I've come across, including some that I've already got the key to. I guess it's probably for this. I've been wondering... I guess now, then, will be as good a time as any to find out for sure. And there's only one way to do that."

"Let's have the key, then."

"Ted!" I yelled.

Ted walked over. He'd been on the other side of the room; asking Jack Harness a few questions, I think.

"Yeah?" he said.

"Have you got the key I gave to you the day before yesterday?"

"Sure. Right here..why?"

"Give it to me."





He gave it to me.

"Ok, everybody," I said, "I'm going to open the box."

Nan Gerding stood up. "I don't think you should."

There was quite an uproar caused by this statement.

"Why not?" I asked.

"Because," NanGee said, "I can feel what's in it. I know it!" that whatever is in is basically evil...I can feel it!"

"She's right," Nan Share said, "I can feel it too."

I smiled at them; I almost felt like laughing in their faces. I kindof forget what I said. "Bilge," it may have been. They looked at each other and shrugged.

"Honestly," I said, and this I remember, "I just can't believe in junk like that. In fact, I, if I may give an opinion that may dissent, think you're both making fools out of yourselves by coming up with this stuff...and actually believing in it! Mighod!"

They both shrugged.

So what I did was, I went over to the box and put the key in the lock. It fit perfectly.

As I said, the box was huge. The lid was a heavy-looking thing, so I called the other Soames Operatives to help me lift it.

"On the count of three let's give our All for the SIC!"

"That rhymes," somebody said.

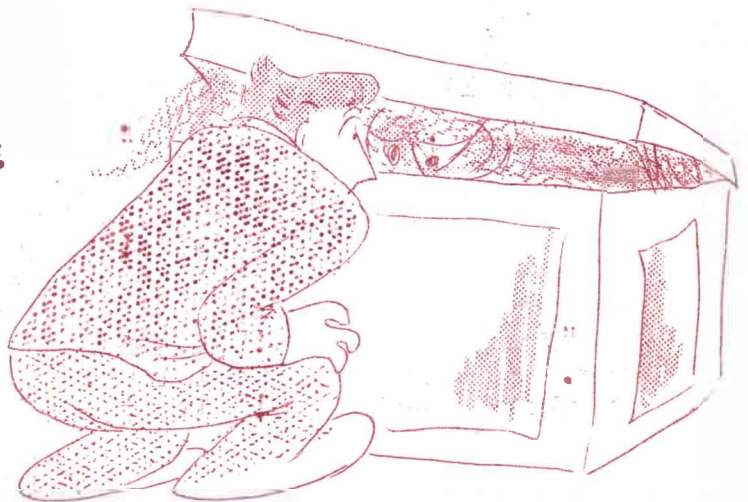
I ignored them.

"One...two...THREE!!!!...Argggghhh!" It didn't want to budge. I looked at the box, and I started the wheels clicking in my brain. I considered the box from every angle. Then, very deftly, I walked over to the lock, turned the key, and let it drop.

"Now, boys," I said, "let's try it again."

Everybody strained. It didn't seem like it was going to give, yet, until, miraculously it seemed as though someone of the pushers had gained super-strength. The top of the box was going up!

In the darkest part of the box, I thought I could see something glowing. Yes, it looked like eyes; eyes that were glowing like two small sunrises in a field of putty. I yelled for everyone to try to slam it shut, but it was too late. The top sprung up and away from our hands...it was off! The thing heaved up from inside the box like a pregnant elephant. It looked like a thin, but overly large, undertaker who had embalmed himself by mistake. A lip curled over its pointed teeth and from deep in the chest came a snarl to end all snarls.



"Squink Blogg!" I exclaimed, and got the bellow of a bull moose in return. The monster, for that truly and hellishly was what it was, reached out a gigantic claw and tried to grab me.

Luckily, when it had stood up in the crate, it had entangled itself, and it fell forward with a dull thud.

"Quickly!" I yelled, "Everybody back. Eney, I want you over here, quick, quick!"

Luckily, SAPS-pipple are intelligent creatures. Seeing the monster, even though it was momentarily detained, they decided descretion was indeed the better part of valour, and they retreated with me.

We were a good fifty feet from Blogg when I called a halt. For some reason, I felt that they were less willing to obey me.

"What do you want with me?" Eney asked.

I whispered in his ear. He nodded, said yes, and mumbled something about quick thinking.

"Hadn't we better get out of here?" Joan Cleveland asked.

"I don't really think so," I said, "Watch!" I pointed my finger at the ground. There was a sound, as of the very earth ripping apart, which was, indeed, the earth ripping apart. Between Squink Blogg and ourselves. I hated to mess up the Inn, but it seemed the only thing to do.

"Mighosh," said Joan, "what was that?"

"That," I said proudly, pointing still at the hole, "is Eney's Fault. He let me borrow it for a while."

It occurred to me to appologize to the two Nan's, but while everyone was congratulating me on the fine job I had done, Squink Blogg, who had freed himself, had picked up the bar (which was on his side; an oversight on my part, I must admit) and placed it, bridge-like, across the interveining gap.

I pointed to him. Everyone turned. And then, suddenly, it hit me like a cat on a hot tin roof. Everything fitted beautifully into the picture.

"I know!" I exclaimed, "I know who has control of Squink Blogg!" Squink had placed a clawed foot on the bar; it gave a very little. Funny, it seemed nobody wanted to hear what I had to say. "Everything fits! Terwilliger got the Westercon, Toskey & Stone had the biggest zines in the mailing and..." Squink was coming across and I was talking to thin air.

"You cannot pass!" I said, pointing a finger at Squink Blogg. I felt very unoriginal. "I know who created you and I know who controls you!" It stopped a bit. "You're controlled by

