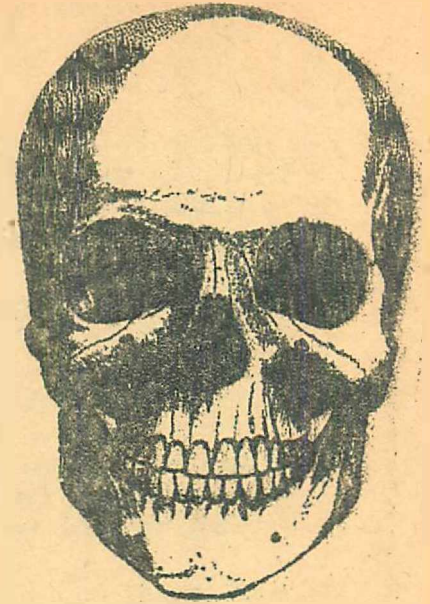


THE
PROPER BOSKONIAN
23



The Proper Boskonian is the monthly Journal of the New England Science Fiction Association, and the J. Mark Anderson Not Ready For Collation Time Typers. The editor is J. Mark Anderson, who can be reached c/o Mike Saler, 393 Main St., Concord, MA 01742. Special thanks to Claire Graham and Dave Anderson and That Whom They Obey.

ANDERSON, MARK: MY WORDS

The pages of this Nesfa Journal continue to fill themselves out, to expand and twist in new and unexpected directions. Here and there may be musings on books or films or fanzines; now and again a short story or factual article or artfully disguised filler. Please continue to send in all of the above (well, forget the filler) -- this Journal is yours to inscribe and mine to pretensify.

This issue we have a special story by David English. Mr English has had stories appear in numerous fantasy magazines as well as an Arkham House anthology. Herein he delivers an absorbing tale (tailing Sorb?) which may or may not have anything to do with Life, Art, and the Nasfa Work Ethic. Read it and see.

Till we mail again...

LoC it to me:::LoC it to me

Mike Bastraw
70 Webster St
Laconia, NH 03246

7/12/81

Dear Mark,

Through careful subterfuge I was able to liberate the latest issue of PB from Ed Maskys. I bribed Ned w/a dog yummy and a promise of autonomy to look the other way.

I'm gonna send Dick Sims the bill for my busted gut. The review on Saturn 3 was just too phunny phor words. It's a sorrow to see that he frequently lowers himself to the lowest of low comedy. About the only redeeming things in the flic were the mechanically interesting robot (for those who are into such things), Farrah's Fawcetts (ftwaist), and Kirk's Douglas (likewise ftwaist). (I see I should have put all between for and those for a better a-gram).

I echo his admiration for Mike Jittlov. There's a frightening amount of

creative talent there. It is a shame that unless he knuckles under to some studio types, he will always have to struggle for backing and widespread recognition. (I wish NESFA had been a bit more on the ball and publicized his appearance).

Thank for the unexpected fun and gastric disorder.

((It seems that there may be a gradual shift away from the corporate "studiotypes" who currently run the motion picture biz, to the wealthy and benevolent auteur school of management, viz. the projects of George Lucas and Francis Ford Coppolla which will be of assistance to "originals" like Jittlov). At the showing, Jittlov alluded to a major motion picture project that he may be working on, and categorically stated that he would never knuckle under to studio-type mentality.## NESFA didn't find out about the showing until about a week before it took place; if and when Jittlov returns we certainly will try to let you know.))

Dear James:

Harry Warner, Jr.
423 Summit Avenue
Hagerstown, Maryland 21740

Apparently I was among the cast of thousands who starred in the epic production, "I failed to Loc the 18th Proper Boskonian". ((Actually, Harry, only about 350 people failed to Loc PB 18. Somehow, that doesn't make me feel any better...)) I'm sorry, but it's only in the past three months that I've rediscovered the secret of responding promptly to practically all incoming fanzines. How long this will last, until it slips my mind again, is too mysterious for my poor addled brain but meanwhile I've been keeping up with current fanzines and even reducing the backlog slowly. At this rate, I'll be writing Locs on fanzines that arrived in 1979 by the end of next year.

((That's okay, we don't mail out the 1979 fanzines until the end of next year.))

Meanwhile, the 19th issue is an interesting one that held my attention even though much of it was about books that I haven't read.

"Aftermath" is a remarkably good story, although the ending dissatisfied me a little. If the author is thinking about this as potentially the first chapter in a novel, then I have no right to object to its final page in this form. Ann McCutchen must be someone who once lived in England. I don't think anyone who hadn't spent years there could do such a good job of getting the flavor of British fiction into her writing.

The reviews of the Star Trek books remind me of something that has been happening in this part of the East. There is no longer any station listed in the Baltimore-Washington edition of TV Guide (including those in the two big cities, all other Maryland stations, and several in surrounding states) which carries the Star Trek episodes in reruns nowadays. As far as I can remember, this is the first time since the series originally was on the networks that there hasn't been at least one station in the area running them on a regular schedule, and most of the time one or more stations have rerun them six or seven times weekly. If this discontinuance of Star Trek reruns is occurring in other parts of the nation, too, will Star Trek fandom hold together with only one movie every couple of years and occasional promises of new television episodes to serve as the binding glue? Maybe it's easy enough to get video cassettes of the television episodes nowadays and the reruns on T.V. are no longer needed, and maybe there's a big enough mass of printed material to keep Star Trek fandom going in much the same way that the Baker Street Irregulars survive. But I suspect that scarcity of televised reruns of Star Trek will change to some extent the nature of the typical new recruit to Star Trek fandom, causing the newcomers to be somewhat older, perhaps more attracted by the intellectual aspects of the series than by the sex appeal of the heroes or the simple escapism in some of the episodes.

((Perhaps, too, the pervasive nature of SF and Fantasy in the media nowadays tends to diminish the initial "contact" * with Star Trek that a new viewer might have. For many ST fans, Star Trek was their first real exposure to science fiction, and the heady, gosh-wow feeling this engendered created a bonding, an ardent enthusiasm for the show. Now, with the proliferation of SF movies this enthusiasm is mitigated somewhat. Fascinating...))

Are we supposed to believe Mark Keller's review of First Channel? This is the first time I've heard of a Simeworld subfandom, and I have an uneasy suspicion that there may be a hoax lurking in your fanzine, one that would be fannish enough to cause some people to think you ought to change its title to The Fanper Boskonian. On the other hand, I think I've seen some of the Falconhurst books in stacks of paperbacks at yard sales, and I know Jacqueline Lichtenberg has been selling some fiction, and maybe this has really happened and is merely another example of how I'm gradually losing touch with the intricacies of fandom. If I'd gone to Denvention I would have probably been asking people to explain terms like gens and simes as if I were a neofan.

((Believe it or not, there are fanzines and clubs organized around the Gen/Sime books, much in the same way there are Darkover zines and clubs, etc. This is what is happening to all those potential Trekkers. All of the above does not mean you are incorrect about the fannish hoax lurking in this fanzine, however...))

The anti-science attitude in the two Miss Pickerell books is just one manifestation of the way the same attitude is turning up in every printed field. I wish I could figure out if the cause is genuine distrust of science or if it's just another variation on the anti-authority attitude which is everywhere nowadays: science is authority in the sense it governs a lot of the things we do and is needed by even those who despise it. Maybe it's time for a new Ray van Houten to arise. Ray created The League of Pro-Scientists or an organization with some such name, back in the years when I was just breaking into fandom. Its very excesses helped to cause fans to realize there are excesses in the anti-science attitude, too.

((Hmm. How about Carl Sagan?))

The cover is wonderful. I have a suspicion that the centaur would be something else for Darwin to worry about, just when he was able to forget the altruism problem, but the drawing has a mad logic to it which can't be put into words but is there, something like the impression that the schematics of an expensive amplifier make on the person who doesn't know electronics but likes the kind of sound it produces.

WRITTEN ON A TRIPewriter
By Harry J.N. Andruschak

DEBRIS #8 by John Boston, 225 Baltic St., Brooklyn, N.Y. 11201. 10 pages, offset, available for SASE for starters.

The word UNIQUE is overused in fandom and elsewhere. So I won't use it for this fanzine, but just say that it is one of a kind at the moment. John collects the more outrageous stories and comments that appear in newspapers, carefully edits them, and presents the results.

"O Lord, what fools these mortals be."

GET IT!

LISFAN ONE by Flint Mitchell, 1509 Anthony Street, Columbia, MO 65201

It had to happen sooner or later...a fanzine devoted to Lost in Space. Available for \$2.00 or the usual, but...

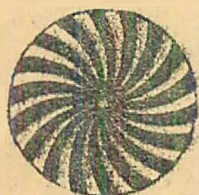
Well printed. Good layout. Readable articles, even. Some very good artwork. But still...does LIS really need a fanzine? What next? A Voyage to the Bottom of the Sea fanzine?

A must for the LIS fan, the completeist fanzine collector like me, and probably no one else.

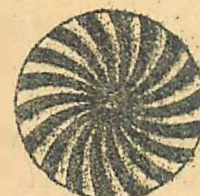
INTERMEDIATE VECTOR BOSONS #3 by Harry J.N. Andruschak, P.O. Box 606, La Canada-Flintridge, CA 91011. Available for trade, The Usual, or \$2.00 .

A shameless plug for my own fanzine. Fanzine fans have no pride. It is intended mainly for trade ((as the title implies)) and features articles on apa-history, A.Bertram Chandler, and the one and only Charles Burbee -- "I Had Intercourse With a Glass of Water."

+++++



THE SORB
by David Allen English



Moved through.

Its verb having no subject, its preposition no object, curiously incomplete, this sentence precisely describes the sorb's translation to our plane of being.

It resisted characterization, the overspace (or underspace, whichever it was, if it was either) through which the sorb had passed. Empty, shapeless, something like thick fog in its utter nullity. Give it up. The sorb's slow senses took no lasting impression.

Arrived, fixed solid on earth, the sorb slowly came into a kind of existence. That was what it felt like to the creature. Slowly a world took form around it, then an awareness of self crystalized out of the environment.

Self and world arise mutually, intercreate one another reflexively--so it is for all organisms. Alone of conscious beings, the

English: THE SORB

sorb, because of its peculiar sensory mechanisms, has direct knowledge of this.

Not that it matters to the sorb, no philosopher.

Kraushaar stood on the lip of the ocean. Far down, waves demolished themselves on the base of the cliff. Icy spray smote his face and the rock shuddered under his feet.

The abyss drew him. Something loosened, tingling, at the pit of his stomach. The abyss, with cold fingers, stroked his scrotum.

Sexy, fatal; both.

He stepped back. Nonchalantly, like a dog coolly withdrawing from a challenge, he walked to the shade of a nearby tree and sat down.

A fifth column, something like that. An emptiness within, at the core of you, that longs to be united with...with....

Kraushaar laughed, sun glinting on big, yellow teeth.

That's only words about it.

Feel it. Be it. But make no words about it.

Words which will only fool you. Always. Every time. He had come away, after all, to escape the senseless babble of men.

The city, a hive of words endlessly buzzing and flitting. They were everywhere, on the walls, on scraps of paper blowing in the streets, drooling from mouths, humming in the machines.

Information. In-form-ation. Language had a structure, and if you let it get into you it would impose that structure on your very soul, your inwardness; it would re-shape you in its own image.

Kraushaar didn't think like that, of course; he didn't form concepts about it, mutter sentences that modeled the situation. He experienced it more directly. In the presence of men's jabbering, he felt language, like an army of termites, invade him and tear away at



English: THE SORB

the structures of his soul and then begin to re-build them on a different plan.

That was what he rejected.

That was why he had fled from the hive--out into the speechless countryside, to rinse his ears with the whispering of wind and tree, and his soul with the wordless rush of the ocean.

As the last inward echoes of manbabble died within him, he turned to his sketchpad. A savage grin twisted his face and his hands were tense and claw-like as he worked. Sometimes the paper tore under the violence of his attack. And yet, hard to explain how, the image that slowly formed out of the jagged, contending lines was calm and clear.

The image of Kraushaar himself, torn and battered by edge rocks and the pounding of the sea; broken and yet somehow triumphant--

Over what?

For a sorb, what is transitory has no existence. Images (but that is not an accurate word for the experience of the sorb) develop slowly, and only what persists makes an impression.

Kraushaar gradually became known to the creature.

Like rich food a starving man, Kraushaar affected the sorb. The hungry man's jaws ache, sweat beads his brow, and his stomach twists drily. The sorb's immediate reaction was somewhat similar...analogous.

They fed on dry husks, sorbs did, on that other world or plane of existence. It was a dying world, the souls of its inhabitants enfeebled.

And the sorbs knew it. Knew that, before long, even such offal as remained must fail.

It had happened before, this ultimate attrition of the beings the sorbs fed on. Soon the time came to move on to another world.



English: THE SORB

To begin the process anew.

Here.

The sorb felt its phenomenal representation changing. That augured well. The sorb's appetite was responding to the new source of nourishment.

For that is how feeding proceeds with sorbs. This mutually arising interaction must take place between the energy structures of the feeder and its meat.

To draw out the psychic energy of the food-source, the sorb brings forward an appearance which will engage the prehension of the other being.

Mostly your soul is buried deep within you, man, crouching encapsulated somewhere in the region of the heart. But when you are confronted with the beautiful and the good, with a suitable object for your desire, your soul, as you have felt, is drawn to the porches of your senses. And sometimes, in mystical moments of deep appreciation, it goes right out into the world, there to engage with and enfold the object of its longing.

As a man's soul is said to be drawn to his lips by a kiss, as in the depths of love: "we two are one body."

The response was instinctive, not a thing the sorb did by an act of will, not a process unfolded under conscious direction. It hardly understood, not needing to, the nature of the appetite it engaged.

Only that it had something to do with the procedure by which these beings replicated themselves.

She.

She was--

She.



English: THE SORB

The woman conformed to his dreams. Kraushaar didn't know that. How should he know that? These dreams haunted infinitely removed depths of sleep, swimming there like weird, bathytic fish. Always, when he tried to draw them to the surface of awareness, the images broke like bubbles and vanished.

But on strange, moon-blasted nights he had indeed encountered women like this one. And he would wake to a dissolution of the loins almost painful in its intensity. But never could he recover what image had accompanied this release.

He moved towards her, unaware that he did so. Unaware, even, of himself moving, so that it was as if she approached him.

He moved in a trance, self-hood momentarily abolished, or at least relegated to the status of observer.

The woman's powerful sensuality formed a vortex in which he helplessly weltered. An aura of power, like the halo of a demonic saint, surrounded her.

Her smile, mindless; smile not of innocence but of what they have instead of innocence, in hell.

Kraushaar seized her, broke her mouth on his. And her response was as savage. They seemed intent each on abolishing the being of the other in his own.

It was more like feeding than love; more like a bloody, vampiric rite where one must rise freshened and fed from the ruin of the other.

But which?

Kraushaar?

Women made that complaint of him. Something hungry and demanding caused them eventually to flee from him, unable to say what it was he took from them, knowing only that his love left them empty and wrecked.

The sorb was in trouble.



English: THE SORB

Across a distance mental rather than physical, off in a direction not thinkable in the customary space of conscious beings, it sensed the others of its race, their dim presence. Towards them, it winged its appeal.

No help from them, nothing they could do. Not even their encouraging sentiments, if they had any, could reach across the formless nullity; only a pale sense of their presence on the other side, their troubled awareness of the lonely struggle.

The sorb didn't understand, not at all. Something was wrong. The process seemed to go the wrong way, the energy flow to be reversed.

The sorb did something it could not remember ever having done before. It disengaged.

The draining stopped. For an indeterminate duration the sorb hung suspended in a kind of emptiness, an utter absence of sensation.

Then, along a fine wire of pain, the only guidance available, it crawled back to awareness.

The energy source was still there. Only now it seemed stronger --and before it had been strong enough to frighten the sorb.

But already the feeding process was beginning anew. The mechanism was triggered on such a deep level that the sorb was powerless to control it, however heartily it might wish to.

At least the representation that had gotten it into so much trouble was now forbidden, inhibited by the fear and pain the sorb had undergone in that form. The sorb would never take that shape again.

Kraushaar snapped out of it, confused. There had been a woman--

There had been a woman?



English: THE SORB

As on waking a dream fades, what had occurred moments before departed almost tracelessly. Some words remained, concepts about it, tattered images; but they didn't seem to have much to do with him.

The man coughed and Kraushaar turned to face him.

The man's lips curled in a sneer. His cool gaze was full of offense.

Unendurable!

Such insolence was not to be borne. The way the man stood, his studied movements--they were a direct challenge.

With a howl of rage, Kraushaar hurled himself at the enemy. They grappled, rolled in the grass. All the violent urges, the twisted passions, the confused rage that had heretofore gone into his art, surged forth, broke from him.

It was the rage of a berserker, of a primitive warrior. Not the frere, calculated killing of a modern man, who decimates countryside and sees only the movement of lines on a map, who slakes his bloodlust with body counts, cold numerical food.

Kraushaar was filled with passionate intensity, deeply involved with his enemy. In fact, he was almost amorously drawn to his foe. There might have been something about his enemy that he loved and wished to make his own--by drinking the blood, by devouring the heart perhaps.

The enemy helpless under him, pinned by his weight. Now to kill him--

The satisfying weight of the rock in his hands. He raised it high and--

Froze still.

He crushed no one to the ignominious earth. No one.

* * * *



English: THE SORB

Something like a high shrill whining filled the nullity between our plane of being and the sorb's home world. Half in, half out of our plane, the sorb cried to its fellows.

They recoiled from that horrible distress. The pain, unfamiliar as it was, disconcerted them. They could form no concept of what was happening. A sick revulsion overwhelmed them.

Pain. Crying.

The feeding process began anew. Unable to withhold itself, the sorb felt another change starting.

Food!

But not food as civilized man knows it. This was meat on the hoof. Kraushaar, unveneered, crouched like a predator.

He did not move at all, but his stillness was that of a coiled spring. Tension showed in every line of his posture.

Out of the yellow eyes of a beast, he glared at his prey. The creature lay frozen in his gaze. Fear paralyzed it.

The prey was something like a fawn, something like a rabbit. "Fawn." "Rabbit." But these were words, concepts. Matters for the taxonomist, a type of mind a million years future to the mind that worked in Kraushaar.

What confronted him was brawn and sweet, oozing fat. It was hot, moving blood to slake thirst, rich organ meats, a heart to be ripped out and swallowed throbbing.

Frozen by fear, the sorb felt its life ooze like tears, draining away. Nothing like this had ever happened before, not ever. Far away, in a world forever lost, there had been gentle dreams and the sweet languor of an ancient, effete race sorbs had preyed on. And gentle dreams of sadness, of ineffable longing and soft melancholy, had drawn out the souls of these dry husks for sorbs to feed on.



English: THE SORB

Here--

In panic the sorb cried out. Prayed its fellows to draw it back, wailing its plight.

Their dreams are too savage--

Kraushaar sprang.

Kraushaar fed.

The afternoon had fled like a dream. Must have slept, Kraushaar thought. Slept? Dreamed? Its imageless aftermath was upon him now. He had nothing to show for his time, it seemed, but the sun going down where once it had been high.

No. For an artist the creations of his dreams are not lost. His hand will create certain forms, textures and complex relationships more surely for having seen them in unremembered dreams.

The inner worlds of love and hate and hunger, which he ever sought to image forth in all their wordless depth, now were clearer to him, he couldn't say how.

And the fierce energy that drove him burned hotter in his veins.

Stronger, freer, he couldn't say how, Kraushaar started back.

