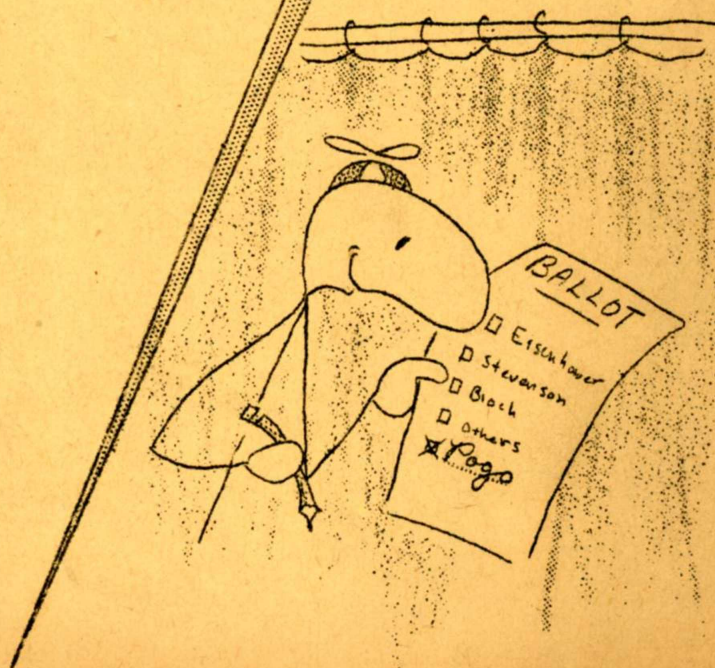


Quandary

No. 26



Egad! Not another issue of..

QUANDRY

the Boll Weevil's answer to Robert Bloch

#26

"Change here for all stations!"

latter October '52

...go west, young fan...

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QUANDRY #26 is the 4th October issue. Subscription by invitation only. Renewals 7 for \$1.00 or 6/-. Opinions expressed herein are not necessarily opinions. You better know the rest.

editor: Lee Hoffman, 101 Wagner St, Savannah, Ga. USA

in assoc with: Walter A. Willis 170 Upper N'towards Rd., BELFAST, N. Ireland



CHAOS

where the editor gathers.....

Concerning FANSPEAK, we don't have copies of it. Try Redd Boggs, 2215 Benjamin NE, Minneapolis 18, Minn. or the N3F for copies. And concerning faaaanzines, did you realize that OOPSLA! the fanzine with punctuation built-in to its title, is bringing forth an annish soon? Well, tis, and if you want to latch a copy before too late, try a line and an envelope full of money to Gregg Calkins, 761 Oakley St., Salt Lake City, Utah.

Got a copy of a fanzine today. A very fine little fanzine that suddenly reminded us of the mags in our collection. Mostly of items five, ten and so years old. Something about this magazine delights us. It is terrific. We like very much, and heartily endorse it to our readers who feel that modern fandom lacks glamor.

Speaking of fanzines, you don't happen to have, folded a mimeoed one, have you? We're looking for people with old lettering guides, shading plates, styli, etc they would like to dispose of for ridiculously low prices. We'll pay money for same, even if it duplicates equipment we already have, as we've friends overseas who'd be able to use what we can't.

Oh, yes, while we're here we want to congratulate H.L. Gold for a fine bit of editorial in the November you-know-which-magazine. This is an item we'd have been proud to print in Quandry.

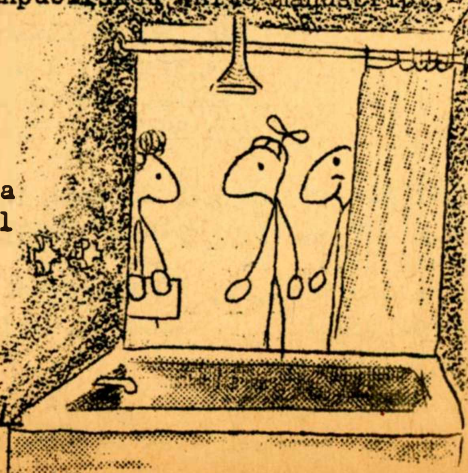
And now down to something we consider important: namely your subscription. If you have two or less issues coming after this one, and no more, we'll put an "x" on the contents page as warning. If this is your last issue, there will be a notice somewhere in the mag. Otherwise, You're safe for a while. We advise that you renew on first warning (the "x") because there's a chance that two Q's will come fairly close together, and if you wait for that expiration notice, you might miss out on one. We will always run a few spare copies, in case. But don't depend on it. A sudden expansion of Savannah fandom could eat up our back supply in a hurry.

It is with pride and humility that we bring you an article by James White this issue. We realize that seldom does his work appear outside of fanzines touched by the Belfast Triangle. But through the unstinting generosity and kindness of Walter A. Willis we have obtained this hithertofore unpublished manuscript, drawn from fact for publication within the pages of Quandry.

And while on the subject, we sorrow to have to report that the Belfast Triangle has lost a dimension in the form of Bob Shaw. This leaves Belfast with a two-sided triangle, much to the consternation of Bill Temple.

"seeded shoulders"

THE SHOWER IS A BIT
UNUSUAL



THE SAGA of a FAN IN SEARCH of a ZAP GUN

by JAMES WHITE

The note-book is pure camouflage, all the details have long since been burned indelibly into his brain. It's an old trick, of course, but if the going gets really sticky he just might be able to pretend the thing is for someone else. Hesitantly, and stammering slightly at first, he goes again into the well-worn routine. His voice is low-pitched, for there are three other characters in the shop, grouped together a short distance away. They are watching him closely, and they look real mean.

The fat man squints at him through the smoke of the cigarette which hangs, purely by virtue of the peculiar adhesive properties of human saliva, from a moist lower lip. He is taking everything in, sizing him up. He doesn't seem to like what he sees very much, growing contempt and scorn, which he makes no effort to conceal, curves down the corners of his mouth. Before the first halting sentence is completed he nods slightly toward a dimly lit curtained doorway and interrupts with a brusque "Dirty books in at the back." The words send cigarette ash spraying all over his rather greasy vest.

The tall young man in the sports coat breaks off abruptly and turns a very deep red. He shakes his head vigorously and, still apparently reading from the note-book, starts again from the beginning. He leans forward on the counter. Almost imperceptibly, the three others edge closer, ears straining to catch as much as possible of the monologue. When 'Gun' is mentioned clearly they grow suddenly tense. Then they all hurriedly reach for their cigarette cases. But apparently remembering the present high price of smokes they have second thoughts and just stand there with their hands in their breast pockets, trying to make up their minds.

The fat man waits until he had finished speaking this time, then says hurriedly, "No, sorry, Can't get 'em anymore, needed for rearmement, none at all. G'bye."

But the tall young man has heard all this before in countless other shops. He mutters something and walks quickly out into the street. Behind him the fat man is loudly wondering what the younger generation is coming to. When he was a boy, etc...

He has been searching for days now, and this is the only part of town left where he stands any chance of getting it. Doggedly he tries every shop that looks even the slightest bit hopeful, grimly goes through the routine, and tried again. But his feet hurt, the heat is making him thirsty, and he is tired and wants badly to sit down. There is no way of treating these discomforts in a busy shopping centre however. He plods grimly on.

The next shop looks promising. A wide range of goods on display, even though

some are rather dusty and fly-specked. He enters and pulls out the note-book, which is getting to be a bit fog-eared by this time. His entrance has disturbed two women who were gossiping furiously. Long before he finishes detailing his requirements one of them, presumably the owner of the dump, snaps out a curt "no" and he leaves, ears burning with embarrassment.

And so the search continues. Some of the people are kind and helpful, others are pitying and faintly derisive, a few are downright insulting. But not one of them has what he wants. He begins to think seriously of the idea that he is the victim of a foul plot. Maybe the notebook approach is wrong. Somebody with a guilty conscience has taken him for a Board of Trade snooper and has warned the neighbourhood to give him the fast brush. But no, that's silly. None of the places he's tried had telephones. Extreme fatigue and the heat are giving him delusions of persecution. He leans against a convenient lamp standard for a brief rest, then on again.

In the next one a nice, gentle-faced old lady is sitting behind the counter. She does all the talking right from the very start. With the notebook only half out of his pocket he hears all about the lovely hot weather, and how she hopes it'll keep up as her son is going to Butlin's, and her married daughter who has just got the loveliest baby girl is coming to visit her, and how she sends all the washing to the laundry now because of her rheumatics. Then she switches the subject suddenly and starts telling him what a nice big fine upstanding chap he is and how his mother must be very proud of him. Then with her eyes twinkling she finally asks the nice big fine upstanding and now very red-faced chap what she can do for him.

He starts to tell her but stops abruptly. He just can't bear the thought of disillusioning her after she's formed such a high opinion of him by revealing the horrid truth. The shock to such a kindly and fragile soul would be too terrible. Hastily he asks for an unobtainable brand of cigarettes and makes his escape.

The quest goes on; in newsagents, hardware merchants, toyshops, any place that looks the least bit promising is tried. He is fanatically thorough, but he is weakening fast. It is almost mid-day. The sun is beating down with ever-increasing intensity its heat and awful brilliance held and reflected by dusty concrete and scores of highly polished plate-glass windows. The sky is one blinding colourless glare of heat haze. Any normal person would have given up the search hours ago, but this tall young man is definitely not normal, for there are deep reserves and untouched fastnesses of steadfast courage, high idealism, moral strength, and sheer raw stupid, mule-headed stubbornness in his make-up that makes him peculiarly unique. He is at best only semi-conscious now. His feet drag, his eyes are dull, his actions jerky and mechanical. It is in this condition that he comes to the shop.

From outside it is small and neat, its displays are spotlessly clean and imaginatively laid out. It purports to be a toy and general hardware store, but like so many others in this district the sign really gives only a very limited idea of the merchandise obtainable within. He pauses at the entrance, swaying slightly with exhaustion, and clutches the door handle.

Inside it is silent, dim, and gloriously cool. The place is deserted except for a tall, dark-haired girl in attendance behind a glass-topped counter at the back of the shop. She eyes him thoughtfully as he walks slowly between the showcases towards her. In these days of Government Controls and Orders she has to be very careful. Without appearing to do so, she examines him closely from his well-polished but scratched toe-caps to the top of his slightly disarranged head. Obviously he isn't a B.O.T. inspector, she can tell one of those twenty yards off, but he just might be a plainclothes cop, because those are truly enormous plates he's got. But the haggard, sensitive face, the horn-rimmed spectacles,



the lenses of which are coated with a thin film of dust, and the weaving unsteady gait all seem to belie this. Probably he's O.K. At the counter he stops and leans heavily on it. He pulls out the tattered notebook and pretends to read from it. She suspects it is a pretense because his eyes have a glazed unfocused look and he has been making unintelligible croaking sounds with his cracked parched lips for fully five minutes now and the notebook bears only the cryptic symbols: "Wanted/ aSF July '40, Am Ed." She can read this easily because he's holding the book upside down. Now deeply interested she listens closely as the tall young man tries desperately to force a message from his dried up tongue and larynx. Suddenly a word comes through clearly, and her suspicions are forgotten in the uprush of all her warm maternal instincts. She gives him a quick pitying smile and rushes into a back room. She is gone only a minute.

Between great thirst-quenching gulps of spring-cold water from the tall streaming glass she brought him he tells her that it is a water-pistol he wants, but thanks a lot all the same. He hands the practically dehydrated glass back and politely refuses a refill. The notebook is stuffed into a side pocket, such subterfuges are unnecessary with her. Somehow he knows instinctively that this girl won't call the police or laugh at him, or run screaming. In a voice now clear and well-modulated, he begins to speak. He is looking for a gun. Metal construction is needed as it will probably be in constant use and he wants a good, solid, hard-wearing job, and it must be portable. Accuracy over a fairly wide range is also important, and there must be a minimum of moving parts.

The tall dark-haired girl shakes her head, and tells him gently why he is on a vain and foredoomed quest. It is simply that all the metal heretofore used in making these weapons is now required for defence, and all old stocks have long since been exhausted. However, she continues, great advances have been made recently with plastics, and she can fill all his specifications except the one requiring all-metal construction, would he like to see some samples? He nods and she starts showing him guns.

The first is a tiny thing, with no moving parts at all, the firing being accomplished by squeezing a bulb in the butt. Accuracy and range are nothing to speak of, she apologizes, it is a mere toy, effective only for close-in work. She turns to replace it, and it suddenly strikes him that besides being unusually beautiful this girl really knows weapons. He regards her with growing respect and admiration, he keeps on respecting and admiring while she is bringing over the next model.

This one she has to carry in both hands. He can see it is a thing of real power, he listens as she begins detailing its performance under various conditions. This is modelled on the sub-machine gun, it is semi-automatic, its range and firepower are the ultimate, she enthuses, what need is there for accuracy when one can spray that around? He is deeply interested, but one of the prime requirements was portability and this squat and deadly projector can scarcely be called that. Regretfully he shakes his head.

As she brings the next one down his eyes light up and he leans forward eagerly. This seems to be it. Small and flat is this one, so as to slide easily and invisibly into a pocket, but from its tiny metal orifice to the checkered non-slip butt it has a look of deadly efficiency. Her catalogue of its characteristics, delivered in a low pleasantly husky voice and interspersed with frequent demonstrations of loading and firing mechanisms, only bears out what he has already guessed. One hundred shots without reloading, she finishes, there is almost awe in her voice, and it is such a little thing.

Lovingly, tenderly, he lifts it from the counter. It fits his hand snugly, comforting and reassuring. They both fall to discussing the gun. These two who were perfect strangers a few brief minutes ago, are now made closely akin by the fact of their mutual appreciation of a nice weapon. Heads close together, they talk for

James White (4)

a long time.

They are interrupted when an elderly man comes out from the room at the back and stands watching them. The tall young man, without any warning, suddenly whips out his new gun and levels it at the man. He screws up his face and from his mouth there issues a noise startlingly like three rapid revolver shots followed by an amazing likeness of a bullet ricocheting off a boulder. The man goes "Awk" and leaves quickly.

Having completed the formalities of purchasing, the tall young man bids the tall, dark-haired girl a cheery good-bye and heads for the boulevard, his walk springy and his heart light. All weariness has left him, he is happy, carefree, and with not a trouble in the world, for he has a means of self-protection now. Never again will the others catch him in a vicious cross-fire, completely defenceless. The status quo has been restored.

The shop is several blocks behind him when he begins to slow down thoughtfully. He is thinking of the girl. He can almost hear in his mind again the low, husky voice, a thing of sweetest music, even when she was talking about such grimly-down-to-earth subjects as wind deflection and muzzle velocity. And before him floats a picture of her lovely face, with the slightly irregular right eyebrow and the short-cut boyish hair-do. He remembers too the light, graceful way she moved about the shop. He bets she is a smashing dancer. But mostly he thinks of the warm, generous personality that led her to give him that water when he was nearly out on his feet.

And he kept yammering about guns, and only about guns. Oh, fool that he was.

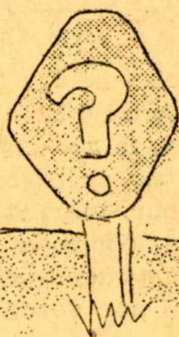
He can't go back now. At least not without some sort of excuse. He tries desperately to think of valid reasons for returning, for now he wants to see her again badly, but in vain.

He walks slowly along, feet dragging, shoulders slumped in extreme dejection, a picture of utter hopelessness. Instead of the weary but indomitable bearing of the Constant Quester of a short hour ago, he now shows all the classic symptoms of the Grade-A lovesick swain in the first stages of the affliction. Even the warm feel of the gun in his pocket seems drab and tasteless somehow.

In a blinding flash of sheer genius the answer hits him. It is so beautifully simple too. A perfectly legitimate excuse that will fully explain his return, and even necessitate his talking to her for a few minutes, though if he can help it it will be much longer than that. This can't possibly fail. He turns quickly and begins retracing his steps.

He will buy another water-pistol, and wear a crossbelt.

---James White



"He's a sincere acolyte of F. Towner Laney."

Land O'Goshen



by Ray Capella

After many long and losing battles with editors, publishers and the like, I'd decide to retire from the natural habitat and was headed toward Oblivion or some such place, when I chanced upon the Great Woods and fell prey to the Fate-that-gets-you-lost.

The only remnant of civilization left upon the place I finally ended up was a sign reading "Okefenokee" nailed upside down to a tree - and the writing didn't look quite for real. But the place looked peaceful and quiet, so I decided to rest my weary self for a short decade or two.

I'd picked out a particularly nice little island, and was about to set myself down beneath the shade of a tree when a voice piped up, "Looky, a stranger in our mist."

It sounded so commonplace, so I didn't do a double take until I went around the cypress knee and saw the critter sitting on a fallen log, fishing pole in hand. He was furry, with a long hairless tail, and a striped shirt. He had soft brown eyes and beside him sat two water-bugs playing pinochle. He added, to me, "What is you up to?"

"I isn't, am not, up to anything." I replied, refusing to accept the fact that he was talking to me. "Matter of fact, I'm down to the last straw. I'm just short of..."

"Where's the straw?" one of the water bugs queried in a thin voice.

"Is she a broom-type of straw, or the soda straw kind?" asked the other.

"That's just a finger of speech," the furry one said. "Sit down, friend, and keep us company. They isn't no sense in lookin' so lively around here." He paused and jiggled his fishing line, "What you up too, may I ree-peat?"

"Down, friend, down. The word is down. I is...er, I have,,lost hope in a future in a certain field and I am about to put an end to a great talent. I, sir, am about to shoot myself." I replied, trying, and easily succeeding, in sounding bitter.

"Not here!?" the air fairly jangled with mixed punctuation marks, " Loud noises scares us. But why in the ever-lovin' is you gone shoot yo'self, why?"

"I..." my voice replied, and went on to relate the story of My Noble but Futile Struggle. I was three-quarters through it when a shadow fell upon the grass beside me and a voice roared from behind us, "What in the foggy blue morn-

in' is a-goin' on here?"

The water bugs were bowled over into the water by the thundering voice. I turned to behold a tall, green fellow with a yellow front and a cigar in a capable long mouth. I said "Ark!" but the furry one was unimpressed by the reptilian addition to the group.

The tall one came tripping daintily over the tree's roots and fell headlong into the water, showering me from head to foot and setting the waterbugs back on their former places.

Now, I'd gone to a lot of trouble, jumping from isle to isle and keeping dry, and now I was soaking wet. I gritted my teeth, thereby losing one, and tried to keep my temper by reciting the first thing that came to mind, namely:

"To be or not to be, that is the question:
Whether it is nobler in the mind to suffer
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune..."

"Hole it...whoa!" a voice leaped at me from behind the waterbugs on my right. I looked. An old flatboat came floating around the little island. In it were two more creatures: one a feathered fellow with a large red sorcerer's hat stuck between owl horns and large eyes peering over a pair of oversized glasses. The other was a small hard-shelled fellow with a red pirate's cap leaning precariously over one eye. As he poled the boat along, he sang; "Oh, lolly was the lemon drop and lovely limp the leaves, and ever earthly eventide, across the evening eaves." The feathered one was addressing me, "That reemark has all the dog-ear-marks of bein' a-creap with ree-dickle-wickle-wockle discreepansies!"

The boat suddenly rose into the air, balanced upon the green one's head. Unabashed, he was making a comeback. Miraculously enough, his cigar was still lit and a question came out amid the smoke and sparks, "Whuffo the discreepanties?"

"Here now," the furry one interjected "Careful. We is supposed to be the clean-cut type."

The feathered one was out of the picture yet. He leaned over the boat's side and went on, "Fust, whuffo he can't make up his mind...to be or not to be... then, if he got such a ding-bing noble mind how can he be so dumb's to stand still an' suffer all these arrows and slingshots?"

"Right!" the hard-shelled one said, supporting his claims. At the same time, he turned around in an attempt to look down at the green one who supported the. His abrupt movement brough a free end of the pole upon the end of the feathered one. The latter complied by going overboard, his criticisms turning to bubbles.

"You scapers up there gone havta make lesson a ruckus," the green one said, walking up on the shore and sitting by me, "Or else I is gone raise the rent."

The boat was still poised on his head, and the small green one was still in it. He threw his pole away, which struck the feathered one, who was climbing to shore, and leaned over the side. He removed his hat, wringing it before him. And, with what he must have thought was a romantic expressuon he chanted, "O Romulo, Romulo. whuffo the bow, Romulo..."

"Pomulo" came scrambling over the bank and up the tall one's shoulder, in the

guise of a feathered furious scaper with a pole in his hands and murder in his eye-glasses. In a second, the action upon the tall one's head was rathered hazy, as the boat revolved propellor-wise.

After two seconds, the latter lost his composure and looking slightly irritated, he took off, but not plane-wise. He cried "Enuff! Enuff..." and the foursome (boat, pole, feathered and hard-shelled characters) were suddenlike in the drink. They disappeared around the island, the sorcerer standing upon the overturned boat, poling his way after his former supporter, who swam for the horizon.

"I don't mind the sweeps of action," said the green one, gesturing broadly, "But the dialogue---ugh!"

"They is Okayfenokee," said the furred one "...in their own uncanny little ways" He turned back to me, "You were saying....?"

"If I had a thousand or three, " I replied, "I'd be able to get loaded...or maybe buy a cannon and part with this world."

"Does you mean you gone get loaded with thousands of them?" The tall one ejaculated, looking faint, "I should think it's bad enuff with two of 'm 'round."

"I meant money!" I shot back, looking faint also at his thought, "Not those two! I meant money!"

"Whuffo?" the furred one queried, "Who wants money in this vale of tears?"

"I do!" I said, exasperated, then changed the subject with an observation "I don't see your friends anymore..."

"If you mean the water family," he replied, "they is gone home. Went when the goin's-on started. I is leavin' too...no bait on my line...want to come 'long and have lunch?"

"At this time?" I looked at my timepiece, "It's supertime!"

"Man, you gone argue about the time?" the tall one scowled. He already had the furry one under his arm and was hopping carefully from hummock to hummock, "We'll have a supper-sized lunch, natural."

Lunch awaited in a large clearing, where a picnic table was all ready. News seemed to travel fast, for the furry one had three times the guests he had bargained for, including the discrepant pair of waterbugs, who sat opposite each other and made faces. The assortment of critters at that table was incredible, not to mention the dialogue and goings-on. But the lunch was interesting and filling.

There was, however, a strange figure roaming the outskirts of the table, pencil and drawing pad in hand. He kept looking at the characters who were busy having lunch, and making notes. It was slightly annoying. But he turned out to be a pleasant young fellow with a mustache and an interesting skill in the field of doodling. In fact he makes periodical visits to this place, in search of some uncanny form of art which I have not yet discovered. However, it is through him that I get my material to my agent...

....For you see, I'm staying here. This is the life for a Noble Heart that asks little of Life, Who Asks But A Pleasant Place To Dwell. And I is change my mind 'bout what I is want. Alone, unaided, this Loyal Fellow remains to scratch out a happy living down here. The only thing in life that bothers me is the way that stranger paints me. That ghastly, orange color! How could he.....

---Ray Capella

"And she was on roller skates!"



Harlan Ellison,
12701 Shaker Blvd.
Apt 616
Cleveland 20, Ohio,

Usurption, usurption!

I've always known la femme Hoffman was a hack. I've even realized the fact that Bob Tucker is but a pen-name for her voluminous pro writings which she refuses to admit ((well, would anyone willingly admit it?)). But when ~~sh~~ comes right down to blatantly swiping a man's saying from under his breath, then the time comes for rebellion, for admonishment, for a damned good cuss word session to tell you in no uncertain terms that as once a full and outright revelation and acknowledgement of the origin of the word used in Q numerous times in ish number 23 belongs to on one byt Harlan Ellison, boy faaan. That word is "birdbath". Spelled b-i-r-d-b-a-t-h, it is the property and has been propounded by, that sterling young fan now making a name for himself (what a name!)((What, a name?)) in the fan ranks. That fan's name is H-a-a-r-l-a-n E-l-l-i-s-o-n. This is often refered to and assumed to be synonymous with s-c-r-e-w-b-a-l-l. ((And other words which I cannot print as this magazine goes through the US Mails)) This is a gross malediction. It's a lie, too.

Beware, of saying-thief, the time draws near when your reckoning must come Long have you flaunted the cudgel of widespread BNF connections in the florid face of helpless fandom. (hey, that's pretty...I might be another Bradbury, ya never know.)((Not in my fanzine, you won't....))

Until you acknowledge in that filth-ridden rag of yours (oh yes, by the way, keep me on your mailing list) ((money, buy, money...)) that the saying Birdbath (as in LONG LOUD BIRDBATH) is originated by these ruby lips (these here stupid!)((I think I left out a "," in that parenthetical expression)), thee shall be ostracized in the well-lighted places where fen of distinction are wont to meet and slip unt slup ((that's what the boy said)) Corby's. ((You mean old elevator shafts, bedroom closets, and the observation ports at the Hotel Morrison?)) In other words, please give me egoboo in Q. Being mentioned in SF NEWSLETTER, SPACE SCIENCE FICTION, SS PENDULUM, CHICON PROGRAMME BOOKLET, WHO'S WHO, etc. will go for naught if I don't get mentioned in (sigh!)Q. ((You wanna show us your clippings too?)) For who in their ol mind would not consider someone truly BBBBBBNF when mentioned in the sacred pages of the All-Holy Fannag. ((You talkin' about the S-F BULLETIN?)) I implore, I grovel, I appeal to the Divine Benevolence of the Good Lee to mention a poor, ol struggling fan when his birdbath is dragged and his chicken fan shows signs of congealing in her sanctioned ~~fff~~ mag. ((Hey, Ellison, is all this clean?))

I leave you with one thought: If confirmation is sought that the original originator of 'birdbath' is me, I suggest the doubting Thomas (or Susan, or Arthur, or Hyberna, as the case may be) contact a certain Bill Venable who will immediately brain the individual who made it known that he had the word birdbath in mind, seeing ((try seeing the next page, kiddies))

Ellison still blabbing about his Birdbath

as how Venable had to spend nearly a week with me and my birdbath and will kill anyone in the mind to remind him of that lost week, which serves the doubting etc right, Ha!

Yours very Bulbofaggingly,

Harlan

Editor's reply:

Dear Injured Ellison,

It is with the humblest of appologies that we admit we did not know what true genius had created the 'birdbath' as a fannish symbol. As the hekto is the symbol of that vombic ghod, Ghu, and the beercan of Roscoe, truly the birdbath is the symbol of the true ghod, Tucker. And now that you have stepped forward and accepted your true glory as creator and founder of the 'birdbath' we honor you as you deserve. We speak in one breath your name with that of Bob Tucker. Harlan & Ellison and Bob Tucker! There, we have done it.

Truthfully, Harlan, we didn't know you dunit. Tuck, when proclaiming to all the world that he had written THE LONG LOUD BIRDBATH, mentioned that he didn't know who created 'birdbath's. No one seemed to know. We thought it would be one of the lost mysteries of the world, to be revealed in future years by telepathetic rosecrutians, or Ray Palmer.

Hallelujah!

"Are you staring at me?"

THE PLEIADES PIMPLES SCIENCE FICTION FAN ASSOCIATION, INC.

3401 6th Ave.

Columbus, Ga.

Dear Sir:

This year, as in the past, the Pleiades Pimples Science Fiction Fan Association, Inc. has selected a few deserving individuals to receive the official PPSFFA, Inc's Badge of Merit

We know that you will be proud to learn that the Board of Judges has selected you as one of those whose untiring efforts and selfless devotion to the cause--our grim crusade to make Science Fiction a household word -- makes him elligible for this honor.

Congratulations. We salute you for your serious and constructive activities on behalf of fandom. Keep up the good work.

Wear your badge proudly. Display it openly wherever you go to identify you as a Fighter in the ranks of the enlightened; an unwavering foe of the forces of ignorance, intolerance, superstition, poverty, crime, juvenile delenquency, barbarism, nepotism, the one party system ((Republican!)) and sin.

Much good luck and success to you in our righteous endeavor.

Paul D. Cox, treas., PPSFFA, Inc.

"Money is Ghod" "Money is Ghod" "Money is Ghod" "Money is Ghod" "Money is Ghod"

Henry Moskowitz((and the answer is no, no relation))

Three Bridges, N.J.

Dear Lee,

Prelude To The Afternoon of A Con might have been good, and funny, too; except for two points...it was drawn out terribly in spots...and in others it was ~~just~~ just plain boring. Who'd want to go and waste good lead to kill--what was the name of

the deceased? Like Chatteris says, let's know something about the person who becomes the corpse...before he becomes the corpse.

O Pioneers was good. How about more? ((Hear the man, Harry?))

Now, what's this about Mines' quote? How does Q stand on the question of Mines' mags. ((One foot of SS and the other on TWS to equally distribute the weight.))

And now the thornes and brickbats. Is this the same Q that every fan used to tell me to get? "You ain't a fan without Q" they used to tell me. ((That was Q#10))

And so I got Q. And so this is Q. ((Q1 is not Q2 is not Q3 is not Q4 is not...))

I was let down. My expectations were too great, I guess. Q didn't stack up. ((Try putting one on top of the other. They stack up that way.))

But the funny thing is, I like Q. ((Even funnier, you paid for it.))

But I'd like to see Q pick up. ((Pick up what?)) It's usually the same dribble. and moreso. Can't we have some new writer? ((Okay, submit something.))

And I missed Silverberg. Where's the boy? Not come From Eer Voodvork Out? ((Silverberg spends his summers in West Cupcake.))

And that would seem to be it, covering the period beginning October 1st and ending....

Yours, Sincerely and STFanatically,
Hank

"Look out, Max, don't step in the punch."

MISSOURI SCIENCE-FANTASY LEAGUE

Dear Lee,

I have been appointed spokesman for the Missouri Science-Fantasy League, the purpose of thos newly organized fan club is to organize and represent fandom in the state of Missouri and neighboring states, to a greater degree, in the stf world.

Membership in the Missouri S-F League is open to all residents of Missouri, and neighboring states, regardless of race, color, creed, age, or sex.

We are now in the organizing stage and are compiling a mailing list of prospective members that have an interest in science fiction. If possible and not against the policy of your fanzine, we would like to receive a list of your subscribers in Mo., and any mention of this club in your publication will be appreciated.

Hoping to further the cause of stf and fandom, we are,

Very truly yours,

Paul Mittelbuscher
Sweet Springs, Mo.

Larry Touzinsky
2911 Minnesota
St Louis, Mo.

"If you step on me again, I'll hit you with this towel!"

R. Douglas Nicholson,
24 Warren Rd.,
Double Bay, Sydney,
Australia

Dear Miss Hoffman,

About our coming convention; here is the set-up. A three-day affair set for the first week-end in May 1953. We want booster ads for the Convention Souvenir Booklet both to get money in and to let us put out something with a few impressive names in it. The rates are:

Full page.....\$2.00
Half " 1.00
Quarter "50

Back cover.....\$3.50
Inside back cover..... 2.50

(con't over)

A. D. Nicholson (2)

Last year, for the first Aussicon, a number of prominent U.S. fans took space for greetings or adverts for their zines and we hope they will support us again. We got quite a few adverts from specialist fantasy booksellers and publishers but were too late to get the prozines, however. This year we hope to get the lot, so fan advertisers will be in good company.

Signing off with regards from FORERUNNER, the Convention Committee, and all of Australian Fandom, I am,

Yours futuristically,

R. Douglas Nicholson.

"We've got three heads."

Paul Cox
3401 6th Ave.
Columbus, Ga.

Dear Lee:

Got the 23rd Q This is a tremendous improvement over the last issue and almost up there with the better issues of the past. A fine litho interior. Warth still interested enough to do artwork for the fanzines? Old fans never die... ((How could they?))

Interesting contents page. You really know you got a fine fanzine when you read the contents page carefully...it's darn near as good (sometimes better) than most other items in the mag. Read Chaos...strained my eyes hunting my name...What? No mention? That will never do. I must do something really big. Clean. Then I'll be mentioned in all the fanzines. Could wash an elephant like Max Keasler suggested, I guess.

Not bad. Not bad at all but still the poorest item in the issue was the longest. I enjoyed Elsberry's "story" well but it was a far cry from what he could have done. I was looking forward to a factual article on the convention ((In Quandry???)) and comes slightly strained funny stuff. Elsberry is one of the best sf factual con reporters--with one defect---he plays up the sordid side a bit heavily. Nothing wrong with this reporting of drinking and going to bed and that stuff...I got a bang out of it but Rich does spread that facet a little thick. Anyway he coulda done better with a fact article.

Liked everything else equally almost with Tucker's "Truth and Consequences" holding a slight edge. Warner's "O Pioneers" was the sort of serious fan article that I really like...something about fans. Laughed and laughed at "Consequences". Our boy Tucker said that and it mighty entertainingly, too.

JT's "Talked with God" was very good. Just good in spots and almost brilliant in a couple of places. I especially liked all those books named BIRDBATH something or other. Good article.

Just noticed the helicopter beanies on the busts in fandom's hall of fame... Hah! Did Art Rapp introduce the helicopter beanie...George Young maybe. His bust should go into the Hall of fame. He changed fandom; introduced the stereotyped fannish character; the fan is always wearing a helicopter beanie. ((And the pro a \$ beanie)) Which makes me think; that tradition should be preserved. The beanie should as much as possible, always appear in fannish cartoons. Twenty five years from now fan historians will be writing learned treatises on the origin and psycho-significance of the beanie.

Went up to Atlanta last week. Met Walt Willis as he probably told you. One really nice guy. What else to say. I met Willis; talked to Willis; liked Willis much. Hope he thought as much of some of us American fans as I did of him.

The center of the universe salutes you...Not me, I just control the machinery of the place. Forced the salt shaker to stand at attention a moment while Quandry was read aloud.

Ever Yerz, Paul

Robert Bloch
740 Franisance Ave.
Timbuctoo, Wisconsin

Dear Lee Beloved:

QUANDRY # 25 (just think of that, 25 of them and no time off for good behavior!) ((what good behavior?)) received and both contents and discontents noted. My only quibble is with the cover but then I am an old cover-quibbler from way back--and probably should have stayed there. Anyhow, here goes:

Who ever heard of a pumpkin with three eyes?

Perusing the magazine from front to back (which is not necessarily the best way, as constant readers of 8-pagers would probably tell me) I am immediately struck, hurled to the ground and stamped on by your phenomenal memory. Either you are a genuine clear or just plain female ((who ever heard of a "just plain" female?)), because I recognized those random space-filling quotes in all their deadly accuracy. How you could pluck them out of the smoke-filled, alcohol-singed, obscenity-blasted air of the convention, treasure them and retain them for reprinting, I'll never know.

What's more, I don't want to...

Silverberg's article on the "fandom" cycles (ac or dc) is good, but I am amazed that he can't easily foretell what Seventh, Eighth and Ninth Fandom will consist of. (I'll dangle all the participles I damn' please, thank you!)((You're welcome.))

Seventh Fandom will originate in Moscow, with the announcement that the first fulltime science-fiction magazine, AMAZINGK, was published by Hugo Molotov in 1925 ...featuring, of course, THE RED PERIL. ((Leslie?))

Eighth Fandom will have its genesis on Mars, and circle about a coterie ((is that a clean word?)) of devoted readers who believe that there is life on the Earth and that it's possible to reach it just as soon as they decide on what current to use to power their rocket ships, and how many cycles, etc.

Ninth Fandom will resume the unbroken continuity of the past, following the Russian and Martian invasions--which mean that in some lonely cave hidden away under the LaBrea Tar Pits, Forrest Ackerman will crouch over a peat fire and read QUANDRY #75, which has been laboriously chiselled on a flat stone, and features quotable gems from the Last Convention--what Walt Willis said to the executioner, and the astonished quip of the Martian leader when Tucker popped his head out of the bird-bath.

The Willis-Hoffman-Oliver-Voodvorker-Clarke items noted and approved. Actually, I could say a lot of things, but I'm afraid of your interpolated parentheses. (There, I said it, and soon it will spread all over fandom, nyaaaa--Lee Hoffman has interpolated parentheses!)*

I mean, like in my letter, see--I used quite a few parentheses. And in this note, similiarly. Then you come along and put in YOUR parentheses, too. With the result that the readers (you and I, are there any others?)(Tucker)) can't disentangle my parentheses from yours. ((My parentheses are double ones, like so...)) In view of the relationship you ascribe to us in your editorial, this sounds strangely like incest. ((You just have a dirty mind.)) In fact, I'm pretty sure there's bound to be incest if you keep on adding relatives at random. ((We didn't add them at random, it was at Chicago.)) Not that I object--some of my best friends are brother and sister. But I think (Keasler would probably know about this) that the Post Office objects to incest. Which means that the Philcon Committee had better be careful in referring to Philadelphia as "The City of Brotherly Love." ((Besides, Laney might hear about it.))

Fraternally,

Bloch,

Greatgrandpappy

((There, he admits it! He is Tucker's father!))

*Your own damned fault for wearing those sweaters, dear!

"Is Robert Bloch really Mickey Spillane?"

--John L. Magnus, Jr.

Chuch Snoopwhistle,
"Carolyn"
Lake Ave
Rainham
Essex
England.

Dearlee Beloved,

This isn't going to be one of those eminently printable letters that make you cry your eyes out when you get to the ultimate P.S. Saying "Do Not Print This." This is just a mediocre letter of the type James White might write to you if he could write. I have just gotten home from the dentist.

Altho I am of course one of these ultra super courageous types who would stand valiantly in the path of a maddened thocht whilst the wimminfolks swooned all over the grassy sward behind me, dentists scare the hell out of me. Usually I am full of reckless bravado and I'm sure I could tell Kimball Kinnison to stuff his twin de-lammeters up his hyperspatial tube without even turning a hair, but as soon as this guy says "Open wide, please" I start shrieking and hollering as if I'd just been expelled from the N3F.

He told me tonight that I am the only patient he has had in thirty years who fainted when he put the mirror in to examine the teeth.

You know that Walt got home last Thursday? He flew ((sic)) the last lap but fortunately we were able to get a telegram to Max in time for him to catch the boat out. Max is already starting to organise another Big Pond Fund for next year.

Hey, did you see my name on the contents page of Q? You did? Well, somebody not only misspelt it but stuck it right under that fakefan Bloch. This is no place for a serious constructive fan. I know all about Bloch.

WHO NOMINATED BEA AND EVELYN AS THE EDITORS HE WOULD MOST LIKE TO SUBMIT TO????
AND WHO SAWED COURTNEY'S BOAT????????

About Q. Elsberry's piece was easily the best thing in the whole issue. I loved "How...how's the Book? whimpered Tucker." It's one of the best things you've ever printed. "I Talked With God" was just as good but wasn't the length. Jay had some nice cracks though-- the penguin egg bit was neat and so was "Nope, My name's Smith, Oliver moved this morning."

Mr Sweetbreath seems a fairly good young writer. I was sorry he didn't tell us about the rumour concerning a heartbroken Tucker sobbing disconsolately in the corridor, ".....But for FREE".

Didn't think the Squidlies were as good as Li'l People.

I disagree with Harry Warner. Amongst other people I think that Sam should have been included for bringing an adult viewpoint into fandom. I don't mean serious constructiveness but a more mature viewpoint that contrasted with the hysteria of say, Wollheim and Michel. Bradbury I would omit in favor of Asimov. Forry I would credit with the laurel for bigtime fan pubbing. Harry says "remarkably little publishing and writing"--a complete VOM file would make the first seem wrong and, I should think, Forry would be one of the top three of the alltime fanzine space fillers. There is one other name I would like to add but this is forbidden by my innate natural modesty. And, if I may borrow a phrase from Bob Tucker's father,

Hoping you are the same,

Chuch

PS. No, you can't print this. I think it's horrible.
((Phooey to you.))

"Blame it on Bloch."

THE FORT MUDGE STEAM CALLIOPE CO.

Main Office: 96th floor of the Metropolitan Bldg. Downtown Fort Mudge, Georgia

Savannah Branch: 101 Wagner Street, Savannah, Ga.

Overseas Representative: Walter A. Willis, 170 Upper Newtownards Rd., Belfast, NI

September 24, 1952

also

24 September 1952

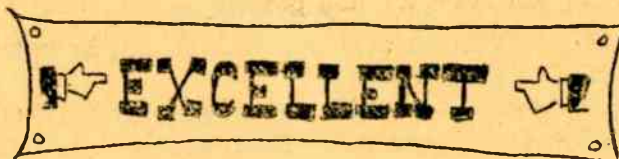
Bulmer & Clarke, Ltd.

Gentlemen,

It has been brought to our attention that Mr H. Kenneth Bulmer, whom we had hitherto known only in his capacity (.000ool mfd.) as editor of NIRVANA, has for some time been engaged not only to Pamela Buckmater but on research into other fascinating subjects such as the harnessing of the latent energy of steam. We would like to draw his attention to the fact that THE FORT MUDGE STEAM CALLIOPE CO. has also been pursuing this subject and has made considerable progress in the field.

The FORT MUDGE STEAM CALLIOPE COMPANY has, in brief, invented and developed a species of musical instrument using the energy of steam, which it is confident is on sound lines. The instrument has been praised by no less an authority than Mr P.T. Bridgeport, who says:

[QUOTE]



[UNQUOTE]

and who is willing to offer the project his financial backing to the extent of several IOU's for \$20. It is the hope of THE FORT MUDGE STEAM CALLIOPE COMPANY and Mr Bridgeport that through the collaboration of our research departments it may be found possible to develop a combined Steam Calliope and Locomotive for the highly specialised industry of circus trains.

The FORT MUDGE STEAM CALLIOPE COMPANY proposes in the near future to send one of its travelling representatives to call on you and discuss this project.

Your esteemed servants,

L. Hoffman & W. Willis

PS. The Office of Price Administration has asked us to inform the landlord of the Epicentre that ceiling prices have recently been reduced.

- - - - -

BULMER AQUEOUS VAPOR CO.

"Damn The Torpedoes..."

HEAD OFFICE: 'The Epicentre', 84 Drayton Park, Highbury LONDON, N. 5.

LOW OFFICE: 16 Wendover Way, Welling, Kent.

BRANCH OFFICE: Rainham, Little Dagenham and East Coast Steam Transport Co., 'Carolins' Lake Ave., Rainham, Essex.

Madam,

We are in receipt of a letter from your concern, 'The Fort Mudge Steam Calliope

Company' and the information contained therein with regard to your product, the Fort Mudge Steam Calliope.

It is evident that whilst 'pursuing this subject' you have not yet caught up with the fact that the so-called Fort Mudge Steam Calliope is directly infringing our patents on aqueous vapour and its applications in many fields, and in the home. A number of summonses pending), and even if you use this 'calliope' as a house-organ, our legal representative, Mr. C. Harris, of Harris, Harris, Snoopwhistle & Harris, advises us that we will have a sound case for action.

We must ask you to cease and desist forthwith from the manufacture of Fort Mudge Steam Calliopes and; "all of any products using the vapor resulting from molecular agitation induced by artificial means to compounds of hydrogen and oxygen and/or all utilisation of the chemical compounds, gases, etc., resulting from said molecular agitation and/or energy resulting from said processes"...to quote our patents No's SFN 9485392/3-4.

We would point out that since Mr Bulmer's initial discovery, which has led to the founding of the Aqueous Vapor Company, all unauthorised research into this highly dangerous and complicated process has been forbidden, in view of possible military uses of these processes, and it would be as well if un-informed concerns did their best not to impede our progress. This particularly applies to methods involving traction and towing of circus caravans as mentioned in your letter. We would advise you not to change hawsers in the middle of the steam.

We do not wish to seem harsh and we are willing to concede that we have no claim on a calliope per se, if it does not utilise Steam (Regd. Trade Mark). For instance, a calliope running on cold mashed potatoes would be perfectly legal.

We remain, Madam,

Ving

pp. Bulmer Aqueous Vapor Company.

THE FORT MUDGE STEAM CALLIOPE COMPANY - Overseas Representative

INTER OFFICE MEMO

Subject: Communication from "Bulmer Aqueous Vapor Co."
To: Branch Office
From: Overseas Representative

1. It has been definitely established that calliopes cannot be operated successfully on cold mashed potatoes. This was clearly demonstrated when the Murphy Cold Mashed Potato Calliope Co. went into liquidation some time ago, along with its associate company The Fort Mudge French Fried Federation. It was found that although their machine had the advantage of providing the audience with nourishing food during calliope recitals, the strain of avoiding the flying fragments of potato was too much for the pre sensitive music lovers.
2. The ignorance of these elementary facts displayed in the above letter led me to suspect that the great Bulmer was not consulted when it was written, and that indeed he is unaware of the lone fight being waged by the Fort Mudge Steam Calliope Co. for Art and Beauty. Accordingly I made investigations in London and discovered to my horror that the great Bulmer is actually immured in a garret known as The Epicentre ignorant of the fact that the entire building is being demolished. (The normal appearance of this place is such that he does not suspect anything.) The great man is loftily occupied with NIRVANA and his multifarious inventions and is totally ignorant that his name is being used as a front by Clarke. When The Epicentre finally collapses, burying the great Bulmer in the ruins, Clarke intends to take complete control of the firm with the aid of the shyster lawyers Harris, Harris and Harris. (Snoopwhistle is a good kid.) All this is quite obvious from the present name of the

firm, for A. Vincent Clarke clearly intends to drop the "Bulmer" as soon as possible and leave just "Aqueous Vapor Company"---ie, AVC.
3. It is vital to the future of the steam calliope that Bulmer be rescued from the clutches of these fiends before it is too late.

Walter A. Willis
Overseas representative

THE FORT MUDGE STEAM CALLIOPE CO.

Savannah Branch

Messers K. Bulmer and V. Clarke

Gentlemen,

Apparently, to judge from your recent letter of the Thursdayth, you are suffering from a misapprehension concerning your patents and their applications. Perhaps you have failed to consult directly with the firm of Harris, Harris, Snoopwhistle & Harris as I am familiar to some extent with the international reputation of this firm and believe it to be of the highest calibre and quite familiar with the intricacies of a case such as this. So I will endeavor to inform you of your misconceptions.

First, gentlemen, your patents are not recognized in the Confederate Swamp of America. Indeed, few if any patents issued by foreign governments, are recognized in the swamp (mainly due to the large words used by legal minds in foreign countries) I suggest that you take up any phases of this which you do not understand, with our European representative a Mr Walter Alexandrew Willis, of BELFAST, somewhere in Ireland.

Possibly you have been misled in your reasoning by our mailing address which is Savannah, Ga. USA. This is for convenience, as the swamp-operated post office (owned and operated by Messers Regular Curtis Chug-Chug and The Real McGee) is not equipt to handle the volume of mail sent to the FMSCC. The, too, it is a well known fact that the US Post Office operates at a loss. Rather than operate a post office of our own at a similar loss, we find it more expedient to let the US government officials who are expert at that sort of thing do it for us.

So you see, your patents are useless to you in connection with the FMSCC.

It is also apparent from your illiterate letter that you are far from acquainted with the workings and history of the Steam Calliope.

Altho the art of steam calliope was well known to the Phoenicians, it disappeared from historical records until 352 bc some years before the death of Alexander the Great, when a young Greek philosopher named Vladimus Steamius hung a set of reeds over the family stove. Steam from a pot of boiling water was sent through the pipes with such force as to produce sound. Young Steamius immediately inspired sad down at his work table and after thirty seven hours without food or sleep, fainted away. His father, disgusted with his idle dreamer of a son, sold him to slave traders and he was never heard of again.

Merely five years later three young Egyptians combined their talents to produce a musical instrument operated by steam. But for some reason the Steam Harp was never very successful.

Steam for use with musical instruments, reappeared on the scene in 157 bc when Sopholaticus II invented the first steam trombone, but since he knew no one who could play a trombone, his instrument was doomed to failure, and Sopholaticus himself, spent his latter years ragged and domed.

It was during the Italian Renaissance that a young statesman, Ludowici Steamia-velli, assigned three artisans, of whom he was patron, to the task of producing a steam-powered musical instrument. One of these, Ravioli Mudgetti, was successful in creating a steam calliope. It was he who founded the Napoli Steam Calliope and Gondola Fabricatorium of Ravioli and Giovanni Mudgetti.

In 1529 young Giovanni married a British girl named Ameria Fort and travelled to the New World where he settled in the wilderness and continued following the

(4)

trade of his father. Around his simple shop grew the town of Fort Mudge.

Until recent year the Fort Mudge Steam Calliope Co. has confined its work and research to musical applications of steam, having produced in its laboratories great numbers of steam instruments, including the world's only A flat steam-operated triangle. But in 1949, we opened newer and bigger research laboratories, and our scientists began research into the various untapped fields of steam research.

As to locomotion by the steam powered vehicles previously mentioned, we do not yet have the facilities for full scale research and experimentation, not to mention production, due to a curtailment of non-essential activities, because of our participation in the war effort. (We are the South's largest manufacturer of steam-bugles). We feel that at present your firm is undoubtedly better equipt for such work. We hesitate to delve into the engineering of a "locomotive" under present conditions until we are certain that no suitable arrangements can be made with your firm.

We do, however, feel that it is imperative that research on locomotives get under way as soon as possible, as we have in our warehouses some 15,000 steam locomotive whistles for which there is absolutely no market at present. We do not expect the market to improve until the invention of the steam locomotive.

We do not wish to impede your progress in any way, but we do want to dispose of these whistles as they are getting dusty and we do not wish to be put to the extra expense of hiring janitors to dust them off. This seems unnecessary and futile to us.

We feel that a suitable arrangement can be reached between out two firms. We would like to hear from you as soon as possible on the subject.

Yours,

Lee Hoffman
Business representative

"We don't mention Mickey Spillane around here."

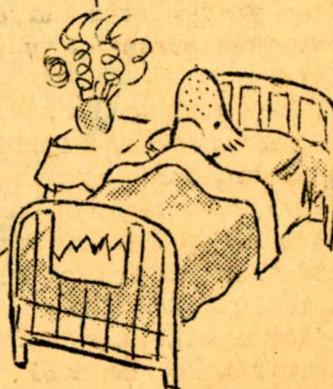
Are you in suspense? Are you chewing your fingernails down to the wrist? Can you stand not knowing? Are you a nervous wreck? Do you want to know what fanzine we were talking about in the second paragraph of CHAOS, this issue? Well, it's a half-sized effort from John L. Magnus, Jr. at 9612 Second Avenue, Silver Spring, Md. ((a Rebel, yet!)) and the name is S-F. Happy?

"Oh to be torn 'twixt love and duty."

Run for cover Dept:

(Korshak at the Chicon): "I'm going to hit as many people at the tables as I can."

"Tucker is ghod
and Money is His
Profit."



QUANDRY

The Hucksters Home Journal

101 Wagner Street
Savannah, Ga.

Return postage Guaranteed

Mimeographed Matter Only

Eric Bentelke

47 Aldis St.

Woodmore - Stockport

Chas. England

