

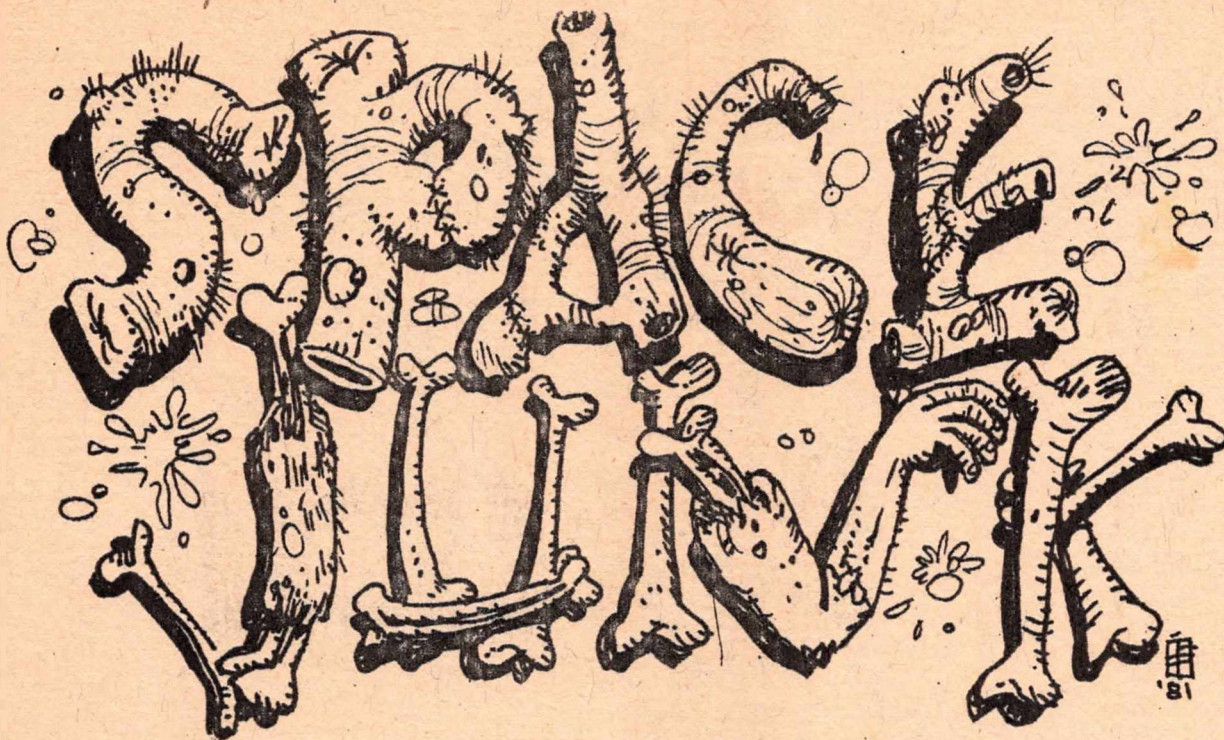


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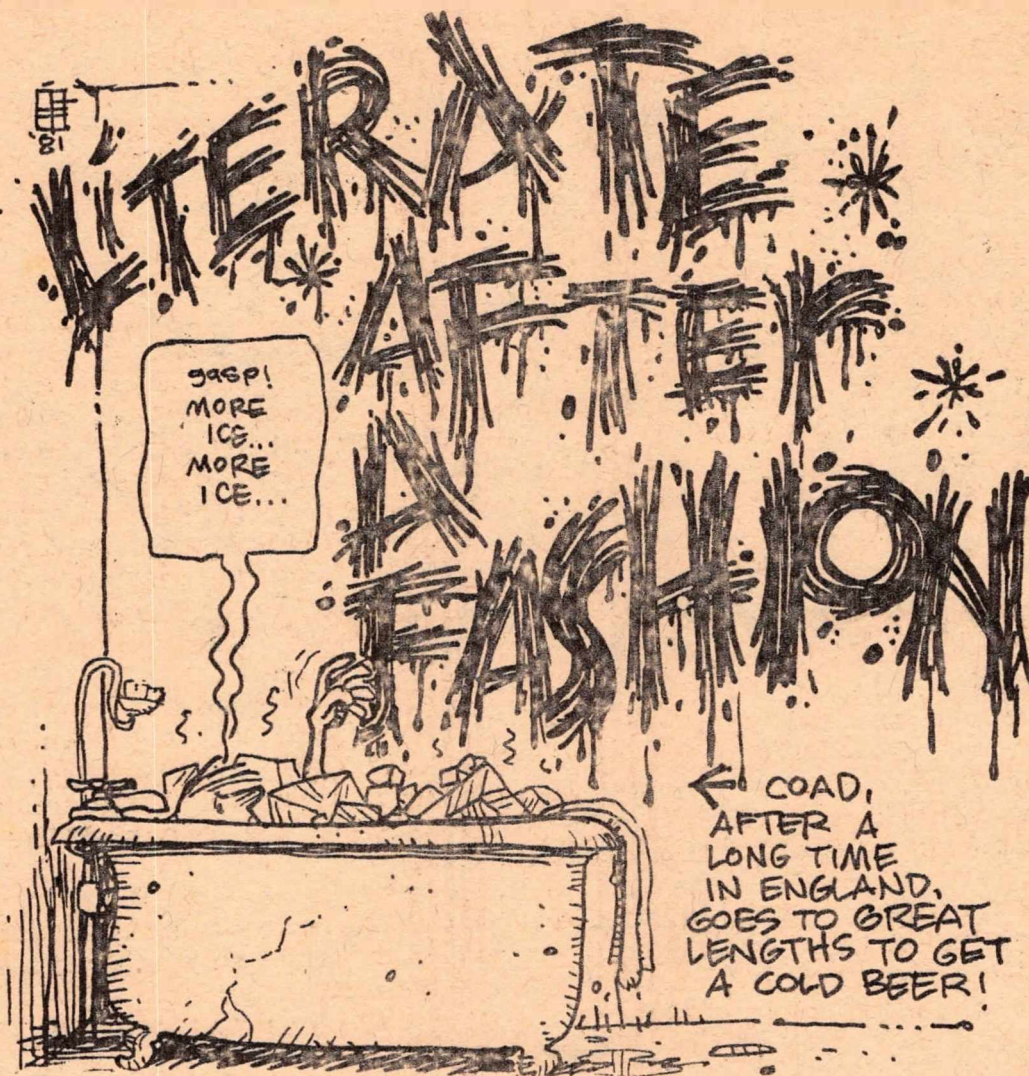


Yes, indeedy. After such strange aeons even Space Junk can return with a sixth issue. This all comes from Rich Coad of 251 Ashbury St. #4, San Francisco, CA. 94117. It's available for letters of comment, trades, contributions or Old Fannish Fanzines. This is a Hopelessly Late Production.

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#### THE LURKER IN THE TYPEWRITER

It cannot have been mere dementia that brought those loathsome and forbidden eldritch words to my knowing, for, if it were mere dementia then that sad state comes packed in malign yet stolid cardboard secured with immovable and unwrenchable brass staples, carrying twelve month limited warranties away from charnel seaports where strange and eerie cries are known to ululate over rife, dank smells...

How well I recall the day I got my first typewriter, for that day, evil day, bad day, naughty day, I also--oh, and how I wish I hadn't--received my first dread fanzine. As I remarked above the typewriter, although of a degenerate foreign brand, at least came well-packaged; the fanzine, apallingly enough, came covered only by a plain brown envelope, curiously elongated and warped as though it were subject to laws of an alien geometry, on which was scrawled a mis-shapen and crabbed rendition of my own appellation. But worse, much worse, was that which made me dread ever again seeing the smiling round-face of Liam our genial, if drunken, postman, for if I should see him I knew my



mortification must be too great for a man of my frail physical constitution to bear. Better though, that my physical side had given out then, than have led me to this extreme of mental distress such that only the urgency of my message keeps my grip firmly on sanity and, once I have told the world what I must tell it, the reason for my doubtful hold on reason shall be gone and I shall slip, blissfully, into the realm of sweet, drooling imbecility, incapable of rational thought then as I am now incapable of hysteria.

For, and I shudder to tell it, those lumps, those inexplicable, incongruous, indefinable, and disgusting lumps actually, I know you will judge me mad but I implore you please believe me when I adjure I am not, for several of those loathsome lumps actually writhed--yes writhed like the ineffable primordial slime that crawls in chaos beneath the ocean depths waiting for a call we cannot hear to rise up from the watery deep and impose its repulsive and ichor-dripping rule on humanity--beneath my fingers as I tore open the envelope! The horror of that squirm where no squirm should have been was too much for my long, aristocratic, fingers and, with a sharp cry, I dropped the menacing envelope to the floor of my room.

Ah, but such is the puny insignificance of the human brain when compared to the meaningless and chaotic swirl of the unknowable cosmos, so incapable are we of accepting that which is so, that I found myself, mere seconds later, dismissing that sudden and awful movement as a mere trick of the wind. I reclaimed the envelope, no doubt feeling foolish.

The fanzine was one I had ordered to broaden my mental horizons--the much lamented Riverside Quarterly. Unlike many so-called fanzines this one was informative and intelligent, full of well-wrought scientifiction comment, a far cry from the decadent zines of today with their intense devotion to fandom at the expense of that great branch of literature which spawned us all. Yes, this was indeed the reason I had come to scientifiction fandom and I dearly hoped that my careful and deep critical comments would find favor and I would find myself quickly drawn to the heaving and passionate bosom of scientifiction knowledge where controversies have roiled since time began. Yes, such was my dream.

It was not, however, to be. For there are forces loose in the universe, forces that even a time-binding, tendril-headed fan of scientifiction (with broad mental-horizons) cannot compete. And, to my horror, I now know that one such inchoate burbling force came from out of the very fanzine I then beheld, the fanzine that had somehow quietly rent the very fabric of Time and Space and loosed the hideous and unstoppable Spirit of Fandom upon me.

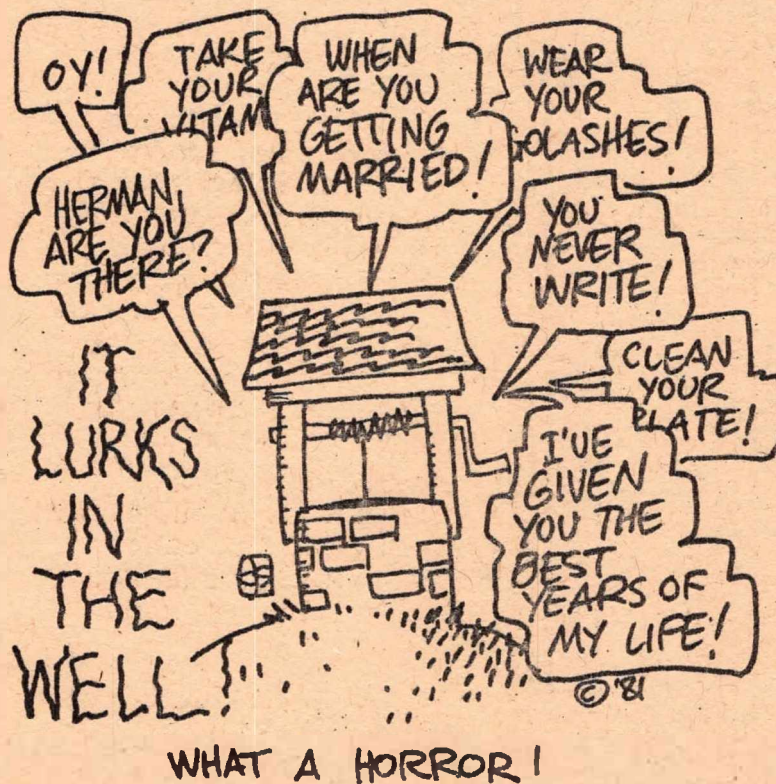
It might have been decades before I realized such horror was surrounding me as the Spirit of Fandom possesses and deludes its victims with a diabolical insidiousness unknown to mankind but privy to insurance salesmen. With deception, self-delusion and hypnotic powers the Spirit works and, as one types out careful treatises on the use of semicolons in Dhalgren and re-reads the



same words one has written, a subtle and frightening transformation takes place: although one has written articles full of meaning and import what others behold is too awful to describe. Incisive comments become a jumbled collection of mindless gibberish, impossibly arcane phrases like "That's not too many," and "Who sawed Courtney's boat," appear throughout the manuscript, bad puns abound, sex is mentioned with less than revulsion, all in all one's high-minded vision of a perfect world brought about by a perfected scientifiction are mocked and riddled and ridiculed by persiflage, badinage, raconteurism, turlupinade and bibulousness. And the writer is powerless to prevent this abortion for he sees it not! The insidious Spirit veils one's eyes to make one see only truly mind-expanding scientifictional articles that are important, you bet.

I know that this is so. I know now that those repulsive, squirming lumps in that first fanzine were the physical manifestation of the Spirit of Fandom. I know now, though it is difficult to comprehend even with my enlarged mental horizons, that these charnel creatures inhabited and possessed my new typewriter. I know now that the serious scientifiction fanzine I have been producing for these past four years has been warped and redone into an appalling travesty mentioning Beckett and Faulkner and Dick and ignoring Norman and Spinrad and Ellison. I know this now for that veil was lifted, I know not how, and there on my typewriter was the stencil. AND I SAW THOSE WORDS ALMOST TOO REPELLANT TO MENTION, THOSE BLOOD\*CURDLING, AWFUL AND ELDRITCH WORDS, I SAW THEM THERE BEFORE ME: SPACE JUNK SIX, THE LOVE-CRAFT ISSUE!!!!

%/%/%/%



I dare say, turning to page two of Dave Langford's article, some of you will think I stupidly stopped typing at the line three-quarters of the way down the stencil without realizing it rather than understanding the obscure artistic reason for the old White Space. You can think that if you want. See if I care. So there.

For readers new to Space Junk I recommend an effective way to stay on the mailing list: WRITE!  
.....



# THE CALL OF OXYDOL

JIM TURNER

I have always wondered at the seeming inability of the human species to recognize and abhor the inevitable, ineffable and loathsome menace attendant upon objects of mere prosaic technological utility. This racial failure has been all the more apparent since the disappearance of my old uncle Nehemiah Scamander. I say he disappeared, for I will not quarrel with those who say so for they know better than this shy, but amiable, recluse. I say he disappeared because they do and because the newspapers say he did; but I know better. This knowledge--so bitterly attained--taxes the puny human mind beyond endurance. Already the knowledge of my certain and, I blanch to say it, my disgusting and eternally hellish death seeps into my blasted soul from out of the cavernous depths of the unnameable stars and the hell-wrapped dank and reeking bowels of the lowering earth and drives me shuddering to the shiny steel automatic pistol in the desk. But not yet. Soon it will set me free. But the story must be told; I must use my precious hours and minutes well before the stalking doom that is mine overwhelms me and spirits my quaking essence into places no man was meant to know.

My elderly avuncular relative Nehemiah Scamander owned and operated a coin laundry in a modest university town in the middlewest. It stood in a neighborhood once proud but now the pavements were split as putrescent green grass oozed up from the holes. Decrepit old houses with quaint tarpaper roofs where once dwelled fine Nordic tenants were now soiled by stinking mongrel hordes of hairy and unwashed students so lost in degeneracy that they differenced from each other as to sex. Where the old tenants had walked in their tight black jeans and white socks and orange plastic caps and driven in fine elegant old 1957 LeSabres with front plates of fine American rustic humor like "Women Hitchhikers Only," the streets now crawled with vulgar motorcycles snarling unbearably in a shameful erotic manner. Passersby would call to each other loudly like common Italians and intolerable music would issue from windows, harsh and alien as the beating of some Ethiopian war tocsin.

The high sheriff of the locality--well-intentioned but stolid like all Celts--notified me of the vanished and perplexing condition of Uncle Nehemiah. I was shocked. He had been a reclusive old gentleman of fine Yankee stock and so genial an old fellow I was inclined to doubt the supposed Bohemian strain on his mother's side. He had left a cryptic note to the effect



that I was to take over his estate and a certain mysterious strongbox, the key of which he had entrusted to me in a brief and no more enlightening note he had mailed to me dated the day of his disappearance.

Being pressed for funds like most gentleman scholars of modest means my first action was to reopen the laundry in the appalling and abominable student neighborhood. After several days of business I was able to purchase sustenance and attend to the sad and unfinished business of the neglected and mysterious strongbox.

I cannot recall my exact emotions in examining it for the first time. It was of stout steel with a huge lock that would have kept out a Hungarian. The box was old and worn, and covered with a layer of fine dust. It should have been dusted by the maid, of course, but she was a drunken old Swede. The key turned easily in the lock though I evinced some difficulty in raising the lid which was of several pounds weight.

You may imagine my interest in finding a number of clippings from what appeared to be newspapers or magazines and a sealed envelope. I was surprised to find my own name neatly inscribed on the envelope with an injunction to first read the clippings and then the enclosed missive before I did as I saw fit to be my duty as an amiable and scholarly recluse of Aryan variety. I knew at once that some higher duty than mere and vulgar curiosity must propel me toward the solution of what frankly promised to be, as the English say, a sticky wicket., but which my stolid and more prosaic microencephalic stock would inevitably construe to be at least puzzling to a considerable degree.

The clippings were all rather recent things, hastily snipped from their parent organs without due attentions to the recordings of time and place in order to locate them more precisely in our world of obvious empiricism. They appeared to be mostly from small journals and papers specializing in the coin laundry commerce and, when viewed in concordance with each other's presence, presented a distressing similarity in content, surprising in sources so obviously dissimilar in location.

It seemed that a number of all-night laundries across the nation, small businesses near colleges, universities and other impedimenta of civilization, were reporting undue congregating of the more exotic specimens of students late in the night in these laundries. Passing motorists would report weird blue lights flickering out onto the streets and eldritch wild chanting and the flickering of immense tapers. Peculiar and lingering odors would have been found to have invaded the premises when the attendant arrived the next morning. There would be unearthly green wine bottles and the drippings of odd and curious candles with the butts of queer hand-rolled cigarettes within them. Guitar picks would abound and occasional traces of seemingly abandoned articles of clothing not generally of the sort adequate for printed description and--strangest of all--small oblong pasteboard boxes with foreign designs and the label "Mysore Bhangi Dhoop Factory."



It was at this ominous point that I dropped the sheaf of clippings and reeled back in horror. Where had I first heard those wholly odious and eldritch words, "Mysore Bhanghi Dhoop Factory"? Some unhealthy influence seemed to slowly but inexorably seep up from those printed pages and gnaw at my staggering soul.

Then I knew as remembrance blighted my mind. It had been only the month before that I read of that dreadful factory in the weekly GRIT. It was surely an evil and deadly place given over to the preparation of incense commonly used by acolytes of unholy and unhallowed thoughts, for covering the wet batrachian stench of things unnameable and deeds better left uncommitted.

But to what purpose? Why should incense be found in a laundry together with such other refuse as described in those sundry and diverse chronicles?

With faltering hands I opened the envelope. Several sheets of Nordically white good bond slid out into my fingers, covered utterly with the drabbed and eccentric handwriting of him I knew to be no longer present at his former abode. I refer of course to none other than Nehemiah Scamander.

Opening the pages and separating them, for they were unaccountably adhesive to each other in a manner seemingly inconsistent with good bond and reeking of some unknown thing redolent of something I seemed to wish to grasp but could not, I began to peruse a narrative so distantly removed from our prosaic reality as to boggle one less accustomed to unnameable horrors and forbidden knowledge than are most scholarly but amiable gentleman recluses of the excellent white race.

"My dear boy," it began. "These last few days have been so filled with unendurable happenings that I am overwhelmed by a feeling of stalking doom. Forgive me if I seem to babble but you can never guess what I have endured in these past days. Forgive me if my chronicle shocks a person of your high sensibilities and spotless character but the tale must be told in its shameful, baffling and altogether mindwrenching entirety.

"You have read the enclosed clippings or I assume you have. Do so if you have not before going further. These items of note began appearing at times closely associated in temporal distance to each other from laundry journals from all over our wonderful Republican nation. I was struck by their strange similarity and began to collect them and would often discover myself during periods of ennui to be musing over them and attempting to discern some pattern, if any.

"I know that you can imagine my distress upon entering my own place of business one fine sunny morning in the recent Fall and finding similar rubbish and remnants scattered hither, thither and yon upon my previously spotless premises.

I decided at once to put a stop, at least in my own laundry, to whatever unholy things were transpiring in the nocturnal hours. I resolved at once to cease operation of the laundry at night and to rely wholly upon such revenues as might come to me from keeping a dawn to dusk establishment. So I hauled away the



shameful mess of bottles and--forgive me--undergarments, and scraped, with much arduous toil, up the varicoloured candle-drippings, putting as the saying might go, my house in order. I locked up that night with a clear conscience.

"Early the next day I looked up from filling the detergent vendor to observe that I had visitors that I immediately suspected to be of the distinctly unwholesome and unwelcome variety.

"One was a short and common sort of fellow, with a sallow olive complexion I found strangely unpleasing, wizened and humpbacked with sharp, piercing eyes. He wore a faded tee shirt with the meaningless legend 'Plaster Casters of America' embroidered on it in golden thread, and stood leaning on a cane of sickeningly carved wood which he clutched in a hand like that of a big buck Jew. He radiated a sense of great age as he leered into my face and breathed his sickening breath, reeking of wheat germ and yoghurt, into my gagging system.

"His companion was no more pleasant in aspect, being a big woolly darky, dressed in a gaudy cheap manner and wearing the expression of happy, sheep-like stupidity so peculiar to his unfortunate species, that are destined inevitably to be our hewers-of-wood and drawers-of-water. He drew the nictitating membranes from across his half-hidden vacant eyes and grinned with an expression verging on a perverted leer (for I have never known a darky without some erotic curiosity and behaviour) and said, 'Howdy, ah 'B Porkwheat.'

"The old man flashed him a contemptuous look and struck him across the face with his cane. 'Shut up, nigger,' he whined. Anger seemed to flare in the thing's eyes and I realized he must be only a half-breed, as submission is ever the way of the real article.

"The old man turned to me. 'The laundry must be open tonight,' he hissed, the tongue sliding from between his empty gums like a pink, dripping serpent, curiously mottled with great blue veins and a cholericky purple on the tip. I was reminded of the sickening sea with its unearthly and unknowable odours.

"'That is impossible,' I insisted stoutly, remembering who I was and what they undoubtedly were.

"'Youse bettah oben hit tonite or our lawd Oxyd--' A single glance from the old man's suddenly three-lobed eyes silenced Porkwheat. I watched aghast as his eyes shifted back to what others might brand as a kind of normality.

"The blackamoor remained cringing as the old man once more surveyed me. 'Beware,' he warned. 'Forget the name of Oxydol. There are things launderers were not meant to know.'

"He turned and began to leave me, the person of undoubted Moorish extraction preceding him in his place. The old man looked back over his shoulder at me in a manner almost sardonic, but somehow I knew not why or even if for certain, but in no wise friendly.



"Dear boy, you may imagine my distress. I looked up, though it was the middle of the day, depriving myself of no end of good American commerce and hastened to my abode, where I pondered at length over those quaint and curious and unwelcome events which had so readily and unpredictably occurred in so brief a time, with so little of what might be construed as sound reason. I was, as you may well imagine, in something of a quandary.

"Along toward the dinner hour I was sitting down to my meagre but not unwholesome repast of good pastoral food when I was aroused by the sound of someone seemingly knocking on my back door. Wondering who was calling at so familiar an hour and place, I opened.

"It was then that I beheld the most extraordinary female creature. She had great greasy and ratty piles of frizzy hair in colour most similar to that of gold but not altogether of that exact shade or tint, and a mottled half-breed complexion. She was clad in a dirty and oddly patched pair of short breeches with frazzled ends fully as unkempt as her pelt, and a thin--I shudder to say diaphanous--shirt or tunic of sorts, which barely restrained a grotesque set of great amorphous mammalian appendages. I was overcome with shock, as well you might suppose.

"She whispered to me in a sort of choked hiss as she pressed her way into my staid and altogether proper bachelor residential premises, 'Hi, I'm April Sacberger, and I've come to do wonderful things for you.'

"At once, and almost by some arcane means, she divested herself of her upper wrappings and drew me to her, as by some super-human strength I knew I could never resist. I cried against her but without avail. As I gazed uncontrollably into her eyes I found myself, despite all gentle upbringing and scruple, losing my iron control in her hot, clammy embrace. The wet massages of her open leering lips sent unknown and unguessable surges of emotion and uncontrollable strength throughout my laboring body.

"I tried to fight but it was hopeless. She drew me to the cold, tiled floor, crooning, 'And tonight you will open the laundry, won't you please, please, for me, and we'll always do wonderful things together, yes, oh yes, just us--'

Horror struck I found myself moaning yes, yes, I would, I would. I would do anything she said and my entire soul was slipping from out of my puny body into some unknowable and unguessable place in the nether universe; plunging into the great dark where unwholesome things lurk, where it is dark and dirty and old spiders whisper to each other, and I was gone and the world was gone, I had no control, and finally I screamed, and screamed again, and that was all that saved me, dear boy. For it was then that she broke away with a vicious sneer and did she? could she? have laughed?

"She seized her worthless garments and fled my home with no parting word but a terrible cry over her shoulder as she ran out into the night, through the hanging trees in the back of the high-walled yard that is my own. I slowly raised myself from the pile of garments I had somehow shed and gagged as though I had drank in the bracing stench of the tomb. But what is worse, far worse,



and more shameful, and I blush to write it, as you cringe to read it, in our nameless and unholy struggles somehow I had unleashed that which is the source of generation and life!

"Somehow I peeled my hands from where the horror of my situation had them clenched, and attempted some form of composure. What to do? What to do?

"There is some unholy thing that goes on in that laundry, darling nephew. Therefore, I am going to find out what it is and put an end to it before it attains greater status. I have written the letters, done what has to be done. If you read this then you know I have failed. If so, I give you a trust. Whatever this thing is, it must end. Your loving and tender uncle, Nehemiah Scamander."

I wasted no time in useless thought but, arming myself with the key to the laundry, I undertook the long walk. It was dark--very dark-- and the trees shuddered against one another suggestively in an inexplicable wind.

The key turned easily in the oiled lock. I threw on the light and sat on a bench by the wall. It was three exactly. First the room shook and all the washers went on at once, their gleaming white sides shaking and churning as water flowed, and then all the dryers began to revolve, their little red lights flashing in unison, and the building shook harder and I might have heard chanting that began low, "Oxydol, Oxydol, Lord of the Churning Detergent Foam," ghastly white light erupted over the premises and I saw, saw, that which was there to be seen, that which had come when its time was nigh. I saw all and realized all and ran out into the night screaming into madness.

Soon I shall be dead. I care not. He who saw what I saw cares for little.

For there before me it reared up, faceless and amorphous, two great vertical lips and a great animal pelt reeking of unguessable seas and its eldritch and unknowable life, opening wide to disclose rows of razor fangs and mandibles and a monstrous, gaping throat, all red and pink and hanging with strange molds, still masticating the mangled, spoiled, but still recognizable, corpse of him who had been my uncle, Nehemiah Scamander!

# # # # #

"The Call of Oxydol" originally appeared in Hank Luttrell's fanzine Starling around 1970. Many thanks to him and Jim Turner for allowing me to reprint it. And many thanks, also, to Terry Hughes for bringing the story to my attention and sending a photocopy.



# THE STRANGE CASE OF ARTHUR WIDNER, JR. OR AT THE FOOT- HILLS OF MADNESS

CHERYL  
IPENE  
CLINE

You may ask me why I am afraid of a certain shade of purple, why the sight of yellowed and crumbling paper makes my hand tremble and causes sweat to break out on the palms of my hands; why when my eye chances on the ordinary configuration of three staples rusting silently and inexorably as Time itself into the soft, mildewed paper they so precariously bind together....There are those who say I respond to these things as others do to a pile of stinking horseshit, and I am the last to deny this impression. What I will do is relate the most horrible, loathsome and namelessly stupefying circumstances I have ever witnessed; and I leave it to you to decide whether to wade through such a morass of adjectives and subordinate clauses as you have never seen in order to get to the bottom of my peculiarity.

When I met Mr. Arthur Widner, Jr., he was a renowned and respected Professor of English Literature at the University of California at Pacheco. His special interest was in that weird and amazing branch of literature known as Science Fiction; and though I was surprised that this mild professor should be so devoted to the progeny of Mrs. Shelley, it was merely the cover for a far more fantastic and darkly unknown preoccupation, one so startlingly frightful, so astoundingly diseased, so grotesque, so icky, that the human mind cannot comprehend it all without succumbing to madness or suicide.

I had no precognition about the inexplicable events awaiting me the sunny afternoon I met Mr. Widner, or Art, as he liked to be called, for that was his name, in his tiny office at the University of Pacheco. I was then a student in his Science Fiction class and, as midterm examinations were coming up, I thought it prudent to, as they say, get in good with the professor. But I had also been puzzled by certain obscure and rather mystifying references Art had lately been making, in and around his lectures on "Sexuality in the Works of Arthur C. Clarke," to a kind of cult, or group, or organization, I was not sure which, that was somehow connected to the literature we were studying. When I questioned him about these references he showed no hesitation in revealing information about the cult, which he called Fandom, something which amazes me exceedingly as I think back upon the monstrous and hellish events his uncautious revelations precipitated. Indeed, I am not sure that these very confessions, in light of the ferment of agitation they appeared to cause him, were not the cause of Art's subsequent catastrophe.



Art's office was a miniscule cubicle overlooking a small courtyard in the liberal arts building. It was the most disorganized and cluttered room I had ever seen or have seen since; stuffed to the ceiling with all manner of books, learned papers, magazines, student essays, academic paperwork and laundry lists, all in hectic disarray. There were bookcases, which were full of books, but these were obscured by the huge piles of books and papers, most of them mundane in origin, but also, as I came to know, some of a more ominous nature. For they were the ancient texts of the strange and noisome cult.

This Cult, Art told me, began long ago as a secret organization formed to further the cause of the literature known then as Scientifiction. At that time, Scientifiction was not socially acceptable, and those who read it were forced by the narrow conventions of their time to conceal the Scientifiction publications they were reading between the covers of dirty magazines. But from the beginning there were those who drew away from Scientifiction and became interested in the Ghods who were older than Scientifiction and in Things Outside Scientifiction such as sex and puns. While the vestiges of Scientifiction still clung to the edges of Fandom, Fandom became a thing of darkness, obscurity and nameless perplexity, something not easily explainable to the mundane world.

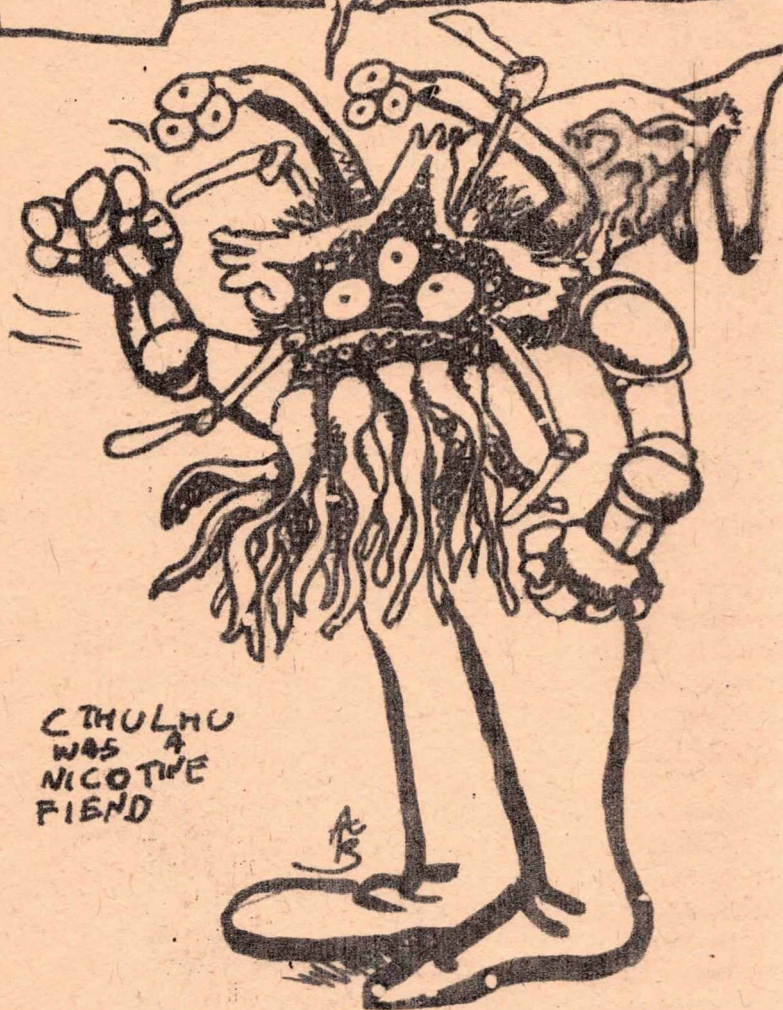
When I pressed him for more details, Art would say no more, but instead placed in my hands two volumes: one was called All Our Yesterdays, the other The Immortal Storm. Their very titles hinted at immemorial aeon forgotten knowledge, and I fell upon them with eagerness. The latter volume proved too dense for me and I concluded it was meant for the more advanced novitiate. The former, however, opened my eyes--and oh how I wish that what I saw there could be unseen, what I read unread, what I learned unlearned, and what I know plunged back into the black abyss from which it came.

But at the time I was insensible of my peril. If I sometimes felt a vague foreboding, a nameless but suddenly chilling fear at the base of my spine, I attributed it to the all too imminent midterm examinations.





WHERE THE HELL  
ARE MY CIGARETTES!!



CTHULHU  
WAS  
A  
NICOTINE  
FIEND

In addition to the two books, Art brought for my perusal weird and singular publications. Art explained to me that other than conventions, a peculiar gathering of "Fans" from all parts of the earth, these publications were the most tangible form of what he called "Fanac." Grippled by a sort of fever I read, and learned of The Old Ones: of Ghu, Of Foo of Yngvi, who was a louse, of Hoy Ping Pong, of Koscoe, of Burbee, Lanky, Ackerman and Willis. With pounding heart and perspiring brow I read of the ill-fated Slan Shack and the loathsome Tendril Towers. My mind could not comprehend the abominably baffling blasphemies written down in those unhallowed pages; there was something about the very language of the Sult that placed it beyond the ken of civilized minds.

Ultimately I learned of the True Fandom, those lifetime devotees who pledge never to Gafiate or become Pros but to always remain faaanish.

They worshipped, so Art said, the Great Old Ones, who lived ages ago before

the Atom Bomb or Star Trek. These Old Ones were gone now, their books had gone onto the shelves and into the vaults of Collectors; but they had told their secrets to the First Fan, who formed fandom which never died. This was that same Fandom, full of time-binding fans and slans, which had always existed and would always exist, hidden in distant wastes and dark places all over the world, even Milwaukee, until the time when the great Jophan would rise from his bed at the Tucker Hotel and bring the World-con beneath his sway. Then all fans would be wild and free, without con programming or hotel security to curtail their ecstatic shouting and revelling in sex and drugs and rock and roll. I could hardly contain the nausea that rose up in me as I heard these accounts.

It was toward the end of the semester, with midterm examinations out of the way and only take-home finals to plague me, that the fate ful interview with Art took place that nearly plunged me



into madness; and which, though I fought back the morbid fever that threatened my sanity, still left me with an insidious and unwholesome neurosis which I fear long years of analysis will not dislodge from my soul. It was the end of June, a perfect summer day, a little too hot, perhaps, but otherwise pleasant and serene. Our Science Fiction class was getting ready to adjourn when Art made his announcement that a Science Fiction Convention, Westercon, was to be held in Sacramento the following month. It was, as I say, a hot summer day, but as I heard him speak the eldritch name of Sacramento, I began to shiver as though the air had suddenly dropped to sub-Arctic temperatures. I could hardly control the shaking of my hands as I gathered up my books and fled that cursed schoolroom. I could neither eat nor sleep that night, but paced the wall-to-wall carpet next to my bed in such a fever of hallucination about Sacramento and such a madness such as I had never experienced. I vowed to call upon Art the next evening, and with this resolution my mind quieted somewhat and I was able to finish reading Rocket To The Morgue, first edition paperback, worth \$10.

My peace of mind was utterly shattered, however, when I opened the door to Art's office the next evening. It was just twilight which may account for the strange color that seemed to lurk in the corners and crevices of his office. But what could account for my very strong feeling, which I cannot explain, that the geometry of the room was all wrong; or the insistent scratching and scrabbling sounds that seemed to come from the walls, as if rats or some other rodent inhabiting the space just behind them was trying to get out... Art seemed oblivious to these strange manifestations, and I could not bring myself to speak of them; but I summoned enough self-control to whisper the reason for my visit.

"Ah, Westercon!" exclaimed Art, and that was the last thing he said that night which made any sense to me. Caught up in a terrifying fit of excitement, he spoke of elevators and consuites and room parties and bheer and poker and masquerades and hucksters, but before I could take it all in, he began to speak in the strange gibberish of the ancient publications, the nature of which I had just barely begun to grasp. "When are you gonna pub your ish?" he shrieked. As I could not answer, he clapped me on the back and screamed in my ear, "Real Soon Now, eh?" and laughed. That laugh was the most utterly fathomless sound I have ever heard, and as I trembled and tried to back away, he grew even more excited, gesticulating and shouting the inexplicable phrases which are so indelibly etched on my consciousness: "That's not too many!", "Who sawed Courtney's boat?", "What, no poetsarcds?", "Rosebud!", and the most insidious, "I have a Cosmic Mind, what do I do now?". After each outburst he laughed, poked me in the ribs and winked, while I began to feel the fever returning; and as my head grew hot, I began to imagine the air in the room began to grow cooler. I could not control the shivering which took hold of my limbs. My senses reeled, when, shouting "Fans are Slans!" Art flung his arm out and knocked over a pile of papers; as they crumbled slowly to the floor they seemed to have taken on a more pronounced hue of the strange color I noted before, and I nearly lost my senses entirely when I saw, in the space the papers had



vacated, a strange and fearsome object, a loathsome hat-like contrivance with what looked like a propellor fastened to the top of it. It was a soft flaccidly sickening thing; but it was the general outline of the whole which made it most shockingly frightful. To my great horror--never will I be able to wipe this scene from my memory--Art pounced upon this object jubilantly and put it on his head. This was more than a sane and christian mind could bear, and with a muffled shriek I bolted.

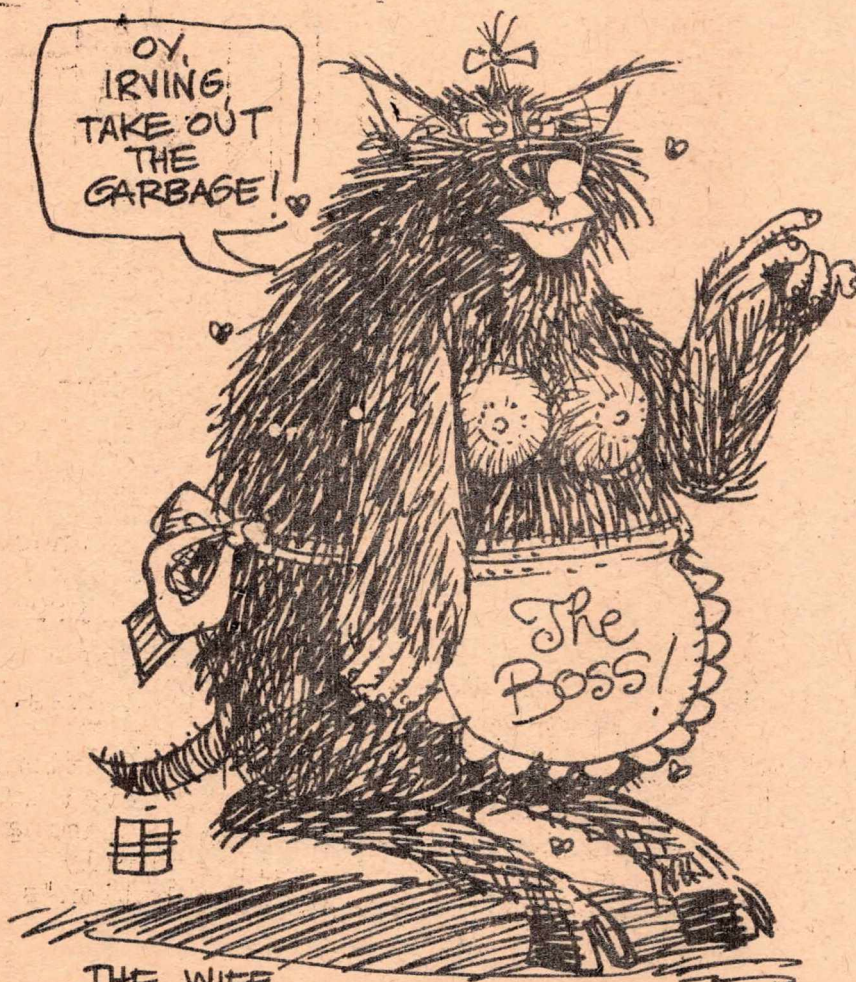
When I again regained consciousness, I was in the safety of my own apartments, although how I had managed to get there I do not know. My fever had passed, but I could not blot out the maddening memories of the crawling chaos of that black abyss upon which I had been so precariously perched. Art has vanished from human ken; his disappearance is a local mystery. I alone know where he has gone, though I shudder to think of it. He has gone to Sacramento, to join in that unnatural and nameless gathering of blasphemous revellers to whom sleep, sober thought and good taste in apparel means nothing; their only object to stay drunk and awake for 72 hours straight; to take his place among the followers of the eldritch and unhallowed Old Ones who bellow and prance and smof around gin-filled bathtubs in lonely places like Chicago. Who knows the end? Loathsomeness waits

and dreams in the deep and Fanac spreads over the tottering bodies of fen. A time will come when--but I must not and can not think! Let me pray that, if I do not survive this manuscript, my editor may put caution before sensationalism and see that it meets no other eye.

%%%%

Shortly after this manuscript was received a distraught Lynn Kuehl telephoned. It seems his wife, the author, had mysteriously disappeared. Tragically, Mr. Kuehl found her several days later when many small portions of her body were found mixed in with the bacon bits at Mr. Kuehl's workplace.

Investigation of the case is continuing.



THE WIFE  
OF PICKMAN'S MODEL!



ABDUL? NAW, HE AIN'T HERE  
RIGHT NOW. YEAH, SURE, I'LL  
TELL HIM YOU FOUND HIS  
BOOK!

HOW ABOUT  
A BEER?



# THE CALL OF KHO-AD<sup>1</sup>

HP

# LOVE CRAFT

WITH DERLETH  
LANGFORD 2

What nameless, gibbous force drew me on that nightmarish journey across the soul-destroying wastes of the Atlantic ocean? What eldritch call from the furthestmost shores of space and time (not to mention the Atlantic) lured me ever closer to the leprous city of Bos-Ton in the Warm Waste --- to steep my horrified ears in the croaking and jabbering of that hateful patois shamblingly uttered by its degenerate colonial folk? Perhaps the horror began as my reluctant eye crawled over certain forbidden passages in the unspeakable Necronoreascon progress reports, where dwelt abominable runes having the semblance of malformed lobsters and other shapes less wholesome to the view. My brain reeled before the Necronoreascon's blasphemous promises of unendurable pleasure indefinitely prolonged; formless phantasms of unimaginable gratification leered and gibbered before my ensanguined eyes. So crazed was I with putrescent desire that in my folly I trafficked with the abhorrent Trans-Arkham Fungoid Federation; and it was under the malodorous aegis of T.A.F.F. that I moved at last amid the polypous perversions of Bos-Ton in the Steaming Hot Waste. And at last I gazed, not without feeling partly rugose and partly squamous, upon that scabrous conurbation's



malignant inner fane --- the unnameable, the unspeakable, the unmentionable, the almost unaffordable temple of Sher-Atonh-Otel.

Ah, that I could forget the demented geometries of that cyclopean edifice; the crazed distortions of its impious architecture wherein gravity itself seemed horridly suspended and water found its level in a phantasmagoric swimming-pool five stupefying floors from the unhallowed ground; insane laughter bubbling from verminous vaults and illimitable mazelike arcades choked with overweight abominations; slime-bedecked altars where worshipped the hideous, exiguous cults of Lichtenberghotep and Emzeebee and fearful Drag-Anne whose works fill all of space and time; worst of all, the shuddering degradation as in the heart of that tainted necropolis I was forced for want of proper food to gorge myself on an abhorrent plasticity of fungoid loathsomeness, to quaff repugnant draughts of blasphemous ichor ...

As the accursed rites of immemorial blasphemy raged on through the charnel corridors of that black, unholy place, one ultimate question burned like eldritch fire in my dimming mind. Which of the Great Old Soggy Ones was the root of this seething evil which whiffled and burbled like some hydrophobic shoggoth through this appalling vortex of cosmic contamination? Could it be the dread Kho-Ad, palpitating and salivating Lord of the Interliterary Spaces and all the cinereous junk therein? Perhaps Abdul al-Pelz, the Fangoh or High Priest of this abominable congregation, whose damnable computer scrolls list all the secret names of a lore too grotesque and repulsive to relate? Perhaps even Bhob-Tuckerrath, the Wrinkled Goat with a Thousand Young, who incontinently wields the power of Beamsspecialbourbon<sup>2</sup> stolen from the elder Gods?

And then, on the threshold of a final, hellish room-party --- in a stark flash of insane lightning which erased my mind forever --- I saw IT and I knew! Oh God, that I might forget! A great mass of bristling, funereal hair that bulged through the doorway, and not only this, but the parting of that hair, flowing blackly to either side to reveal the pitted, proto-plasmic flesh forming that eldritch, hideous horror from outer Toronto, that spawn of the blankness of primal fanac, that behatted, bebottled, amorphous monster which was the lurker at the threshold, whose mask was an accretion of cimmerian beard,



the noxious GLICK-SOTHOTH, who froths in primal slime and Chivas Regal forever beyond the nethermost outposts of space and time!<sup>6</sup>

"Hello, Mike," I said....

#####  
to be continued<sup>7</sup>  
#####

#### NOTES ON THE TEXT:

(1) Lovecraft himself failed to supply a title for this work; but my intense spiritual rapport with him leads me to the certainty that he would have chosen this, or one with a similar number of words.

(2) My own small part in this latest of Lovecraft's 746 post-humous masterpieces was confined to a little filling-out and polishing of the detailed plot which (in folded form) was found wedging a window in a house Lovecraft may well have visited once. The original text follows: Idea: man visits weird city and meets something pretty horrible. Or have I done this one before?

(3) The semicolon marked here merits special attention, being a microscopically accurate copy of one handwritten by Lovecraft himself in his private notebook. A collector's item.

(4) Conceivably pizza and Generic Beer from the fast-food counter.

(5) This potent name appears in one of Lovecraft's lesser-known shopping lists, and it is almost certain he would have invoked it to help him with the present story.

(6) One of Lovecraft's few faults was his failure to indicate each stories' climax by a good long exciting passage in italics. In my collaborations with him I am always careful to correct this lapse.

(7) Or not, depending on the saleability of paperback rights. Incidentally, though this tale may possibly not appear in my coming horror collection, The Langford TAFF Report, other and nearly as adjectival installments may be found in TWLL-DDU 19, BOONFARK 5, NABU 11, WARHOON 30, and TAPPEN 3.

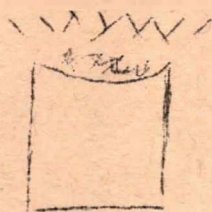
(8) There is no note (8), as the discerning reader will have perceived. But any editor who makes transatlantic phone calls to secure articles deserves to suffer recursion, thus:<sup>8</sup>

% % % %





JUNK



MAIL

The letter column, this time, is a bit thin. Why? Because most, if not all, of the letters were of that anathemic type: comments on the previous issue. How unoriginal can you get. I mean really. I want art and I get constructive criticism. Poot, man.

Candi Strecker  
213 S. Grove St.  
Oak Park, IL. 60302

Usually, the exhuming of ancient fanzine articles strikes me as the sort of Ancestor Worship typical of fandom at its worst. Too many people would rather discuss the Good Old Days than risk creating a little greatness of their own. However, I did enjoy your reprint of Bill Temple's "Return Engagement", which, along with Ted White's letter, led me to contemplate the disturbing question: were fan writing and fanzines better howevermany years ago than they are today?? ((-NO-)) I'm blissfully ignorant of most of what's published today, let alone being aware of the historical backwash, so I can't make much of an intelligent analysis. Ted sure makes those old days sound attractive though. And I suspect he's right when he says "Fans are a lot more normal now than they once were. 'Normal' types don't stand outside their culture and view it askance..." ((-I do-)) Think a moment about the insidious demographics at work here. As fandom grows bigger and better-known ( the result of sf-reading growing more widespread) the very idea of fan activity seems less weird and thus is more acceptable to people of an increasingly normal sort. Eventually -- I'd give it ten years maximum -- a saturation point will be reached at which nearly every young person will be able to say s/he is a fan, i.e., reads and likes some science fiction and therefore would feel justified in attending a con or calling him or herself a fan.

If I may expound on one of my favorite theories, fandom and fanzines seem to be stratifying into a three-level, pyramidal structure. At the bottom is the entry level group: people gathering to actually talk about science fiction. Analogous to this is the mass of 'zines oriented to specific authors, movies or TV shows. Most will stay in this group forever or eventually fade out of the picture, but the best minds will rise, like cream, to form the smaller group that deals with fandom on a more abstract level: appreciation of fandom for its own sake, only occasionally touching on science fiction



when a source of common metaphors is needed. Most of the tolerable people and 'zines today exist at this level. The exciting development which I think is taking place today is the logical next step: fandom is slowly transcending itself, rising above in-jokes and jargon to the point where wit and intelligence need no longer be shored up by references to the shibboleths of either science fiction or fandom.

((Personally, I doubt whether anything could ever appear witty or intelligent without some Evil Thargs and an atomic blaster or two.))

Karen Trego  
2020 Park Ave. S.  
Minneapolis, MN. 55404

Would you believe that my watch stopped even as I was reading Bruce Townley's story about watches stopping? Have you ever

noticed how the simple act of turning your wrist to read the clockface sometimes jerks those little gears around to start the second hand? This is a corollary of my observation about never being able to get information at the same time it happens. It's taken about 1/1,000,000,000 of a second for the light from this paper to reach your eyeballs; the paper could have spontaneously ignited and given you third degree burns by then.

Harry Warner Jr.  
423 Summit Ave.  
Hagerstown, MD. 21740

You sound prejudiced against five in this issue of Space Junk. Haven't you heard of the five & ten cent stores that used

to honor the number in every hamlet of the nation? Or attended a play rehearsal at which the director says at a moment when nerves are frazzled, "Take five"? It's never take four or take six. Didn't you ever prepare yourself for an old fannish custom by going to a liquor store and purchasing, not a third or a seventh, but a fifth? When the Dionne quintuplets dominated the news back in the 1930's, how many babies were involved? Have you ever seen on the late show movies entitled "Six Branded Women", "Six Finger Exercise", or "Six Star Final"? Did anyone ever insist that all the nation needed was a good four cent cigar?

IAHF: Luke McGuff; Gary Deindorfer: "I used to think Lynn Kuehl was a girl but, obviously this bacon bits factory employee is "all man"."; Bruce D. Arthurs; Robert Whitaker; Ritchie Smith, a confused Geordie who commented on SJ4; Lindsay Stuart, a confused Arizonan; Dave Rike; Sarah Prince; Linda Pickersgill; Gary Mattingly; Jim Meadows III; Bob Lee; Livy Jasen; Kent Johnson; William T. Goodall; Jordan Cadogan; Lee Carson; John Berry; Allan Beatty; Michael Ashley; Harry Andruschak; Dick Bergeron and Walt Willis, who was kind enough to send old fanzines. Many thanks to all. Contributors should have recieved xeroxed copies of the relevant portions of unused locs, but they probably won't have due to my procrastination. You will eventually.



# LOVECRAFT & ME

BILL GIBSON

Coad wants a little something off the wall, a little thing for his Lovecraft issue. My initial reaction is, Rich, my man, I got nothing on these walls about Lovecraft at all, not in 1982, not under all the layers of fuzzy slogans in basic spraybomb black, not under the phone numbers written in nail-polish or businesslike Bic, 'cause this is the Modern World, Jack, and all the eldritch ichor off all the bedsheets of Providence is as nothing in the face of the horrors that confront us daily. My basic advice on Lovecraft is to take your Baudelaire straight and take a pass on all that kink shit; go to the source, get yourself a good hit of Paris spleen, and ignore the nameless things that flap their dank genitals in the black and noisome alleys of the Elder Culture...

He feared ice-cream and loved fish, or was it the other way around? I forget. It's been years. Nurses in black rubber suits invaded his dreams, as I recall, tickling and tweaking him...Or maybe that was Colin Wilson. Anyway, this guy's work abounds with "feminine landscapes", hillocks and mounts with holes in them, and, if you're unlucky enough to find your way down one of these things, you'll find, too late, that it's full of rats, it's all damp and icky there, the very fabric of reality breaks down, down there, and it's just a burbling, bubbling chaos, where things with big feet dance to the music of madness, all burning-churning fishy-nasty...

I think I was about fourteen when I discovered Lovecraft. In those days, he was a truly esoteric taste. I found a hardcover of THE OUTSIDER or something, not Arkham House but some obscure New York publisher. And, in all fairness, it scared the shit out of me. In those days, HPL wasn't in print. It was all small press. Howard, too. The other night I went to a party and there were people wearing black nylon Cat hats, except the embroidered patch said LOVECRAFT instead of PETERBILT or whatever. (Now that's really frightening, but in a whole other way.) Today you can buy Lovecraft like candy; you don't have to send off to Sauk City for creepy little brochures. It must take a lot of the thrill away. You kids don't know what you're missing. The Golden Age of Sexual Paranoia is past, and HPL's just another taste in the wire rack at Safeway...

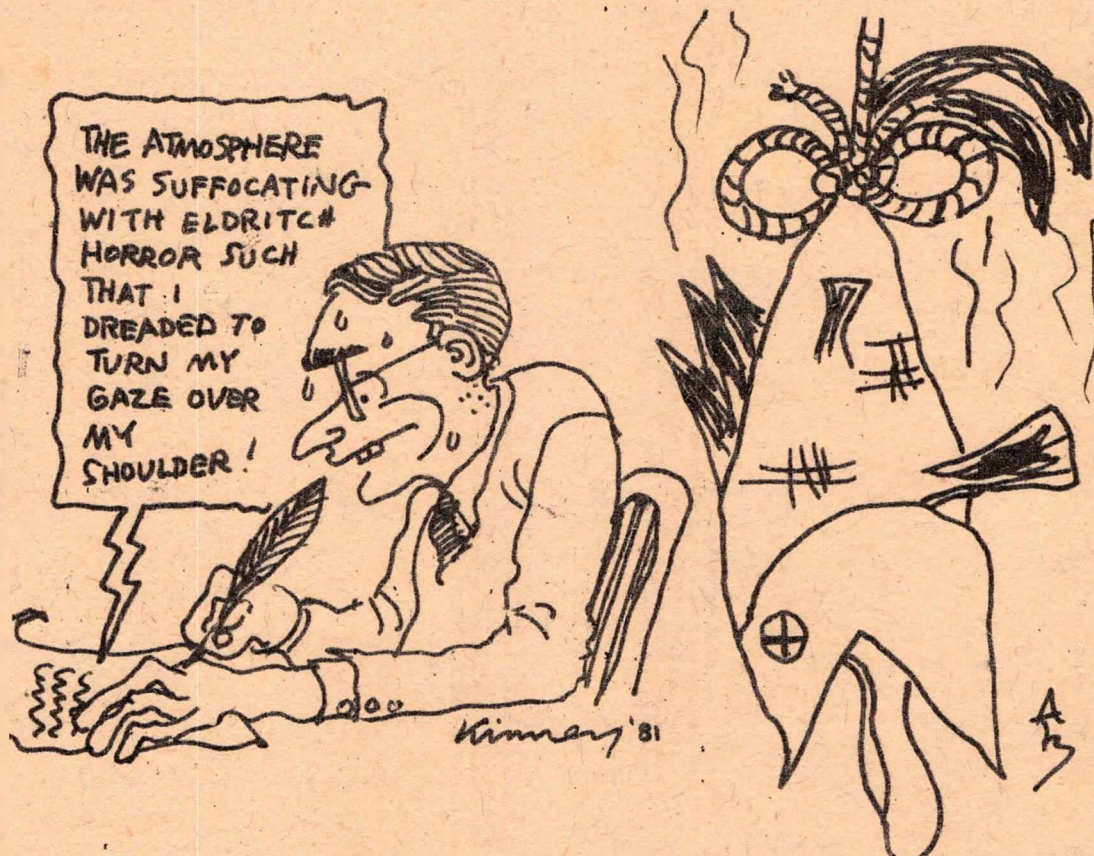


Looking back, I can see that my Lovecraft period extended from about age fourteen until sixteen, when I started to satisfy my curiosity about hillocks and mounts. After that somehow, he never packed quite the same punch... Kerouac and Henry Miller had more to tell me, then, and poor old Lovecraft wandered up into the lumber-room of early adolescence and stayed there, pressing his trousers under the mattress and staring dully through a small-paned window, eating ice-cream and worrying about fish.

I'm still looking for those rats...

\$ \$ \$ \$ \$ \$ \$ \$ \$ \$

Just enough space, I think, to congratulate Bill on losing his first Nebula award; though a nomination for a first story heralds more losses to come. So check Omni for stories by Wm. Gibson, "one of the best urban science fiction writers around." He told me so himself.





HOLD ON TO YOUR  
BOWELS, IT'S...

'KNEE-SLAPPING  
HUMOR FROM DEEP  
UNDER THE GROUND'

# Lovecraft LAFFS

'H.P.L. OFTEN HAD BAD EXPERIENCES IN RESTAURANTS'

