

STF

4th year of publication

Friends

#14



March 1954

27th SAPS Mailing

Special Notice to Subscribers

WITH THIS ISSUE STF TRENDS BECOMES A SAPSZINE. THIS IS BEING DONE FOR ONE MAIN REASON, I LOVE AMATEUR PUBLISHING AND AM GOING TO CONTINUE IT, BUT MY DOCTOR HAS WARNED ME TO SLOW DOWN FOR AWHILE EITHER IN MY WORK OR MY HOBBY. OF COURSE WITH A FAMILY TO SUPPORT IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO DO SO IN THE FORMER. SO I WILL JUST NOT HAVE THE AVAILABLE TIME TO SPEND ON TRENDS AS IN THE PAST, PRINTING, COLLATING, ADDRESSING AND MAILING THE QUANTITY OF ZINES THAT I NOW DO.

ALL SUBSCRIPTIONS , HOWEVER , **WILL** CONTINUE UNTIL THEIR EXPIRATION DATE!! AFTER THAT DATE UNLESS YOU ARE A MEMBER OF SAPS, ON MY 100 LIST, OR ON MY PREFERRED TRADE LIST YOU WILL NOT RECEIVE TRENDS.

FOR **TWO WEEKS** AFTER THE MAILING OF THIS ISSUE MY 100 LIST WILL BE OPEN. IN OTHER WORDS, THE FIRST 100 FANS TO SEND ME A DOLLAR BILL WILL BE ON THE 100 LIST AND WILL RECEIVE TRENDS FOR ANOTHER YEAR AFTER THEIR PRESENT SUBSCRIPTION EXPIRES. I AM VERY SORRY TO SAY THAT I WILL NOT BE ABLE TO ACCEPT MORE THAN 100 SUBSCRIBERS, SO, FIRST COME, FIRST SERVED.

I AM PLANNING NOW, TO PUBLISH (AFTER PRESENT SUBSCRIPTIONS EXPIRE) ONLY 175 COPIES OF EACH ISSUE INSTEAD OF THE USUAL 375. OF THESE, 45 COPIES GO TO SAPS, 100 COPIES WILL GO TO SUBSCRIBERS, 3 COPIES GO INTO MY FILES AND 27 COPIES WILL GO OUT AS TRADES AND TO CONTRIBUTORS.

TO THE 200 WHO WILL NO LONGER BE ABLE TO SUBSCRIBE TO TRENDS, I WISH TO THANK THEM FOR THEIR INTEREST IN TRENDS AND FOR THEIR HELP IN MAKING TRENDS THE ZINE IT IS. I AM SORRY I CAN^{NO} LONGER FIND THE TIME TO PUT OUT ENOUGH ISSUES FOR ALL, BUT MY HEALTH AND MY FAMILY MUST COME FIRST, AND PRINTING, COLLATING, ADDRESSING AND MAILING THOSE 200 EXTRA COPIES COULD BE MY BREAKING POINT. I CAN NO LONGER DO IT. IT IS EITHER CUT DOWN OR QUIT. ACTUALLY, I WOULD EVEN PREFER TO HAVE NO SUBSCRIPTION LIST, TO PUBLISH JUST MY SAPS AND TRADE ISSUES, BUT IN FAIRNESS TO THOSE WHO LIKE TO READ TRENDS AS WELL AS I LIKE TO PUBLISH IT AND WHO HAVE MADE POSSIBLE THIS ZINE BY THEIR LOYALTY AND SUPPORT OVER THE PAST THREE YEARS, I FELT I SHOULD KEEP AT LEAST 100 SUBSCRIPTIONS OPEN.

TRENDS, WILL OF COURSE, BE PUBLISHED 4 TIMES YEARLY (MARCH, JUNE, SEPTEMBER AND DEC.) FOR THE SAPS MAILINGS. SUBSCRIPTION COPIES WILL BE SENT OUT THE THIRD WEEK OF THE ABOVE MONTHS.

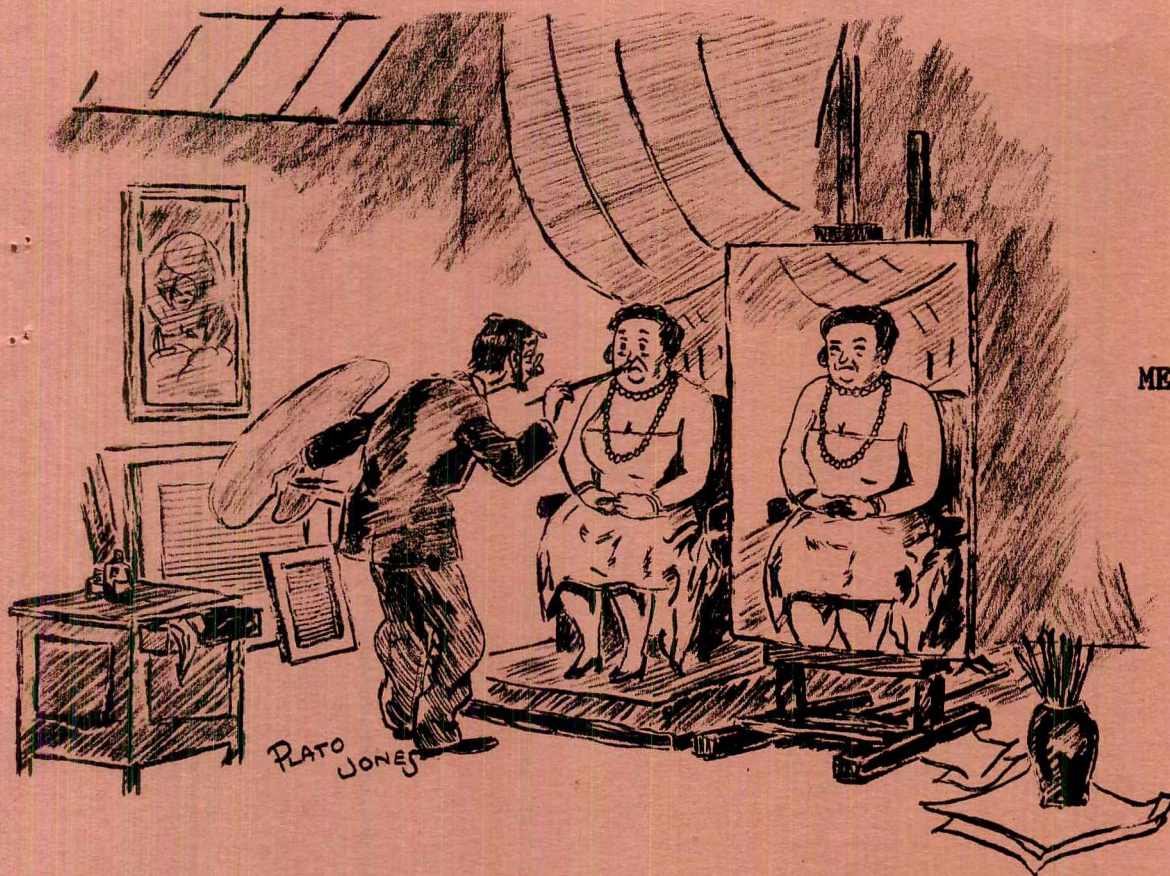
THIS ISSUE IS FOR THE 27TH SAPS MAILING.

LYNN A. HICKMAN

EDITOR

*you can always tell a Sap by the smile
on his*



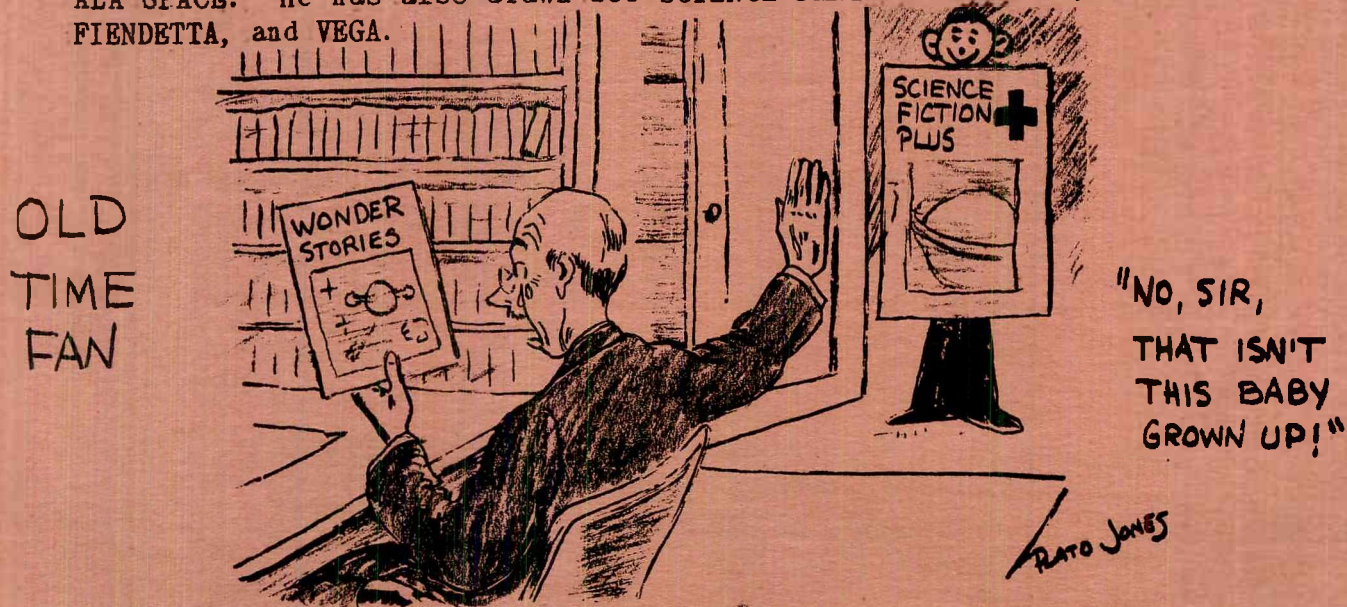


MEET PLATO JONES

Plato Jones, when questioned had very little to say about himself other than that he is a rather timid soul and very absent minded at times. Above is the only known photo of him.

Through various sources, we were able, however, to obtain a few facts about this character. He was born sometime in the nineteen hundreds in some small town somewhere in Ohio. He led a very normal life up until the time he was 12. From then on he was a science fiction fan and rapidly deteriorated to what we find him today.

At the present time Plato is doing illustrations and cartoons for various fan magazines, with most of his work appearing in STF TRENDS and ALA SPACE. He has also drawn for SCIENCE-FANTASY BULLETIN, MICRO-, SF, FIENDETTA, and VEGA.



OLD
TIME
FAN

"NO, SIR,
THAT ISN'T
THIS BABY
GROWN UP!"

All Aboard for Outer

By STANLEY FRANK

Interplanetary travel is closer to reality than you think. Man, not machines, is the joker, however

WHEN a bunch of sedate scientists are seized by a whimsical idea, it usually is a little gem. In March, 1950, the American Museum of Natural History in New York announced, strictly for a gag, it was taking reservations for a rocket trip to the moon, casually adding it could not guarantee return passage to the earth. To date, more than 23,000 acceptances have been received from throughout the world. The publicity created such a sensation in Europe that the Russians promptly declared they also were building a space ship. The museum people thought the announcement would be taken in the frivolous spirit it was made, but the utter seriousness of many applicants who want to get out of this chaotic world is at once frightening and revealing.

Voyages to the moon and outer space are nearer reality than the skeptical and the gullible realize. A manned rocket could be sent to the moon tomorrow, figuratively, if \$2,000,000,000 were available for the project—and a good case could be made

for spending the money. The U. S. Air Force believes interplanetary travel is so feasible that it held a four-day international conference on space medicine at San Antonio late last fall.

The agenda was devoted to the environmental and psychological problems man will encounter when he begins to explore his solar system.

World-famous physicists, astronomers and geophysicists did not meet at San Antonio from points as distant as Belgium to cut up Buck Rogers touches. They were there to discuss known phenomena and investigate exotic conditions in the aeropause, a new term that soon will be in the common vocabulary of us earthlings. The aeropause is the zone where the functions of the atmosphere for men and craft terminate. Stated simply, it means there is not enough oxygen up there to sustain life or to operate reciprocating or jet engines. The aeropause begins at 70,000 feet, a ceiling that has been pierced by a few planes. In other words,

man already has put a toe into outer space.

"For once, we're beating the engineers to the punch," says Maj. Gen. Harry G. Armstrong, surgeon general of the Air Force. "Pilots died in the past because they were not protected against the conditions found when man left his natural environment. Those hazards are infinitely greater in space, of course. Enormously intricate protective devices will have to be built into space ships and it's our job to find out what they are before interplanetary travel is attempted.

"Although space ships will be guided largely by automatic controls, the crews will have to make delicate adjustments in flight. If they are unable to make them, the space ship will be their tomb. There are tremendous problems, but some of the basic ones have been licked."

Man has been flying on artificial oxygen for many years, and his requirements are no different at 50,000 feet than at 50,000,000 miles. Reduced air pressure causes the blood to boil at 63,000 feet. Pressurized cabins now in use can take man anywhere in the universe safe from that danger. An antigravity suit that prevents blacking out at extreme speeds has been perfected. A short five years ago people wondered what would happen to a pilot when his plane exceeded 760 miles an hour and hit the sonic barrier. On June 11, 1951, Bill Bridgeman, flying

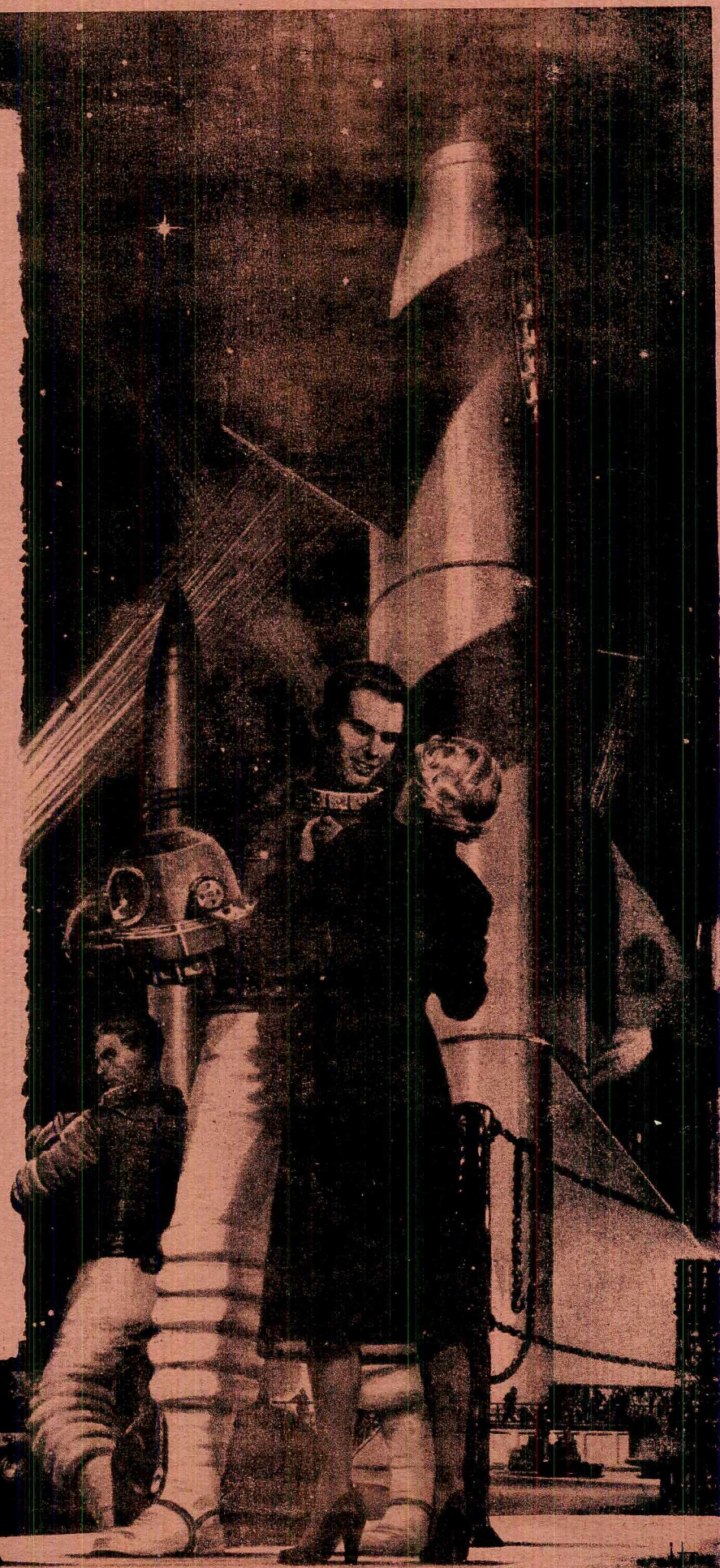
Space

an experimental plane, traveled between 1,200 and 1,500 m.p.h.—the exact speed is a military secret—at Muroc, Calif. Bridgeman was among those present at the San Antonio conference.

The critical altitude a rocket must attain to escape earth's gravity is 350 miles. On Feb. 24, 1949, the WAC Corporal reached 250 miles above White Sands, N. M. The fellow with the answer for the remaining 100 miles also was at San Antonio. He was Wernher Von Braun, an affable, 39-year-old German who speaks fluent English. Von Braun, now a consultant on the Army's guided missiles project at Huntsville, Ala., is such a pleasant guy that you sometimes forget he was the man who perfected the V-2 rocket that devastated London in 1944.

"Clearing those last 100 miles is a cinch," Von Braun said briskly. "The WAC Corporal is a two-stage rocket, a V-2 with a booster. All we need is a three-stage rocket. Sure, there are a lot of bugs, but give us the dough and we'll get rid of them."

Von Braun even had the blueprints for his proposed three-stage rocket. It is 200 feet long, 65 feet in diameter and has an over-all weight of 8,400 tons. In the first stage the rocket, fueled by a mixture of alcohol and liquid oxygen, climbs 1.4 miles per second to 40 miles, where the second stage takes over at 3.7 m.p.s. for another 60 miles. The third stage then goes to work at 5.3 m.p.s. Exactly 59 minutes after



the take-off, the rocket is in free flight, needs no more power to continue at its speed indefinitely. The motor is cut off at that precise point where centrifugal force counterbalances earth's gravity so that the rocket can circle the earth as a satellite, serving as an assembly station and springboard for leaps into outer space.

THE high-domed crowd made it clear enough to me last fall in words of one syllable, but it's easy to hoodwink a scientific ignoramus. How valid are their theories? On the last leg of the trip home, made by train from Washington to New York, I saw Dr. J. Robert Oppenheimer, wartime director of the Los Alamos atomic laboratory. I asked what he made of this heady interplanetary business. Oppenheimer is not one of the wild-blue-yonder boys, but as an outstanding physicist he is thoroughly conversant with their abstract trade talk.

"There is no physical law that makes trips into space impractical, or even very difficult, to achieve," Oppenheimer said. "It can be done if we want to put as much money into the scheme as we spent on the atomic bomb. The unknown always is fascinating, of course, but what will the whole thing prove?"

It is a good question. Space specialists admit there are no new physical laws or elements to be discovered in the universe. Much speculation is centered on the cosmic ray, which never penetrates earth's thick layer of atmosphere in the pure state. Dr. Herman J. Muller, Nobel Prize winner, suspects the cosmic ray is the cause of cancer; others hope it can cure the disease. The most intriguing proposition—we'll return to it presently—finds all authorities in agreement. There is no possibility of human life, as we know it, elsewhere in our solar system.

On the positive side, there are two possible uses to be made of space ships. They can be unparalleled weather stations, although the service comes awfully high at \$2,000,000,000. The military believes space holds the key to our future security. A satellite space ship, circling earth every two hours, can be a perfect observation post and bombing platform in the event the Russians make the big move. You'll have to take the experts' word for this, but they claim

that magnification factors will enable us to see people walking on earth's surface and pinpoint military targets with missiles launched and guided from the satellite.

The most poetic—and perhaps the most appealing—reason for investigating the void is advanced by Dr. Joseph Kaplan of the University of California at Los Angeles. "When man ceases trying to explore the universe around him, he ceases trying to understand himself. The Lord has provided us with a magnificent laboratory. The proof that we alone have been endowed with the divine spark of human life in our solar system could start a great religious movement."

The conquest of space must be a gradual process. The first step will be a small satellite with instruments to report on the weather and the chemistry of the upper atmosphere. Then animals will be sent up to reveal the effects of cosmic and ultraviolet rays on living organisms. (The satellite will be brought back to earth by radar control.) It is interesting—and ironic—to note that a monkey, man's first cousin, went up 80 miles in a rocket at White Sands last summer. The animal survived the flight and the descent all right, but died four hours later. It succumbed to the heat of the New Mexico desert.

AFTER equipment and calculations have been checked, a large satellite that can serve as a filling station and workshop will be put up 350 miles above earth. Then will come the breathless moment in the great adventure. A rocket carrying men and equipment for a space ship will be sent into the satellite's orbit. Astronomers who compute eclipses of the sun and the courses of the stars with split-second accuracy say it will be easy to time the rocket's flight so that it can overtake the satellite. The rocket's passengers will tie up at the satellite and assemble a ship for a flight to the moon 250,000 miles away.

The round trip should take about 20 hours—the experts still are talking—since one burst of energy can achieve and maintain a speed of 25,000 miles an hour in the absence of gravity and air resistance. In fact, the ship will fly at a constant speed on one impetus until the end of eternity unless it collides with another heavenly body or gets

into its field of gravity. If you'll pardon a hopelessly archaic metaphor, though, all that is putting the cart before the horse. The trickiest, most uncertain factor in the exploration of space is man, not machines.

In the past, it was assumed that man could fly any machine designed by engineers. That assumption does not hold true for outer space. Man is about to leave the environment that has conditioned his body, his senses and his emotions for millions of years. In bypassing evolution and plunging boldly into entirely new, vastly different surroundings he will be exposed to physical and psychological strains he may not be able to endure. His transition will be as radical as that of the first fishes that crawled on land—only he will be making it in one-millionth the time.

THE fear of falling, for example, is one of man's strongest instincts. Babies are born with it; the fear remains with us throughout life and is so terrifying that it wakes us out of dreams in a cold sweat.

Dr. Heinz Haber of the Air Force's School of Aviation Medicine suspects that a gravity-free man hurtling through space may have the sensation of falling into a bottomless pit. In dreams, which last a fraction of a second, awakening is the escape from the terror. In a space ship, where the sensation will continue for days, the only escape may be insanity and merciful death.

Haber is not completely sold on his own theory because it is impossible to conduct experiments in a gravity-free laboratory. It may be that the space traveler will experience the exhilarating feeling reported by parachutists who have fallen many thousands of feet before hitting the silk. It should be remembered, however, that the parachutist can dispel possible panic by pulling the rip cord. A space traveler will not have that easy out.

The weightless, or gravity-free, conditions an earthling will encounter in space probably will not affect the functioning of his organs since man has his own built-in gravity system. His nervous system and his mind are the potential weak links. One thing is certain.

EDWARD WALTON



All Aboard for Outer Space

(Continued from page 40)

Volunteers for flights into space will have to be extremely stable, strong-willed blokes to adapt themselves to bizarre conditions.

Muscular actions geared to the pull of earth's gravity will be thrown hopelessly out of whack. A man intending to unbutton his shirt will bat himself in the nose if he isn't careful. A sudden movement of any kind will send him crashing into fellow passengers or the walls of the ship. The reverse kick of a belch, a common reaction at extreme altitudes, will hurl him back violently. Hair will stand on end, clothes will balloon away from bodies and the slightest perspiration will envelop the cabin in fog.

Smoking will be taboo—consumes too much precious oxygen—and all liquids will have to be taken through straws. Objects must be attached firmly to the walls or the floor of the ship or they will float aimlessly all over the place. Man himself will have to wear a magnetized space suit to stay on the floor.

Earthlings landing on the moon will find a dead, eerie world. Since the moon has no atmosphere, there will be no sound, no smell, no weather, no rain, no sunlight. It will be impossible to converse on the surface of the moon because there is no air to transmit sound waves. Extreme changes in temperature, ranging from 212 degrees to 400 degrees below zero, will make insulated space suits imperative.

Many perils will be encountered en route, especially from meteorites. Dr. Fred L. Whipple of Harvard estimates that 500,000 meteorites enter the earth's atmosphere every day but are immediately vaporized by their contact with the air. There is not that protective cushion in space, but Whipple believes the danger of a meteorite striking and puncturing a ship can be greatly reduced by a meteor bumper, a thin, tough skin around the outer shell that will absorb the impact and vaporize a meteorite. Whipple admits, however, the possibility of a large meteor destroying a space ship.

The most intriguing mystery of space is the possibility of life on other planets in the solar system. Life can exist only under certain conditions in delicate, limited balance. The most important elements are oxygen, carbon, nitrogen and hydrogen; if one of these factors is too abundant or too sparse,

life, as we know it, cannot develop.

Mars has the chemical and climatic conditions closest approximating earth's, but all authorities agree its oxygen content is too low to support man and animals. There is vegetation on Mars but that's all. Venus, the planet nearest earth, is perpetually hidden by dense clouds of dust and gas that probably are fatal to human life. Mercury's heat is so intense that it will turn lead and tin mines into molten rivers. Jupiter and Saturn are enveloped by poisonous ammonia and methane gas. The other planets, Uranus, Neptune and Pluto, are so far away that little is known about them, but all evidence indicates conditions are unsuited for supporting life.

That is a ridiculously brief listing of our galaxy, but—and here is the most overwhelming concept of all. Edwin Hubble of the Mt. Wilson Observatory estimates there are 200,000,000 galaxies in the universe, a figure widely accepted by leading astronomers. Each galaxy has a sun, many of which are infinitely larger than the center of our small system. Each sun *may* be the source of human life. A betting man certainly would hesitate to go against the proposition that conditions necessary to support life *cannot* be found in some of these 200,000,000 other galaxies.

"It is stupid and arrogant to insist that earth alone has been favored with life," Dr. Haber argues. "There are some galaxies much older than ours. It is possible they can have a high civilization beyond our comprehension. It will take decades, maybe centuries, to bridge the vast distances between the other worlds, but man never will quit trying to make the effort."

One rainy Sunday afternoon when the Museum of Natural History was accepting "reservations" for interplanetary travel, the attendant behind the desk facetiously asked a bored, lonely girl where she wanted to go. The girl was not amused and snapped that she had no intention of lending herself to such nonsense. As she turned away, a young, good-looking fellow stepped up and, going along with the gag, booked passage for Jupiter. The girl looked at the young man speculatively as he walked off. She went back to the desk.

"Put me down for Jupiter," she said.

- HEDEN GRAY -

THINGS TO COME?

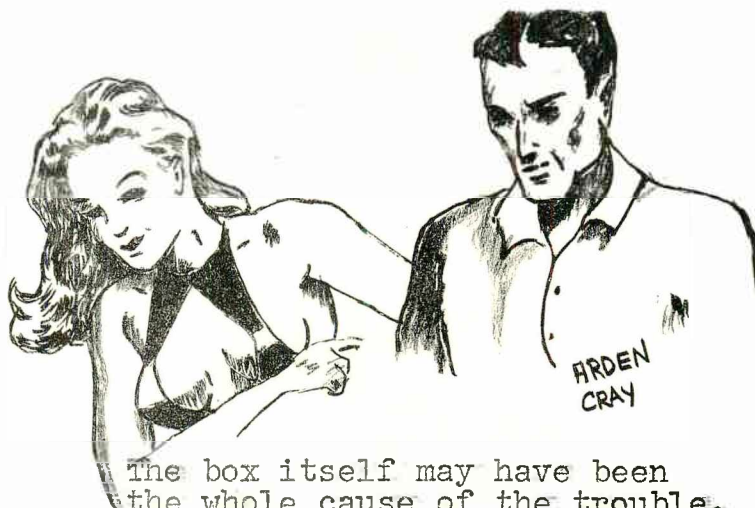
Sam Mines states in the latest Writers Digest that more letters are now being written to science fiction magazines by women. Formerly the men were far ahead. Does this mean we'll have something like the above in the future? Where Sandra of the Space Patrol saves sweet Sal, also of the Space Patrol? Or will it be Intimate Space Romances and the like. Kidding aside, we're mighty happy to see the gals take such an interest in science fiction. Checking our subscription list on Trends we find that almost 50% of the subbers are gals. God bless 'em. We love 'em.

While on a visit through the east this summer, Harlan Ellison was tossed over a fence by a bull. Acquaintances of Harlan expressed much surprise at the outcome of the contest.

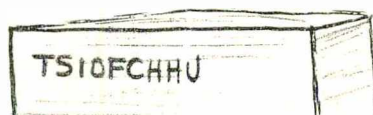


SKIN OF A SKELETON

By HAL ANNAS



The box itself may have been the whole cause of the trouble. It's still there in the closet anytime you want to take a look.



mind his dragging in stray females, drunks, urchins, and homeless cats. I didn't put up much of a howl the time he brought in a horse. But you've got to draw the line somewhere, and I say he's going too far when he brings in a box with an angel in it.

Keely shouldn't have brought it in to begin with. I don't

I wouldn't have minded so much if the angel had been from the right place. But his judgment ain't dependable. Now take me. If I was lugging around an angel which had its wings all scorched -- well, I'd suspect something. I've said it before and I'll say it again: he should have left that box alone.

I'm not narrow minded. When I team up with another guy to rent an apartment like this I don't figure on putting any restrictions on him at all. But I do think he ought to use judgment, and when he gets a yen to bring home -- well, confound it! he should at least get one that doesn't smell like sulphur and brimstone.

Keely is a right guy in most ways, and I'm using the present tense because I believe he's still alive. He's a year and a half younger than I, which makes him twebty-six, if I knock off the year I spent in the pen. He's nineteen or twenty pounds heavier than I, and that's the reason I can't wear his clothes. We're both close to six feet in height, but he's broader in the chest and shoulders, and not an ounce of his hundred and eighty pounds is fat. His trousers are too tight around my waist and his coats fit me like a tent. I tried to get him to fatten up in the middle and trim down in the shoulders, but it didn't do any good.

He just ain't real bright. He's got plenty of education, gets along well with people and makes a good living, but what I'm getting at is that I'm the brains in this outfit even though I never went to school after I was pinched for arson in the Sixth Grade.

Don't get the wrong idea. I was railroaded on that pinch. I wasn't trying to burn the school down. It was just a little fire I'd made in the basement after I figured I'd learned everything in my books and wouldn't need them again. And I thought that stuff I poured on the books was water, not coal oil as it turned out to be.

Such innocent acts are often misunderstood, and had I got away with that one I might've gone on and got an education and become president, instead of winding up on an assembly line in a sound equipment company.

I've got plenty of brains. But Keely! He's just a dumb cluck. Not that he means any harm. But bringing home a box with a live angel in it and not making sure it couldn't get out -- well, you get the idea.

I aged ten years overnight, not counting time off for good behavior. I didn't think anything so horrible could happen in this day and time.

I knew Keely would get in mischief when he went out that night. He refused to lend me five bucks, as usual, and I said right then "He will get fouled up." He had plenty of money lying on the dresser, and a man's asking for bad luck when he won't lend his roommate five bucks every payday.

I wouldn't have bothered trying to borrow if he'd gone on to the bathroom, as he should, without moving the money. But he happened to see me looking at it. He took it with him to the bathroom just as if he feared a burglar might break in and steal it. And with me right there! It just goes to show he wasn't up on his toes, for he should've known I'd beat any burglar to it -- I mean, to a pulp. I ain't no baby.

And he should have known something was out of line when he picked up the girl the way he did. I don't take his word for it that she looked frightened and helpless and that the box was too heavy for her. If her legs were all he said they were, she could've carried the box easy and another one like it. And if she was built like a brick outhouse, as the old saying goes, well developed in the chest, and all, she wasn't a weakling. You get the picture?

I discount what he said about her features. I know most broads in the local bagnios, and if some of them would wash their neck and comb their hair, I have no doubt you could take out your watch in their presence without having the works suddenly quit. I've never seen one whose features would suddenly do things to my heart. I think he was looking at her shape when his heart got going like that, because, from what he said, the dress she had on didn't leave much in doubt. He said it was one of those red and yellow things that fit like your skin.

I don't mind his running on with wild ideas like that, but I do think he should have found out what that TSIOFCHHU meant, which was lettered on the box. He didn't have any right to bring anything in here with a word like that on it without first looking it up in a book.

I'm not a stickler for rules, and I figure a guy's entitled to get out of line once in awhile, but I draw the line when it comes to accepting what a stray female says about a word like TSIOFCHHU. Especially when she mentions that the angel in the box has a sharp-pointed pitchfork over its shoulder.

And then there was all that stuff about rising from the dead.

I'm not superstitious. I know there's no such thing as a ghost. Good people will tell you there ain't. And I've never seen a person rise from the dead. I don't intend to see one, not twice, anyway, and I don't believe in anything that has superstition attached to it. But he stood right there where you are and told me she had made him understand that he'd died at least once. That's exactly what he said. If it ain't, I'll eat your socks and not ask for a drink of water.

Besides what he told me, I don't know a thing about the girl, and as I've pointed out, his discription was ridiculous. No girl could have eyes bluer than the heavens and brighter than the stars, and no beams, and no two people could be so attracted that simply by holding hands they became as one and their hearts beat in unison.

Those ate his words, not mine. My idea of a right gal is one that will let our two purses become as one and let me manage it. She can run her heart slow or fast, as she wishes, and if she's got myopia in one eye and warts on the other, it's all the same to me, because if she lives around in this neighborhood she'll get them shaded anyway. And as for moonbeam hair, you can't stuff a mattress with it.

So I say there was no reason whatever for him to do what she told him about that word TSIOFCHHU.

What I'm getting at is that he'd already made up his mind to see if the box did open into another region, as she claimed, and all this stuff he was handing me was just some sort of justification for getting me mixed in it.

Not that I did anything he didn't order me to. I wasn't even in the room -- that is, I wouldn't have been if the door hadn't been locked and if that angel hadn't got between me and the window.

As I mentioned, I shouldn't have minded his looking up that word in a book, but I do think he should've been more considerate than to make the word speak of itself. It's hair-raising for lettering on a box suddenly to rise up and say, "Tchee-ufka-hoo!"

Turn off the light and try it in the dark. You won't get the full effect without the popping of a fuse, the flashing and hissing, and the fluttering and sighing as the thing comes out. But if you'll give yourself a good long minute in the dark, and sort of let yourself get absentminded, and try not to suspect anything, and then spring that "Tchee-ufka-hoo!" you'll scare the pants off yourself and have kittens at the rate of one a second. To put realism into it, stumble over a chair in the dark, bash your head against the door trying to get out, and then turn around and face -- Well, you'll have to get yourself a smelly angel with scorched wings and a sharp pitchfork to get a glimmer of what I went through.

Keely came in that night about the time I did, and I noticed right off something was wrong. He was sober. He didn't have a black eye or any bruises showing, and you must remember this was on Saturday night. I knew he'd gone and got himself in mischief.

I'd seen him in love before, but this time, from the expression on his face, I knew he'd hit some sort of peak.

I started to ask him what sort of swing she had to her hips and whether she wore falsies, but he hushed me with a threatening gesture. "Not a word," he warned. "Your thoughts would sully the devine creature I held in these arms. The finest compliment you ever paid a woman was to say her teeth were so even they must have cost her sixty bucks. And you always check your women over to see if they're wearing a girdle in case you might need a strip of rubber patch for an innertube. Don't breathe a syllable. If I see a change of expression on that dismal thing you call a face, which indicates you are framing comments on this girl, I shall work you over."

"But Keely--"

He balled up his fists.

I am not afraid of him, nor anybody else, but I don't like to be worked over by men like Keely. The trouble is, they do the job permanently. I remained quiet. And that's the reason I didn't complain when he began working with the electric wiring. I knew he was going to blow a fuse, but if I'd opened my mouth, and he'd got the wrong idea about what I was going to say, it could have been unpleasant -- not that it wasn't, anyway.

He talked dreamily about the girl as if the greatest thing in the world had happened to him, and that's how I know what he claimed she looked like -- not that I believe any of it.

He placed the box in the closet. I didn't believe it had an angel in it, especially one with scorched wings and a pitchfork, for if I had I'd've gone away like a pint of rye among six.

He said he met the girl at the station. He'd gone there in to use the phone. The place was nearly deserted. No trains had come in the past hour and none was due for another hour. And yet this girl came in from the platform just as though she'd got off a train.

Holding onto the box, she looked sort of bewildered, and Keely edged close for a better look.

Then he suddenly began to know about what he described as his other life.

I think he was out of his head or dreaming, because people don't just suddenly know they're looking at a girl they've loved in another life. And if they do, the girl ain't going to smile back and murmur, "Ah! It's been so long. The train was delayed where the trestle was washed out over the River Styx."



Hell! There wasn't any train there to be delayed. And there wasn't anything in the papers about the River Styx being flooded. Never heard of it before, and if it's getting out of hand like that, why doesn't the government get busy and put in a dam and a hydro-electric plant and keep it controlled? The government puts its fingers in everything else from here to hell and gone, and it ought to do something about this river and put it to work making electricity to improve the lighting and heating. Congressmen ought to be compelled to recognize the fact that they themselves will have to cross the rampaging River Styx sometime, and they ought to be forced to answer the questions: "Do you want the crude oldfashioned kind of light and heat to be with you throughout eternity? Or do you want the newer, highclass kind which is guaranteed to keep you cozy more effectively?"

Do you think any logical thing like that occurred to Keely? It did not. He didn't even ask the girl whether she had to get out and wade.

Me? I'd've fingerprinted the wench and turned her over to the immigration authorities for transporting a non-citizen angel.

But you can't depend on Keely to do anything right. He said he went over and took the box out of her hands, and they went into a clinch, and his memory opened up, and he realized he was in the wrong universe or something.

She told him she had finally got permission to come and provide a means for him to get back where he belonged. He couldn't go back with her because she had only a roundtrip ticket on her train, and his money wouldn't buy the kind of ticket needed to take him. And right there is where it gets crazy: She came on a special train, no other passengers.

I'm thinking of writing congress and asking for an investigation of railroads operating on such an inefficient basis across the River Styx. No wonder the nation is going bankrupt. They undoubtedly need business on the other side of the river, and I say we ought to load every train to bursting, giving congressmen priority, of course, and send the business on across. We could relieve congestion on this side by doing that.

Anyway, the girl told Keely that inside the box is the gate to the other universe, a gate guarded by an angel. She said the angel was on guard so long as it was sleeping there in the box, but when it got up and flew around it was off duty, or something, and he could go through.

Do you think Keely called the men in the white coats?

Never mind! You know as well as I that he went right ahead and did what she told him, working with that TSIOFCHHU which, she explained, was the key to making the angel wake up and fly.

Keely said that the word was part prayer and part designation of something. I didn't pay much attention at the time, but later remembered.

He said that he and this girl had lived at the same time in the other universe and attended medical college together. Both got bumped off at the same time in an accident. And they had willed their bodies to the college.

In this other universe, he said, they'd worked out a plan for perfect happiness and immortality, and that's why they wanted the college to have their dead bodies. The students were to fix them up again.

I can understand perfect happiness, all right, if you could get a pair of loaded dice that couldn't be detected, and win all the time, but I wouldn't make a book on that immortality, because eventually somebody is going to get wise to those dice, and right then and there mortality is going to catch up with you. I wouldn't back Saint Peter on remaining immortal if he cheated some of these gamblers around here.

The students skinned their bodies and took all the meat off, and no doubt got a good price for the meat in the black market. They kept the brains and the skeletons, the brains in alcohol, the skeletons in the closet of the girl's family.

The names of the skeletons were Keely and Marbee and they hung there in the closet waiting for the students to make them immortal.

Their brains were finally sent over and fixed in their heads, with some skin that had been saved, and they were able to think about one another. And right off the bat they began making love.

This is the most reasonable part of the whole thing. They were already in love before they were bumped off. I can get the picture of how they felt and acted when they got their brains back. You can, too, if you'll just think a minute. Suppose you were hanging in a closet with the skeleton of your best girl. Right off the bat it would occur to you to say, "Sugarplum, you've overdone your dieting this time. Your curves ain't what they used to be." Then you'd rattle around a bit and put your arm about her and add, "But I'm past the pinching age and it doesn't matter."

Then she'd tilt her grinning skull up toward you, click her exposed teeth, sway her hipbones with a seductive rattling sound, lower the eyeholes in the exposed bone of her head, and murmur, through the clicking of her teeth, "I kept myself from getting plump because I wanted to hold your love."

"That's fine, Punkin," you'd click back. "I'm not complaining, because, in a way your bones do have some fetching curves, but I don't believe in overdoing this sort of thing. Look at me! Look at the bulging bone on my arms and chest. Still, I'm not overweight anyway you look at it, and I haven't dieted even once. Now, mind you, I'm not complaining. You're my girl and always will be. But if you'd pick up a pound or two I believe you'd fill out your skin better, if you had any skin to fill out."

The idea may be a trifle too romantic. I've always been a sentimentalist. They'd probably rattle and fight all day long. But I'm basing the whole thing on what Keely told me, and I gather he made quite a bit of headway right there in the closet. He admitted that matters hadn't gone very far before, but left alone day after day with her skeleton, and she with his, they let their emotions have full sway and vowed eternal love. And at this point, I confess, I shed a tear, for it seemed so tender the way they were rattling around and clicking out vows and words of love.

The students fetched in a couple new bodies made to measure to fit the skeletons, although Keely's had to be let out a trifle, as he's pretty long in the legs, and Marbee's had to be taken in at the waist and let out above. The other measurements were all right with the exception that, having taken her in at the waist, Marbee's navel had to be set over a trifle, and while they were at it they went ahead and stitched Keely's a little tighter, with waxed thread, so there wouldn't be any danger of him losing it even if Marbee failed to check over loose buttons and things after they were married.

They didn't get married right then and there. It seems that their souls, released from their bodies, achieved immortality. When their bodies were restored their souls were supposed to return, because this was a place of perfect happiness.

But something went wrong. Keely's soul had been wandering around in all sorts of universes, and when it was time to re-invest the body it happened to be in this universe here. The soul was stronger than the flesh, immortal in fact, and it snatched the body to it. That's how Keely got in this universe.

The girl's soul had been behaving itself and was right there when she needed it. She didn't get snatched but had to undergo considerable risk in belatedly coming after Keely and ordering him to return and make an honest woman of her. After all, as skeletons they'd been all alone in that dark closet, and while he claims everything was strictly on the level, you never can tell. I figure her old man found out about it.

To get back to the point, he worked with the electric wiring here in the apartment, got it fixed to suit him, then called me over.

"I've got these wires grooved down in the lettering on the box." He pointed. "All I need now is a short circuit. You know how the voltage jumps on a make and break. Just switching on the light jumps the voltage many times, but the interval is so brief it doesn't burn out the bulb. The amps drop as the voltage rises. Understand?"

I didn't, but nodded anyway.

"I'm leaving the box in the closet," he went on, "because, after the short circuit, you'll be in darkness and might trip over it. You might even fall through."

"Through what?" I said.

"Never mind. After I get through, Marbee and I will try to pull the box through. If we can't we'll just close the gate from the other side and then it will appear to be nothing but an empty box. The angel will come and guard it from that side after it realizes the gate has been opened."

I looked around for something to hit him with, but he ignored me, went on. "I'll explain the lettering on the box because it's going to become immortal. It is both a prayer and a designation."

I nodded, tried to edge away.

"Translated into our language," he said, "the lettering reads, 'The Skeleton In Our Family Closet, Heaven Help Us!' A broader translation might read, 'This is our family skeleton. We beseech Thee of Heaven to let it return to us'."

I nodded dumbly.

"When those words become immortal," he added, "the angel will rise from the box, the gate will open, and I will find my way to the arms of my beloved, the jewel of all universes."

I couldn't restrain myself any longer. I had to know something. I just had to break down and ask, and I did:

"Keely!"

He grunted.

"Keely!"

He nodded.

"Keely!"

"Well," he said, "what is it?"

"Now that you won't be needing it, and won't be around here, and so on, you can slip me that extra five you've got in your pocket."

He studied me with both pity and contempt. "I had to entertain Marbee a bit between trains," he said. "In order to do justice to the occasion, I sold all the I. O. U.'s I was holding against you to that tough bookie who works this section and who never fails to collect."

"But Keely, you can't do that. That's the toughest bookie in town."

"I've already done it. You'll manage. Never seen you when you couldn't steal or swindle a buck. Besides, I'm leaving you my clothes."

I was too dumbfounded to speak. He showed me how to close the circuit, said I was to wait until he got in the closet right beside the box, ready to dive through. He left the door open so the angel could get out and in.

I figured I'd humor him, but as I waited I felt a chill creeping over me. Something seemed to grip every muscle and hold it tense, to twang every nerve, to prick my heart and drive it like a racehorse. Keely felt it too. He became pale. His hand trembled as he gave me the signal to close the circuit.

I closed it.

The room was plunged into darkness as the fuse popped.

"Tchee-ufka-hoo !"

I nearly jumped out of my body through my throat. The lettering atop the box had blazed up like a neon sign: TSIOFCHHU, and said "Tchee-ufka-hoo !"

Clammy fingers ran up and down my spine, froze my blood.

The flame faded, died, but the lettering continued to glow above the box.

I heard a faint, terrifying whisper as the lid of the box lifted. I heard sighing and fluttering and hissing, as though coming from a great depth, as the angel came out of the box and fluttered toward me.

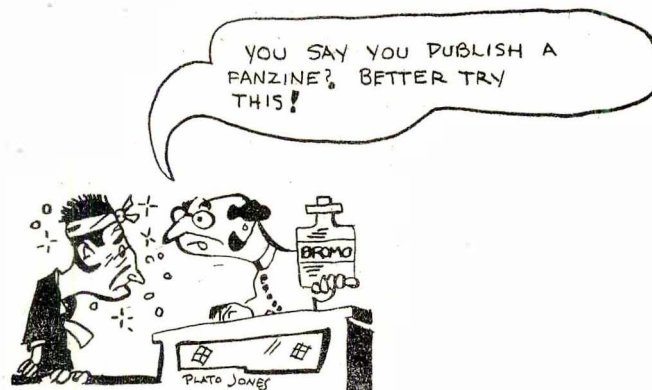
I lunged for the door. It was locked. I felt sharp points touch my back side. I smelled sulphur and brimstone.

Quivering like jelly, I turned. I saw great wings flap, fanning a smell of scorched features in my direction. The thing was between me and the window. There was only one thing left to do, and I did it: I turned wrongside out.

Well, all right, confound it! I fainted, if you insist. I was there under the bed when they found me. The box is still in the closet.

So you see the setup? Keely is gone. His clothes are here, but I can't wear them. So if you want to move in and pay your share of the rent, it's all right with me.

I weighed you when you came in the shop the other day, and judging from your build I think I can wear your clothes.



FAN TALK

Dear Lynn:

Thanks for TRENDS NO. 13, with my last letter to you. About Mr. Elsberry's letter in that issue: If you will excuse my flogging a dead horse in order to set the record straight (and mixing my metaphors in the process), let me repeat that I absolutely did not "rule out the south" or "attempt to set up a precedent against having Cons in the South." Not only did I never entertain such a plan, but nobody suggested it to me, nor did I hear such a suggestion made in the meetings of the Executive Board and the Convention Committee. The first I ever heard of such an idea was when I read about it in the fanmags. The same goes for the alleged proposal to bar cities in which fans were feuding. I don't know where this completely false rumor originated, though I have suspicions.

Nor did the Convention Committee, or I myself, at any time determine to give next year's Convention to San Francisco. We only intended to set up machinery to enable the Convention to make its own choice. Actually I never even voted - I meant to but was so busy running the election I forgot.

Five bids were submitted; Cleveland (by E. J. Burden), London (H. J. Campbell), New York (Will Sykora), and San Francisco (DON FORD). Also a young man got up and said Lexington, Kentucky, would be a fine place for a convention. He didn't live there; in fact he didn't even know if there were fans there, but he still thought it would be a good place. I told him to see me with the others, but other fans told him the facts of life and changed his mind. I should have been justified in ruling out such a bid, but happily it never became necessary to do so.

Then Sykora withdrew at the last minute. Merrill Gwosdof proposed two changes in methods of conducting the election. The first (to have three ballots instead of two) was adopted by the convention, but did not become operative because of there being only three candidates. The second (to have discussion from the floor between nominating speeches and voting) was voted down. As far as I could tell, the election was perfectly fair and orderly.

As for changes in the method of choosing sites, the plan for a permanent Convention Committee was not mine. My only concern was to see that any action in such a matter was in accordance with General Robert's little brown book. As far as I am concerned the fans could choose the next city by playing spin-the-bottle. We staged a debate, as a result of which the convention passed a resolution directing the next Convention Committee to present a matured plan for rotating convention sites among different parts of the continent.

Finally, Kyle was given the job of editing the program booklet because he has had artistic and editorial experience and said he had the time for the job. Such tasks are headaches, not plums, as Mr. Elsberry will learn if one ever comes his way.

Cordially,

L. Sprague de Camp
Wallingford, Penna.

Dear Lynn;

Cleveland has read with great interest the Tucker-Elsberry letters concerning the "pro-underground" and smoke filled room tactics everybody is accusing everybody else of. Since we are in a pretty good position to know the truth about this matter, we would like to have our say. Cleveland bid for the 1954 consite and lost to San Francisco. We lost not because there was an underground against us, but simply because enough people felt that San Francisco should get the convention.

The Terrans decided to bid early in July. Ever since Chicago the only word out of the coast was that the Little Men were through and didn't care if they ever got a convention. We honestly didn't believe that they wanted it, or were prepared for it. Heavens knows, they deserved it. Frisco waited a long time to get their convention and no city had a better right. But, as I said, the only information we had led us to believe that Frisco was not serious this year.

Cleveland went to Philly and put on what we honestly feel is one of the best campaigns ever presented. We were very well prepared. We could handle a convention and we wanted it. The two prime requisites for any city. However, when we started campaigning we ran right into a great deal of sentiment for San Francisco. That is one thing you cannot beat.

At no time, did Tucker or any other "pro" put any pressure on us. As far as I can see, the pros are people like anyone else and most of them don't care if the next convention is held in Mecca. They go to have a good time and not to "run" anybody's convention bid. I hate the very thing the word "pro" implies. These men are writers, most of them have another job at which they earn a living. They are far too busy to bother about fan politics. They are just glad they can attend the con without having to make too many speeches or do too much work. Let's give them a break, and not holler "foul" everytime the city we support does not win.

The Cleveland Club is not bitter about losing, in fact if what Elsberry says is true, that Frisco would have a rump convention if they had lost, we are glad they didn't. Fandom may be a poor thing, but our own. We like to see it intact. Its all over for another year, so see you in Frisco.

Mrs. Noreen Kane Falasca
president-The Terrans

Dear Lynn;

My little heart is broken...as of this writing...as you may have heard...Cleveland put in a bid for the next Con site. We only had San Fran to contend with and we thought it was a sure thing...well, we didn't count on a lot of things. All in all we missed it by 30 votes. San Fran got 187 and Cleveland got a 157....Sure was close.

The pros have all been promising us that in 55 its Cleveland...won't believe it till I see it happen though.

Dear Lynn;

Honey Wood
Cleveland, Ohio

The latest issue of STF TRENDS caught me flatfooted. It wasn't the fact that the issue was late. One expects a certain irregularity in the publications of fan-zines. What really rammed me amidships was the cover and lead article of the issue! Not only this---the whole book had a certain polished, platinum-plated aura to it that I had despaired of ever seeing in an amateur publication.

To say that I commend you, is a masterpiece of understatement. I really don't see how you did it. I'm serious, Lynn. That was the best piece of work you have ever done---it was beautiful. Even the letter column almost let "Brass Tacks" shine through; almost devoid of the garbled, childish, drivel that turns ones hair in most contemporary letter columns.

DON'T apologise for an issue like that; regardless of how late it may be; it was worth a dozen of the masterpieces of mediocrity. I see that you were serious when you stated that you wanted to do your part to improve the literary quality of science-fiction. Keep up the good work!

L. W. Carpenter, D.D.S.
Elizabethton, Tenn.

Dear Lynn;

The poem OUANN was delightful!

- Naaman Peterson
Bellingham, Wash.

Dear Lynn;

STF TRENDS finally came through...Congradulations, Lynn! Love that Coggins Cover! Topped only by a Saturn cover he had on a '52 TWS. He really makes you feel like you are out in space.

Ray Thompson
Norfolk, Neb.

Dear Lynn;

Out of This World was excellent, I think I will force it on some of my anti-sf friends. Bob Bloch's letter was as funny, if not more so, than Geo. O. Smith's bit.

Bill Dignin
Cleveland, Ohio

Dear Lynn;

Fine, fine issue! Well worth waiting for.

Bob Bloch
Weyauwega, Wisc.

Dear Lynn;

The best single item in thish, and probably the best thing ever run in TLMA, TLC, and STF TRENDS was Schultheis' piece of Jabborwocky. Long have I awaited someone with the ability to take up where Lewis Carrol left off. Perhaps he has been found. I hope he'll continue writing this sort of stuff. Kincannon's cartoon strip was among the top items that have been done in fmz along that line. Is he auditioning for MAD COMICS? And now that letter from Calvin Thomas Beck, BI (Blithering Idiot). Since he makes only one direct accusation at me

in that letter, that's what I'll tackle first. I'm sure that Mr. Beck will find, if he wants to exercise his never-used-common sense, that I never mince my opinions. I set forth my opinions as my opinions. When I present someone else's opinions, or quote someone else, I like to give them credit. (Something Mr. Beck should practice.) And sometimes I endorse other people's opinions by quoting their statements and acquiescing to them. Check that with my letters, Calvin bucko, and you'll see that I'm right. I'll refrain from saying anything else concerning the malicious Mr. Beck, and hope that he has no more aspersions to cast.

Hal Shapiro
Kirksville, Mo.

Editors note: I'm sorry that I have not been able to run all the fine letters that I receive and that I have been forced to cut portions of the ones I have printed. The brutal fact is -- the letter column has been getting out of hand. Too big I mean. There are three and one half pages devoted to it this issue. I will try to make this a standard size. If too many letters come in, I'll have to try and edit them to bring only the portions that I think would be of interest to most of the readers. If I don't print your letter, write again anyway. You are helping in the shaping of the magazine. As of this writing, Nov. 7th, letters have also been received from the following. Thanks for your comments. Avis Pabel, Sam Johnson, John Magnus, Russ Watkins, Euclid Brown, Lyle Kessler, Basil Wells, Paul Powlesland, E.M. Williams, Dean Grennell, Jimmy Clemons, Kent Corey, Fred Chappell, Ian T. Macauley, Carl L. Dill, Denis Moreen, Burton K. Beerman, Claude Hall, Marie-Louise, Ray Schaffer, Jr.



Hmmmmmm-----on the other side of this page I said I was going to stick to 3½ pages of letters. Then in the first week of December I received this letter from Joe Gibson. I wanted Joe to have his say before this matter was dropped. Also, now that Trends is a SAPSazine, I will undoubtedly run more pages of letters than I had intended. At least I'm hoping now that I will get more letters of fannish interest rather than just letters on whether or not you liked the mag. Of course I want to know that too, but lets write in our opinions on subject matter where needed. OK?

Dear Lynn,

One of the most flabbergasting things I've read in a long time is Rich Elsberry's "Voice" in Trends #13. Obviously, it's considerably outdated, but the amount of rumor and suspicion it reflects is downright I was in the midst of many of the shennigans mentioned: the "steam roller" at Chicago, the Nov. '52 Philcon where the Rules Committee was started, the careful steps taken at the Phillycon to help Frisco win for '54.

One of the things that floored me was when Elsberry quoted Bob Briggs' remark: "Can anyone doubt that a group of pros is trying to move the World Con to New York?" Elsberry says this was written in Oct. '52, right after the Chicon--but then, or a year before, or right now I could say that I doubt it with some damned strong doubts.

In the first place, nobody is less impressed by pros, in groups or singly, than fans in the New York area. Any time the pros want to start something--and this now includes Sam Moskowitz--it had better be good, or else. In the second place, New York fandom is divided, tho not so much now as a few years ago. The ESFA in Newark is a bunch of fans approaching middle-age who haven't the slightest desire to tackle a World Con, themselves. The fairly-new NYork S-P Circle is full of eager youngfans who will, in a few years, have the experience to tackle such a feat. The proish Hydra club is little more than a social group of pros--visitors by invitation only--who have very little, if any, interest in fan enterprises. Nothings been heard from Will Sykora lately. The last we heard of him was at the Chicon, when he made a bid for New York. The "steam roller" didn't come up until it seemed to a number of us that Frisco had lost before the voting started--by handing out leases to the moon when they should have been selling Frisco. They'd already sold themselves to active fandom, to a considerable extent. But they never sold themselves to the predominately non-active fans attending the chicon. That's when we decided something should be done about Sykora's NY bid, something that would keep New York from becoming a strong choice for the con. The whole idea of a 2nd New York bid, which then withdrew and threw its support to Philly, was to keep NY from being chosen. If Frisco could beat Philly, then, that was ok with us. We were east coast fans, of course (and some of us were Southern fans) so we DID campaign pretty strongly for Philly. The thing was tossed into Dave Kyle's lap, rather than planned by him. He was chosen because he represented the resurgent NY youngfans and, after all, NY was the problem.

And we didn't want the world con in NY this year for the same reason we didn't want it there: fandom in this area is still too split-up to handle a World Con.

As for the Rules Committee, I knew it was forcing nothing on fandom, either good or bad. I knew it from the start, from talks with deCamp, Jim Williams, and others that they merely hoped to work out some sort of plan that they could present to fandom at the Phillycon and have fandom vote on it.

They did work out a plan of sorts. It was passed by vote, by the fans. And I suspect it may prove to be a hot issue at the Frisco Con, particularly since the buck was passed to Frisco to work out a rotating plan for future cons--again, to be presented to fandom and voted on. Maybe fanzines should be publishing stuff about this, so fans can know about it and get it hashed out, instead of publishing stuff about what happened last year or the year before--stuff which fandom SHOULD have hashed out long ago. Could it be that fanzine editors aren't on the ball?

As for the Rules Committee (that is, deCamp) passing on bids for the '54 con, that was another nobody could force on fandom. A number of wary East Coast fan kept an eye on that, and it seems they were more successful at it than Briggs was. There was no ruling out of bids from the south because of racial discrimination or of Detroit because of split club or feuds or whatever. There was plenty of talk by virtually everyone, with plenty of wild ideas floating around. But the only definite thing was that a bid for the '54 Con had to be backed up by an active fan group that really existed, not by someone merely with a dreamed up club. Apparently, All Briggs heard was one or two of the wild schemes being proposed--there were plenty, most of which couldn't pass one test: if presented to fandom at the Phillycon

would they be approved by fandom?--and Briggs took what little he heard far too literally and began spreading it as gospel.

It's also apparent that Elsberry had no idea of the close relationship between Philly and New Jersey fandom. Quite a few Philly fans show up at ESFA meetings in Newark, and Newark fans occasionally drop in on PSFS doings. Some are fans who did their fanzine publishing and egoboosting back in prewar active fandom. Thus, it should be no surprise that I not only gave my "name" to the Con Publicity Committee, but I also got ads into a few prozines and sent out a couple of hundred letters boosting the Con, while Dave Kyle ended up with the "ripe plum" Elsberry calls the Program Booklet and Jean Carroll got the last-minute task of rigging some sort of Costume Ball.

There are promising indications in NY-NJ fandom, these days. The fanclubs in this area may be well-enuff organized in a year or two to put on a small regional con which, once started would no doubt become an annual affair. Later (perhaps much later) they can think seriously about tackling a World Con. But it doesn't seem likely that they'll be ready to bid for it at Frisco, in case Elsberry or anyone else is worrying about it.

As for the pros... the ones I've seen appear to have a proper respect for fandom. Somehow, I doubt if they could get together and agree on anything, even if their lives depended on it, and a pro "pressure group" is something I'd have to see to believe. Especially in fandom.

The rest of #13 was a top rate job. If Trends were the average, I'd say today's fanzines are a considerable improvement over the prehistoric era of Spaceways, Le Zombie, VoM, Chanticleer, etc.

Yours,

Joe Gibson

The following is excerpted from a letter I received from Joe the following week.

Incidentally, I read Elsberry's letters in part to a recent ESFA club meeting, to give these stodgy, oldtime fans some idea of the things that are going on in modern fandom. Their reaction varied somewhere between open-mouthed astonishment, incredulous mirth, and sheer boredom. None of the crowd pubs a fanzine, y'know, and only 3 or 4 ever read 'em. Which is one reason the rest of fandom has known so little about what's going on in this eastern area.

Then Les Del Rey, the quest speaker, got up and told what he thought was the trouble with both science fiction and fandom, today: too little good science fiction and too much fan politics. He said he's all for good science fiction and more fan activities, not politics (which aren't his exact words, of course, but were certainly his sentiments.) Naturally, everyone accused him of being the leader of the Pro Underground, and a slight ball was soon in progress.

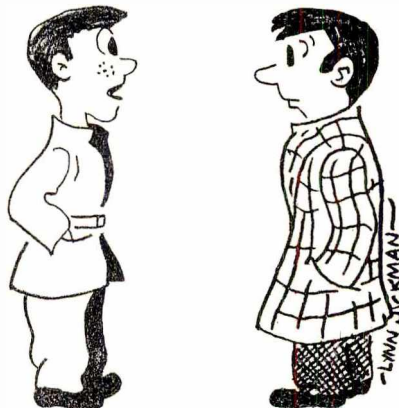
Surprise Attack

What hovers high above my head
A meteor? - a falling star?
Or some strange craft with stranger crew
On mission from a planet far?

Or foes perhaps - invaders come
To capture Earth for warring Mars
But wait, it closer comes to sight
I see it plain - its

Junior's kite.

by June McClain



"HECK- I DON'T READ ANY PROZINES
ANYMORE. I FOUND OUT FANZINES
ARE MUCH BETTER,"

My Saps mailing comments must be kept breif this mailing as this issue of Trends is getting out of hand. How so many extra pages kept sneaking in, I don't know.

I'll start with what I consider one of the better efforts in this mailing, Ignatz #4. For some reason I liked this. Maybe it was "Beauty in a Bottle" that did it. Nancy, you describe the feelings of us luses so well. Could it be that yours is a lush too? Oh, but mentioning beer on the same page ---- I'm a high class lush and herewith order you to write a poem about Jack Daniels #7 Sour Mash Bourbon. Artwork this issue slipped. Best was sweet puppy dog on page 12 and 13.

Next in the pile is GYPsum (errr--excuse me---) Gem Tones. I have long liked this zine, swapping with Gem for several years before finally becoming a Sap myself. (Hm - before finally becoming a Sap myself -- sounds derogatory doesn't it.) Issue is good as usual. One of the best in the mailing. G. M.; Harry Turner has 3 inferior domestic varieties. I did not give him my permission to turn out three genuwine little monsters.

What have we here ---- Looking Sapsward(?) Arguments already you wish to start? OK -- Jack Daniels #7 is the new ghod.

Wants from Mcneil -- OK McNeil, I've finally moved most of my collection and am busy filing them. Starting next issue I'll be giving some listings on the ones I want to sell or trade. Pretty fast aren't I. Lets see, I promised you that at the Nolacon didn't I.

Revoltin Remarks is a revoltin zine.

Warhoon -- As with the two above mentioned, one or two pages -- phooey! Anybody could at least put 6 pages in a mailing. Gafia press indeed.

Gnaub -- hummmmm-

Nandu -- Beautiful mimeoing, beautiful artwork, good writing, swell zine, but I liked the last issue better.

Dodo #2 -- For a cute lil ole gal you have one hell of an outlook on life and a putrid taste in music. I agree with Nangee, though, hate us all to hell and back, but stay with us. We need cute gals.

The Archives #2 -- Ilike Larry, I like his zines. Nice Mimeo, nice art.

Ghu Saplement #17 -- Gads -- Beer on the cover. Jack Daniels #7 is the true ghod.

The Third Bop -- Please Al -- learn how to run that mimeo. I like to read your zine but a couple of the pages made my eyes bleed. Was improved over last issues mimeoing though.

Creep #2 -- Nice duplication. Cute cover. Interesting reading. I enjoyed it.

The Bronc -- Liked it!!!!

Servi-warp -- Says its by Eney and Rapp. Must be pennames of Wolhiem.

Tale of Two

Cuties

by Wilkie Conner



Homer Henry Hickmann, (with TWO 'n's') was not exactly handsome, but, then, he wasn't exactly unhandsome, either. He was, shall we say, the in-between type. You could take him or leave. Most people left him, but that is beside the point. He wasn't exactly lean, nor was he fat; he wasn't too tall, nor was he apt to be nick-named 'shorty.' He was the average man personified.

If it hadn't been that Homer Henry always had a habit of stopping at Redman's Bar and Grill for coffee, he wouldn't have met the First Cutie. And if he hadn't met the First Cutie, he couldn't possibly have met the Second Cutie...and if he hadn't met the twi, there would have been no story. So you might say this yarn owes its birth to a cup of coffee.

She was sitting at the counter sipping a beverage. Homer dropped beside her without seeing her. Until he had had his first swallow of coffee in the morning, Homer couldn't see anything. The java opened his eyes and he glanced about the room to see if any bill collectors were present. (Had they been, he would have went into the men's room, climbed out the window and moved his Mercury to a less conspicuous spot. Also, he would have hidden his watch, tie pin and diamond ring.) Having assured himself that the coast was clear, he began to enjoy his coffee. He was about half-way down from his lips with the cup, when his wrist seemed to grow weak and he spilled the hot beverage into the lap of the First Cutie. He was embarrassed.

The lady glared at him and Homer felt hot blood flooding to his face. He swallowed hard, his Adam's apple bobbing like a fisherman's cork, and finally managed to find a reasonably accurate facsimile of his voice, 'I--I beg your pardon. I didn't mean...'

'Mean it or not,' snapped the lady, 'if they served hotter coffee in here, I would have been parboiled. And, I would have sued!'

Homer twisted about and awkwardly began swabbing at the spilled coffee with his handkerchief.

'I'll have your dress cleaned...' he began.

'In that case, you may quit playing with my legs and me home, so I can change.'

Reluctantly, Homer quit the swabbing and put the soggy handkerchief into his coat pocket.

'It will be a pleasure to help you,' Homer said, arising.

The First Cutie slid from the stool. 'I presume you have a car?'

'Oh, yes. I have a car. It's parked outside.'

'How nice! I thought it was under your coat!'

Homer ignored the sarcasm and pulled a dollar bill from his pocket and laid it on the counter to take care of his and the girl's drinks, making a mental note to see Redman about the change later. He then followed the girl into the street.

The First Cutie was staying at a hotel close to Redman's, so they were there almost before the Mercury was recovered from the shock of its boss actually having a woman for a passenger.

'You wait for me,' The First Cutie commanded as she got out of the car without waiting for Homer---who hadn't thought of it, anyway---to get out and open the door for her. 'I'll change and bring the dress right out.'

Homer watched the girl go through the big doors the doorman was holding open for her. His heart was thumping excitedly. After twenty-three years of bachelorhood, he suddenly felt that she was THE girl. He was glad he'd been so clumsy. Yet he was angry that he had been so school-boyishly embarrassed. Homer Henry Hickmann---converted Confederate gentleman from Ohio!---should have had more poise. He should have been master of the situation. Instead, he'd made a damn stuttering ass of himself.

While he was mentally chastising himself, the Second Cutie appeared.

She was walking down the street, straight toward his car. At first, Homer thought he was dreaming. He looked at her, and then he rubbed his eyes. A nude woman walking down the street in broad daylight! And in a sleepy Southern town too! It was preposterous, unbelievable, unthinkable. It just wasn't done. Why here in Statesburg, North Carolina, they didn't even have Sunday movies, let alone allow nude women on the streets.

When she was closer, he could see his first impression was wrong. She wasn't entirely nude. But the skin tight, pink tights she had on left little to the imagination.

The girl walked up to the Mercury and said, 'Quit staring at me and take me to the police station.'

For the second time in less than an hour, Homer was embarrassed. He forgot that he was a converted Southern gentleman, the master of any situation. He swallowed, gulped and said, 'Lady, dressed as you are, a police station is no place for you!'

'Don't argue with me! I know where I want to go. Now, are you going to take me to the police station or not.'

'Very well, if you insist.' He opened the door and held the seat over so she could get into the rear. The Second Cutie was just seating herself, as the First Cutie came out of the hotel and approached the car, carrying the soiled dress over her arm. Like the Second Cutie, she, too, was dressed in pink tights.

Homer turned preplexedly from one to another. If someone from an insane asylum had come along, he would gladly have gone with them. The two girls glared at one another the way women will when they find another of the species similarly attired---or, as in this case, unattired.

'Say, what is this...a nudist convention?' Homer demanded, as the First Cutie climbed in beside him.

'Never mind! Just drive to the cleaners.'

'To the police station,' came from the back seat.

The First Cutie turned about and looked into the eyes of the Second Cutie. 'The Cleaners!' she said firmly.

'Police station.'

The First Cutie got upon her knees on the seat and leaned across the back and said, 'TO THE CLEANERS!'

Before Homer knew what was happening, the two girls were clawing at each others eyes, hair and faces in a free-for-all female fight, right there in his car. The furor was causing passers-by to stop and glare. It wasn't everyday Statesburg had a wench-fight out in public. It was better than a circus. Homer felt about three feet tall. He wished he were on Mars.....



That was the straw that broke the camel's back. One instant, he was on a street in the North Carolina town of Statesburg. The next, he was on a desert in the middle of Mars' equatorial belt. With him was a Mercury. Two semi-nude women who definitely didn't like each other, a dress in need of cleaning, with no cleaners available...a girl who wanted the police...with no police station closer than a little green ball called Earth.

'This,' said the amazed Mr. Wickmann, 'is a pretty kettle of dandelions...but how did it happen?' It was then he noticed his passengers had quit their squabbling. Instead, they were laughing.

'What's so dad-blamed funny?'

'Shall we tell him' laughed Cutie #1

'Yeah,' said #2. 'Like all Earthmen, he's too stupid to find out if we didn't.'

Cutie #1 gazed into Homer's eyes. 'Now, take this calmly. What was your last thought before you found yourself here?'

'Why--Why--I wished I were on Mars!'

'Exactly! And we are now on Mars!'

'I didn't understand you. I thought you said we were on Mars.' Homer doubled up with laughter.

'We ARE on Mars, stupid!'

'You're kidding,' Homer almost choked.

'I'm not kidding. The girl in the back seat is my twin sister, Zelda Zock. I'm Zinnia Zock. We're Martians..'

'But you can't be! Mars is cold and desolate..it has a weak gravity and thin air. I've been reading FUTURE SCIENCE FICTION and other science fiction magazines for years and I guess I've learned something about Mars from them! Besides, even if Mars were habited, its life wouldn't be in human form...'

'How stupid can an Earthman get!' Zinnia wanted to know. She sounded as disgusted as an old hen who has just found a stray feather in the coop. She turned to her twin sister, 'Zelda, explain it to him in little words, so he can understand it...'

Zelda leaned across the seat and Homer felt his heart pounding furiously at her nearness. 'Look. Mars is an ancient planet. We had a civilization here before your planet even had an amoeba. Our race long ago learned the science of mind-control. We make you see Mars as you'd want to see it, not as it actually is; just as we make you see us just as you'd want to see us...as you'd want us to be. How we really are, doesn't matter. As you can see, Mars is, even to you somewhat desolate. However, there is a valley near here and in it there's civilization. There is a village with a population consisting mostly of females, which will appear to you as we do, in so-called human--she shuddered...'form. The males---well, you won't see them, anyway. They'll be working in the mines.'

Homer's head was going 'round and 'round. It seemed so fantastic, so unreal. He felt like he felt that time he got drunk at the carnival and sobered up to find that he'd been sleeping it off in the freak tent.

Zinnia said. 'We've wasted enough time. Let's take him to town. Start the motor.'

Surprisingly enough the car started. Zinnia gave terse directions for finding the town. On the way, she gave a quick account of what had happened, and why.

Mars was far from being a dead planet. Though there was little water and no food, both could had from a rare mineral that could be mined far under the crust of the planet's land. There was only one drawback: the mineral made men sterile. The race was doomed to extinction, either from starvation or lack of male fertility. The females were in the majority: were the planets rulers, doctors, chemists, teachers. Like women the universe over, they decided something had to be done, so they got together and sought a solution. They discovered by using two women with almost identical minds, such as possessed by identical twins, the two could generate enough mental energy to create a space-warp that could put them on any planet in the universe. Each Mars year, they picked out two delegates to go man hunting. This had been going on for generations. Some males were brought from every inhabited planet, but as the food they had to eat soon made them useless, they soon had to be sent back to their native planets. When Zelda and Zinnia were chosen, they picked earth Earth, partly because all their memory, they had never known of an Earthman being chosen, and partly because the science fiction writers on Mars pictured earthmen as being exoerts in the art of propigation.

'We tested lots of males on your planet in order to find one we could control. We were about to give up when I caused you to spill that coffee, merely by suggesting it to your subconscious. Then I knew I had you. I telepathed Zelda--she was in Europe flirting with some Frenchman---that the search was over. She immediately created a minor space-warp and came to you at the hotel. Though we are fairly powerful, we needed your help in order to create a warp big enough to transport the three of us and the car. So we staged a fight, and when you were sufficiently embarrassed for us to really grab control, we suggested that you wish yourself on Mars...you did...and this is it!'

'Well, I'll be damned,' said Homer. He couldn't think of anything else. With a grunt, he stepped heavily on the accelerator. The Mercury, amazed at the light gravity, whizzed merrily across the desert.

In an hour, the desert ended. The city of Zagoon, stretched along a mine, came into sight. The mines, Homer noticed, were dug in long, straight, lines. He realized that these gaping ditches were the famous canals earthian astronomers argued about.

A great crowd of females, each clothed somewhat similarly to Outies #1 and 2, thronged about the car as they entered the city.

'Welcoming committee!' said Homer gleefully, for the first time really feeling good about the whole matter.

'Welcoming committee, my foot,' sneered Zelda. 'These women are childless. They're all married and they want children. You have quite a job cut out for you for the next few months!'

Homer shivered. Into his memory came scenes from various science fiction 'last-man-on-earth' stories... and while he had often dreamed of such a situation with himself as the hero, he felt suddenly weak and nervous now that it was so alarmingly true. He stopped the car.

'Drive on, you fool,' commanded Zinna. 'Di you want to be mobbed?'

The warning came too late. The women began to push and shove at each other, trying to get to the car first. They began to pull hair, and to shout and curse. From someplace in their tunics, they produced thin-bladed knives and a bloody battle raged.

Zelda and Zinnia jumped from the car, dragging Homer with them. They scurried along a deserted back street until they came to a large building on the edge of town.

'Quick,' they commanded. 'In there.' Zinnia opened a door and pushed Homer through. Zelda passed her hand before Homer's eyes and before he realized exactly how the room looked, it took on the appearance of a comfortable hotel room.

'You'll be safe here until we get to the President and decide how to ration your services.'

'What about those women out there fighting?'

'Oh, they'll stop when they realize you've gone. But they'll be hunting for you. Don't be afraid, though. They won't hurt you...INTENTIONALLY. You're too valuable to them.' Homer shivered at the emphasis she put on 'INTENTIONALLY.'

'We must go now,' said Zelda. 'Make yourself comfortable, stay in here, and don't worry. We shall return.'

The next few days were like nightmares to Homer. He stayed safely in the room. Yet, just a glance from the window showed him the grim-faced women as they prowled the streets, searching....searching for the birthright of every woman of the universe: the right to give life. If just one of these women should happen to discover him! One--wouldn't be so bad. The terrible part would be when the word spread. Homer trembled at the consequences!

(cont. next page)

Midwestcon May 22nd and 23rd Bellefontaine, Ohio Ingalls Hotel

BE THERE!!

Zinnia, or Zelfa, -- he couldn't remember which -- had left some food in concentrated tablets wrapped in the dress he had damaged. Homer ate one when he felt hungry and it satisfied his hunger---though they weren't exactly as filling as steak and potatoes.

The fourth day of his imprisonment brought no sign of the girls. Homer made several cautious trips to the window and peered out. Neither time did he see any women except for a few patrols of what appeared to be police officers.

So, winning an argument with himself, Homer went out. He found his Mercury parked where the fight had ensued. It was trampled a bit, and scratched up some, but it would still work. He started out in the direction he was already headed. He let the car have its nose, so to speak.

The course led through the heart of town, and when he was in the middle of the first block, he realized his mistake. One of the patrols noticed him and there was a shout. In a second, the street was alive with women coming from all directions. Homer pressed hard on the gas feed. But the Mercury hadn't been mentally acclimated to atmospheric conditions on Mars, as Homer had, so it didn't respond to the thin atmospheric conditions on Mars, as quickly as it would have on Earth. However the gravity was lighter and it moved swiftly. But not swiftly enough. The horde of scantily clad, screaming females swept across the car, stopping it as effectively as one lone blonde could have on Earth.

Homer felt himself being lifted in the manner of a football hero and passed from the car to the shoulders of the nearest women. They handled him firmly, yet tenderly. As Zinnia had said, they wouldn't hurt him intentionally. It was what they might do unintentionally that worried Homer.

'Lemme down,' he screamed. He kicked wildly. However, the women paid no heed and carried him aloft through the entire length of the street. He couldn't understand the gibberish they were talking. But it had a triumphant sound that he didn't like. He wished Zelfa or Zinnia, or both, would happen along. At least they could speak English. And though he despised them for getting him into such a predicament, at least they would know what to do with these....these barbarians!

The women paid no heed to his kicking and gouging and hair pulling. They were used to kid-napping virile males and were used to being roughed up a bit. One lady, a tender gleam in her eye, pinched the calf of his leg playfully. Homer kicked her teeth out just as playfully and instead of being mad, she ran around bragging about it. Another girl, seeing the pinched calf, came up to massage it in a motherly fashion. Homer didn't know whether to be embarrassed or angry. In fact, he was too much of a man to be angry...really angry. And too much of a gentleman not to be embarrassed. It was a dream situation that had all the qualities of a nightmare thrown in.



Homer could see that they were approaching a sort of market place. A wide, paved clearing, with a platform in the center. Homer's first thought was that they were going to auction him off, like a slave. But then he noticed the women were passing sealed envelopes amongst themselves, and he realized he was going to be the object of a raffle. Shuddering, he felt like a Turkey on Thanksgiving eve.

Word of his capture spread quickly---telepathically, he learned later. By the time they were established on the platform, a great crowd had gathered and Homer could see more coming from all directions. The market place was literally seething with females. However, neither Zinnia nor Zelda seemed to be present.

Homer was placed on a chair in the center of the platform. A very beautiful red-head who seemed all curves, pulled a blade from a sheath suspended from the belt of her tunic and pressed it gently against Homer's neck. If he had any ideas about leaving, they were quickly dispelled.

Then a young brunet stepped to the center and began to jabber away. Homer wished he could understand Martian. At least he would have been more certain just what was going on. His knees were shaking like a dymyankee eating water melon. His heart was pounding against his ribs like it did that time he peeped into the school gym and saw his best girl getting ready for a shower. He wouldn't admit that he was frightened---the goose pimples on him were caused by the thin Martian air. The women in the audience quit so much disordered milling and began to write something on the papers from the envelopes and then began dropping the envelopes into a huge basket. He knew, then, that the drawing was about to commence.

He kept looking for a familiar face in the crowd. Though from a distance all the women looked alike, those that were close might as well have been from Venus for all that he could recognise. Then, his heart gave a quick, double-times beat. Near the inner edge of the circle that ringed the platform, he saw Zelda and Zinnia. They, too, seemed intent on the raffle. He saw them wildly waving their arms and shouting, just like the rest. His heart sank. They were his only friends, and they were deserting him. Homer started to wish he were dead, then stopped himself just in time. He remembered if he hadn't made a mild wish, he wouldn't have been in this predicament now.

For the first time in his rather colorless existence, Homer Henry Hickmann, felt like committing suicide--whether by wish or by leaning just a bit on the knife the red head held to his throat. He almost had nerve enough to lean on that knife, when he realized there was a purpose behind his girl friends' handwavings. They were semaphoring. He recalled, now, that they had access to his mind and therefore they were familiar with the wig-wag message days of the Boy Scout troop he'd belonged to when he was a lad.

Homer shut his eyes and tried to remember the code. Perhaps the girls' concentration of it helped. For the symbols seemed to leap into his brain. He could see each signal as clearly as if it were imprinted in the Boy Scout Handbook. Quickly, he opened his eyes and got the message:

'--M--A--K--E--L--O--V--E--T--O--G--I--R--L--W--I--T--H--K--N--I--F--E--'

Homer let the message sink in, then he turned his face to that of the red-head and smiled. She was a bit startled and for a second, Homer thought that she was going to use the knife. He felt more goose-flesh forming on his body. Then the girl's eyes lit up with a smile. She relaxed pressure on the knife. Encouragement filled Homer's body. He reached out and ran his hand up and down the girl's leg. The red-head almost swooned. He felt like Johnny Ray for a second. In fact, he would have given anything to have been on a little white cloud, whether or not it cried. The girl dropped the knife back into its sheath and Homer stood up. He reached for the girl and she came into his arms. His mouth found hers in a delightful kiss. Under different circumstances, he would have enjoyed it. In fact, it would be lying to say that he DIDN'T get SOME enjoyment from it under the circumstances as they were. He went back for seconds, after a brief pause for air.

The women weren't long in discovering what was happening. A shout went up that could have been heard on earth, if people could have been pried away from their television sets or Ray Bradbury yarns long enough to listen. Homer didn't need to savvy Martian to know the red-head was a very unpopular female at the moment. Female nature is the same through-out the universe, and these women felt they were being cheated. It was worse than a bargain basement sale at Macey's.

The red-head, seeing that she was being contested for her prize drew her blade and leaped into the crowd. Before the other women knew what was happening, Homer jumped from the platform and ran toward his two friends.

'You idiot,' said Zelda when he got to them, 'why didn't you stay in your room? Now you've got all the female population up in arms. No telling when they'll quit fighting.'

'Don't preach to me now,' pleaded Homer. 'Just get me away from here.'

'That'll be hard to do. Just as soon as these women quit fighting, they'll be after you again. Unless...' Zinnia turned to Zelda. 'Get rid of your clothes.' Then she turned to Homer and started undressing him.

'Hey!' Homer yelled. 'What's the idea of undressing me in front of all these women.' He tried vainly to keep his shorts, but Zinnia yanked them away. Zelda, meanwhile, had disposed of her garment and was now putting on Homer's clothes. Zinnia picked up Zelda's garment and handed it to Homer. 'Here, stupid. Put this on.'

Zelda headed for the platform.

'U'mon,' Zinnia instructed. 'She'll keep 'em fooled until we are away from here.'

The streets were deserted and they reached the Mercury in a few minutes. They got in, and Homer started the motor. It started quickly. Zinnia gave terse instructions.

'Where are we going?'

'To the home of the president. She wants you first.'

The full meaning of Zinnia's remark was a second or so in seeping into Homer's befuddled brain. He stared dumbly and his adam's apple bobbed once or twice.

'For -- baby purposes?' he managed to ask.

'Of course, stupid, The president is a woman, you know.' Zinnia answered. 'Zelda and I have been with her every since we left you, trying to work out some way of rationing you. She decided that since she was president, she should have first choice. Then---' she smiled broadly-- 'Zelda and I shall be rewarded for bringing you here!'

It was, Homer reflected, a dream situation--one that any red-blooded male would love to be in. And now that he was in it, he wanted out.

'Suppose I'm not willing. A man has his rights, you know.'

Anger flamed to Zinnia's usually pleasant countenance. 'Need I remind you that you are on Mars--- here men have no rights! Don't make such a remark again...or you'll never get back to Earth!'

They were close enough to the scene of the big fight for Homer to tell it was still going on--- from the sound, very furiously.

Homer stopped the car. Zinnia glared at him and started to speak. Homer put his arm about her and pulled her close.

'Zinnia...why take me to the President? Why don't we--the two of us--go back to my room? There, we would be alone--with no rationing!'

Zinnia slapped him and the blow stung him clear down to his boots.

'How dare you suggest I turn traitor. Start this machine, at once, before I kill you, personally!'

Homer felt a needle of fear in his belly, but he managed to ignore the wrathful girl. He held her tighter. She struggled and he kissed her, firmly. Her lips were soft, surprisingly so. And, equally surprising, Homer found he enjoyed the contact.

'You wouldn't be a traitor,' he whispered. 'The president would never know...and Zelda...we could manage her.'

'You make it sound so nice, Homer... I wish...'

'It would be nice. Damned nice.'

'You aren't trying some sort of trick?'

'Of course not!'

Homer began to lay it on thick. Seeing Zinnia was weakening, he recalled all the pretty nothings he'd ever heard or read and used them. For the first time since this crazy nightmare started, he saw a glimmer of light. If he could talk this--this--beautiful Mars Amazon into a private tete-a-tete, there might be a chance of convincing her that he should be sent back to earth...

'Just think... the two of us alone...with no competition...'

'You win,' said Zinnia, huskily, 'Turn the car around...'

It was a short drive to the place of his imprisonment. Homer led the way up the stairs. He flung open the door to his room and he and Zinnia entered.

Zelda, dressed in Homer's suit, was sitting on the bed.

'Enter! My charming and deceitful sister...I figured this would happen!' Zelda greeted.

Zinnia's face paled. 'Zelda! We thought...'

'That I was at the fight. Well, I slipped away. I wanted to get here ahead of you. I knew that Earthman would trick you into coming here. The president would have your head if she knew.'

'Zelda...you wouldn't...you couldn't...'

'Wait a second,' Homer demanded, surprised at his own bravery. 'Our plans included you. We were only going to stay here for a while, then we were going to come after you.'

'I can believe that,' Zelda snorted. 'That sister of mine would keep you to herself as long as she could.'

Zinnia crossed over and dropped on one knee in front of her sister. 'Please, Zelda...believe me... we thought of you...Please, I beg you, don't report me to the president. I'll do anything...'

Zelda burst out laughing. 'I can't keep it to myself any longer--' she jumped from the bed. 'Get up from there, Silly sister. You've done nothing to be reported for.'

'What do you mean...' Zinnia was puzzled.

'Yeah...why are you having such a sudden change of heart?'

Zelda picked up some of the concentrated food tablets Homer had been eating. She showed them to Homer. 'Did you eat any of these?'

'Why, yes. They were wrapped in that damaged dress. I figured you girls brought them from Earth for me. They were satisfying, if not delicious.'

It was Zinnia's turn to laugh. 'These tablets are concentrated food tablets, all right, but not of earth food. Your mind has been conditioned to see everything on Mars in its Earth quality. The people look like Earth-people...the buildings like Earth buildings...and the tablets like Earth tablets. These tablets are the kind of food we on Mars have eaten for generations. We had them with us on Earth to use as food.'

'So what?'

'So you've eaten a dozen or so. So that is equivalent of a year's normal consumption of the mineral food. So, as far as Mars women are concerned, you are as sterile as the men down there in the mines. You are as useless as they are. That's so what.'

Homer was too happy to be astounded.

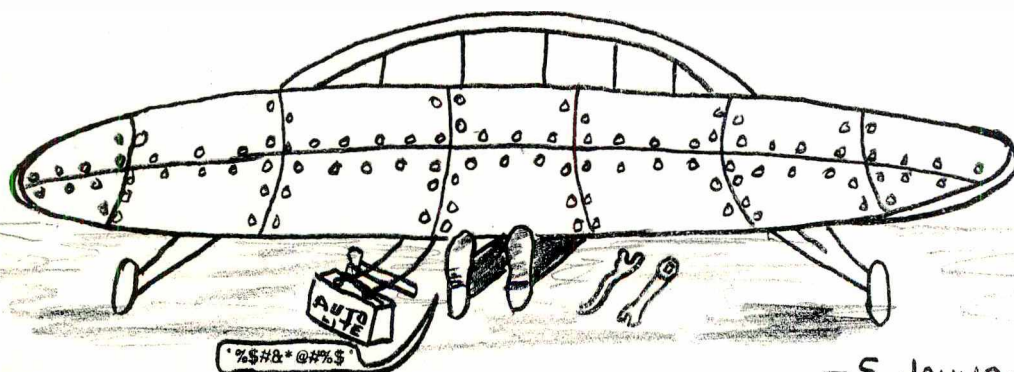
Then you'll send me home,' he managed to ask.

'There's no other choice,' there was a note of sadness in Zinnia's voice. 'Get into your Mercury...' Homer's Mercury was parked in front of Redman's Bar and Grill. Zelda and Zinnia, looking like two very beautiful earth girls, were with him.

Homer hugged them both as they got out.

'It's nice to have met you,' he said. They waved to him and briskly walked away. Homer watched them until they turned a corner and passed from his sight. Then he entered Redman's and headed straight for the bar...

So, friend, if you see a beautiful blonde sitting invitingly on the stool in your favorite cafe or bar, leave her. She MIGHT be from Mars!



- S. JOHNSON -



This is Lynn Hickman —
I've just overheard "Alice"
telling a friend some of
the things she has in
her future. Believe me — they are great.

Send 20¢ for a sample copy of Ala Space
to Kent Corey Box 64 Enid, Oklahoma

The Editors Page

This issue marks the start of my fourth year in fan publishing and is a little larger than usual to commemorate that fact. An "annish" if you wish to call it that. I don't, for I know what happens to little boys who put out annishes. Seems they aren't long with us anymore.

This issue, materialwise is, I believe, the best I've printed to date. I like humorous stories and I believe Hal and Wilkie have done very well in that department. I'm sorry to say I couldn't print Robert Gilberts' cover this issue, but the truth of the matter is, I just didn't have the spare cash to have it plated. Maybe in an issue or two that problem will be solved and I can once again use plated covers.

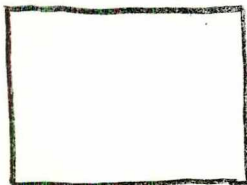
Next issue, materialwise, will feature another humorous story by Hal Annas, a brilliant satire by Ray Schaffer, and an article by Joe Gibson. There will be the usual Plato Jones cartoons as well as another Telekenesis strip by Kincannon. And of course, the letter column, my Saps comments and other little things that will, I hope, add up to a pleasant evening of fan fun for you.

Don Fruchey, better known to Stf Trends readers as Don Duke, has a four page spread in the March 1954 issue of Amateur Art and Camera, (50¢ at most newstands). Six illustrations, in different mediums, were reproduced on these pages along with a short article on Don and his methods in rendering the drawings. Get a copy of AA&C before they're sold out as I'm sure you'll enjoy the article and Don's work.

Don, by the way, did this issues excellent cover. I'm sure my older readers will remember his work in TLMA and The Little Corpucle. Don has recently recovered from a very bad case of Gafia and has promised to do much more work for Stf Trends in the future. He also has covers coming up on Hodge Podge and Ala Space.

Lynn A. Hickman

P.S. Remember, your buck must be here within two weeks after you get this yine if you want to be on my 100 list and continue receiving Trends!



AN "X" IN THIS

SQUARE MEANS YOUR SUB
HAS EXPIRED.

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"WHO, ME?"

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