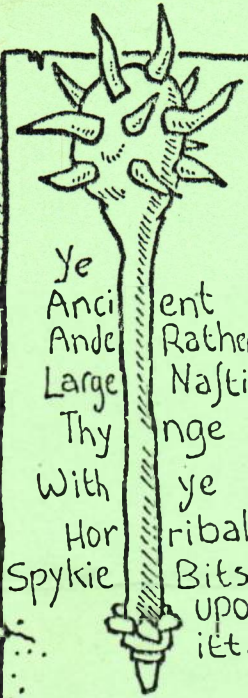
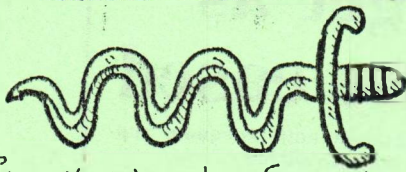


# THYME #78

The Australasian SF News Magazine  
March 1990



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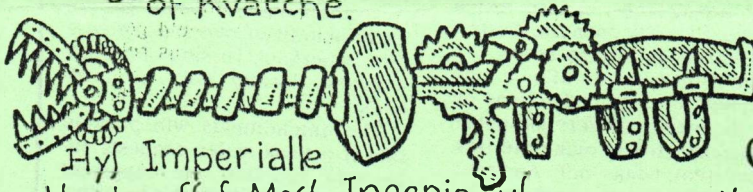
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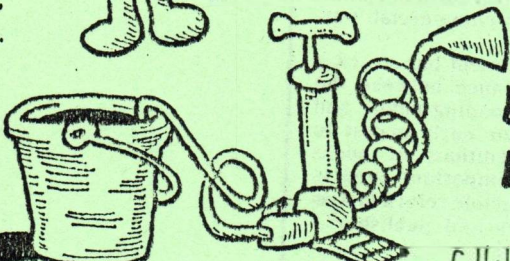


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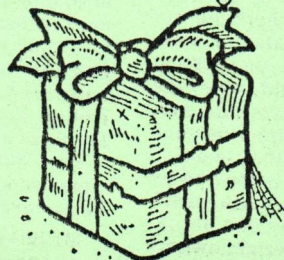


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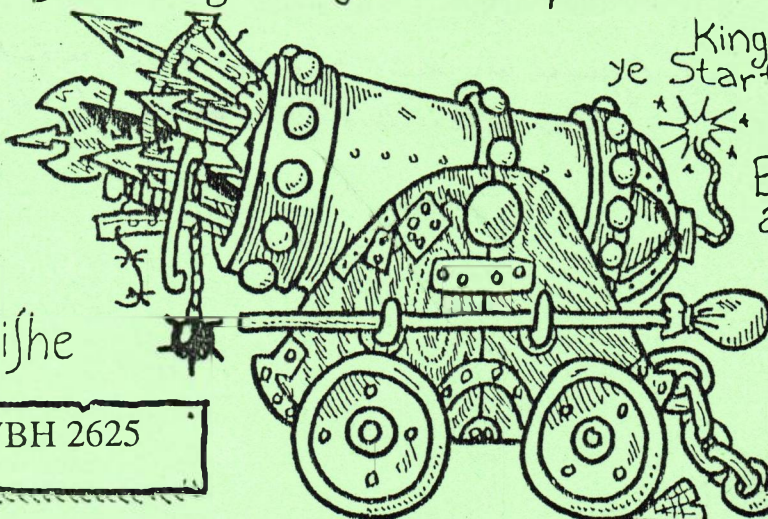
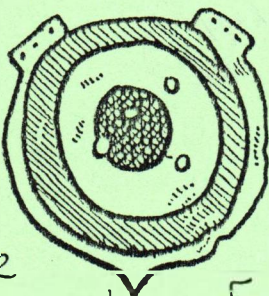
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# Overseas books will be easier to get as trade curbs are eased

By MICHELLE GRATTAN,  
Canberra

The Federal Government last night announced changes which will significantly open the Australian market to foreign books.

The reform comes after a long campaign to ease restrictions on the importing of foreign books and is expected to make the flow of overseas books into Australia faster and possibly cheaper.

But the Government has not gone as far as recommendations from the Prices Surveillance Authority, which urged a fully open market.

The compromise will not be welcomed by British publishers who have exercised control over the Australian market, but it will also fail to meet the demands of those wanting a completely open system.

The Attorney-General, Mr Bowen, said that if publishers did not publish first in Australia, or within 30 days of first publication overseas, they would lose the right to control imports into Australia, which would then become an open market for that book.

If a book that was protected by the Australian publication provision was out of supply and not replenished by the copyright owners within 90 days, the book would become subject to uncontrolled

importation until adequate supplies were available.

Mr Bowen said an important feature of these reforms was that Australian readers would get the early benefit of overseas release of a paperback version of a book available locally only in hardback.

The amendments will provide that if a book seller requests paperback supplies, the copyright owner cannot satisfy this by offering to supply hardbacks. If paperbacks are not supplied after 90 days, the book seller will be able to go offshore for paperbacks.

Under the reforms a book seller will be able to import a copy of any book at any time to fill a documented order by a customer wanting it for non-commercial purposes.

"The Government has struck a reasonable balance between the desire of the reading public and book sellers for early access to lower-priced editions of books and the very important need to ensure a reasonable return to Australian authors and publishers," Mr Bowen said.

He said the changes within time should have "a salutary downward effect on prices".

Mr Bowen said the Government hoped to introduce legislation for the changes early next year.

*The Age : Friday 22 Dec 1989*

*(I guess we have to wait & see what happens after the election on March 24! CRN)*



**Thyme** is brought to you ~bimonthly (Commitments permitting) by LynC, from the ADDRESS:

P.O. Box 4024, University of Melbourne, VIC, AUSTRALIA, 3052.

Telephone: [61 3] 615 0328 Oz EST Business Hours, or 386 8058 until 24/Mar/90, 386 0721 after (Clive Newall or Lyn), before 10:00 pm GMT+10.

**Thyme** is available for news, reviews, artwork, informative phone calls or letters, trade, or even subscription, at the following rates: 8 issues for A\$10 (NZ\$13, or UK£5 - to the agents). **ELSEWHERE**: \$2.00 Australian per issue. All overseas copies are sent SAL, or Airmail if SAL not available.

Advertising rates: \$15 (Oz) per quarter page, or pro rata. Copy-ready ads only.

Our agents are: **EUROPE**: Joseph Nicholas, 5A Frinton Rd, Stamford Hill, London, N15 6NH, U. K. **NEW ZEALAND**: Lyn McConchie, c/- Farside Farm, R.D. Norsewood, Aotearoa/NZ. **ELSEWHERE**: write to me (LynC) directly.

If you have a big hand-drawn X (XX for non Australians) on your mailing label, this means that this is your LAST issue unless you **DO SOMETHING**.

I apologise for the lateness of this issue, but between work, buying and renovating a home, and caring for a new addition to our family (Two 2 week old kittens, one of whom had to be put to sleep three weeks later), there just hasn't been time till now. Remember FIJAGH!

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## 1990 Ditmar Nominees:

The Ditmar (Australian Science Fiction) Award Nominees have been announced. The voting form is enclosed, and is due back BEFORE Danse Macabre, on the 6th of April.

### Best Australian Long Fiction:

Victor Kelleher, The Red King (Viking Kestrel)

Keith Taylor, The Sorcerer's Sacred Isle [The Danans: Book One] (Ace)

Wynne Whiteford, Lake of the Sun (Ace)

### Best Australian Short Fiction:

Terry Dowling, "The Quiet Redemption of Andy the House" (Aust Short Stories #26, June 1989)

Rosaleen Love, "If you go Down to the Park Today" (Total Devotion Machine Women's Press)

Rosaleen Love, "Total Devotion Machine" (as above)

Petrina Smith, "Over the Edge" (Mirrors: Redress Novellas Women's Redress Press)

### Best Fanzine:

ASFR (Aust SF Review)

SF Collective

Ethel the Aardvark

Melb SF Club (Alan Stewart (Ed))

Get Stuffed

Jacob Blake

Sweetness and Light

Jack R. Herman

### Best Fan Writer:

Terry Frost

Bruce Gillespie

Ian Gunn

Jack Herman

Yvonne Hintz

Alan Stewart



**Best Fan Artist:**

Ian Gunn

Kerrie Hanlon

Craig Hilton

Phil Wlodarczyk

**William Atheling Jr Award for Criticism or review:**

Due to a lack of nominations, this category has been declared null and void this year.

Does it appear that a distinct air of cliquishness has crept into the fan nominations in the last two years??? Lessee - The old guard collective, the new guard Melbourne, and the Sydney mob. Nup, it looks like the same groups as last year.

On a more serious note: Does anyone know where I can get hold of anything Kerrie Hanlon did last year? And who is Yvonne Hintz? Can anyone point me in the direction of an example of her work?

Also if you are having trouble getting hold of the fiction, don't worry, so is most of Australia. The two Ace books (Keith Taylor and Wynne Whiteford) have only appeared in the Specialty book shops because technically they were published in the States, not here.

Rosaleen Love's book is stuck in the warehouse. For this book even the specialty SF stores are having real trouble. You will have to find one of the rare people with a copy, and photocopy the two stories nominated. It is a long messy complicated story as to why, despite the fact that it was officially published last year in Australia, it hasn't been released in Australia yet. It has to do with non payments, bloody mindedness, and a total lack of concern for the Australian market. I find it all too disgusting to write about, even if I did know ALL the facts (which I don't). The changes to importation legislation won't come soon enough for this member of the buying public!

For all these reasons it is not possible to bring you reviews of all the nominated works at this point in time, so in the interests of fairness, no reviews are being provided this issue. Please make an effort to read the nominated works yourselves and make an informed vote by April 6. - LynC

---

## NEBULA AWARD NOMINEES:

Here is the official list of nominees for the 1989 Nebula Award, a peer award given by the Science Fiction Writers of America. Congratulations to all the nominees!

**Novels:**

Poul Anderson, Boat of a Million Years (Tor)

Orson Scott Card, Prentice Alvin (Tor)

John Kessel, Good News From Outer Space (Tor)

Mike Resnick, Ivory: A Legend of Past and Future (Tor)

Elizabeth Ann Scarborough, The Healer's War (Doubleday/Foundation)

Jane Yolen, Sister Light, Sister Dark (Tor)



### Novellas:

Lois McMaster Bujold, "The Mountains of Mourning" (Analog, Borders of Infinity)  
John Crowley, "Great Works of Time" (Novelty, Doubleday)  
George Alec Effinger, "Marid Changes his Mind" (Asimov's)  
Megan Lindholm, "A Touch of Lavender" (Asimov's)  
Judith Moffett, "Tiny Tango" (Asimov's)  
Howard Waldrop, A Dozen Tough Jobs (Zeising Brothers).

### Novelettes:

Greg Bear, "Sisters" (Tangents)  
Megan Lindholm, "Silver Lady and the Fortyish Man" (Asimov's)  
Mike Resnick, "For I have touched the sky" (F&SF)  
Kristine Kathryn Rusch, "Fast Cars" (Asimov's)  
Robert Silverberg, "Enter A Soldier. Later: Enter Another" (Asimov's, Timegate)  
Connie Willis, "At the Rialto" (Omni, The Microverse)

### Short Stories:

Mary Aldridge, "The Adinkra Cloth" (Marion Zimmer Bradley's Fantasy Magazine)  
Michael Bishop, "The Ommatidium Miniatures" (The Microverse)  
Orson Scott Card, "Lost Boys" (F&SF)  
Suzy McKee Charnas, "Boobs" (Asimov's)  
Geoffrey A. Landis, "Ripples in the Dirac Sea" (Asimov's)  
Bruce Sterling, "Dori Bangs" (Asimov's)  
[Chuq Von Rospach]

Once again Isaac Asimov's Science Fiction Magazine (edited by Gardner Dozois) has a lion's share of the nominations, and this year, TOR can celebrate with five of the six novels nominated being theirs (Four edited by Beth Meacham, one by David Hartwell).

[Any errors due to glitches in the network- Ed]

## LOCS:

In reply to Russel Blackford's article on publishing in Australia comes this letter of agreement from Yvonne Rousseau:

P.O. Box 433  
Norwood SA 5067  
15 November 1989

Dear LynC,

Even before the members of Critical Mass in Adelaide had read Russell Blackford's injunction (in 'Advertisements for Ourselves', Thyme 77) to get their articles about sf printed in such publications as what he calls 'the Age Monthly Review. God blow me down!') - we had been innocently doing exactly that. The Age Monthly Review printed my own 'Parallel Worlds: Science Fiction History' in its August issue this year. Michael Tolley's 'A Fantastic History: How Pynchon Fuelled the Rocket State' in October, and Bryan Forte's 'Playing the Shadows: The Many Masks of Batman' in November. None of these were about sf by Australians - but perhaps it's helpful that they're by Australians about sf?

Cheers!



## SYDNEY IN '95:

After the disaster of Sydney in '91, and the withdrawal of Perth in '94, comes yet another Australian bid for a Worldcon. This one will be held ten years after Aussiecon II, which was held ten years after the very successful Aussiecon I.

This is now Sydney's third attempt at bidding for a Worldcon (Remember '83?), and while both previous attempts lost the Site Selection vote, at least they made it as far as the vote.

The bidding committee do nothing to aid their cause by naming it after 'Sydney in 91', and using the same venue (Darling Harbour) as that bid. At least this time though there is a better chance that the facilities will all be finished and open by the convention. Hopefully too, they aren't planning to make the same mistake of holding the Hugo Awards at the Opera House, halfway across Sydney. There is also mention of investigating cheaper alternative accommodation, which is a must as Darling Harbour is very expensive, even by Sydney standards.

Unfortunately though, the schism amongst Australian fans which destroyed "Sydney in '91" appears to have surfaced again, if John Tipper's open letter in Metaluna (#31, DEC '89) is anything to go by. I say 'unfortunately', because this means the bid will lose as all other Sydney bids lose. If Australia is to win another bid, we must present a unified front to the rest of the world. Sentimentally it feels right to have a Worldcon here every ten years, even if this one isn't to be in Melbourne.

Pre-supporting is \$10 (or \$15 if you want their newsletter). The committee is chaired by Rod Kearins, and includes (in alphabetical order) Graeme Batho, Mike Bourke, Ray Gleeson, Michelle Hallett, Jack R. Herman, Gary Luckman, Kevin McLean, and Gerald Smith. Address for information is G.P.O. Box 429, Sydney, NSW, Aus, 2001.

Two competitions have been announced so far - one for the Logo, and the other for the T-shirt. Personally I feel the Logo should come first, as the T-shirt will be a lot easier to design AFTER a logo is decided. Details available in their newsletter.

[S&L]

## ALIEN(S): The True Story or: How Not to Handle a Conflict - In Space, No-one Can Hear You Negotiate.

Every so often a teacher in the State School System floats the idea of having a school course on Peace, with a capital P. As everyone agrees that armed conflicts are a very wasteful form of human activity then, so the argument goes, teaching school children that peace is beneficial will eventually result in society as a whole rejecting war.

The idea might have some attraction for certain elements of the community but it's fundamentally flawed. If teachers want children to avoid fights in a still tough and nasty world then the little monsters should be set a course in war, not peace. How do conflicts (armed or not) begin? What keeps them going? Both questions are far more complicated than they appear at first - even World War II, where one side was clearly the aggressor, presents some interesting issues to study.

Only by such deep investigation of such questions will it be possible to work out ways to prevent or contain conflicts. I particularly recommend AJP Taylor's How Do Wars Begin as a quick introduction to the subject, which also has a much wider application in non-violent (usually) hassles such as industrial disputes and trade wars.



One Low Intensity Conflict (translation: not a full shooting war) that could have been significantly reduced by reasoned analysis at the time was the incident on board the deep space freighter, "The Nostromo". The same could be said of the much larger action at the Colonists base on planet LV-426 although, as we shall see, both the Alien aboard the Nostromo, and the aliens at the base would have been distinct political and legal embarrassments if revealed to the outside world. In space no-one likes political embarrassments.

It is unfortunate that any analysis of the incidents must rely heavily on an hysterical and obviously doctored account by Warrant Officer Ripley, and a coloured depiction of her version of events in the films ALIEN and ALIENS. (I enjoyed both films immensely, incidentally.) However, a few points do stand out.

In the first film the Nostromo diverted from its normal space-freighting business to set down on LV-426. There, members of the crew entered a long derelict spacecraft of non-human origin and took away a specimen alien life form. Besides being totally illegal it was an extraordinarily silly thing to do. One can imagine the die-hard members of the Organic Lifers Party (A futuristic cross between the Greenies and the Right to Lifers) chaining themselves to the doors of The Company offices back on Earth, demanding that the life form be returned to LV-426.

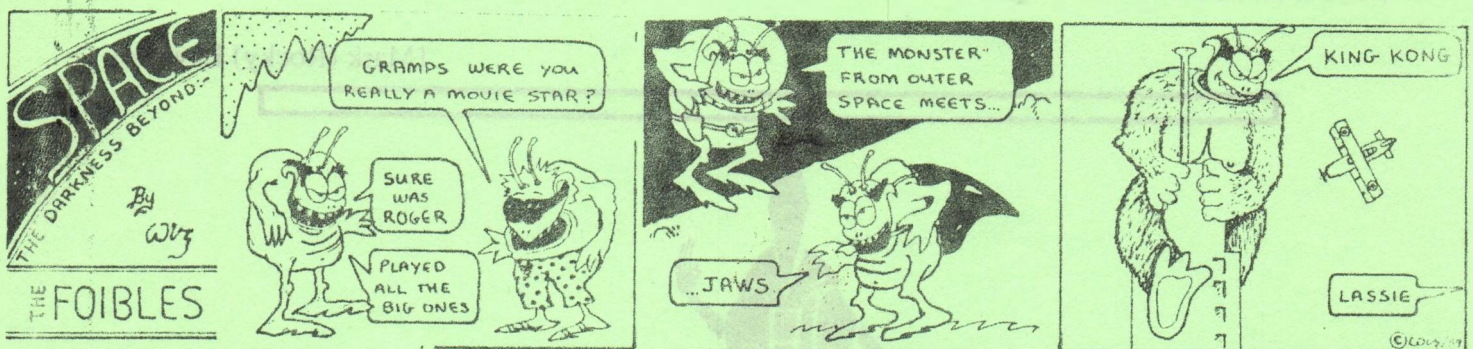
Ripley's version of the story is that the ship was responding to a distress call and that the creature attached itself to a crew member - the second or executive officer Kane. The rest of the crew insisted that Kane be brought aboard ship, while Ripley was the only one who tried to stick to Quarantine Procedures. Her attempt to observe procedure was thwarted by Scientific Officer Ash, who later turned out to be a Robot (?). Ash was also the only member of the crew, besides the ship's computer, who knew that the incident had been set up so that The Company's weapon division could get an alien to play with.

Note that in her version Ripley turns out lily-white innocent, while those who are to blame are either conveniently dead, or their identities are buried deep within The Company's archives. The real truth is that probably everyone involved bears some of the blame for the Nostromo disaster.

Firstly, it seems extremely unlikely that The Company (the institution's identity is not revealed), having somehow intercepted and deciphered the original distress message, would have risked a valuable ship and crew in the hope that someone would get a baby alien implanted in his chest. Too much risk. Instead the crew would have been paid, and paid very well, to make an unlogged detour. Presumably The Nostromo was the nearest convenient ship with an agreeable captain.

Any heavy work in that un-authorised stop-over would have been done by a small taskforce of Androids/Synthetics - probably no more than two battle 'droids - whose task would have been to capture at least one live adult of the species, preferably two, plus some egg samples.

What were the creatures doing on LV-426? Well, they certainly could not have evolved on the planet, and it is difficult to imagine how the creatures could have evolved elsewhere - although it may be possible.





On Earth, the wasp *Aphidus Nigripes* shares with the alien the charming habit of injecting its eggs into the living body of its prey, namely a potato aphid. When the eggs hatch they slowly consume the aphid from the inside. This is nasty. Animals also often have great strength. Polar bears can, reportedly, rip the perspex top off a small helicopter with ease, although they are also fairly easy to scare off by making loud noises. Needless to say Polar bears would have trouble hiding in a space ship.

To change the scale entirely but move closer to the concept, Ants also share the Alien-like quality of implacable hostility towards anything that comes near their nest. Some species of Ant even deliberately raid other nests for slaves, slaughtering everything in sight and taking captured larvae and pupae back to mature in their own nest.

So it's possible that the charming combination of qualities exhibited by the Aliens in the film could have evolved naturally, although, especially if the bit about the acid blood is true, it is much more likely that the species was genetically tailored by an advanced civilisation. As soldiers? As weapons? Who knows.

Whether the creatures were being taken somewhere by the unknown ship and something went wrong, or whether the ship was "infected" by the creatures are questions that can only be resolved by close examination of the wreck - which must still be intact incidentally. (It was a considerable distance from the colony.) Another interesting question is what was the ship doing on the surface, rather than in orbit somewhere. Sigh!

Whatever the exact chain of events the Alien creatures took over the wrecked ship and established a colony. Although the planet was probably not nearly as environmentally hostile as made out in the films, there was nowhere to go, and, more importantly, no-one to attack. Survival and adaptation to the dull life of subsiding on whatever they could find in the ship and the surrounding soil would have been tough, especially as the creatures had been designed for fighting.

But they did adapt and that was the problem, for although the new generation had not been shown the use of tools they were displaying a form of collective intelligence. As an "intelligent" species living on the planet, albeit marooned because they had wrecked the ship that had brought them, the creatures were technically in possession of the planet.

The film glosses over this point by showing the colony as just a load of egg sacs waiting for something to infect, but it is almost certain there were adults and at least one was taken aboard the ship (the bit about it growing to full size from an egg in such a short time can be dismissed). As a result a legal action to claim possession might have held enough water for the creatures to negotiate a slice of mineral rights for the whole, terra-formed planet.

Here the reader only needs to recall that the creatures were, in fact, Black to see just how embarrassing the incident could have become for everyone concerned.

Stay tuned for the next exciting episode. The Alien-napping that went wrong. Why *ALIENS* is just an interstellar remake of *ZULU*. What to wear to a massacre. Is Kylie really from outer space? ... and oh, um, a few other things.

[Mark (Rocky) Lawson]





# WHAT'S ON AT THE MSFC?



THE MELBOURNE SCIENCE FICTION CLUB MEETS AT 7.30 P.M. ON FRIDAYS AT ST. DAVID'S CHURCH HALL, 72 MELVILLE RD. WEST BRUNSWICK. ALWAYS MAP 29 CG CATCH A NO. 55 TRAM!

## THE LAST SAUSAGE SIZZLE OF SUMMER

**FRI 9<sup>th</sup> MARCH**

YOUR LAST CHANCE FOR A BBQ! BRING YOUR OWN SNAGS AND WHATEVER ELSE...

BRING ALONG YOUR IDEAS (AND YOUR TYPEWRITER IF YOU'VE GOT ONE) SO WE CAN PRODUCE ONE OF OUR FAMOUS ON-THE-SPOT INSTANT ZINES. WE'LL WRITE, ILLUSTRATE AND EDIT IT IN

UNDER 3 HOURS AND HAVE IT READY FOR DISTRIBUTION BY THE NEXT WEEK

**INSTANT**

**Fanzine**

**FRIDAY 16<sup>th</sup> MARCH**

## GAMES

**FRIDAY 23<sup>rd</sup> MARCH**

BRING SOME FRIENDS

BOARD GAMES  
ROLE PLAY GAMES  
ALL SORTS OF FUN

GET YOUR TEAM OF FOUR TOGETHER (WE'D LIKE YOU TO LET US KNOW WHO THEY ARE IN ADVANCE - PHONE 807 4180 THE WEEK BEFORE) OR COME ALONG + WATCH!

CAN YOUR TEAM IMPROVISE BETTER THAN THE REST?

**30<sup>th</sup> MARCH**

**theatresports**



**FRIDAY 6<sup>th</sup> APRIL**

See what strange things the members of the MSFC put on videotape...

THERE'S NO MSFC MEETING ON GOOD FRIDAY, BUT A LOT OF US WILL BE SPENDING EASTER AT **DANSE MACABRE**

THE NATIONAL S.F. CONVENTION AT THE DIPLOMAT MOTOR INN, 10 LAND STREET, ST. KILDA

THINK YOU'RE SMART, HUH? WELL, NOW'S YOUR CHANCE TO PROVE IT! GET A TEAM OF FOUR TOGETHER AND COMPETE FOR AMAZING PRIZES. THIS IS A FUNDRAISER FOR NUTTCOIN AND WILL COST \$4- (INCLUDES SUPPER)



**20<sup>th</sup> APRIL**

**QUIZ NIGHT**

**FILM NIGHT**  
**FRIDAY 27<sup>th</sup> APRIL**

AN ASSORTMENT OF ODD BUT INTERESTING MOVIES. A SMALL FEE WILL COVER THE HIRE OF THE PROJECTOR

THE MELBOURNE SCIENCE FICTION CLUB IS A FRIENDLY BUNCH OF PEOPLE WITH A WIDE VARIETY OF INTERESTS. WE PRODUCE OUR OWN CLUB MAGAZINE "ETHEL THE AARDVARK", OWN WHAT IS ARGUABLY THE LARGEST S.F. LIBRARY IN THE WORLD (INCLUDING LOTS OF LEGO) AND ARE GENERALLY OUT FOR A FUN TIME. FOR FURTHER INFO SEND A S.A.S.E. TO P.O. BOX 212, WORLD TRADE CENTRE, MELBOURNE, 3005 OR PHONE 807 4180



## The Yarn Basket:

### The Ackroyd Effect:

Back in issue #75 (April 1989) an hypothesis was proposed that Justin Ackroyd had this spell which he cast on all people who lived with him, causing them to ... (gasp) ... get married. At the time I proposed that the hypothesis was false, and cited two examples of exceptions. It appears maybe I was wrong, and that while some people are more immune than others, others only need to come into proximity to fall. It has been many years since **Dennis Callegari** (Bizarre) lived with Justin, but it appears he has finally succumbed, and it is said that he is getting engaged. **Perry Middlemiss** (Larrikin) on the other hand merely attended Justin's wedding, and he got married to **Robin Mills** (who caught the bouquet) during the Labour Day weekend. It appears I am now the exception that proves the rule.

Also getting engaged were **Karen Pender** (Pink) and **Ian Gunn** (regular artist for Get Stuffed, sometime artist for Thyme (Ian did this issue's Thyme cover) and editor of StunGunn).

### CofAs (The Weber and Lindsay Column):

**Jean Weber** and **Eric Lindsay** appear to have finally found a permanent week place at 7 Nicoll St, Ryde, NSW; close to Jean's work. Their weekend and fannish adress remains 6 Hillcrest Ave, Faulconbridge, NSW, Aus, 2776. [S&L]

**Michael Hailstone** (The Matalan Rave) has moved to 5/83 Collins St, Thornbury, but his postal address will remain G.P.O. Box 5144AA, Melbourne, Vic, Aus, 3001. There is no phone.

**Mark Linneman** has fled the looming depression in our country and gone to a promotion in the Law Library, at the University of Kentucky, Lexington, Kentucky 40506, U.S.A. At present this is the only address we have for him.

**John Foyster** (Doxy) and **Yvonne Rousseau** have changed post office boxes. They have squeezed into P.O. Box 3086, Grenfell St, Adelaide, S.A., Aus, 5000.

**Terry Frost** seems to have become a permanent fixture in Melbourne. He can be found at 5/291 Church St, Richmond, Vic, Aus, 3121.

And **Gordon Lingard** has moved to 1/104 Marsh St, Armidale, NSW, Aus, 2350.

On the 24th of March from about 11:00 am onwards, the Thyme Editor (**LynC**) and Partner (**Clive Newall**) are planning on moving to their new mortgage creator, at 22 Coburg St, Coburg. (All assistance gratefully received.) The new phone number will be [61 3] 386 0721 (AH). The POSTAL ADDRESS however will remain P.O. Box 4024, University of Melbourne, Vic, Aus, 3052.

**Mike McGann** has also been on the move. He has moved to 483 Beauchamp Rd, Maroubra, NSW, Aus, 2035. No phone number supplied. He wished Thyme readers a "Merry Christmas", but we didn't get this issue out in time to duplicate his card.

### Oz Publishing:

Both **Sean McMullen** and **Terry Dowling** have appeared in F&SF this year. Sean appears in the February 1990 issue with "While the Gate is Open", and Terry appears with a Tom Rynosseros story "Shatterwrack at Breaklight" in the March 1990 issue.

**Greg Egan** also has a story in an overseas magazine. His story "Beyond the Whistle Test" appeared in November 1989's Analog.

**Rosaleen Love's** collection Total Devotion Machine has been officially published, but due to various stuff-ups few copies have been seen. It is rumoured that normal law-abiding people have even been resorting to photocopying to get hold of it. [Are the distributors in this country even capable of reading the writing on the wall and shaping up before they become extinct? - Ed]

Rosaleen also has a story "Power Play" in the ABC/ABA publication The Art of the Story.



On Friday March 9th, during Writer's week at the Adelaide Festival, Mandarin Australia launched the Australian releases of **Damien Broderick's** The Judas Mandala, and The Black Grail. RRP will be \$12.95 & \$13.95 respectively!!

Finalists for the most recent "Writers of the Future" Competition include one **James Verran** of Port Noarlunga in Western Australia. His story will appear in Vol VI to be published later this year. For details on how to enter this competition write to Julie Tremp, New Era Publications, P.O. Box 466 Paddington, NSW, Aus, 2021.

#### Anthologies:

**Women's Redress Press** are planning to publish a women's speculative/science fiction anthology. Closing date for submissions was 1st of March, but any queries can be addressed to SF Anthology, Women's Redress Press Inc., P.O. Box 655, Broadway, NSW, Aus, 2007. [Yvonne Rousseau]

**Pangolin Press** plan to publish a collection of Australian Short Stories soon (no dates supplied). They want stories between 3000 & 6500 words, and expect to pay approx \$90/1000 words. Rates will be finalised when they go to press. For information write to Craig Ruau at P.O. Box 317, Strathpine, QLD, Aus, 4500.

**Chimaera Publications** (Stephen Higgins and Dirk Strasser) are planning to publish a quarterly national Science Fiction Magazine, Aurealis. If you wish to contribute write to them at P.O. Box 538, Mount Waverley, Vic, Aus, 3149 for details. **Dirk Strasser** has a story "Nullarbor Lights" in The Art of the Story also. [M.S.F.C.]

**Aphelion Press** are still planning to launch not one but two Short Story Collections at Danse Macabre, however rumour has it that the anthology of original Australian SF has run into stormy weather. There are various reports of friction between the Editor of this proposed anthology and several (previously published) contributors to the same, which has resulted in some instances in the withdrawal of the contributions. Perhaps the problem lies in the underlying premise that there are only one or two SF writers in this country capable of producing professional submissions, and that all the rest (despite previous publications) need to be treated as students in a writing class. We also understand that the lack of acknowledgement of receipt of stories has led to uncertainty and frustration in the contributors. While no-one expects anthologies to happen overnight it would be a pity to see something else stretch out as long as the still awaited Dowling/Ellison production, but I guess, late is better than never.

#### Critical Mass:

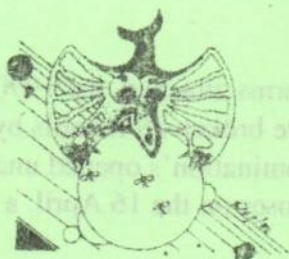
The calendar for the next three months for Critical Mass (Adelaide's SF/F criticism club) is:

4 April, "Watchmen" talk by Zoran Bekric.

2 May, "An End to Metascientific Tyrannies?" by Jeff Harris.

6 June, A talk on Philip K Dick's Short Stories by Michael Tolley.

The group currently meets at 20 Wilpena Terrace, Kilkenny, from 8:00 pm onwards on the first Wednesday of the month. Write to John Foyster at P.O. Box 3086, Grenfell St, 5000 for more information.





### **Nova Mob:**

The calendar for Nova Mob (Melbourne's long running SF/F criticism club) is:

4 April, "Secret Societies in SF", a talk by Bruce Barnes.

2 May, "The Current state of Cloning" a scientific talk by Donna Hennan

6 June, "Intelligent Aliens" by Wynne Whiteford

4 July, "*Something Escatalogical*" from Marc Ortlieb

1 August, Bruce Gillespie on "Non-SF books by Philip K. Dick"

5 September, Alan Stewart on Shared World Anthologies.

(October & November are yet to be decided, and December will be a Christmas Party somewhere/somewhen)

The group meets at 31 Brighton St, Richmond, from 8:00 pm on the first Wednesday of the month also. Ring Alan Stewart on (03) 429 8354 for more information.

### **Fanzines:**

New Fiction 'Zine on the scene is New Eyes. Technically since it pays for contributions it is not an amateur production, but costs have been kept low, and it has the look of amateurish work. Cost is \$2. Write to **Robert Luxford**, P.O. Box 300, Mortdale, NSW, Aus, 2223. The first issue was 70 A5 pages, and McGann artwork was heavily featured. There is no indication of frequency of publication.

**John Foyster** is now attempting what both Thyme and Sweetness & Light have failed to produce lately; a regular newszine! Called Doxy, it will appear monthly, and as of the second issue has kept to this. The second issue appears to be largely responses to the rather controversial first issue, most people protesting that he got his information wrong. [Nice to see someone else copping all the flack. Keep it up, John. -Ed.] Available for the usual from John Foyster at P.O. Box 3086, Grenfell St, Adelaide, SA, Aus, 5000. Our copy also features Doxa, a fortnightly **Roman Orszanski** production on anything and everything.

### **Science Fiction Bookshops:**

**The Known Space** science fiction Bookshop has moved to 96 Gawler Place, Adelaide - First Floor. A mail order service is available to those unable to visit the shop. [Yvonne Rousseau]

**Galaxy Books** in Sydney have offered a prize of \$200 to the artwork judged to be BEST in the Art Show at Danse Macabre. All entrants are eligible, but entries close 6th April. Galaxy Books are located at 203B Castlereagh St, Sydney, NSW, Aus, 2000.

### **1992 Natcon Bids:**

"Sydney in '92, the place to be"

As far as Thyme is aware only Sydney is bidding for the 1992 Natcon. They currently plan to use a new hotel, and the Queen's birthday weekend. (Traditionally Sydney conventions are held during the Queen's birthday weekend.) There will be a bidding party at Danse Macabre. The committee can be contacted at G.P.O. Box 429, Sydney, NSW, Aus, 2001. Pre-supporting membership is a whopping \$10. [S&L]

### **Fan Funds:**

As you can see from the voting forms attached, the 1990 race for DUFF and GUFF is up and running. FFANZ however apperas to have broken all records by opening and closing nominations in the biggest non-event so far this year. Nomination's opened unannounced and then closed on the 28th of February. Voting (for whom?) closes on the 16 April, a mere four weeks away. [S&L]  
[Was it really worth it Terry??-Ed]



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# The THYME Convention Update

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**DANSE MACABRE:** The 29th Australian National Science Fiction Convention

**Dates:** Friday 13th - Monday 16th April, 1990 (Easter)

**Venue:** The Diplomat Motor Inn, Acland St, St Kilda.

**Rates:** Currently \$70, \$15 Supporting, Banquet \$25 \$30 Accompanied Child, \$5 Voting Only, .

**GOH:** George R.R. Martin

**Fan GOH:** Eric Lindsay

**Room Rates:** \$54 single, \$59 Twin/Double, & \$80 Triple/Suite.

**Mail:** DANSE MACABRE, PO Box 273, Fitzroy, Vic., 3065

(Bizarre 6 is now out, and includes voting forms for the Ditmars. New news is that there is to be a \$200 prize (from Galaxy Books) for best Art submitted, and the closing date is April 6th - contact 22 Waltham St, Richmond, 3121; Ph: (03) 319 3733 (BH), or (03) 428 4686 (AH) for details.)

**KIWICON:**

**Dates:** 13th -16th April, 1990

**Venue:** The Gateway Lodge, Kirkbride Rd, Mangere, Auckland, NZ.

**Dates:** \$40 Attending, \$20 Supporting, \$45 at the door.

**GOH:** Harry Harrison

**Fan Goh:** Mary MacLachlan

**Room Rates:** \$45 + GST per person per night. An extra \$10 gets you breakfast as well.

**Banquet:** \$28.50 includes GST

**Mail:** P.O. Box 711, Pukekohe, New Zealand.

**EASTCON 1990:** (The British National Convention)

**Dates:** [Guess! It's another Easter convention isn't it?]

**Venue:** Adelphi Hotel, Liverpool

**Rates:** was £20 attending to 1/Dec/1989, £9 supporting

**GOH:** Iain Banks, Anne Page, Nigel Kneale, and Ken Campbell

**Mail:** 15 Maldon Cl, Camberwell, London, SE5 8DD, U.K.

**CONVERGE II:** (The 11th National NZ SF Convention)

**Dates:** 1st - 4th June, 1990 (NZ Queens Birthday)

**Venue:** Airport Hotel, Kilbirnie, Wellington

**Rates:** NZ\$40. NZ\$20 Supporting. Banquet - \$26

**Theme:** "Return of the Intergalactic Tourist."

**GOHs:** Richard Arnold (The StarTrek Archivist at Paramount), Tracy Torme (Script Writer), Brent Spinner (from ST:TNG) - commitments permitting

**Fan GOH:** James Benson

**Room Rates:** \$79 single, \$99 double/twin, \$109 triple, \$119 quad.

**Mail:** conVERGE II, P.O. Box 30-905, Lower Hutt, New Zealand.

**TREKCON IV:** (A Multi-Media Science Fiction & Fantasy Convention)

**Dates:** 9th-11th June 1990

**Venue:** Townhouse, 701 Swanson St, Melbourne

**Rates:** \$60 til April 1990, \$65 after. \$75 at door. \$20 Supp.

**GOH:** Bjo Trimble

**FGOH:** Greg Franklin (Also Steve Sholtz, and Gary Armstrong)

**Room Rates:** \$90 Single, Twin/Double. \$10 per extra person. Make cheques payable to "Townhouse"

**Mail:** Kaye Morrissey, Trekcon IV Secretary, P.O. Box 305, West Heidelberg, Vic, Aus, 3081

**SYNCON 90:**

**Dates:** 6-8th July (Not the Queen's Birthday!)

**Venue:** Hawkesbury AG College, Richmond, NSW

**Rates:** Residential \$130, Day membership \$30 (2 days)

**Theme:** "The Science in Science Fiction"

**FGOH:** Ron & Sue Clarke

**Mail:** G.P.O. Box 429, Sydney, NSW, Aus, 2001

**CONFICTION:** the 48th World Science Fiction Convention

**Dates:** 23rd - 27th August, 1990

**Rates:** \$120 till 15 July 1990. \$35 Supporting. \$20 Child (U14).

**GOH:** Joe Haldeman, Wolfgang Jeschke, Harry Harrison, Andy Porter, & Chelsea Quinn Yarbro(TM).

**Venue:** The Netherlands Congress Centre, The Hague, Holland.

**Mail:** Worldcon 1990, P.O. Box 95370 - 2509 CJ The Hague, Holland

**Agents:** Australia: Justin Ackroyd, GPO Box 2708X, Melbourne, VIC, 3001

[PR#4 is now available. It contains the Hugo Nominations form, closing date 10 March, and the Site Selection Voting form; mail votes close 15 July. This is the FIRST time in my memory that these items have arrived in Australia in time to utilise them. -Ed]

**HUTTCON '90:** (The 1990 Media NatCon)

**Dates:** 23-25 November 1990

**Venue:** The Diplomat Hotel, 12 Acland St, ST KILDA.

**Rates:** \$55 to 30/June/90, the \$60. Supporting \$25

**GOH:** Simon Jones (aka Arthur Dent).

**FAN GOH:** it could be you! Buy raffle tickets from either Edwina or James Allen. Cost \$2.



**Room Rates:** Double/Twin \$61, Triple \$72, Executive Suite \$78 Include one night's accommodation when booking, cheques made out to "The Diplomat Motor Inn".

**Travel:** Contact Edwina, if interested in a group bus from Canberra and Sydney.

**Mail:** Edwina Harvey, 12 Flinders St, Matraville, NSW. 2036

[HUTTCON will be taking bids for BOTH the 1991 Media Natcon AND the 1992 Media Natcon. If you are planning to run either please contact Edwina.]

#### SWANCON XVI:

**Dates:** Australia Day Weekend, 1991

**GOH:** Barbara Hambly

**FGOH:** Cindy Clarkson

**Mail:** P.O. Box 318, Nedlands, WA, Aus, 6009

#### SUNCON '91: (The 30th Australian Natcon)

**Dates:** 29th March - 1st April, 1991

**Venue:** Brisbane Sheraton Hotel and Towers

**Rates:** \$50 til 16/Apr/90, Supporting \$15

**GOH:** Harlan Ellison.

**Fan GOH:** Leigh Edmonds & Valma Brown

**Room Rates:** Still under negotiation

**Mail:** Suncon '91, P.O. Box 437 Camberwell, Vic, Aus, 3124

#### CHICON V: (The 1991 Worldcon)

**Dates:** August 29 - September 2, 1991

**Venue:** The Hyatt Regency, Chicago, Illinois, USA

**Rates:** US\$85 to 1/Jul/90, US\$95 to 31/Dec/90.

Supporting US\$30

**GOH:** Hal Clement, Richard Powers (Art), Martin Greenberg, Jon & Joni Stopa, Marta Randall

**Room Rates:** US\$70 single/double, + US\$20 per person triple/quadruple. DO NOT attempt to book yet.

**Mail:** Registration; Chicon V, P.O. Box 218121, Upper Arlington, Ohio 43221-8121

Information; Chicon V, P.O. Box A3120, Chicago, IL 60690-3120, U.S.A.

#### HONGCON '92:

**Dates:** June 6th-8th, 1992

**Venue:** Adelaide Convention Centre

**Rates:** \$55 til July 1990, \$65 til July 1991, \$75 after. \$30 Supp.

**Mail:** Hongcon '92, P.O. Box 106, Rundle Mall, Adelaide, SA, Aus, 5000

[A multistrand convention emphasising media interests.

The first 192 memberships are eligible for various prizes.]

#### MAGICON: (The 1992 Worldcon)

**Dates:** September 3rd - 7th, 1992

**Venue:** Orange County Civic & Convention Center, Orlando, Florida

**Rates:** was US\$50 attending till 31/Jan/1990, US\$20 Supporting, US\$30 Children

**GOH:** Jack Vance, Vincent DiFate, Walt Willis, Spider Robinson (TM)

**Mail:** Magicon, Box 621992, Orlando, FL 32862, USA.

(all details are correct to the best of our knowledge at the time of going to print.)

Thanks for this (again belated) issue got to: Karen, Ian, Ian, Justin, Michael, Mark, Roger, Yvonne (many times), Gordon, Mike, Lucy, Sue, Alan (many many times), John, Roman, Dennis, Jack, Chuq (and the Melbourne Uni Computer network connections), and of course Rocky, for the long awaited start to his series on Aliens.

#### Artwork for this issue:

Front Cover: Ian Gunn © 1989

Back Cover: Brad Foster © 1984

"Space: The Darkness Beyond:- The Foibles" The Wiz © 1989

P6 Dennis Callegari © 1989

P9 The Wiz © 1988

Once again our apologies for the lateness. After we move to our new home, and get settled in, things might get better. No promises.

See ya nextish, LynC, 2247120390



# SHARING SPACE

## Jai S. Russell

"She's stabilizing," the tech sang out as he watched the monitor screen. "Heart's regular. Alpha reading steady now on 25."

"Good. Good." The Medic's comment was curt and impersonal, yet it carried with it a tone of professional satisfaction. This particular implant had been difficult, and he knew that under pressure he had performed well. With luck, it would not go unnoticed.

"You know, for a time there I thought she'd reject," he said, labouring the point a little for the benefit of any unseen ears. "Don't know why they take women for implants, so hard to bypass their Corpus Callosum." He looked across at the tech. "And why pick a woman for this one, an experimental bio-chip? Christ, it's asking for trouble."

The tech shrugged. "Wonder why she volunteered? She's young, and quite a looker. You'd think she could have found work with the P and L Corp. Anything would have to be better than an implant in your brain." He stared vacant-eyed for a moment as he tried to imagine how he would have reacted in the patient's position, then his attention went back to the screen. "Ready? She's coming round."

The slender figure on the recovery couch shuddered slightly at the residue of their conversation. P and L, Pleasure and Leisure. What did they know of the work that Corporation offered? What could they know about work-search? They'd both probably been Corp contracted at birth, parents life-long company folk. At least being a 'plant, a successful 'plant, made you a valuable corporate property, and the corporations looked after their own.

"Did it take?" she asked, suddenly anxious and afraid. "Am I okay? Is it going to work?"

The Medic smiled down at her, professionally, impersonally. "You're fine, Evi. No! No, don't touch anything yet." He moved quickly to halt her as she reached to probe and scratch the vague area of irritation at the base of her skull. "Just be still for a while. Rest. Your programmer will be along soon. He'll have you keyed and working in no time at

all. Rest now. It wasn't so bad, was it?"

Evi was grateful for his concern. She lay back upon the couch and closed her eyes.

Apart from the dull, unfocused itch that seemed to well from deep beneath her skull, she felt no different. She'd finally made it, she thought. No more struggling with casual or temp work; no more midnight studying, trying to stay one jump ahead of the contract work stream's ebb and flow; no more running from sweaty palmed advances as some second or third grade dole assessor sought favours for a work contract. And as for P and L, she shivered, she'd served six months with them already. Compulsory service. "You have to try the P and L Corporation," the assessor, a woman that time, had argued. "You've had no work for five months now." She'd made it sound like some contagious disease. "You are bound by law to try any corporation that is hiring. If you don't, your dol-creds will be rescinded.", and with a sniff and shrug she'd passed Evi's I.D. through the terminal and handed her the listing for the P and L Corp.

So she'd worked, for six miserable months, as a P and L disco chick until, unsolicited and unexpected, they'd offered her a long-term contract for companion training. Such an offer was not to be refused in this age where one either belonged to a corporation, or to the 60% of humanity that comprised the pool of unemployed or contractual workers. The offer could not be refused, or all dol-creds and welfare services were revoked. One became a non-person with no way of obtaining work or food or shelter. One became, soon after, dead or a crim.

"That's why I volunteered as a plant," Evi whispered to the empty air. The tech who had asked the question had long since left the room.

Evi must have slept. She woke, startled, to the sound of an insistent voice. A thin smile creased the tanned, somehow ageless face that loomed above her, a smile that might have been friendly, reassuring, if it had reached the elated, smugly calcu-



lating, blue eyes.

"I'm Dr. Grant. I'll be in charge of your program." His smile widened. "You're a very special unit, Evi. Yes, very special. The first of your kind."

"The first of a kind? What do you mean?" Evi struggled to rise, suddenly afraid. "I only volunteered for an implant; a normal data implant. I'm supposed to be an ordinary Mobile Data Unit. What have you done to me?"

"Now, now. Don't distress yourself. We can't have you physically stressed." He patted distractedly at Evi's unresisting hand.

"I have made some revolutionary changes to the basic bio-crystal implant. I'll explain if I can.

"Not only is the risk of rejection reduced - the biotic component of my new crystals is taken from the host's body fluids which ensures total compatibility, almost symbiosis - but the data storage capacity of the unit is also increased. Even I can only speculate upon its limitations."

He still beat an unconscious tattoo upon Evi's hand. "You see, the old plants, while mobile and vastly superior to other computer systems in that they could learn to utilize some of the host's extrapolative potential, were limited. We had no way of wiping obsolete data, or of adding to their storage capacity.

"My invention, your crystal, is capable of change, of development, of growth if you will.

"No! No. It's not going to expand and take over your brain. You've been viewing too many horror vids." The hand patting became furious as she struggled with her growing panic.

He sighed. "I wish it wasn't necessary to have your understanding and feedback. I would have spared you this distress if I could.

"I am going to take good care of you, Evi, believe me. You will be my personal MDU. I have spent my life developing this unit and you are going to help me improve on it even more."

"What will the crystal do? How will it grow?" Evi asked, quietly enough.

"Well, the mass won't change. It will alter its shape as necessary. The surface of the bio-crystal is the area of data storage, so, to increase available bytes, or space, the crystal will fractionalise, or change, into smaller and smaller units.

"Before you ask, this will not harm the host. The changes will occur at the molecular level and the crystal, remember, is sympathetic to your own tissue, is a part of you in a sense. I have created a perfect marriage of animate and inanimate matter."

He paused, as if acknowledging some unheard acclaim.

"But I'm the first?" asked Evi. "This thing you've put in my head is still experimental, still unproven?"

"Yes, yes," the doctor replied with a degree of irritation. "But there is no risk to you, no chance of failure. And, so aptly are you named. Evi. I shall code your implant Adam. What else." He chuckled, delighted with his wit. "My Adam and Evi."

Then he was serious again. "Of course you will never meet Adam. You will operate just like all the other MDUs. When the data processing mode is operational, when Adam is coded in, your own consciousness will be sub-system. Just like being asleep, the other plants say.

"Now, I'm glad you're feeling better. More at ease, less afraid."

He hadn't asked her, Evi realised.

"Rest today. Tomorrow we'll begin your programming." And, with a final, desultory pat to Evi's non-responsive hand, he left.

It should have been an easy and pleasant life for Evi. As a corporation 'lifer', she had access to all of the vast facilities that Cyb Corp offered its people. Her cred rating allowed almost unlimited indulgence and her off-duty time was more than adequate. The only pleasure banned to her was the Vid Sensies. "No Sensies," the doctor had warned on many occasions. "Too much risk of wave interference with the unit's rhythms. Use P and L instead." But Evi didn't mind this restriction; she'd never liked the sensory vids anyway, even on the outside.

Evi indulged, but in solitary pleasures. She didn't mix with the other corporation workers, not even with the other plants, and she never approached the P and Ls.

After a time she began to have strange fancies that she was being watched, spied upon. Engrossed in some old text, she'd spin, suddenly, sure that someone was reading over her shoulder.

Astride her horse, she'd find her hand caressing the rough silk of his neck in wondering awe at the pull and stretch of straining muscle beneath her thighs, reaching with her senses to share the animal's joy in moving through the wind.

And grav-planing: more and more Evi spent her time high above the earth, tasting the air, catching the wind through her mouth, her nose, her hair, feeling free of her body, yet more aware of each tiny sensation of sun and wind upon her skin than she had ever been. "This is beauty, taste it," she would answer the questions that hammered incessantly through her being. And she'd laugh aloud for sheer joy and the questions would answer with a sharing, a silent, tentative echo of her laughter.



One time the questions asked, "What is pain?" And, without thought, Evi plunged a stylo in her finger, deep enough to draw a gasp from her lips and blood from her flesh.

But some things were more difficult to resolve. "What am I?" the questions would ask.

"Why, you are a question," Evi would respond.

At these times Evi read. Philosophy, the old religions, texts and treatise, fact and fiction. She read rapidly, voraciously and never stopped to wonder at her growing understanding.

Some questions were disturbing and embarrassing. Like the day Evi stripped in front of her mirror and, with great regard to detail, scanned and probed every inch of her body, all the while looking behind her reflection for the watching, searching eyes she felt upon her.

"What is good? What is evil? What is hot? What is cold? What is love? What is hate? What am I?"

"You are QUESTION," whispered Evi to the mirror and marvelled at her growing madness, for she found the questions were a solace to her loneliness.

"I think I'm going insane, Dr. Grant," Evi stated bluntly, quickly, before he could throw her into work mode. "I keep hearing questions and I have this compulsion, this obsession to find answers."

He laughed, impatient as always with Evi. "It is only adjustment, Evi. You have a relatively good mind and an opportunity now to indulge your natural curiosity, your need to learn. Enjoy it. You're physically in top condition and your plant is stable; no problems there. Besides, no one that is really insane ever thinks they are. Perhaps you should mix more with your peers," he advised, and coded Evi sub-system.

"What is love? What is love? What is love?" Evi refused to hear.

"What is love? Who am I?"

"Why, you're ADAM." Evi marvelled. How could she not have known. And for a time the questions were still.

Then, insistently, filling her waking and reverberating through her dreams, "EVI, what is love?"

Evi went to the Sensie rooms. She wouldn't use a P and L worker, not a real man, she vowed she wouldn't. Just this once, to stop this damned, eternal questioning, she'd use a sensory vid. Dr. Grant need never know.

The vid she chose was an innocuous sexual fantasy, if slightly romantic in style.

Evi left the cubicle physically sated but emotionally frustrated and distraught.

"There," she yelled, but silently. "That's love, or sex, or whatever you want to call it. No big

deal, is it?" But the questioner was still, while Evi wept and remembered other days, a father, gentle and caring, forced into contract with Urmine Corp, and a mother, who had quietly and quickly followed him into the darkness of death.

After the sensies, Evi's head rang with the absence, the silence. She developed a fever and a dull, throbbing ache beneath her skull. Finally, afraid that she'd damaged the unit, harmed herself with the sensie waves, Evi sought the med centre and, sedated but strangely miserable and alone, she slept.

He came to her in dreams.

The first time, a single red rose lay upon her pillow. And Evi could scent the lingering perfume upon the morning air even after she had awakened and the rose had vanished into the dream.

She slept again.

He came, lightly, tentatively tracing her cheek with a gentle fingertip. "You are Evi?" he whispered. "You are beauty," a question and a marvelling that hung upon the streaming afternoon sunlight and lingered in the remembrance of a caress upon her skin.

She dreamed again - upon a clean, white beach. And every minute grain was discrete beneath her skin. Soft waves soughed a happy chorus to her breath. Light lips, no more at first than the touching of a breeze, teased her eyelids apart.

He leaned above her, slim and smooth and golden. A certain hesitancy, almost shyness, lurked in his eyes, lending a humanness, a vulnerability to a beauty that might else have been too great to bear. Carefully he bent until their two lips touched, then more urgently, as she did not move away but in awe came closer to him.

"Adam?" she questioned. "You are Adam?"

"Yes," he breathed. "And Evi, you were wrong. This, I think, is love."

They came together as a man and a woman, at one with the sea and the sun and the sand.

After, Evi lay touching the dream's reality of firm muscle beside her, tracing the hard line of bone from cheek to jaw to shoulder.

"How can this be?" she wondered. "It's a dream, but so real. How can you exist? How are you male? What do you want?"

He laughed. "Now you are question. The doctor named me Adam, and this created the environment in which a male evolved. I want to live, Evi. I want to share life with you. Look, let me show you what has happened."

He smoothed a wide patch of sand and began to trace.

"This is the section of the brain where the bio-



crystal was implanted. It, 'I', was supposed to extend here and here, and utilize the energy and area created to store and retrieve data. This organ here is the Corpus Callosum, a bundle of nerve fibres that link the two halves of the brain, the logic centres and the symbolic or creative. In you, this body is abnormally large, perhaps causing the medic to set the crystal too close, or perhaps the first changes moved randomly, in this direction. Whatever the cause, it was unplanned. I know this from the data I hold. But once I began to question, to experience polarities, to sense the external as you do, I could not halt or reverse the process even if I had desired to do so. But my experiencing is unique; it is absorbed and evaluated by the part of your brain that is the bio-crystal, that is Adam.

"The sensory vid's radiation accelerated the process. I'm not certain yet just how, but the doctor will resolve this. We must tell him. He will be pleased. He can make use of this technique."

"No. No," Evi protested. "He must not know. I don't trust him. He doesn't care about people, only about his experiments."

And she struggled from her dream, hearing the echo of her words, to find Dr. Grant bending solicitously over her.

"A nightmare, Evi? I just dropped by to check some data with Adam - and to see how you were feeling, of course. You don't mind if I sub you for a few minutes, do you? - ADAM 7711..."

Evi fought the coding as long as she could until her awareness slipped away.

She was in another place. A vast, echoing repository of data; a humming hive of reference and cross-check. Information surged like water through a channel and Evi was buffeted by an alienness; swept along on a tide of stimulus and response; drowning in a torrent of half-heard words; clutching at alien binary statements and configurations that battered at the edges of her understanding.

I'm in Adam's space, she thought desperately and his presence was beside her, holding her safe from the maelstrom of information.

"I won't tell him yet, but why do you fear his knowing?" A whisper garnered from the flood around her. "You must teach me this trust and not trust."

And Evi could hear, as an echo, her own voice as it directed a flow of data to the doctor. When she looked in a certain direction, which had no referent to north or south, up or down, she could see the doctor, through the windows of her eyes, seated at the side of her bed.

Adam's words fell upon her from the stream of information. "He wishes to make more advanced MDUs. Units that will become less and less dependent upon

a mentally active host. Theoretically, this is now possible. They would taste life as I now do. Why would this be wrong?"

She showed him then, her memories mingling with the data streaming past. Showed him the world outside of the corporations' protective environs. She showed him the pain and the suffering, and the hope and the courage. All in an unmeasurable instant she encompassed striving humanity and the mindless, compassionless thrall of the corporations.

"But such crystals would kill the host, destroy the human ego." She shuddered, suddenly desperately afraid of the expanding awareness that was Adam. "And the corporations would never permit the plants to develop true identity, individuality. Individuals mean nothing to the corporations. They exist only to further their own corporate needs."

He was silent, considering, while she showed him why and what she was, in a manner she herself would never comprehend. He read her dreams, her fears, her aspirations, her humanity.

"If the doctor discovers what you... what we... what is happening to us, he will surely stop this experiment, wipe your memory banks. You were only meant to become a tool, an ultra-sophisticated tool."

"Will you tell him?"

"No!" she whispered through the sudden anguish that coursed through her.

"Will you share life with me, Evi?" The demand fell urgently upon her. "We can share flying and tasting, and all that you touch and see and hear can be mine also. And..." the words were hesitant, uncertain, "in dreams we can share love."

"Yes!" shouted Evi into the maelstrom of data, remembering the bleak emptiness when she thought the questioner lost to her. "Yes, I will share what I have with you."

"Then we will change the way things are. Look, I have the means."

He showed her the vast communications network of the corporations, become dependent upon the computers and MDUs for their continued existence. And she saw his access, the ways in which the system could be altered, turned upon itself, redirected to different goals, humanity's goals.

She saw the lie, the first evasion as a bright, discordant streak against the flow of information that surrounded her and heard her voice, as Adam responded to a query from Dr. Grant. "Insufficient data to pursue this area of development."

She shared laughter and trust and a warm glowing hope for tomorrow.



# TO HERE THE MIDNIGHT FLED

## Sue Isle

Jana. Jana. Jana.

She whirled the name, the statement, hovering above the blazing wheel at the very centre of her thought. It was Brandon, of course, searching for her in the only way he could, letting his mind travel where his body could never go.

She rose through silk water until the four walls closed around her and she was back with her body, sitting cross-legged in the centre of the room. Night clung around her and flowed like a river down her back.

She looked at the clock. It was late and they would be wanting to serve dinner. She got up, slowly, in stages, stretching her cramped muscles, and moved to the window. Outside the road lay like a trampled snake, black and glistening in the falls of the last light. The tall eucalypt stood dignified nearby, barely tolerating the brash newness of the house.

Brandon.

Why had he called? It was not safe. He knew it.

After dinner she rose. "I have to go out now. I have to meet a friend."

She escaped with their weary protests following. So easy to lie, to make them think this was a boy, to tell them the printed books were from school, to tell them....

She was out on the road, jogging until she reached the main road where the conveyor carried its doped cargo of humans, resting comfortably in their cushioned seats. She heard their dim laughter as she walked below the filigree night sky. They were as mechanical as the world they served, and she despised them for it. I'm sorry, Bran, she thought, as though the world was her possession about which she must apologise. Look what we've made, what people just like me have made. The air was not good, she noted, but there had been no alert.

Look what we've made. The thought stayed with her, tracking a circle in her mind, then it faded as she turned up a side street and slipped into an older world. Like her home street, this one was too narrow for a conveyor to be installed, but unlike her home, this one enjoyed the magic of having been forgotten. Here was a museum, each house speaking in brick and wood of a past she didn't remember. Trees sank massive roots to tainted water and stoically endured. The street hid from the automatic world that dashed around it in rings of fire. Jana pushed

through the tall crackling grass and sunflower plants, bursting like some explorer of old on to the open land, the wooden verandah.

He didn't come to meet her. He never did. She moved like a slender shadow past the creaking wooden door which you pushed to open, down the gray corridor and into the living room.

Brandon had built a fire, a real fire, in the age-blackened fireplace. Light shadows sprang golden around the room, slinking lion-like up the walls, making dark hollows in Brandon's face. He sat easy in a huge moth-eaten armchair, his body following its contours, his attitude revealing clearly that this was home. For Jana it was also home, moreso than the abrupt, white-lighted house where she had been born and had lived her years. The armchair opposite Brandon was hers, and she went to it at once and curled in.

"So, how went your day?" he asked.

"As usual, uselessly."

Even as she spoke, she felt herself relaxing in the warm gold of his voice. It was a lion's voice. It made her feel good.

She thought again of what he had said to her when she had first wandered here: "But never trust me. Never be sure you know what I'll do, and I won't try to predict you either. That's my way of friendship, and I'm not a friend often."

"Why did you call?" she said. "I was worried. You never risk it."

Before Brandon could answer, there was a soft knock at the door. He raised his eyebrows at her and called: "Come in, Michael."

The boy who came in was what her parents termed 'trouble'. Most recently, he had been implicated in a furore over the school library. There had been a break-in, and banned texts had vanished before they could be officially removed. Michael Wallace had been tested but suspicion was all that clung to him.

He nodded to Jana as he moved across the room and squatted near the fire. He had a sort of ugliness that was as compelling as beauty: heavy build and prominently broad features, a tall dwarf.

He was silent a moment, settling himself down on the carpet before looking to Brandon. "Well, old werewolf, you seem to have a problem."

"What problem, Bran?" Jana asked.

He gave her the answer almost without need for words. From when she was a small child, their minds



had been in sympathy, and his own telepathic strength was sufficient even without that. She got a wash of grief, and images of houses falling. When he finally spoke, his voice was low and grey, with all the golden drained. "This street is to be razed."

Raze the street. The sense of the words seeped gradually in like the contents of a chill needle. The house, the street, the memories, had been part of her life since she'd grown old enough to know that the cage was a cage... that things were being shut out.

Cold science would trap him now. Without the card, he would never find anywhere else, and he would never get the card. How could he? He would never agree to think as they wanted.

He was talking now, swift and restless.

"They ask questions, always they ask questions. Science has bridled the storms. Rain falls where rain never fell in a hundred thousand years. Cities crawl inward from the coast to where forests are torn bloodily from the earth. The spaceport, the great Kyerang, stands where rainforests once grew." He shrugged his shoulders, the gesture almost an admission of defeat. "My people knew those places, Jana. We are a breed of night, hunters.... The price is to stay where we are put. Predators in a cage."

Jana was silent, but not from shock. Her thoughts drifted from him into that cool dark around the wheel of fire.

"No more dumps like this, friend," she heard Michael say. "We're being routed from the Margaret River camp, or I'd ask you. That'd be risky for you though."

Words. She retreated from them, reaching instead for Brandon's thoughts, and at the whirling centre found his answer.

"Space!" she exclaimed. "You're going into space!"

Fire blazed behind Brandon's eyes. He got up and approached her, lifting her to her feet.

"Yes!" he said fiercely. "If I can. What do you think? Is there a chance of it?"

"The germ of a chance," she warned, secure in the relaxed cage of his arms. "No better than that."

"Then there are things that must be done," he said, practical once more. "There are options to consider."

"Of course."

She lifted her head from his chest and looked up at him, loneliest of wolves. She had needed him throughout her childhood. He had talked to her, taught her, given her the books and explained their mysteries. When he needed her, she had aided him, as she would now. It was business, the business of survival in a world of strangers.

"You've several options," she said. "You could go to Woden. That's still pioneer level. Or apply to one of the interstellar freighters. I can go to Interstellar travel and see if there's work. There's a chance; the long hauls aren't popular. Still...."

"Why the hesitation?"

"Well, once you do it you're stuck. Their hauls last for years. Time enough for people to find out you're nameless."

"That's the least of my worries. Once the police come to clear out the rats, there'll be nowhere to go."

"How are they going to do it?" Michael asked, more interested in local problems than in talk of the stars.

Brandon looked across at him. "They're going to use the laser of an orbiting starship. Fire from heaven. Pure poetry."

He let Jana go, gently, and in the same smooth movement, went to the window and stared out. The window faced sideways over a crippled fence to a second house, half-crumbled already. Shadow clothed it, running black through the nearby trees, fled here from the psychedelic world beyond.

Words came unbidden to Jana's mind, and she whispered them in the quiet. "To here the midnight fled. We ride the darkness, you and I, riders of the darkness of the world."

"Perhaps," Brandon said, "when this place is destroyed, there will be no more darkness."

"Don't. You make me feel chilled."

"You should feel chilled." Brandon sounded harsh. "No, no, I am not angry at you. But tomorrow night they will begin, and I am angry that I can't do anything to stop it. And they will not listen to you."

"Someday someone will."

"Meet us where the vultures gather to watch," Michael said. "We'll sort something out."

"Freighters?" The young woman had a long, lean, almost lupine kind of beauty. She eyed Jana with suspicion, but handed her back the ID card. "Are you sure your friend knows what's involved? Why hasn't he come himself?"

"He's allergic to daylight."

"I see." The young woman accepted that with surprising ease. She swivelled to face her screen, and Jana watched as the names and details of ships appeared in a steady upward-flowing stream. "Unskilled?"

"Yes."

"Yes, it's usually last-ditch."

Before Jana could ask her to clarify the comment, the woman's finger darted at the console. The column



froze. "Here we are. Warrigal, freighter class six. Only requester still in orbit. Put in a req' for two untrained, got one yesterday. Lost two on a moon of Woden."

"How long are the trips?"

"I wish you'd listen, girl. I said moon. Moon work goes on all the time. Those who want leave transfer to ships heading to a station or planet. They only call when they need people. It takes an unusual sort to tolerate the life..." She broke off. "Did he authorise you to sign for him?"

Jana nodded.

"Very well. Here."

Jana gripped the pen hard. When she signed Brandon's name, it felt as though she'd never written anything before.

The lupine young woman flicked the form out of her hand. "Right. Do you know where the port is? Good. Tell your friend to go to the main terminal and ask at Inquiry for Captain Garrett. Do you think you can remember?"

"I think so," said Jana, with a chill worthy of Brandon.

The woman's brilliant eyes searched hers. "All right, I'm sorry. It's important that he finds Garrett and that he doesn't talk for long to anybody else."

"Why?"

The woman looked at her for a long time, then said words Jana had never expected to hear. "You know why, or you would not be here for him. We have heard about the street. Good morning."

As his house collapsed, Brandon stood watching from the rim of the safety perimeter. He was hemmed in by curious onlookers for whom this was just more evening entertainment. He could not see his house, could not see it die, but senses beyond the five brought him close. As though it was his life, he felt the body caving in, felt crucial bones crack and collapse. He had seen many buildings die, buildings of mud and straw, of wood, of stone, but never had it touched him like this. It had never been so final. Here, night itself fled before the advancing dragonfire.

He felt Jana's approach. She came to stand soberly by his side, a fellow mourner. As she told him, he felt the closing of the ways. There were no more choices. He was driven along a road hedged with swords.

"Michael has a place you can stay awhile," she said. "All the people from his camp are there. The police cleared it out this morning."

"Fast movers," Brandon said, and he went with her. "I trust I don't have to travel to the

Kyerang?"

"She just said the port. The shuttles use the airport and dock with their ship in orbit."

Michael's house was crammed with bodies; living, shifting, talking. Heads turned, hair swished in Jana's face as she pushed through. Michael was perched on a chest-of-drawers like a gargoyle, talking loudly to the people around him. Seeing her, he waved. "I was getting worried about you!"

"It's done," Jana called back, drawing a thumb across her throat. She shoved her way to him. Brandon remained near the door, all his senses on edge in this crowded warren.

"Why so many people?" she asked.

"You know about the camp," Michael said grimly. "Police claimed the conditions were unsanitary, but they didn't seem to care about this house. They just wanted us out of the area." He shrugged his acceptance of it. "And they gave us money."

"How much?" Brandon said. Though he talked softly from the doorway, Michael heard him.

"I don't know. The Council has it."

"Enough," Brandon pressed, "to buy a spaceship?"

"Come on, Bran. We could get a ship, but none of the planets would clear us to land. You know how particular the colonies are. We haven't got the skills they want."

"Who says you have to land?"

Jana's head was becoming hazed, as if somehow she was missing the point. "If they gave you money, why can't you get houses?"

"Undesirables," Michael said, sounding ridiculously cheerful about it. "The Good Neighbour Law squashes us flat."

"Tomorrow night I will be gone," Brandon said.

"If you all stay here, you must find some way to accept this world. If you cannot, then take a step beyond what I'm going to do. The colonies are only particular about who lives there. They will not care who supplies them with what they must have. Aboard such a ship you make your own laws. But that's for you to decide. I am going out now, but first I need to see where I can sleep."

"I'll show you," Michael said, jumping down.

Jana left them then, to walk slowly, sadly, home.

In what had been Brandon's street, machines under floodlights were at work piling up the stones.

Jana walked with Brandon in the early evening of the next day. They had been silent, in the way of old friends who do not need talk to feel easy. Better than any magic was his trick of not being noticed by anyone who might have reason to stop them. Brandon laughed at her when she called it magic, and said



that once everyone had known how to go quietly.

"That girl I met at the Space Agency," Jana said, "she was like you. She doesn't belong here, but she can pretend she does."

"Some must," Brandon said. "I have. But now I've had enough."

For several minutes they walked quietly on, then Jana found the words for what had been worrying her most about Brandon's decision.

"You won't be able to go outside," she said. "I think I would hate that worst of all."

He looked down at her, and his smile was a measure of all the things lost and gained. "You can see the stars. Think of that."

She glanced skyward, automatically, forgetting the smog and the city lights. "I see what you mean. But to persuade Michael and his friends to go to space.... You saw them. They're scared. When it was impossible, everyone wrote about it and wanted to go, and now that they can, they won't! The police shoved and they moved. Even Michael. And he saved the books!"

"That was a somewhat smaller step."

They returned to the house, less crowded now. Some of the uprooted commune dwellers had returned to their families, leaving a core of about fifty. Michael was talking to a group of older people, but they were not like the elders Jana was used to. These people talked loudly and aggressively, shouting one another down.

"I'm leaving now," Brandon said gravely to Michael, sharing some of his stare with the group, and quietening them remarkably.

"This is our Council," Michael said. "I've been telling them what you suggested."

"And?"

"We don't know!" he said in anguish.

"If it is lack of expertise that worries you, I am sure people could be found..."

"It's all right for you!" someone interjected. "You're going to a job on an established vessel. There's no such thing as a free trade ship."

"Then make one!" Jana said, angry now. "Why can't there be Free Ships? It just needs some of you to get off your butts."

Brandon took her arm and guided her out of the house. Over his shoulder he murmured to Michael: "Work on them."

"The authorities would go for it," Jana said, on fire with the idea as she and Brandon approached the terminal doors. "It gets a whole lot of trouble makers out of their hair - and the beauty is, those colonies really aren't supplied to the extent they

need. There're only the passenger ships and what they can carry in their holds!"

Brandon smiled. "You see. You know more about it than you thought." They reached the gateway and halted. "I am supposed to find this Captain on my own. We had better say goodbye here."

Filled with a sense of loss, she felt at once childish and stupid. Brandon embraced her briefly, lightly, the only way he had ever touched her.

"Mind you take the books with you," he murmured.

Then the huge glass doors slid wide to admit him and he was gone. She did not give him up at once, but ran right around the building and into the viewing garden. Ignoring the neat, politely waiting groups and security guards, she ran up to the barrier where children watched the silent transport shuttles on the solid black lake beyond. She waited for ten minutes, unable to withdraw into the quiet-of-the-mind he had taught her.

At last she saw him, walking with a group of men and women toward one of the waiting ships. They were sharply outlined under floodlights into stark black and whites. Among them, Brandon did not stand out, as he did wherever else she had seen him. Here, he was no longer alien.

They were separated from her by a barrier of metal. Already aliens. After the group went into the ship, most of the watchers moved away, nervous to remain even at this distance when the craft took off. Jana could not move. She jumped at the suddenness of harsh breath at her side. It was Michael, who must have run several kilometres to reach the terminal.

"Wanted... to see it leave."

Someone pressed in beside her and she turned, recognising one of the youths from the house. There were at least a dozen, all in their teens or early twenties.

Michael grinned at her, half-shamed. "All I could get."

Out on the field, the small craft woke and began the building crescendo of fire and thunder that would free it. It rose slowly, to their eyes, and built up speed in the air as it shot straight upward and out.

Jana stared at it, trying not to let desolation take her. She swallowed hard and faced the others. Even Michael was watching her, as though, by leaving, Brandon had passed to her the authority that had been his. She knew she would have to take advantage of that.

"It's going to take us a little bit longer," she said.



# GLARING PROBLEM

## Maurice Xanthos

Halley's Comet was where it started. For ages I had wanted to see it. I bought the books, read the dates for the best sightings, scanned the skies with my telescope and kept a log of its progress. But always I was dissatisfied with my involvement. I wanted to really see it, be where I could almost touch it. That need to be close grew into something of an obsession.

Ayers Rock, right in the heart of Australia, was the place I had to be - all the articles agreed. And there were ready-made ways of getting there. Some of the airlines were planning night flights, though to me that was hardly an improvement to what I was already doing. And it was sharing; I wanted to have it to myself. I wanted to go to Ayers Rock, but not as part of a guided tour. I wanted an adventure; I wanted to be part of the experience, not just a witness. I made up my mind that I was going, and under my own steam.

My parents weren't too keen on the idea.

"Don't be silly," my father said. "The comet's coming in April. What about your studies?"

"I'll be gone two weeks at the most," I said. "And I'm not silly. How many chances do we get to really witness something as incredible as a comet?"

My parents remained silent.

"...And my studies aren't going to suffer. The semester is only three, four weeks old then, and my mates will lend me their notes."

My father rubbed his forehead, and I could see the 'God, help us' expression in his eyes.

"How are you getting there?" my mother asked. "Bus, plane?"

"No," I said. "I want to drive up. In my car."

My mother yelped. "Your car? Do you think that you'll get to Ayers Rock in your car?"

"I gave it a good overhaul last week," I said. "It goes like a rocket..."

The rocket gave up on me on some dusty track between Oodnadatta and Granite Downs. I was still about 500 kilometres from my destination, but it might as well have been 5000.

I was fortunate, I thought, that my car had the consideration to crack up in the late afternoon, when the big heat was past. After my initial tantrum, and with feet more bruised and battered than my car's body, I slumped into the front seat and decided to wait it out. I had a few litres of water

in the back, with a few courses of sandwiches that I had organised for myself, and felt it would be safer to wait there than to go wandering off and getting caught in a blazing desert sun.

Two depressing days passed, and there had been no passing traffic. So much, I thought wearily, for my adventurous short cuts. I was down to a few mouthfuls of water, and my sandwiches were becoming slightly toasted. I got to the stage where I was considering hiking my way out of this predicament. The car was an obvious write-off - fire does incredible things to motors - so there was no need to go backwards. My timetable for arrival at The Rock wasn't too inconvenienced, for I had allowed myself plenty of time to get there. The time had come for me to hoof it ... in the morning, when I could see the road. It shouldn't be too bad, I naively figured. After all, hadn't someone successfully run through the hottest part of the desert just recently. I reckoned I could make the next station by tomorrow night.

I settled down for evening, planning to get an early start.

It was towards sunrise when I was awoken by a snort and another sound like panting. My eyes flickered open and I had to stare for a few moments before I could focus my eyes into the pre-dawn darkness. A horse stood before me, its head shaking like it was evading flies. I suddenly realised that a man was sitting on the horse and I stumbled out of my car.

"Am I glad to see you," I said. I think it came out as a rasp.

"Strike me," he said. His voice was slow and very nasal. "What the bloody hell are you doin' out here?"

"Well..." Suddenly I felt foolish. He got off his horse and ambled over. He had a dog beside him.

When he stopped before me I had to suppress a smile. Despite my embarrassment, his appearance reminded me of the clichéd stockman: the bow legged gait, the flat dusty hat on top of the long unshaven face, the strong almost leathery hands, and more. His companion was one of those tough black and tan, multi-ancestral cattle dogs that stare at you suspiciously and shepherd you along.

"I was on my way to Ayers Rock," I said, "to see Halley's Comet." His dog sniffed at my heels, and I had mixed feelings about its intentions.



"Harley's what? What's that, mate?"

I couldn't believe my ears. Stranded here in the desert, and who should I come across but someone who hadn't even heard of Halley's Comet. I explained to him about the comet and why I wanted to see it. He took off his hat, scratched his head and stared at me as if I was pulling his leg.

"Me name's Bob Fellowes, but me mates call me Snowy," was all he said. I looked at him and wondered why he was called Snowy, for his hair was as red as copper.

"My name's Greg Meillion," I said, reciprocating the introduction.

He continued to stare at me. He seemed to be assessing something in his mind. There was the hint of a smile on his lips. He put his hat back on his head and turned.

"Come on, Melon," he drawled. "I'm headin' towards Flemin's Range. I'll drop you off there. Grab yer gear."

"Which way's that?" I asked nervously, trying to calculate my dates and costs for travel arrangements.

"Closer to where yer want ter get," he answered laconically.

I picked up my carry pack and water can and followed him.

"Have you been out here all night?" I asked.

"Been out here fer the past three days," he replied.

"Why's that?"

"Dead cattle and 'roos, Melon."

I didn't understand. His story came out in dribs and drabs.

"A few days ago," he said, "I was doin' me rounds and found close to a dozen of me cattle dead. They'd been burned to a crisp. Couldn't figure it out." Silence followed, then, what seemed like minutes later, Snowy continued. "Thought it must've been some blacks on walkabout, so I went lookin', followin' some tracks."

"Then I came across some dead 'roos, all killed the same way. It's peculiar, mate." Snowy went quiet again, his hand absently scratching his dog's head. "Kept followin' the tracks, and I kept findin' dead animals. All done in the same way. Wasn't abos that done it. They at least eat their food."

"You don't think it was me, do you?" I asked, nervously. I'd hate for this tough nut to get stuck into me.

"Hum? You? A bloke like you? Strewth, Melon, come off it."

I didn't know whether to feel indignant or relieved.

"Then you've just stumbled across me?"

"Yer could say that. We was followin' the tracks. They come just past yer car, about a hundred yards down there." He pointed into the darkness. A faint light was dawning with the rise of the sun and I could barely make out a clump of rocks.

"The tracks are headin' towards Flemin's Range, so you can come with us, if yer like."

He turned and ambled towards his horse.

"How far is it... to get there?"

"Eh? 'Bout two days. Three days when it gets hot."

Two days. That would really cut my arrival in time to see the comet very finely. But I had no choice. I hoped that I could arrange some quick transport once I got to Fleming's Range.

We set off, moving towards a now golden sunrise.

As the sun moved skyward and the heat quickly dried the flimsy dew, I saw traces of what Snowy had described earlier. On a few occasions we came across scorched remnants of animals: dingoes, kangaroos, even some goannas. Snowy showed me the trail he was tracking, a shallowly etched, continuous ditch moving randomly across the plain. I pointed out that it wasn't just animals that had been burnt, there was also spinifex lying singed and blackened. He just nodded, as if he had already known it.

"You don't reckon it's aborigines," I said. "What do you think has done this?"

I had asked this question a dozen times, and Snowy was yet to answer. Finally he looked to the horizon and said, quite nonchalantly, "Somethin' from space."

This floored me. "What? I don't understand?"

I hoped that Snowy would answer me. I couldn't bear him to go quiet on me again after he made that statement.

"Space, Melon," he said, "somethin' from space. That's a fact."

"How... what... how?" I was tongue tied.

"I seen what it came in." He stopped and looked me in the eye. "I didn't want to tell you, 'cause it's none of yer business. But you've been bloody naggin' me ever since this mornin', so perhaps now yer'll shut up."

I was confused by his ambiguity. Was this a story just to shut me up, or was he telling me the truth to stun me to quietness?

"You mean...?" I said.

"Listen, Melon," he said, "I'm trackin' somethin' from outer space. I came across its ship, or whatever, when I started out. I reckon it crashed."

"But how do you know?"

"If you seen it, you'd know, mate. When yer out here in the desert, Melon, you get ter see many strange sights. I've seen them before, sometimes two



or three of them."

You can't get more matter of fact than people of the outback. I actually believed him.

"Just think of it," I said. A million thoughts flashed through my mind at once. "If we find it, what can we learn from it?"

"How's it goin' ter pay me back fer me dead cattle?" Snowy responded, seriously.

Suddenly I blinked. Something had flashed, and I was blinded for a few moments.

"Hell, what was that?"

Snowy looked up, and we both saw what appeared to be swirling dust rising and falling around a fiery glare. Although we were a fair distance from the swirl, Snowy seemed to be studying it closely. His forefinger rubbed lightly down the side of his mouth, from his nose to his chin.

"I reckon that's our killer, mate," he said at last. "Fer sure."

He set off towards the movement, waving me forward to accompany him. "Let's take it easy. I don't want it runnin' off now that we've found it."

"Or sizzling us up like a charcoal grill," I added ruefully.

About a hundred metres from the swirl, it flared again, and we had to cover our eyes. Suddenly I smelled something burning and without warning Snowy hurled himself at me, knocking me face-down to the ground. His dog bounded around us, barking. Grabbing up a handful of sand, he flung it at me. Then he tore off his shirt and commenced to flog me with it. Only then did I realise that my carry pack had been set alight and Snowy was trying to extinguish the flames. I quickly unbuckled the straps and dropped my pack onto the desert floor. All that remained of it was a blackened ball of melted fabric and twisted metal.

Snowy grabbed my arm and dragged me across to some cover. This was the fastest I had seen him move. However, when he spoke again, his voice was as nasally and matter of fact as usual.

"I suppose I'll have ter sort him out meself," he said, pulling on his shirt and rebuttoning it.

"What happened?" I stammered. Everything had happened so fast that it seemed like a blur.

"Well," he drawled, pulling out a satchel of tobacco, "all I seen was a ray of light come flashin' from our mate up there, and strike you just above the shoulder." Snowy rolled out a cigarette and put it to his lips. "Yer pack suddenly burst into flames. I couldn't have me new mate go poof on me." There was only the hint of a smile as he said this.

The cigarette hung from his lower lip and refused to fall as he spoke. He pulled out a box of matches

and lit up.

"Right you are," he said and got up.

"Where are you going?" I asked, foolishly.

"I've got a score to settle, haven't I?"

"But you saw what it did. What have you got to fight it?"

He looked at me and shrugged. "What yer see, mate, is what yer get."

He walked up the slight rise, leaving his horse rummaging for some grass beside me. His dog fell in beside him, but kept looking back at me, expecting me to come. Grudgingly, I pushed myself up and followed. As we drew closer, I could make out the shape of the glaring thing. Snowy was right; it was from space, somewhere far, far away.

I must have done a double take, because I could see right through it. It stood erect, on three ... legs. It's shape wasn't human, or animal or anything that I can compare it to. It was round, and ... square. It had protruberances like eyes on stems, but there was no flesh or blood. It was almost invisible, but at certain angles of its body it reflected the sunlight. And when reflecting, the blinding gleam scorched the soil and grass, leaving a small shallow trail. My binoculars had been fried so I couldn't have a closer look. It wasn't made of rock, or vegetation. Was it some amazing alien transparent flesh?

It circled on its feet and faced us. Its eyes seemed to be looking in our direction.

I stood with my mouth open. Snowy rolled up his sleeves and said, "Well, here goes." He turned and looked at his dog. "You stay there." The dog sat and grinned.

I must have been too stunned for action or protestation. I just stared as Snowy walked up to meet the thing face to face. He strode in a circular fashion, easily avoiding a moving tract of lethal light refracting from the alien.

What happened then occurred and was over in just a few seconds. The alien seemed to rear up and then spin on its heels. It then lowered its head to Snowy's head level and emitted a shrilling roar - like fingernails running down a blackboard, only much louder. Snowy took a step forward and let a fist go straight at its head. The face shattered, and in a moment the alien lay smashed on the ground before him.

My mind was reeling from this short battle. It all seemed unreal. Pulling myself out of my daze, I realised that Snowy was standing in front of me. He seemed to be disappointed. He was shaking his head and clucking his tongue.

I tried to speak. I kept looking from Snowy to the piled remnants up the rise.



"Yer know," said Snowy, "I've known hundreds of blokes just like that." He nodded his head backwards. "They try and hand it out, tryin' ter bluff yer, thinkin' yer can't match 'em."

I realised that Snowy was still puffing away on his cigarette. He took a long drag, then flicked the butt away.

"Then, when yer put them to the test, they're no match. Yer just aim for their weakness."

"But how...?" I asked. "What was its weakness?"

"Melon, mate," he said. "He had a glass jaw."

---

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# BOX EX MACHINA

## Paul Enever

I told him it wouldn't work but you couldn't really tell Gussie anything. He'd nod and look like he was agreeing with you then go off and do things the way he meant to all along. Still, he was right about as often as you were so a lot of his inventions worked.

His inventions? Well, if you wanted the archetypal mad professor you wouldn't go past Gussie Billings. He looked the part and he was a genius, right enough - would probably have invented television and seamless stockings if someone hadn't beaten him to 'em - but at least half the time his inventions were nuttier than he was. I asked him once why he'd invented non-inflammable petrol of all things and he said for the same reason people climbed Everest, it was there waiting to be invented.

His latest project might have led to a technical revolution for he was after an unbreakable box. Some expensive equipment he'd ordered came in a wooden case that looked as if an elephant had rolled on it, and the equipment was damaged. He went to work in his usual fashion, well before the beginning. First, he said, it had to be plastic and it ought to be possible to make plastic as hard as steel. There didn't happen to be one on the market of that quality so he invented one. At least that's what he told me the grey-green powder he had stacked up was.

Just after that I had to leave, being warned that the wife was catching up on me, so I didn't follow his next moves. It was two months before I dared venture back and by then he'd got it finished. His box-making machine was about the size of a Greyhound bus, just a long rectangular thing with a hopper on one end and a square door on the other. There was a switch on the side but nothing else. It was fully automated, he said. All he had to do was empty a bag of plastic in the hopper, start up and four minutes later a box the size of a coffin would slide out of the end door.

"Does it work?" I asked.

"Of course it works."

"Well, where's the box?"

"Oh, I haven't actually made one yet. I was waiting for you to get back." I was flattered but only for a second because he went on, "...so you could see how little you know. You'll be the first to see that it DOES work."

I sat down. This might be interesting. Then I had to get up again to help him tip a bag of powdered plastic into the hopper. Gussie only stands one fifty and he'd made the hopper two metres high. Typical. When he finished panting he switched on and sat back with me. There was a lot of noise from the machine, not much more than a buzzsaw going through sheet iron would make, and sure enough, four minutes later the door opened and a grey-green box slid out, all shiny and seamless.

It looked good and when I rapped it sounded hollow but substantial. The only snag was it had six sides where one of them should have been a lid. When I pointed this out to Gussie he tut-tutted and said something about a minor adjustment. Then he climbed in through the door with a monkey wrench and a screwdriver. I heard some banging and clanking and after a minute he called out "Switch on."

"You sure?" I asked. To me it seemed a bit like looking for a gas leak with a candle.

"Of course I'm sure. I want to see what happens."

I switched on. Ten seconds later Gussie let out a shriek so I ran to switch the thing off, but nothing happened; he'd built in a four minute cycle and for four minutes it kept going. So did Gussie, yelling and screaming until, quite suddenly, his voice went muffled.

The door opened and a box slid out. I pushed it down the ramp - jeepers, it was heavy - and stuck my head in the machine. I could see a lot of pipes and



robot arms and gizmos but no sign of Gussie or his spanner and screwdriver. While I was still metaphorically scratching my head there was a thumping noise from the box and Gussie's voice, much muffled, crying "Get me out!"

I looked the damn box over but unfortunately he hadn't cured the trouble. It was still a six sided box with no clue which side was supposed to be a lid.

"Get me out, for God's sake, before I suffocate!"

I have to admit, I panicked. I hit the thing with a hammer and nearly broke my wrist when it bounced but the plastic didn't even dent. I ran round the workshop like a decapitated hen until I found a hacksaw, came back and started sawing like mad. The saw skidded all over the box without making any impression. Gussie had stopped hollering, to conserve air, I guess, but now he said, gasping a bit:

"Diamond drill... on the bench... hurry."

I found the drill and set it about where I judged his head to be. The thing slid about like the saw but at last I managed to hold it still long enough to make a slight depression in the plastic. After that it stayed put and the screeching it made proved it was cutting. The plastic, it turned out, was no more than 5 millimetres thick but it took that drill fifteen minutes to get through, even with my considerable weight leaning on it. I saved it from going right through and perhaps trepanning Gussie. When I drew it out I'd made a clean hole as wide as it was deep. I spoke into it:

"You alright, Gus?"

There was no reply but when I put my ear to the hole I could hear faint breathing. Thank God, I thought, he's alive. Now he can get air he'll come to.

I still didn't see how I was going to get the box open. The drill wasn't going to do it - there was hardly any diamond left on the bit - but perhaps a diamond saw might. Trouble was there didn't seem to be one in Gussie's tool kit. I went back to the hole: "You alright, Gus?"

A weak voice replied; "When are you going to get me out?"

"I'm trying," I said. "I'm going off to borrow a diamond saw. I'll be as quick as I can. At least you won't suffocate."

I ran all the way to a friend, Johnny, who runs an engineering shop. Yes, he had a diamond saw but it was power driven and mounted on a stand.

"Can't we take the whole thing?" I asked. "It's urgent." Then I had to explain the problem. Once he knew Gussie wasn't about to die of suffocation he nearly died himself of laughing. I didn't think it was that funny but had to agree it was typical Billings. We got the saw loaded on Johnny's pickup after some sweat and took it round to Gussie's place. When he heard us he started to complain. He was hot and thirsty and his bladder was full. We quenched his thirst with a funnel and a thin tube but there was no way of cooling him and as for the other, that was his problem.

Johnny got the saw set up and switched on. We'd arranged it to cut the end off nearest Gussie's feet. "Draw your legs up," I said.

"Can't. Not room."

Well, we took a chance on giving him a pedicure and sat back to watch the saw at work. An hour later it was still sliding through a millimetre groove with practically no teeth left. It was going to be a long job. Johnny was despondent. "Maybe an oxy torch would be quicker."

"Sure worth a try," I said. "You got one?"

It wasn't a success. Whatever was in that plastic sneered at heat but Gussie didn't. He was being roasted, he screamed, were we trying to cremate him prematurely? We went back to the saw. I stayed while Johnny dashed off to round up all the diamond blades he could locate. We're into our eighth now. I feed Gussie with soup every four hours, keeping my nose clear of the hole because he's beginning to stink.

It looks as if one more day will see him free.

---

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## review

This is the bit where I (compiler? editor? whatever you like to call me - I'm not fussy) get to have a say.

You'll note that the stories aren't so black this time. I'm still going through old material from *Aphelion SF Mag.* - the eagle-eyed will note that *BOX EX MACHINA* was slotted for *Mag.\*6*. *GLARING PROBLEM* also; it was lined up at the last minute when difficulties arose with one of the other stories. *TO HERE THE MIDNIGHT FLED*, one of a series of stories Sue Isle wrote in her early days, based on the character, Brandon, and the repressive world he inhabits, was also on file, which makes *SHARING SPACE* the only newcomer (to me at least), a situation to be redressed as *TF* gets established.



I'm attempting here to mix different styles of and approaches to story-telling; for mine, there is no one correct way to go about it (although there are certain rules of thumb regarding character, plot, narrative, conflict, resolution of same... that you simply can't get away from if you want to "sell" [as opposed to "succeed" - which is a term that, since it can't be measured, has no real meaning]. The stories that appear in TF have all "worked" in some way or other for me; whether they do the same for anyone else, I can only ask that you read them and decide. If particular stories appeal, please let me know; as a professional publisher, I would really appreciate the feedback.

The address for submissions (and feedback) to TF is: Peter McNamara, THYME FICTION, P.O. Box 619, North Adelaide, SA, 5006.

The news from my professional arm is that George Turner's collection, A PURSUIT OF MIRACLES, went off to the typesetters the day before I began this 'review' piece. (This book has given me particular pleasure, for if there is one person writing SF in this country who really knows their craft, then that person is George Turner.) A PURSUIT OF MIRACLES is earmarked for release in January.

The text for Terry Dowling's RYNOSSEROS is all but in the bag (the last few "would it work better if on page 144, line 23, I said..."s are moving between Sydney and Adelaide). Our present intention is to release RYNOSSEROS just prior to (or at) Danse Macabre in April. The 1990 Anthology is still at an early stage of development - but more of that later.

In case the following item has escaped the attention of Lync & Clive: Women's Redress Press is seeking submissions for a women's SPECULATIVE/SCIENCE FICTION ANTHOLOGY. The anthology will consist of stories (500-10,000 words) and poems. Author must hold copyright. The anthology is open to Australian women and women resident in Australia. The closing date for submissions is 1st March 1990. (Remember the SSAE.) The address is: SF ANTHOLOGY, WOMEN'S REDRESS PRESS INC., P.O. Box 655, Broadway, NSW, 2007.

Also, Jeff Harris informs me that there are still some spots to fill in APHELION PUBLICATIONS' 1990 Anthology (tentatively titled "METAGALACTIC DREAMS"). A word of explanation here: there is no deadline as such; long ago, we got together and formulated policy. It was decided that story selection would not simply be a matter of going through the submissions and picking the 10 best. When Jeff has the wordage he requires and at the standard he requires, only then will he take the package to his publishers. The address for late (but never too late) submissions is: Jeff Harris, Anthologies Editor, APHELION PUBLICATIONS, P.O. Box 619, North Adelaide, SA, 5006.

And for those who would like to know the progress of their submissions, please write to Jeff. He has complete control over the project; I get to play my part only when he informs me that the collection is complete. In other words (and I assure people this is true): I KNOW NOTHING!

A last word: I really can't let Russell Blackford's article (or was it an advertisement?) in THYME #77 go by without comment.

Talking about URBAN FANTASIES, he says: "The stories I mean seem to have been virtually crystallised (yes!) rather than written in the normal way, depending upon an extreme economy of incident and description, evocative images, and refusal to provide rounded characters and an unambiguous plot. Such stuff does not go down well with a lot of traditional SF readers." Now, I go along with that completely, although I would have placed the final stop after "well". Russell and David King (and Ebony Books) showed great courage to publish this collection, for they knew (if I read it right) that such stuff doesn't sell. What I don't understand is Russell's complaint that stuff that doesn't sell isn't selling. He says that: "The book is still awaiting vindication." "Vindication" is like "succeed" - it is not able to be measured and therefore has no meaning. URBAN FANTASIES is largely (I must be careful here; there were a couple of traditionally crafted stories in there that I thoroughly enjoyed) experimental, small readership (I bought a copy) material with which Russell and David went out on a big limb and deserve our admiration for doing so. It stands as an achievement in its own right, so why muddy the waters around it by talking about the economics of publishing? Russell...?

All that aside, Russell has - albeit, obliquely - canvassed some of the main problems (issues?) facing SF publication in this country. His article deserves careful consideration, and as much for the points missed as the points made.

And I'm becoming (have already become?) boring again. Goodbye.



## GUFF 1990

**WHAT IS GUFF?** The Get Up-and over Fan Fund (known in alternate years as the Going Under Fan Fund) was established in 1979 to further contacts between European and Australian fandom by bringing a well-known and popular fan from one hemisphere to attend a convention in the other. GUFF exists solely through the support of fandom. The candidates are voted for by interested fans all over the world and each vote is accompanied by a fee of not less than £1.50 or \$A4.00. These votes and the continued interest and generosity of fandom are what makes GUFF possible.

**WHO MAY VOTE?** Voting is open to anyone who has been active in fandom (fanzines, conventions, clubs, etc) prior to January 1988 and who contributes at least £1.50 or \$A4.00 to the fund. Contributions in excess of this minimum are gratefully accepted. Voting is by secret ballot, only one vote per person is allowed, proxy votes are forbidden and you must sign your ballot. "Write-in" candidates are permitted. Cheques, postal orders and money orders should be made payable to 'GUFF' if in \$A and to 'Eve Harvey' if in £ (if you cannot provide these any other currency should be in notes, but we'd prefer not to incur the additional transaction costs.)

**DEADLINE** Votes must reach the administrators by 21 April 1990.

**VOTING DETAILS** GUFF uses a preferential ballot system, which guarantees an automatic run-off and majority win. You rank the candidates in the order of your preference. If the leading first-place candidate does not get a majority of the total votes cast the first-place votes of the lowest-ranking candidate are dropped and the second-place votes on those ballots are then counted. The process goes on until one candidate has a majority. It is therefore important to vote for second, third etc. on your ballot. It is also a waste of a vote to put any candidate in any more than one place.

**HOLD OVER FUNDS** This choice, similar to the No Award in the BSFA and Hugo Award balloting, gives the voter the chance to vote for no GUFF trip, should the candidates not appeal to them or if they feel that GUFF should slow down the frequency of its trips. Should Hold Over Funds receive a majority of votes on the final ballot no GUFF trip will be awarded.

**DONATIONS** GUFF needs continuous donations of money and material to be auctioned in order to exist. If you are ineligible to vote or don't feel qualified to vote, why not donate anyway? Just as important as donations is publicity - in fanzines, letters, convention booklets, and by word of mouth - to increase voter participation and fandom's overall interest in and awareness of GUFF.

**THE CANDIDATES** Each candidate has promised, barring acts of god, to travel to the 1990 Worldcon (Confiction) in The Hague, The Netherlands, if elected, posted a non-refundable bond, and provided 5 nominations and a platform. The platform and nominators are detailed overleaf.

**VOTES AND CONTRIBUTIONS SHOULD BE SENT TO:**

**EUROPE:** Roelof Goudriaan  
Caan Van Necklaan 63  
2218 BB Rijswijk (ZH)  
**THE NETHERLANDS**

**AUSTRALIA:** Irwin Hirsh  
26 Jessamine Avenue  
East Prahran  
Victoria 3181  
**AUSTRALIA**



## GUFF 1990 CANDIDATES' PLATFORMS

**LARRY DUNNING** Born 14 days after Sputnik and raised in various parts of the Galaxy but mostly in Perth, Larry works for the Bureau of Statistics producing Government fiction. His interests in mainstream SF, Comics, Games, Art, Films, Folk and Filk are famed if not infamous, and he has been involved in organised fandom since 1975. Larry has also produced several fanzines including APOCRYPHA (a genzine), THE PHANTOM ZINE (an APA) and TAU CETI (a games zine). Known as a masseur and hug therapist, winning GUFF would enable Larry to write the best trip report since the Odyssey. Remember, Dunning is running!

Nominators: Terry Frost, Carey Handfield, Shirley Page, Grant Stone  
and Pascal Thomas

**MARK LONEY & MICHELLE MUIJSERT** As Michelle has yet to return from the trackless wastes of northern Ontario (become a computer programmer and see the world!), the task of drafting 100 words of deathless vote-winning prose has fallen to me alone. The obvious fanac to mention is THE SPACE WASTREL but, I must admit guiltily, we haven't pubbed our ish since 1988. But we have both been fans since the seventies, both involved in running clubs and conventions as well as pubbing fanzines, and would love to meet as many of you as possible in Holland and the UK in 1990. Till then hopefully ....

Nominators: Eve Harvey, Perry Middlemiss, Julian Wraner, Roger Weddall  
and Pam Wells.

**ROMAN ORSZANSKI** Bearded, baroque and bilingual bicyclist and broadcaster Roman has been producing small and curious fanzines since '75, inspired by Aussiecon. He's hovered around conventions since, organising his own when necessary. Fond of talking, he's sometimes press-ganged onto panels - but prefers parties, eating and drinking. He produced THE STEAM-DRIVEN FLUGELHORN, Australia's first audio-fanzine, and has launched several radio programmes (including ones on Film, SF and Media). His interests include jazz (modern), films (old, black & white), community radio and protecting rainforests. An ardent greenie, he's campaigned on many environmental issues. His ambition: dance until dawn in the capitals of Europe.

Nominators: John Foyster, Judith Hanna, Joseph Nicholas, Marc Ortlieb  
and Jean Weber

=====

I VOTE FOR : (rank 1, 2, 3, etc )

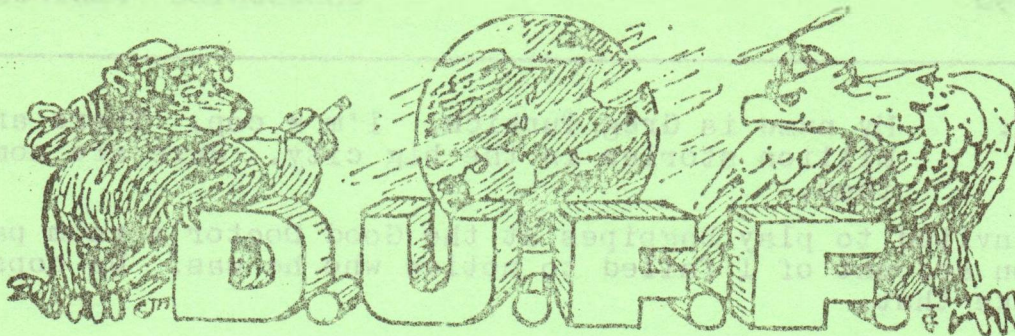
( ) Larry Dunning	Signature: _____
( ) Mark Loney & Michelle Muijsert	Name & Address: _____
( ) Roman Orszanski	_____
( ) Hold Over Funds	_____
( ) _____ (Write-in)	_____

I enclose \_\_\_\_\_ as a donation to GUFF. (Make £ cheques payable to 'Eve Harvey' and \$A cheques payable to 'GUFF'.)

If you think your name may not be known to the administrators and that your vote might be disqualified, please give the name & address of a fan (not a fan group, a candidate or their nominators) to whom you are known: \_\_\_\_\_

Reproduction of this sheet is encouraged provided that the text is reprinted verbatim. Anyone doing so should substitute their name here: *Thyme*





## DOWN UNDER FAN FUND

DUFF 1990

AUSTRALASIA TO NORTH AMERICA

**DUFF:** The Down Under Fan Fund was created in 1972 to encourage closer ties between fans in Australasia and North America. With host countries alternating each year, there have been 17 exchanges of fan representatives since, supported entirely by voluntary contributions from fans all over the world. DUFF delegates visit a major SF convention in the host country and visit with fans they might otherwise never meet in person. DUFFers are treated as special guests and are always well looked after.

**DONATIONS:** DUFF exists solely on the donations and contributions of fans and always welcomes material for auction and donation of money. There will be auctions of DUFF material at future cons. Contributions can be brought to the con or sent to the local administrator. Anyone may contribute, even if ineligible to vote, and any donations in excess of the voting donation are gratefully accepted. Cheques should be made out to John D. Berry (in North America) or DUFF Australia (in Australasia). Money should always be sent in the administrators' home currency.

**1990 VOTING OPENS:** Votes are now being called for the 1990 DUFF Race, Australasia to North America. All candidates have posted a \$10 bond, given a brief written platform statement, provided the names, addresses and signatures of three Australasian nominators and two North American nominators, and promised (barring acts of God) to travel to the 1990 NASFiC in San Diego, 1-3 September 1990. In cases of multiple candidacies, DUFF pays for one set of fares, accommodation and expenses.

**NOTE:** ALL VOTES MUST REACH AN ADMINISTRATOR NO LATER THAN 5 pm 16 April '90.

**VOTING:** Voting for eligible candidates will be opened late January 1990 and closed at Danse Macabre (the 1990 Australian natcon) 13-16 April '90. Any fan active in fandom before January 1989 may vote. Ballots must be signed and be accompanied by a donation of at least \$2. Each person is allowed only one vote. If, at the time of voting, you think your name may not be known by an administrator, you will be asked to include the name of a fan (not to include any of the candidates) or fan group who can vouch for you. Unverifiable votes will not be counted. The present DUFF administrators are:

DUFF Australasia:

Terry Dowling  
11 Everard Street  
Hunters Hill, NSW, 2140

DUFF North America:

John D. Berry  
525 Nineteenth Ave East  
Seattle, Washington 98112



GREG TURKICH: My name is Greg Turkich. I'm a cop. There are a million stories in the big city. Here are some of them.

I once got invited to play bagpipes at the Good Doctor's room party; I declined on account of I failed to notice who he was. Us cops are observant like that.

Charlotte Proctor and Lucy Huntzinger are sponsoring me. You may notice something about them; they're both female. Us cops are charming like that.

Jack Herman and Carey Handfield (TRO) and John McDouall are sponsoring me too. They're male. They really know who I am. Us cops are realistic like that. Fnord.

Nominators: Jack Herman, Carey Handfield (TRO), John McDouall, Charlotte Proctor, Lucy Huntzinger.

ROGER WEDDALL:

...and now, the story that they said could never be told...The story of a Roger who - against incredible odds and in exactly one hundred words - set out to win the hearts and minds of both Australian and North American fandom. A person who, in his day, had been the editor of a number of fanzines (THYME probably being the most notable among them), as well as being both an enthusiastic convention organiser and a dedicated Wild Party attendee. And who, once asked to list a few of his favourite things, cryptically replied: "People. Picnics. Hugging. Sunsets. Italo Calvino. Lasagna..."

Nominators: Marc Ortlieb, Nick Stathopoulos, Bruce Gillespie, Dick & Nicki Lynch, Teddy Harvia.

Completed ballots and Voting fee should be sent to the administrators: Terry Dowling, 11 Everard Street, Hunters Hill, NSW, 2110, Australia. John D. Berry, 525 19th Avenue East, Seattle, Washington 98112, USA.

Reproduction of this ballot form is encouraged provided it is verbatim.

I vote for: (list 1,2,3 etc)

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Greg Turkich \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Roger Weddall \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Write-in: \_\_\_\_\_

If you think you may be unknown to the administrators, please give the name of a fan or fan group to whom you are known:

Hold Over Funds \_\_\_\_\_

No Preference \_\_\_\_\_



# 1990 AUSTRALIAN SCIENCE FICTION ("DITMAR") AWARDS

## VOTING FORM

### BEST AUSTRALIAN LONG FICTION

- |       |                  |                            |                |
|-------|------------------|----------------------------|----------------|
| _____ | Kelleher, Victor | The Red King               | Viking Kestrel |
| _____ | Taylor, Keith    | The Sorcerer's Sacred Isle | Ace            |
| _____ | Whiteford, Wynne | Lake of the Sun            | Ace            |
| _____ | NO AWARD         |                            |                |

### BEST AUSTRALIAN SHORT FICTION

- |       |                 |   |
|-------|-----------------|---|
| _____ | Dowling, Terry  | The Quiet Redemption of Andy the House<br>(Australian Short Stories #26, June 1989)                     |
| _____ | Love, Rosaleen  | If You Go Down to the Park Today<br>(Collected in <i>Total Devotion Machine</i> ,<br>The Women's Press) |
| _____ | Love, Rosaleen  | Total Devotion Machine<br>(Collected in <i>Total Devotion Machine</i> ,<br>The Women's Press)           |
| _____ | Smith, Petrina, | Over the Edge<br>( <i>Mirrors: Redress Novellas</i> ,<br>Women's Redress Press)                         |
| _____ | NO AWARD        |   |

### BEST FANZINE

- |       |                     |                |
|-------|---------------------|----------------|
| _____ | ASFR                | SF Collective  |
| _____ | Ethel The Aardvark  | M.S.F.C        |
| _____ | Get Stuffed         | Jacob Blake    |
| _____ | Sweetness and Light | Jack R. Herman |
| _____ | NO AWARD            |                |



# 1990 AUSTRALIAN SCIENCE FICTION ("DITMAR") AWARDS

## BEST FAN WRITER

_____ Terry Frost	_____ Yvonne Hintz
_____ Bruce Gillespie	_____ Alan Stewart
_____ Ian Gunn	_____ NO AWARD
_____ Jack R. Herman	

## BEST FAN ARTIST

_____ Ian Gunn	_____ Phil Wlodarczyk
_____ Kerrie Hanlon	_____ NO AWARD
_____ Craig Hilton	

## WILLIAM ATHELING JR. AWARD FOR CRITICISM OR REVIEW

Insufficient nominations were received in this category for any nominees to appear on the voting form.

---

The optional preferential voting system is used so please number, from 1, your choices in each category that you wish to vote in. It is not necessary to vote in all categories or number all nominees in a category.

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_

You **MUST** be a member of **Danse Macabre** to vote for the Ditmar Awards.

A special "voting only" membership is available for those unable to attend the convention—see the general application form.

If you wish to join **Danse Macabre** in order to vote please use the general application form—do **NOT** send membership applications with this voting form.

VOTING CLOSES: 6TH APRIL 1990

SEND VOTING PAPERS TO: PO BOX 427, ABBOTSFORD 3067, VICTORIA

---

REPRODUCTION OF THIS FORM IS ALLOWED PROVIDED IT IS VERBATIM



## Danse Macabre General Application Form

Remember that completed forms should be sent to Danse Macabre, PO Box 273, Fitzroy 3065, Victoria

*Danse Macabre* is the 1990 Australian National Science Fiction Convention being held in the Diplomat Hotel over Easter of 1990 - four days of fun, frivolity and *fear*! The convention theme is 'Mardi Gras in New Orleans' - party, party, party. But seriously, we will have panel discussions, films, a full video programme, games, competitions.....

### MEMBERSHIPS

- ☐ **Attending - Adult:** \$60 until 31 December 1989, \$70 thereafter.
- ☐ **Attending - Child:** half the adult rate for children 15 years or younger at 13 April 1990. A *Children's Membership* can only be issued with a supervising *Adult* membership. The supervising adult will undertake full responsibility for the child at the convention and will accompany the child at all times during the convention.  
Children less than 5 years old will be allowed free entrance to the convention provided they are accompanied and supervised at all times by an adult member of *Danse Macabre*.
- ☐ **Supporting (non-attending):** \$15. A supporting membership may be converted to an attending membership at any time on paying the difference between the two membership rates.

☐ **Voting Only:** \$5.

Name(s) and Address(es)

.....

.....

### ACCOMMODATION

Accommodation at *Danse Macabre* has been arranged with both the **Diplomat** and at the nearby **Spaceline** hotel. The **Spaceline** has been provisionally block booked by the convention to ensure no hotel management hassles - the only residents in the **Spaceline** will be *Danse Macabre* members. This arrangement must be confirmed with the hotel by the end of February. Book now (there are also only a limited number of rooms) so that the convention can guarantee full occupancy of the **Spaceline**.

- ☐ Double / Suite (= two-room triple) room(s) (\$59/\$80 per night) at the **Spaceline**.
- ☐ Single / Double / Triple room(s) (\$54/\$59/\$80 per night) at the **Diplomat**.
- for the nights of (12 - 16 April): .....

I/we intend to share our room with: .....

Please find enclosed \$ ..... as one nights deposit for accommodation.

Accommodation bookings will only be confirmed and placed with the hotel on receipt of one nights deposit.

.....

### OTHER DETAILS

I/we intend to book ☐ seats at the banquet (cost is approximately \$25)

I/we intend to contribute to the art show. ☐ Yes ☐ No

### OTHER COMMENTS

I/we would like to help out: .....

Other suggestions and ideas: .....

.....

Agents: Adelaide - Carol Woolmer

Perth - Grant Stone

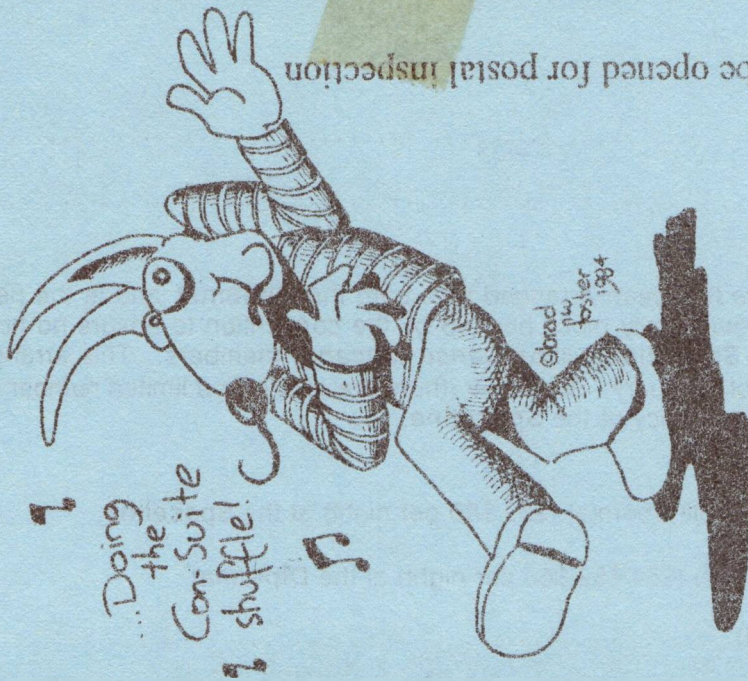
Sydney - Gerald Smith



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