





# TWILIGHT ZINE

## 26

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### ART

Cover: "Ice Cave on Titan" by Morris Scott Dollens

page 1: Joel Davis ©1972

pages 2 & 36: Mike Gilbert

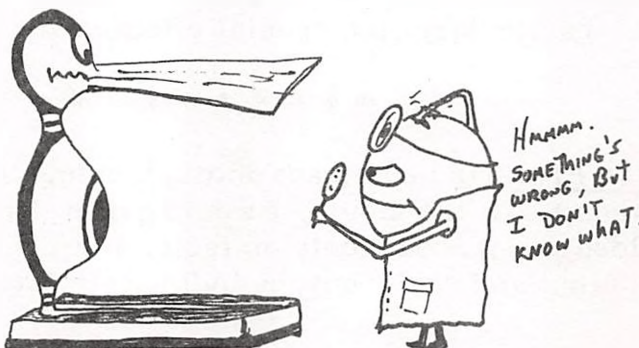
pages 8 & 18: Courtesy MIT Info Office

page 32: Mike Symes

Back cover: Diane Hirsch

The 'Famous Fan Writers  
School' ad was devised and  
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Tanenbaum.

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In TZ 24 I wrote that ecology disaster stories had taken the place of nuclear annihilation stories in science fiction. The first of these in movie form has now arrived in the film Silent Running, which, as I write, is just opening in New York City after previewing in various places.



Silent Running is the story of the last ecology nut in the world. The last wild flora and fauna of Earth have been shot into orbit aboard a bunch of spaceships, and the nut is one of the people who are looking after them. The rest of the crew are plastic people who would like nothing better than

to return to the nice, carefully managed Earth, and they are overjoyed when the order comes to destroy the domes containing the "trees" and come home. It is not clear why Earth is so eager to get rid of its wildlife; perhaps it needed the room. The ecology nut, after doing away with the rest of the crew, hijacks the spaceship containing the last undestroyed dome and takes off for the great beyond, accompanied only by a trio (shortly thereafterwards a duo) of robots (aka "Drones") that the nut programs to do all the dirty work and play poker.

Eventually, Earth ships catch up with him, and the nut shoots the drone-tended dome out into deep space and blows himself up rather than return to the plastic people.

This being an ecology picture, there is lots of preaching about the wonders of nature and such, inspiring but tending to bring the picture to a ragged halt at unfortunate moments. Bruce Dern plays the nut with a continual wide-eyed fanaticism that doesn't allow much room for any subtle characterisation.

The director, Douglas Trumbull, seems to have spent most of his time with the special effects (which are terrific) and with the multiple amputees who operate the drones. The drones are as cute as can be, which is only unfortunate because their "human" characteristics are rather inconsistent with their presentation as simple "drones". If you can get around this lovable-mutt-as-mechanical presentation and the eco-preaching, it should be possible to enjoy the picture, particularly the special effects.

\* \* \* \* \*

Slaughterhouse Five has been made into a movie. Though I didn't have the book with me when I saw the movie, I would guess that the book-to-flick transfer ratio is close to 1:1. The only omission I noticed was the whole by-play about Kilgore Trout and such, but the bulk of the Kurt Vonnegut madness is intact.



This being so, it is likely that your feelings for the book and the movie should be the same. The various portions of Billy Pilgrim's life are well done, especially the World War II sequences centering about the firebombing of Dresden. I personally didn't care for the girl who played Montana Wildhack, Billy's Trafadadorean paramour, but this is minor. The acting is uniformly good, though it seems like most of the characters don't really have a life of their own. This inadequacy is mostly Vonnegut's fault; he is more interested in what happens in his books than who it happens to. Vonnegut protests that he is not a science fiction author; he is merely using the trappings of sf for his own ends. Unfortunately, he also carries on in the tradition of scifi authors in his inadequate characterisations and his fascination with the mechanics of the fantastic. Whether or not he can abandon the format of sf for reality is an unanswered question. It looks like Slaughterhouse Five was Vonnegut's final work in the cycle that commenced with Player Piano. What will happen next is hard to say.

\* \* \* \* \*

This is the second issue to be produced with the new, improved offset method; I have been assured by our hardworking technical staff that he is now aware of the peculiarities of the machines involved and that this issue will be "the best so far". It would be better still, he hints darkly, if I wrote less of the issue, but this is more dependant upon the contributions of our readers than it is upon me. So now your duty is clear.

Jonathan Fox  
3/29/72

## An Editorial

Uh, hello. I'm Jack Stevens, random hacker and Faithful Gnurd who, for my part in typing up TZ 25, submitting (articles) to this and future TZ's, and swearing eternal fealty to the aims and goals of the Most Noble Society, Long May it Rule the Universe, was offered the conveniently vacant post of Jourcom 2.

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As you can see, I accepted.

This being the First Editorial Ever to leave my golden pencil (at least in this universe) I may be appearing to overdo things a little bit, what with My Free Use of Capital'd Letters and so on, but, after all, isn't Pride and Enthusiasm in Our Work what Twilight Zine is all about? Isn't it? Huh? (If it isn't, Fox, don't tell me.)

In any case, having nothing more to say (and having had nothing much to say in the first place), I leave you to your "drab, wretched lives" (Tom Lehrer) with their so pitifully infrequent moments of brightness--such as this issue.

6/15/72

With the current circulation of two new issues of Twilight Zine (#24 and #25), MITSFS has received a number of letters of comment and inquiries about both MITSFS and TZ. In an attempt to satisfy as many people as possible at one time, I am now going to try to answer many of the questions and clear up some misunderstandings.

TZ is produced at irregular intervals (by irregular typists --editor's note). Since August, 1971, two issues will have been produced, and a third is currently in the works (hopefully, it will be out before September, 1972). TZ is produced for only two reasons: 1) so that MITSFS will have something to trade for fanzines; and 2) so that MITSFS will have a place to print a want list and inform people that we still do exist (hmmph! --editor). For those of you who trade, the most TZ's ever produced in a 12 month period has been only four. Considering that there was a 2 1/2 year interval between TZ #23 and TZ #24, two or three issues a year is both phenomenal and the best that we can do. Don't get impatient. If you received one copy of TZ, you will continue to receive them until you request that your name be deleted from our mailing list.

The contents of TZ are almost entirely produced by the members of MITSFS. MITSFS is not a fan organization and, therefore, does not try to produce a fannish type fanzine. In fact, we also try not to produce a clubzine, either. The material printed in TZ should not even require a previous knowledge of the MIT environment. The only possible exception to this rule has been the printing of excerpts from our meeting minutes ("The ... of MITSFS," etc.). As a non-fan oriented society, MITSFS's only purpose is the maintenance and expansion of our 20,000 item library, the world's largest open circulation science fiction library (appraised at over \$25,000). For this reason, unlike other organizations, we do not take ourselves seriously at meetings. In fact, it is out of order to discuss serious business at a MITSFS meeting. Therefore, there are usually no IN jokes in the minutes. The excerpts are not jokes. They are from what actually occurs at the meetings, not necessarily intelligible but always interesting and surprising. I must admit, however, that there are a number of customs and traditions of MITSFS that occur at these meetings. In an attempt to explain some of them, a serious official history of MITSFS is being prepared for later publication in TZ.

A large number of people complained about the quality of the offset printing in TZ #25. This was caused by inexperience. MITSFS has access to an A.B. Dick offset duplicator. We, therefore, printed TZ ourselves. We also obtained very cheaply two reams of direct image offset masters. The poor quality of TZ #25 resulted from two major discoveries: first, that a loose impression cylinder on the press results in double images; and secondly, the direct image masters require the use of a wax-carbon ribbon such as those used on IBM typewriters in order to take up ink (and thus print). The Pindda cover and all the artwork were done with photographic masters, and they came out satisfactorily. Since offsetting TZ in this manner is cheaper than mimeo, we will continue with the offsetting. In addition to our experience with TZ #25, my personal experience using the press should result in high quality reproduction for this issue. (0)

The Alpert  
President and Skinner Emeritus, R<sup>td</sup>.



Dear Jourcom:

You are very kind to continue sending Twilight Zine after I've failed to write a loc on at least one and probably two or three previous issues. I would beat my breast in abjection if it wouldn't set off a coughing attack, leaving me too weak to write this loc. All I can say is: it's not happening just to you, and I'll try to do better, and I've been breaking some promises lately.

Anyway, this was an amusing and occasionally puzzling issue, and an extravagant one in a sense. What else is the fanzine that spendthriftily puts beautiful photooffset fullpagers on both sides of the front cover page? I was thinking about a suggestion to the effect that the Fabian picture really should have gone on the outside back cover where it would be instantly visible. Then I happened to notice something. Because of where it's situated, it's necessary to bend the page into a convex shape to look at it properly (nobody would even think of putting a crease into the page alongside the staples so it'll lie flat) and this curve in the paper seems to make the drawing more effective, since this causes the eyeball and the young ms. and most of the other elements in the picture to assume the shape which they would have in reality.\*

The front cover is also nice. Strange thing: fanzine art showing the exterior of spacecraft seems to be influenced by the Apollo program to some extent, usually including the ladder that never appeared when spacecraft were shown on a planet's surface until the first lunar landers became famous. But interior scenes don't seem to show the effects of the real thing and they continue to be the kind of art made famous by prozine illustrators.

Flash Gordon provided most of the puzzlement. I finally decided that Doug Hoylman was right, and Jonathan Fox considers these characters and place names a modern equivalent of the semi-mythical Greek heroes and wars and is relating the modern saga in somewhat altered form, just as the Golden age of Greek drama produced many plays on the same general themes which disagreed in fairly important ways. I can't remember that there was ever a generally circulated prose version of Flash Gordon. If I'm not confusing the comic strip with another one, I believe that in the original funny pages, Mongo invaded the solar system and was visited by Zarkov, Flash, and Dale in an effort to turn it aside or something. Or maybe this is based on one of the movie serials.

Shamefacedly, I must confess that I didn't see those when they were shown originally and I haven't caught up on most of them during their recent revivals. But the references here to lasers, anti-missiles, and so on indicate

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\*The Fabian picture was on the front cover of TZ 24--editor.

that some modernization has occurred. Anyway, it's pleasant reading, making me think of the science fiction that used to appear in the low-priced boys' series by Grosset & Dunlap.

Jean Berman sounds very learned. Elvish seems as mixed-up in its inflections as Anglo-Saxon used to be. And the more I read about Quenya words, the more I think they look like Finnish, a language which I know only from staring at the texts printed on record jackets to vocal music by Sibelius and a few other composers.

The minutes indicate that your meetings are considerably more lively than most of the meetings I attend. Or maybe it just seems that way because I go to them because it's part of my work and you people attend because you want to. I didn't even have the heart to smile today at the end of a long meeting of the county commissioners when the chairman said in conclusion "This whole meeting was inadvertent." Today was Maryland's primary election, the county board invariably changes its meeting date from Tuesdays when there's voting so everyone can go out and politic; nobody had remembered to do it this time, and everyone had been too ashamed of the oversight to mention it until everything was completed. When that happened, you know that politics aren't what they used to be around here.

Every time I encounter something like the Astounding discussion, I remember some prozine story or other a while back in which monsters from outer space conquered the planet by changing things so imperceptibly that nobody noticed. If Jean vanished suddenly, I'll have to look up the story and send the CIA a warning about it.

I don't read the prozines frequently enough to contribute anything current to the randomcom report. It must have been three or four years ago when Analog published a story whose fallace nobody seemed to notice. It took place in apparently the near future with the reaction of television fans getting transmitted to the announcers and actors in commercials and other program material. Even that long ago, next to nothing on network and big city television was being done in person.

I've reached the vision stage that causes me to feel extra grateful to fanzines with first-rate reproduction on white paper. But you seem to have gotten a remarkable variety of general page-appearance, even though almost everything is easily readable. If you could manage to keep everything as splendidly reproduced as page five was in my copy, it would be wonderful; page 32 is very nearly as good. I gather that a large assortment of typists and typewriters resulted in the differences in typography from page to page in this issue.

I enjoyed most of the interior illustrations but got the most pleasure from the one on page two. Joel Davis seems to have a wild sense of humor that should be cultivated and harvested much more intensely by Twilight Zine and other fanzines, if you'll forgive the mention of the competition.

Please try to publish a little more rerulg, I mean regularly. It's too hard to get acquainted iwth w the current MITSFS names when they bob up in fanzines so rarely.

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

May 16, 1972



# Another #\$\$%¢&! Ferdinand Feghooter

In 3142 Ferdinand Feghoot was retained by the Hexadecapod Bowie Critterraisers Guild of the planet Shiv. The critters' primary commercial use lay in their natural weapons, the gem-quality diamond toenails that tipped 2 of their arms. Besides being valuable in themselves, the gems had the unexplainable property that, with an appropriate power source\* connected, the nails acted as 99.44% efficient X-ray lasers.

Because they all had temperaments best described as nasty, the Shiv-ians had almost wiped them out. Unfortunately, while Critters captured young could be raised for their nail clippings, no Critter had ever been known to breed in captivity or been seen to do so in the wild. As the universe's leading expert on breeding habits (he was then running a fabulously successful advice to the lovelorn column\*) Feghoot was called in.

Feghoot took one look at a mature captive specimen and ordered its pen packed with thermite and ignited. The specimen afterwards looked rather dead. Declining to explain, Ferdinand left for home.\*

Shortly afterwards the head of the HBCG called him to announce that the creature had just recovered and experienced a two-fold mitosis. How, he demanded, had Feghoot known what to do?

"He that is forewarned is fourarmed," replied Feghoot.

Mark Swanson

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\* These footnotes have been omitted--editor...

## An Astronomical Primer

Star

Planetoid

Star Cluster

Nebula

Planet

Sky

Beautiful Galaxy (Cloudy Night)

Moon (Student attempting to find)



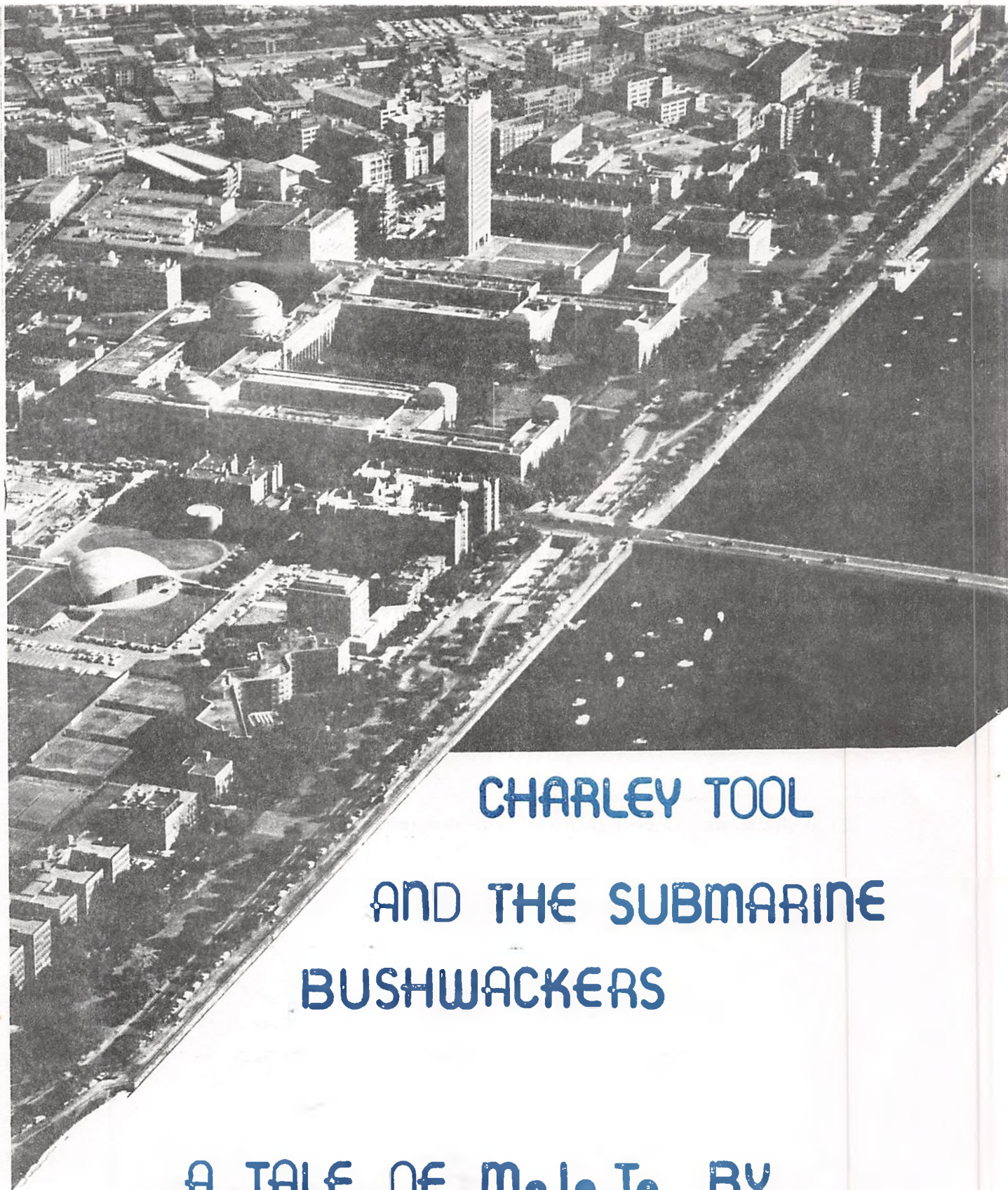
Instructor's Eye



Student's Star Field after Hitting Instructor in eye with Telescope

Jack Stevens





CHARLEY TOOL  
AND THE SUBMARINE  
BUSHWACKERS

A TALE OF M. I. T. BY  
IRWIN T. LAPEER



"Mister?"

She stood on the riverbank, her long brown hair tossed by the wind whipping up the Charles. Her tender, brown, and very puzzled eyes looked up. Across the river behind her stood the skyline of Boston. She was alone.

She was a very frightened ten year old girl.

I

"We will sink the Yankee Dogs to the bottom of the sea!"

The cruel Captain Radu Laffleurescu cocked a finger in the gash which ran across his face, and whistled out through it. "Ensign Stein!"

A long-haired lackey scrambled up the submarine deck to answer his capricious captain. "You call, I come. You sing, I hum."

"I need you to take notes. Lt. Vertigu, raise the periscope. I think I'll have myself a look-see."

The thin, greasy periscope emerged itself from the bowels of the Bungarian naval vessel, to be grasped by the blood-caked hands of the captain.

"Take my sunglasses." He pushed his bulbous nose past the lens, and pressed a bloodshot eye to the eyepiece. "Aha, there it is...we've entered the Charles. Bridges, people...and MIT! Take notes, take notes. I see a dome; one; look, two--no, three domes! A veritable dominion! Ensign Stein, call the Thugs here."

"You say, I do your orders true."

Three soldiers, all natives of Thugia, appeared and took their places in a rubber raft, waiting to be sent out into the cold and clammy New England night, on a desperate attempt to kidnap the famed American scientist, Edward Bush.

"I see the institute now...along the river it spreads, like an eagle spreading her wings over her nest of eaglets...and somewhere in there are our egg-heads!"



And the Institute spread out before them. The long gray walls stretched left to right; and two wings came out from the main hall to the riverfront, forming a courtyard. On the main building, dominating the Great Courtyard, was the Great Dome. And over to the left, where the left wing thrust out to the river, a second, lesser dome could be seen. A multitude of buildings were jumbled behind the main structure; to the right, a skyscraper and more buildings formed yet another courtyard.

"Well," said Laffleurscu deeply, "do you think we've caught them by surprise?" He laughed. "Take a look, Stein. What do you think? Be frank, Ensign Stein."

"I agree with you! I look with glee, I do!" was Stein's chortling chuckled reply.

The submarine surfaced, the rubber raft was launched, and then the gray hulking Hungarian vessel returned again to the deep Charles Bed.

## II

Charley Tool was walking along the picturesque Charles when the little girl spotted him. She ran to him, and touchingly caressed his right hand. "Yes?"

Together, they walked along the Charles, the masts of the racing dingies forming a backdrop to their tender meeting. The spars were like an enchanted forest, shadowed in the moonlight sparkling off the river. The slap,slap,slap of the river wavelets as they patted the boat bottoms was like the rustle of enchanted leaves.

The girl was shaking, and trying not to show it. "Do you see...out there..." She pointed out to the river.

"Why yes; there's some sort of rubber thing...and seamen, coming out of a log, cigar-shaped object..."

The girl had calmed down enough to talk. "I think I know who they want."

"What do you mean, who?"

"Don't let them see us." She started walking briskly to the courtyard and the Great Dome.

As the rubber raft crunched on the shore, the girl started running, across Memorial Drive, over the lawns and under the hedges of the courtyard, and towards the Dome itself.

11

Charley was confused for a moment. A short, dark, lankless youth, he pulled himself to his full 60" height, and ran his fingers through his tousled beard in a troubled and thoughtful manner.

He was a student at the Institute. It had been the fulfillment of a childhood dream for him. Since he had been five years old, he had thought of nothing but sports, and he had hoped to come to Technology on a football scholarship. Alas, his eheight was against him. But through a strange quirk, he had passed his entrance exams with perfect scores, and space had been found for him in the hallowed gray halls.

But all that was behind him. Ahead, he was to face the evil Radu Laffleurscu, and pit 18 years of study and training against the menace of the Bungarian invasion.

Quickly, he turned and ran after the girl.

She had run to an open door, and was dashing in. He caught up with her inside, and they ran down the long gray corridors of Building 4. The lightle stopped to look at some strange metal sculputre, but Charley pulled her away and kept running, through Building 8, and downstairs until they reached the basement of Building 16.

### III

The whole building shook. A Bungarian bomb had found the ammo dump at the Navy shipyard. The enemy gunboats were successfully completing their diversionary raid against the port of Boston.

"Now, what do you want with me?" Charley demanded.

"Why is everybody running?" the little girl asked.

"The Bungarians are attacking. The Bungarians are coming!"

"Away! To every Middlesex village and farm!"

"Laugh. Laugh, see if I care. Get yourself killed. Who are you, anyway?" Charley demanded.

"Sarah Bush."

"I do believe, on a sudden, that I care." Edward Bush, besides teaching 10.992, 15.879, and 8.01, was the foremost inorganic chemist in the world.

(How could any chemist be so inorganic? people would ask.)



He was the reason for the attack. He had developed angular thermometers to a degree which threatened Bungarian supremacy. The destruction of Boston was merely a diversion, while Captain Laffleurescu kidnapped the famed scientist.

"I like your beard."

"Thanks. I know it looks crummy at first, but it grows on you," Charley replied nonchalantly, hoping to keep the young girl's tender mind off the attack.

"So what are you going to do about the attack?"

"Me? Sit it out, what else?" answered Charley.

The thuds were coming regularly from the direction of the Navy Yard. "That doesn't sound good for us."

There was a splintering sound above them. "That doesn't, either," whispered little Sarah. Heavy boot treads echoed down the stairwell. Charley started to go up and investigate, but Sarah held him back. He saw the look on her frightened face; she was worried, but not for herself. The treading faded off.

"All right. What was that?" asked Charley.

"Those were the soldiers," answered Sarah.

"What soldiers?"

"The ones from the rubber raft."

"What rubber raft?"

"The one in the river, silly, of course."

"What river? I mean, how do you know about them?"

"I saw them get out of the submarine. ("So," Charley breathed, "that's what that cigar-shaped object was.") They're after my father, don't you see? He's the world's greatest scientist, don't you see? They're going to kidnap him! Oh, don't you understand?" she moaned. "That's why the Bungarians are invading Boston."

"I knew there had to be a reason," Charley muttered to himself. "Why else would anyone in his right mind want Boston?"

"You're just joking," Sarah complained. "And you're just standing there. And they're going to get him and they'll hurt him, and we'll lose the war, and everything." She started to weep silently.

(The blue square photograph is at bottom right)

"So what do you want me to do to five heavily armed Hungarian soldiers?" inquired Charley.

"There aren't five. There are only four."

"What could I do against one?"

"Kick him in the balls."

Charley was a little taken aback at that statement. "That's not a very ladylike thing to say. Where around MIT did you ever hear such foul language?"

"That's what my dad always says--'Kick 'em in the balls.'"

"Well, then, he can do it."

She gave him a disgusted look, and turned away.

"Look," pleaded Charley, "if all they wanted was Bush, why couldn't they just ambush him at his seaside home, instead of holding a big invasion in the middle of Boston?"

"Because he's not home. He's here."

"So? I'd wait. I'd ambush."

#### IV

Little did they know that the evil Radu himself had overheard that last remark.

"I overheard that last remark!" cried evil Radu Laffleurescu. "I have found you! You just admitted, 'I am Bush.'"

"No; I said, 'I'd ambush'."

"So you did," admitted Radu. "Oh, well. By the way, where is Bush?"

"Try Building 15," said Sarah.

"Where's that?"

"Across from Building 47."

"Now Sarah," reproached Charley, "you know there isn't any Building 15 or Building 47. Why did you tell him that? And why are you kicking me in the shins?"



"Where is Bush?" cried evil Radu. "I want Bush!"

"If you don't know where to find Bush by now, I'm certainly not going to show you," snapped back Sarah. "And let me ask you a few questions. How did you get your submarine here? There's a dam across the river mouth, you know."

"It was easy. I followed a Turkish smuggler's boat, going through the locks with a couple of keys."

Suddenly, a strange buzzing came over the Bungarian's cruel communicator. It was a fly. He shook the instrument, and a cockroach jumped out.

"Ha! Still haven't gotten all the bugs out of --" a look from Laffleurscu stopped Charley in midsentence. "er--ah--out of the basement yet, have we?"

Radu spoke into the machine. "Have you found him?"

An evil smirk spread across his pimply face like crunchy peanut butter on pumpernickle bread, as he listened to the response. "You can't hide him from us! We have found him!" he shouted. And as he ran down the corridors, his laughter rang through the ~~gray~~ halls and echoed off the gray walls.

## V

"By the way, where is your dad?" Charley asked, after Radu had gone.

"In Building 48, the hydrodynamics lab."

"There must be some lab-credit-hungry tool helping him out there. Maybe if we snuck up from behind, we could surround them, or something."

"That's what I like, a man with a plan," said Sarah.

She followed Charley down the dirty gray basement corridor of Building 26. At the end, they went upstairs, and looked out the door. The glass-covered walkway between Building 26 and Building 20 had been smashed by a flying fragment from the battle scene. They jumped across piles of glass slivers to Vasser street just in time to see six men emerge from the hydrodynamics lab. Three were soldiers with guns. One was Radu; another was a lab assistant. And the sixth man was Dr. Bush.

"We're no good if they see us. We'll head them off!" Sarah followed Charley back into the campus.

The soldiers headed down Vassar street towards Mass. Ave. Charley and the girl dodged into Building 24 and ran through institute-gray corridors and tunnels, across buildings 12, 4, 10, through the War Memorial, 10, 3, and under the lesser dome of Building 7, towards the doors that open out to Mass. Ave.

Meanwhile, the two American scientists and their four Bungarian captors were heading down Mass. Ave, back towards the Charles, just as a VW bus full of US Marines came screaming across Harvard Bridge at 300 smoots a minute, and charged up Massachusetts Avenue from the heart of Downtown Boston!

"Into one of these buildings! Quick!" commanded Radu.

They ran, the captors pushing the captives on, through the Center for Advanced Engineering Study, then outside and back into the Vannevar Bush building--where they stopped.

The first floor lobby of the Bush Building was a voluminous empty room, with high marble walls and smooth tile floors. Two random freshmen were playing handball against one wall. And the Bungarians never interfere with a handball game.

"Can't go that way." Back outside, they ran through the Adv. Eng. Bldg. again; the VW bus had stopped outside it. They made a quick turn, and went through a hidden door into Building 7--under the lesser dome.

## VI

At this moment, Charley and Sarah also ran into this building. "Get those kids!" screamed evil Radu.

One soldier ran after them. Down the corridor of Building 5, past the Naval Architecture Museum, around the computer centers, back up along the Great Courtyard, they ran and ran, in a circle back to Building 7 and the lesser dome.

"Upstairs!" Sarah followed.

Up to the first balcony overlooking the lobby under the dome; the soldier was heard clumping up the stairs. Up to the second balcony; the boots were right behind them. Up the third flight of stairs, then to the roof--the doorway to the roof was locked.

"Quick! This way!" They raced along the fourth floor. They were level with the base of the dome, Charley knew. Around the dome they raced. The Thug was close behind. Into the architecture shop--room 7-427--open 168 hours a week--

Charley slammed the door behind them. There was no lock in the door. He bracked a piece of wood under the knob, and pressed his weight against the door.



This room had three normal walls. But the fourth was part of the octagonal wall built under the bottom of the dome. Against this fourth wall were power saws and carpenter's tables.

But amazingly enough, the fourth wall stopped about six feet up from the floor. There was a two-foot gap between the top of the wall and the ceiling. Up through this gap, the underside of the dome itself could be seen, close-up. Along the top of this curious wall were the spotlights which illuminate the underside of that dome. A ledge, about three feet wide, extended out under the dome along the top of the wall. From the ground floor, the ledge would keep the spotlight fixtures out of sight.

And if a ten year old girl should sprawl herself out onto this ledge, she too could not be seen from the ground.

Sawdust clung to everything in the room...the tools, the walls...even a small brown change purse, apparently left behind by some grad student. Sarah found three pennies in the purse, but no identification. It seemed --THUNK-- to be pretty old --THUNK-- but it matched the color --THUNK-- of her eyes, so Sarah decided --THUNK-- that the owner wouldn't mind if --THUNK-- she borrowed it...

(Meanwhile, Charley was getting a little tired of holding the door closed and beating off the Hungarian who was trying to break through.)

Sarah noticed that the soldiers below could be heard through the gap in the wall. This gave her an idea. She climbed onto a table, and then pushed herself up between two spotlights onto the ledge. Hooking her feet onto the lights to hold her in balance, she stretched herself out on the ledge, lying on her stomach, until she could just see over the edge.

Below her, she could see the two scientists, two soldiers, and the evil Laffleurescu. One of the soldiers was directly below her.

She took out one of the pennies from the brown change purse. Holding it out from the ledge, she dropped it. "One thousand and one, one thousand and two..." she counted off the seconds.

"Ping"

The coin bounced off the first soldier's helmet. He looked up. She dropped another penny.

A penny weighs three grams. There is a force of 2940 dynes acting upon this penny. Assuming that Sarah was 25 meters from the soldier, the penny took approximately 2.24 seconds to drop. Its momentum on impact was a bit over 7 gram-meters/sec. Its impact velocity was about 22 meters per second.

That hurts.

While the first soldier was thus holding his eye in pain, the scientist with the notebook was hitting him over the head with the book. The other soldier turned to help the first.

Dr. Bush kicked him in the balls.

But, recall, there was a third soldier, beating down the door of the shoproom. Charley and Sarah ran to the other end of the room, around to the other side of the dome, and exited via a second door to a hallway which eventually led down towards the Great Dome.

The soldier managed to break down the first door (which Charley was no longer holding back.) He followed them. The two pursued ran into a self-service elevator. The soldier ran into the other elevator, which is operated by a bitchy old elevator operator.

"Quick--follow that car!"

"Sorry, this elevator is going down. Who the heck do you think you are, ordering me around? You're as bad as some of the students..." The rest of the old lady's statements were lost in quiet growls. Eventually, the soldier got to the fifth floor, in hot pursuit of the girl and Charley.

Under the Great Dome (which is a story higher than the lesser dome) is the Engineering Library. Suspended from that dome, which forms the ceiling of the library, is a large piece of sculpture hanging from a wire. Sarah jumped to the top of a bookshelf opposite the entrance to the library. Charley pushed the sculpture over to her. The soldier entered the doorway. Sarah let go of the sculpture.

That hurt too.

Meanwhile, Laffleurescu, coward as all cowards are, had abandoned his soldiers and had run back to the rubber raft on the shore of the Charles. He managed to paddle out to the submarine, and he clambered aboard. He called to his faithful Ensign Stein.



# 18

"What depth do we have here?"

Stein stared at the depth meter. "There is no bottom to this river. There's no response from the depth-giver."

"Then DIVE!" Radu shouted so loud that he scared two cockroaches out from the depth meter.

Deeper and deeper they penetrated the murky black muck, the propellers screwing the long, cigar-shaped vessel further and further down. Little did they realize that the Charles has no bottom. It just gets thicker and thicker, as you go deeper and deeper. We can only surmise that the submarine, and all the seamen, ultimately became completely mucked.

## IX

And so, of course, the day was saved. The evil Hungarians were captured. The diversionary raid on the naval yard was unsuccessful. Only a portion of Boston was destroyed, to the regret of all. Father and daughter were reunited. The other scientist got a new notebook, to replace the one damaged in the scuffle.

And one day, after all the excitement had died down, and classlife had returned to 96.85841...% normal at MIT, when Charley was leaving a run-down classroom where his 10.648 class was being held, he stopped just short of bumping into a ten year old girl with long brown hair and a little brown change purse.

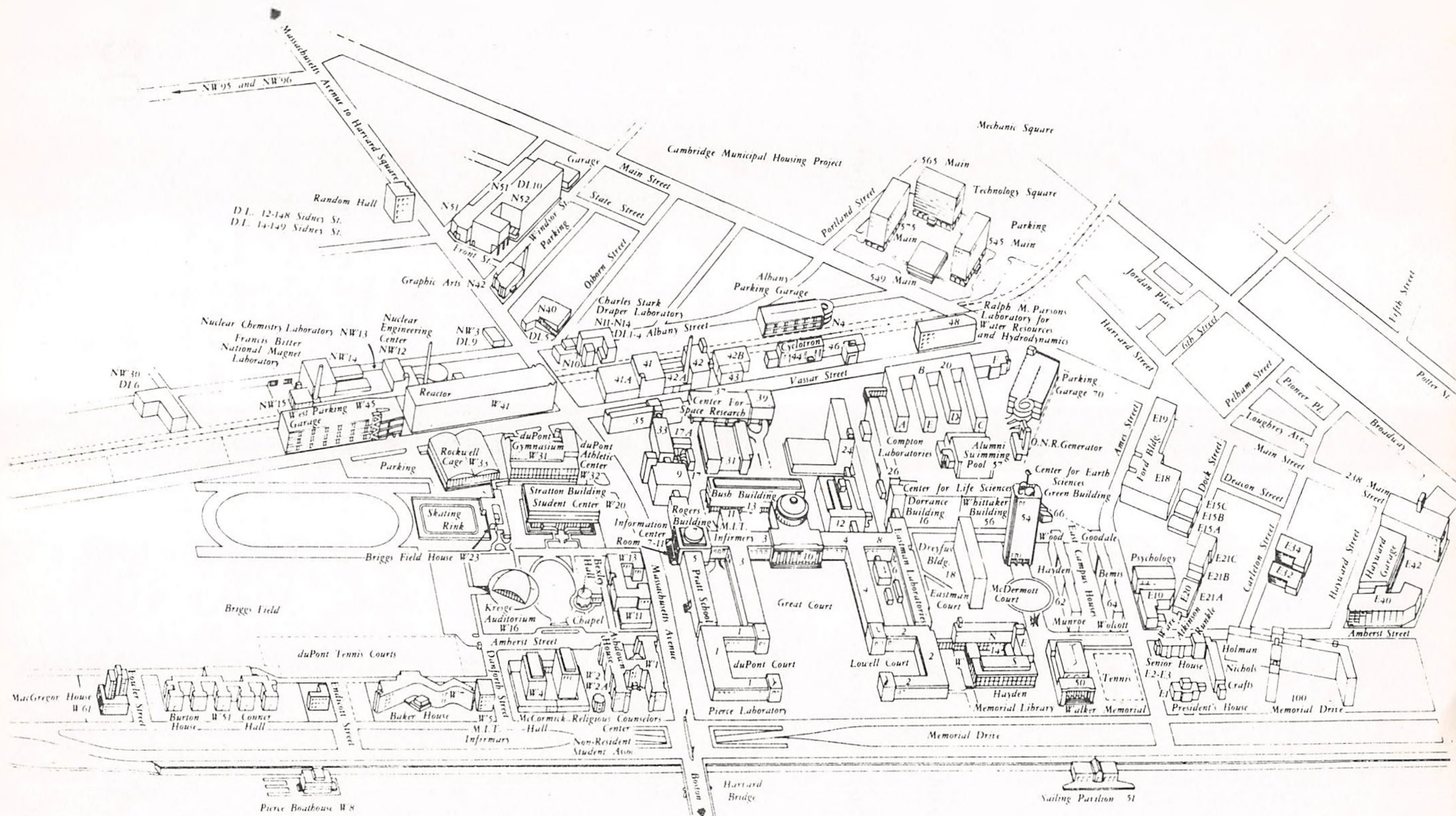
"Charley," said Sarah, looking up with her big brown eyes. "Charley, there's something I must tell you."

"Yes?"

"Charley," she repeated, "after that time, you know...I just wanted to tell you...you know, I think...that was the most ridiculous thing that's ever happened to me in my life."

Charley looked at her gravely.

"No," he breathed out quietly, "shit."





## Twilight

Remember the dawn, if you can  
Life was more exciting then, no?  
Events that happen in morning light  
Reflected by the passage of years.  
But have you lately seen the night  
Or forgotten what foredooms  
The sleeping giant in its unformed  
nebulously when to be roused.  
The rainbow slips silently to darker hues  
Frost merged forever  
Racial memory heavily lies  
On those whose surface it near springs.  
Beware of those upon whose feet you tread  
Your feet may grow smaller with age.  
Dimmer by photons  
Subatomic changes in flux  
Heisenberg haunts the indeterminate  
But the morning too has passed;  
High noon is told only after the sky has greatly  
dimmed  
Twilight--none knows what it is nor when it is  
Until nightfall has come.

Paula Lieberman

I disclaim all responsibility for the quality of anything under my name in TZ

(Signed),  
Paula A. Lieberman

# "We want to test your writing aptitude"

By Jonathan Fox

*Jonathan Fox is the editor of Twilight Zine*

If you want to write, my colleagues and I would like to test your writing aptitude. We'll help you find out if you can be trained to be a successful fan writer.

Several years ago we started the Famous Fan Writers School. Our aim was to help qualified people acquire the skills they need to break into print. We poured everything we know into a new kind of fan writing magazine called *Twilight Zine*. After a solid grounding in the fundamentals you get advanced training in the specialty of your choice—Science Fiction, Fantasy, criticism or technical writing.

Each of your writings will be examined by editors who are themselves fan editors or writers. Your instructor spends up to two months trying to analyze your work. He makes corrections right on the stencil much as a fan editor does with established fan writers. Then he submits it to *Twilight Zine* along with a long letter of personal attack. This training works well. Our students have had their writings in more than ten publications including *APA:L*, *APA:NESFA*, *APA:Jarnevon* and *The Mitagator*.

Tom Lang of Whine, N.J. says, "I just received a letter from *TZ* saying that my article would be accepted. That's 11 stories printed in six years." Paula Lieberman of S. Coven, Conn. who has had five



stories printed in *Wereman's Day* in exchange for two back issues writes, "writing for your magazine has made this all possible."

## Writing Aptitude Test Offered

To find out if you can benefit from this training send in an article to the school's magazine. If it is printed or you offer evidence of fan writing ability you may contribute. But there is no obligation to do so.

## Famous Fan Writers School

W20-421, MIT, Cambridge, Mass.

I want to know if I have fan writing aptitude. Please mail your comments on the enclosed submission and the 28 page illustrated *Twilight Zine*.

Mr. \_\_\_\_\_  
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Nt. (circle one and please print) \_\_\_\_\_  
Street \_\_\_\_\_  
City . . . State . . . Zip . . .

Accredited by the accrediting commission of the fanzine control board.





## FLASH GORDON III

21

What has gone on before: Scientist-astronaut Flash Gordon and reporter Dale Arden were the unwilling guests of the mysterious Dr. Zarkov in his remote Chinese laboratory. The three of them take off in Zarkov's starship, and land on the Earth like planet Mongo. They are taken to the throne of "Ming the Merciless, emperor of all Mongo." Ming sends Zarkov to the palace laboratory, Dale to the royal apartments, and has Flash thrown into the arena. Flash, aided by a dagger thrown him by Ming's daughter Aura, kills the creatures and escapes into their cage. From there, with the help of the power men, who are sworn to run the machines but encourage revolt, Flash rescues Dale. They are joined by Prince Barin of Arborea and head for the forest where they are ambushed by a squad of Ming's men. Barin is wounded during the fight that kills all of the squad. As he topples over, a squad in different uniforms seize Flash and Dale. Their leader glancing at Barin's body says "he is dead, execute these traitors at once!"

Soldiers surrounded Flash and Dale with a wall of crossbows.

"Wait a minute," said Flash to their leader, who stood over Barin's body, "don't be so hasty; make sure Barin is actually dead."

"Yes, brother," murmured Barin from his prone position, "you'd have me buried before I'd drawn my last breath."

"Barin!" cried the other, "I --- " He fell to his knees before the prince. Barin rose unsteadily to his feet, pulling his brother with him. Using him as a support, Barin turned to Flash and Dale, now surrounded by gaping soldiers.

"My brother, Ronal," said Barin, indicating his support, "a fine scholar, but weak in the medical arts."

"Charmed," said Dale, bowing slightly.

"These are Flash Gordon and Dale Arden, of the planet Earth. They came to Ming's palace with a scientist, Zarkov, whom Ming has imprisoned. Flash, Dale and I escaped, with Ergon's help."

"The powerman?" asked Ronal in disbelief. Barin nodded. Ronal seemed distinctly undersized when compared to his brother, but on closer inspection Flash could see that he was just a shorter, less muscular version of Barin, with the addition of a thin blonde mustache: in short, a normal person with a supersized brother.



Barin assigned soldiers to take charge of the now abandoned aircar of Ming's troops and then lead the way, with Ronal's help, further into the forest. An hour later he stopped before a large tree set in the center of a small clearing roofed by the foliage of the surrounding trees. No one except the Earthpeople was surprised when a door opened in the side of the tree and light streamed from the interior of a metal cylinder set inside. It was an elevator to the top of the tree, large enough to accomodate the entire party. When all were wedged inside, the door shut and the elevator rose swiftly to the top. The door opened on an incredible sight.

"Amazing," Flash said, "a highway built on the tops of trees."

"Not quite the tops," said Ronal as the party left the elevator, "you can see how the foliage extends over the roadway to shield it from the sky."

"Protection from aerial attack?" asked Dale.

"Slight," replied Ronal, "but very helpful sometimes."

"Ming knows where it is," snorted Barin, "his spies are everywhere."

The group proceeded some distance on foot down the two lane aerial highway. As they made a sharp turn into the deepest part of the forest, a large bus came from the opposite direction to stop before them. It was a ground effects machine, showing the signs of age on its frame. Flash guessed that it floated and was propelled by an antigravity field. He commented on this to Dale when they were seated inside.

"It doesn't make any sense," Dale said, "spears and antigravity, tree highways and Princelings; what's going on, Flash, do you know?"

Flash watched the bus slowly turn and then pick up speed as it flew down the highway. "All this technological stuff that we're seeing is the remains of a previous civilization," he said, "very recent, but now more or less disintegrated. These people are what's left, apparently only partly knowledgeable in the science left behind."

"Quite so," said Ronal, turning from the seat before them, "all the scientists, the rulers and masters, left after the time of the great experiment, about 100 years ago." He looked at the interior of the bus, "but they built to last, even through planet wide disaster."

"What happened, Ronal?" said Flash.

"A big experiment," responded Ronal, "something to do with the force that moves this craft. I think they were trying the same with the planet."

"Taking it out of orbit, like a spaceship?"

"So it appears from the secondary records in my possession. They refer to a city-laboratory somewhere in the southeast, south of Ming's domain,

which controlled the experiment that, obviously, was a failure."

"This sounds like a certain series of recent events on Earth," except our spaceship worked, sort of."

"Your spaceship?" said Ronal, his eyes widening, "where is it?"

"Ming's palace," said Dale, "want to go back for it?" Ronal stared at the girl and then shook his head. The man was silent for the rest of the journey. Occasionally he glanced at the Earthpeople who sat behind him, speculation in his eyes.

The bus brought the travelers to another tree-elevator set at the end of the stretch of highway, which turned off in another direction. The elevator descended to the forest floor, where the party got off. They started down a broad pathway through the trees that soon opened out to reveal a large walled town set in the middle of the forest, dominated by an imposing medieval-looking castle, set on the low hanging branches of one of the huge trees.

"Arborea," announced Barin, sweeping the Earthpeople forward to the city gate.

"Quite an interesting place," said Dale, noting the quaint architecture and dress of the inhabitants of Arborea, "looks like Nottingham in Sherwood Forest, but with Robin Hood on the inside."

"This place is on the grand scale," said Flash, "and please notice the modern accouterments hidden in the background: electricity, plumbing, aircars . . . ."

As the party filed through the narrow streets of the town, and into the castle, Ronal told the Earthpeople of the kingdom. Arborea had been built up from the remains of a pre-experiment resort city set in the midst of the vast forest, whose bounds were also those of Arborea. The country, Ronal said, was presently at an uneasy peace with its neighbors, Ming on the one side, and the barbarous Lion Men of the cold wastes to the north. Beyond the Lion Men lay the kingdom of Frigia, about which little was known.

"Ming rules the rest of the continent," Ronal continued as they were admitted into the castle courtyard, "and of the islands to the east; well, we just don't know anything about them."

Barin and Ronal directed that Flash and Dale each be shown to a chamber to rest and change their clothes for those of Arborea. The garments provided for Flash were not radically different from those he had worn previously, except that the blue of Ming's forces had been changed for green. He suspected the clothes all came from ~~the~~ a central source. Ronal had said that the countries of Mongo were allied by trade: Ming needed raw materials and agricultural products, he in turn exported machinery and, sometimes, technical knowledge. The Lion Men served as trading intermediaries for all items, this being



Because otherwise, Ronal claimed, they would turn to a more violent form of piracy.

\*\*\*\*\*

That evening a sumptuous ball was held in the main hall of Barin's castle to celebrate his safe return. Curiously, little was said of Barin's imprisonment by Ming; Flash deduced from conversations with Barin's generals that there was little Arborea could do about it, Barin having been taken at the unsettled border.

Beneath the orange glare of torches, Flash danced to alien music with several elegant ladies of the court, but his eye was always on Dale. Dressed in a shining, lowcut gown that clung to her lithe, slender figure, her auburn hair glowing in the light, she was the most beautiful woman on the floor. Ronal had taken a decided interest on her, and kept her company for most of the evening. Flash eventually succeeded in steering Dale Arden away from Ronal and her other admirers, and onto a balcony overlooking the Arborean forest.

"Well," sighed Dale, when they were alone, "I don't think I ever attended a more unusual reception, even in the good old earthly days with my father in the diplomatic corps."

"Yes, I noticed you and Ronal having fun there," said Flash, "but remember about Zarkov, and getting back to Earth."

Dale laughed, "What about it?" she said, "what can we do? Have any suggestions, Flash?" Dale's eyes gleamed mischievously as she stared at Gordon from under raised brows. She looked so appealing Flash found it hard to think.

"No, I don't have any new ideas on that score," he said finally, "but, Dale --"

"Let's go back to the party. I think it would be a good move, diplomatically," said the girl, taking Flash's hand and pulling him into the crowd, "I'll see you later."

Flash lost Dale in the crush when the party broke up several hours later. Sadly, he shook his head and mounted the stairs to his room. A single candle illuminated the chamber, throwing shadows over the paneled walls, vast fireplace, and the strange furs that were thrown over the low carved wood furniture. Flash sprawled on the soft bed and pulled off his clothes. He lay that way for some time, looking into the darkness at the end of the room and listening to the sounds of the Arborean night. There were soft cries in the forest, and the whine of machinery as convoys came and went on the tree highway. Eventually the convoys stopped and the forest became very still. Flash heard a soft knock on the door, and from the darkness Dale appeared, the light of the candle glinting off the highlights in the hair that hung about her ivory face. She was dressed in a long silver robe, which Flash saw was her only garment.

"How did you find me," he asked, "I couldn't begin to figure out where you were hidden."

Dale smiled and moved a few steps closer to the bed. "I asked a romantically inclined maid in my place the route," she said softly.

"We don't have any of those around here," Flash affirmed. Dale stared at him intensely for a few seconds and then moved to the foot of the bed, her arms crossed across her breasts, her hands holding her shoulders. Flash rose on the bed and slid over to meet her at the edge.

"Why did you want to find me," asked Dale, coming nose to nose with Gordon. His lips brushed hers lightly.

"Why did you want to find me?" Flash replied. Dale's lips nipped at Gordon's gently.

"I asked you first," she said in a whisper. Flash put his arms about Dale's slender waist, and Dale encircled his. He pulled her onto the bed and onto her back. Flash leaned over and looked into her face.

"The reason was," Flash began, toying with the belt of Dale's robe, "because --" Dale untied the knot in the belt and let it lie loosely. "Because I wanted ...."

"Yes," whispered the girl, "you wanted --"

"--to make love to you, my dear Miss Arden." They kissed passionately.

"I thought so," said Dale, taking off the robe and again coming into Flash's arms, "that was my idea, exactly."

\*\*\*\*\*

Flash was awakened early the next morning by the whine of an aircar. From below came the sound of agitated voices as the aircar settled down. Gordon carefully freed himself from the still sleeping girl and got out of bed. He walked over to a large bay window that overlooked the main courtyard. Flash could see several soldiers clustered about a battered aircar with Arborean livery that had just landed. A stretcher was carried out to the craft. from the castle.

Dale's bare arms came about his neck, and her chin planted itself on his shoulder. Flash felt Dale's firm breasts press against his back.

"Who's the stretcher case, my love," Dale asked brightly.

"Don't know yet," said Flash, peering down, "there's too much of a crowd around the aircar." Dale's fingers roved lightly over his chest. "Aren't you cold?" he asked. Dale laughed. "Are you?" she replied, "no, silly



question to ask, considering ---"

"Quiet," said Flash, "they're bringing someone out now. Ye gods, it's Zarkov, I'd know that beard anywhere." Ge turned and held Dale at arm's length. "We'd better get dressed and get down there, darling," he said.

"I suppose so," sighed Dale. The girl snatched up her robe from where it had fallen and put it on, with a sly glance at Flash, who still stood by the window. Dale waved gaily to Flash and with a 'see you later, love' was out the door.

"Amazing girl," said Flash to the room, and started pulling on clothes.

When Flash arrived in the main hall some what later, he found two noble-men and Barin and Ronal gathered about Zarkov, who lay on a couch covered with furs.

"Flash," cried Zarkov when Gordon appeared. Ronal and Barin, who had been questioning the scientist, made room by him for Flash.

"How are you, Zarkov," asked Gordon, shaking the doctor's hand.

"A little frostbitten and battered -- but alive," said Zarkov, "and look, Dale Arden too, you're both alive." Dale came between Barin and Ronal to stand next to Flash, who put an arm about her waist. He noted Ronal watching this closely.

"What's going on," said Dale, "how did you come to be in this state, Dr. Zarkov?"

"I attempted escape in my repaired space ship," explained Zarkov, "I succeeded in evading the palace defenses, thanks to Princess Aura. But we were forced down in the northern wilderness by Ming's aerial patrols. I was forced to abandon ship there, and I set the ship on autopilot and it took off, eluding Ming's forces."

"Where's the ship now," interrupted Ronal.

"Where Ming can't get it," said the scientist, "when Aura and I were forced onto the ground we were attacked -- "

"You and Aura!" cried Barin, "where is she?"

"As I was saying," continued Zarkov, "Aura and I were attacked by Ming's force. Then another group came, huge barbarians with long shaggy hair -- "

"The Lion Men," said Ronal.

"Yes, well, these men overran us and Ming's troops were forced to retreat. I managed to hide myself, but the barbarians captured the Princess. I was wandering in the snow until your men found me!"

"Where do you think Aura is now?" Barin asked Ronal.

"If the LionMen have her, and know who she is, then they have probably taken her back to their city," said Ronal, pursing his lips, "chances are they will auction her off to the highest bidder. All of Mongo is now congregating there for the trading, and she will bring a high ransom from the enemies of Ming, or Ming himself, if he gets there first and has the best persuasion."

"Military force?" asked Barin, "we must get there first."

"Not against the LionMen, Ming wouldn't. In any case if we are to beat him there, we must begin at once."

Barin turned to his other aides and ordered them to prepare an expedition. "You will go with us," he told Flash and Dale. They nodded. "You, too, Zarkov, you are all right."

"Yes, certainly," agreed the scientist.

\*\*\*\*\*

The tree highway came to a dead end a few miles from the northern edge of the tree line. The antigravity bus conveying Barin's expedition stopped before a small fort built at the end of the roadway. Barin, Ronal, Zarkov, Flash and Dale got out and were escorted inside the fort by one of the guards. While Ronal arranged for the equipment for the expedition, Barin explained his plan to the others.

"We will take an aircar from here to the city of the Lion Men in the north. We have a trading expedition there now, like all the other nations, and a messenger has been dispatched to apprise them of our arrival and of the situation."

"No radio?" Flash asked Zarkov. The scientist shook his head.

"The magnetic fields of Mongo are completely twisted up. The ionosphere is in such a state as to make communication nearly impossible by standard radio. Ming has other methods of communication but not over very long distances," said Zarkov.

"You had better put on these clothes," said Ronal, handing the other travelers leather and fur parkas and leggings, "we have reports of a large storm up north. We may run into it on our way up."

When the travelers had dressed and the aircar was loaded, Barin directed two soldiers and an officer of the outpost, Captain Solas, to accompany the party. The aircar lifted off from the roof of the outpost, which was soon a speck in the distance as the car left the forest of Arborea.



Beyond the forest stretched a hilly plain, only sparsely covered with vegetation. The air grew noticeably colder as the aircar lost sight of the forest. The plain grew more barren as the car proceeded north, and a cold wind began to blow snow about the craft. Soon the travelers were in the midst of a wild snowstorm. Winds buffeted the car, causing it to shudder wildly. Captian Solas, who was pilot, found it difficult to maintain altitude.

"We'll have to set down," he shouted to Barin over the roar of the storm, "or we'll be wrecked."

"How far to the city," said Barin.

"I'm not sure," said Solas, fighting the wheel, "about two hour's journey at normal speed."

"Go on," said Barin.

"But --" began Solas. Barin frowned darkly at the soldier, who turned back to the wheel. The storm was now tossing the car back and forth across the sky. The travelers held onto the frame as they were shaken by the sudden changes in direction. The aircar dropped lower, skimming the tops of snow-covered crags. Flash searched the landscape for any sign of life, but there were none that he could make out in the swirling snow.

A sudden high whining sound came from the aircar. Solas depressed a few switches on the control panel, but the whining continued. The craft lost altitude.

"I was afraid of this, our steering unit is overheated. It will burn out soon, and we'll crash," said Solas. Barin grunted.

"All right, Solas, set us down, we'll go the rest of foot," he said.

Solas nodded and searched for a spot to land. A low flat table of wind-whipped rock opened before them, and the captian put down by a protecting shelf of rock. The travelers climbed out of the car and Barin assembled packs for each. He gave Flash the party's only gun, taking only crossbows and swords for the others.

"The city is ahead," said Solas, pointing a direction. The storm had begun to abate, and the winds quickly died out, revealing the silent polar landscape.

"Not much worse than the Himalayas," commented Zarkov as the party set off over the snow, Solas in the lead.

Dale shivered inside her furs. "Yes, invigorating, isn't it? How come you always pick these cold places to crash in, Zarkov?"

Zarkov grimaced and adjusted his pack. The travelers were strung out in single file behind Captain Solas, with Flash and Dale at the rear. Solas led them along a snow covered ridge leading north. On either side of the ridge stretched long sweeps of bare ice, broken here and there by large black rocks which thrust through the surface of the ice sheet. As the file left the ridge to walk along the plain, Flash detected some sign of movement far in the distance, near some white hills in the east. He kept his eye out for some sign of what had moved, but could see nothing in the clear, still winter air.

Solas led the expedition along the base of a tall icebound cliff that sprang suddenly out of the uniform snowfield. Flash heard a low growl behind him. He whirled, raising the gun to fire Dale cried out as she saw what Flash had seen.

Five wolf-like creatures the size of bears, covered with white fur, had come around the base of the cliff and were now just behind them. Their huge mouths open and slobbering over gigantic fangs, the wolves rushed up on the surprised party.

A bolt of violet lighting crackled from Flash's gun. The creature in the lead yowled wildly as the bolt struck, and a gaping hole was torn in its chest. It tumbled head over heels to rest before the travelers. The other creatures halted for a moment, and Flash fired into the pack. The shot hit one beast a glancing wound across the shoulder and tore the head off a second. The other beast fled, but the wounded snowcreature screamed and prepared to spring.

Barin and Ronal leaped over the fallen creature and advanced towards the attacker, swords poised before them. Captain Solas and the soldiers flanked the creature on its left, forcing it against the side of the cliff. The creature, howling its defiance, reared on its hind legs to spring at its tormentors. Blood ran from its wound, staining the white fur and darkening the trampled snow. Barin leaped under the creature's massive front paws and speared it in the chest. Ronal followed Barin in. The snow beast roared and fell forward; Ronal and Barin swiftly leaped aside. Solas and the soldiers jumped in and finished the beast off, hacking off its head with their long swords.

Flash and Dale ran up to the fallen beast, Zarkov behind them. Though stained with the creature's blood, Barin and Ronal were unhurt.

"Let's go, let's go," said Barin, panting, "to the city!"

Zarkov bent over the severed head of the beast. "Flash, look at this," he said, motioning Gordon over. Brushing back the creature's fur, Zarkov revealed a slender silver cylinder set beneath the skin and leading into the skull.

"What does it mean," said Flash, "remote control?" Zarkov pulled the cylinder from the skull. It came with a sharp snap, leaving a set of torn wires projecting from the end.



"More sophisticated remote control than I have ever seen," said the scientist, fingering the cylinder, "who could have known this much, the Lion Men?"

"Perhaps it is a survivor of the old civilization, like the aircars or the reactors," suggested Dale. Solas and Barin had already walked from the beast along the cliff, and the other members of the party quickly followed. In the distance beyond the cliff Flash could make out a long low cluster of squat buildings, which were filled with movement. Zarkov hung back with Flash and Dale as the party approached the buildings, which Solas said were the city of the Lion Men.

"The creatures would not live long enough for that to be so," said Zarkov to Dale Arden, "someone in the present civilization had to plant these cylinders, and direct the beasts in their attack."

"Still could be the Lion Men," Dale said.

"I wonder if there are any scientist survivors of the disaster still on the planet," said Gordon.

"They would be over 100 years old, if there are," said Dale, "hey, wait a second, what about Ming and the powermen?"

"I have been wondering about that, Miss Arden," said Zarkov, "I regret to say I do not know how Ming and the others have come to be as they are."

A vehicle approached from the city of the Lion Men. It was a sled, drawn by two huge birds, that looked like ostriches with broad paddle feet. The heads of the birds were capped with a large bony crest which came down almost over their small black eyes. Driving the sled were two of Arborea's soldiers. Ronal explained that the snowbirds, for so they were called, were the principle source of motive power in this part of Mongo. They could also be ridden like horses, for their sloping broad backs furnished adequate room for a saddle.

The sled came to a halt before the travelers, and Barin motioned them to get aboard. The soldiers snapped the reins to the snowbirds and the creatures, with a snap at the cables, leaned on the traces and pulled the sled towards the city.

The city of the Lion Men was a large jumble of low buildings built of stone. They stood against the face of a shelf of rock that jutted from the bulk of a large mountain which extended far into the distance. From the windows and balconies in the rock face, it was plain to see that most of the city was built into the mountain itself. Several sleds and small clusters of snowbirds were tethered in front of the main city entrance, manned by groups of men in strange liveries. The Arborean sled drew up before a pile of crates piled below a loading dock near the outer edge of the crowd. Several Arborean soldiers emerged from the loading bay, followed by the largest man that Flash had ever seen. He was at least nine feet tall and

proportionately larger and heavier, his massive muscular frame clothed only in rude furs. The man's huge face was completely covered with hair sprouting from a full beard of growing in a wild corona about his head.

"Behold a Lion Man," said Zarkov, "just like the ones that attacked us."

"How'd they come to be so big, Ronal," asked Flash.

"They were here before my records begin," replied Ronal, "They have been raiding, slaving, trading and plundering from the beginning of the present age."

The Lion Man looked over the cases assembled before him. Selecting one, he heaved and carried it up onto the loading bay and inside. Flash saw that it took four of the soldiers to follow with an identical second case.

Captain Solas led the travelers through the main entrance to the city. Inside the air became dense and hot, permeated with the smells of human habitation and of burning torches. The group was in a large central corridor, from which several smaller halls branched, leading to the homes and workshops of the Lion Men. Solas proceeded down the corridor to its end, before a large wooden door. Dale commented on its resemblance to the metal one in Ming's palace.

"We've been through this before," she said, as Solas spoke with the Lion Man guarding the door with a six foot long sword, "let's hope we don't get thrown to the lions -- oops -- get pushed around again."

Flash hefted the ray weapon. "This time we have certain advantages."

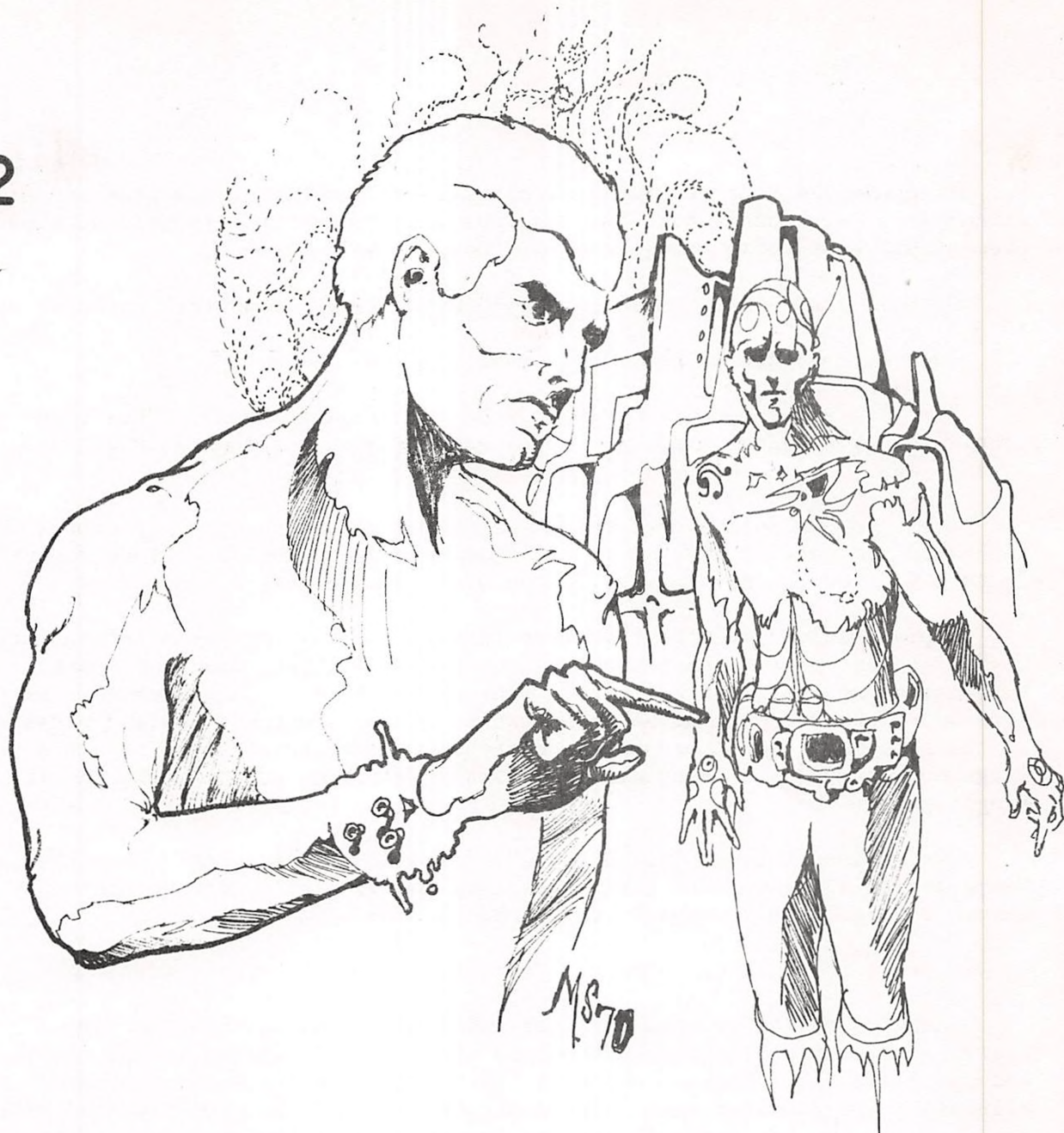
The Lion Man threw open the door and led the group into the large central room, which Solas told them was the place of trading in the city, and the place where Bruksa, chief of the Lion Men, would auction off the Prince's. The room had been chopped out of the bare rock and timbered with huge beams. Torches stuck in sockets in the beams illuminated the central hall, which was arranged about a central elevated dais. Tables with trade goods were grouped around this dais, and various groups clustered about the tables, bargaining for the items. Flash noticed a preponderance of a certain group at the tables and in conversation with the few Lion Men who stood around.

"Captain Solas," called Flash, "who are the guys wrapped in the plastic bags?"

One of these men heard the question and turned to respond.

"We are soldiers of her majesty, Queen Fria of Frigia, and these are suits to protect us from the cold, much more efficient than your furs." The suits resembled hooded coveralls, with the hood capable of encasing the head. They were completely transparent and underneath the man wore garments Flash expected only in tropical climates.





"This is the first time Frigia has made an appearance when Arborea was here," said Ronal, "I imagine their trading arrangements are some what different that ours, as they are much closer to the LionMen than Arborea."

"They're probably here because of Aura," hissed Barin, fingering his sword, "I hope this Fria is capable of being disappointed."

"Hm, I imagine she'll have something to say, with her ten-to-one man ratio here," said Dale, looking around, "Look out, here comes the head Lion."

A Huge Lion Man strode through the crowd, surrounded by equally huge bodyguards armed to the teeth. The Lion Man jumped up on the dias. Flash

noticed that under his arm he was carrying a large cloth wrapped bundle, approximately Princess sized.

"Nobles!" roared the Lion Man in a hoarse voice, "I, Brukka, chief of the Lion Men, now present the central object for trading today!" With that, he whirled the cloth off his bundle, standing it on end. It was indeed Aura, dishevelled, bruised, and naked as the day she was born. Flash and Ronal leaped on Barin to prevent him from storming the dias, which Flash noticed was surrounded by guncarrying Frigians.

"I smell a fix in the air, Flash," murmured Dale. But Flash, nor any other man in the room seemed particularly interested in this, for the moment.

Aura stood with her hands on her out thrust hips, her brown eyes blazing with defiance at her tormentors. Brukka's eyes roamed across her body, fondling her large, rounded pink tipped breasts and caressing the curve of her belly. The dark, sensual face and voluptuous body of Ming's daughter broadcast their message and dwarfed the magnitude of her political importance with more primary considerations.

"Keep tight hold on Barin, there," warned a somewhat flustered Dale Arden, "my, that woman is built sexy, isn't she?"

"Don't worry about it," said Flash, comfortingly. Dale lifted an eyebrow at him and looked again at Aura, who had now caught sight of Prince Barin. She sagged slightly, as her eyes locked on Barin's.

"I regret, the bidding is concluded," said a female voice from the crowd. The ranks of Frigian soldiers parted, and a blonde woman in the transparent suit of the Frigians walked through and climbed the dias to stand by Brukka. The woman was no older than Aura, and had hair so blonde as to be white. Her icy blue eyes raked the assembled company, coming to rest on the Arboreans.

"Ah, so sorry, Prince Barin, but what I had to offer Brukka he could not refuse: a power system for his city," said the woman in a soft, low voice. She was exquisitely proportioned, dressed beneath the suit in only the briefest of costumes, and Flash reflected that on Mongo it seemed that beautiful woman came in threes: the elegant Dale, the sensuous Aura, the icy perfection of...

"Queen Fria, your majesty," Ronal said to the woman, "we will pay anything, do anything, to get Aura. Look here: we have Dr. Zarkov and Flash Gordon, scientists here, as great as Ming's powermen, if not greater."

Fria looked at the indicated people. "Bring Aura to my chamber," she told Brukka. The Lion Man nodded, and took the unprotesting Aura off through a doorway beyond the dias. The Queen indicated that the Arborean party should follow. The Frigians lead by Queen Fria followed the Arboreans, leaving the traders to ponder the latest turn of events.



Ronal, Barin, Zarkov, Flash and Dale were escorted by a Frigian into the large chamber of Queen Fria. She sat on a low carved chair with Aura, now clothed in a rude shift, sprawled at her feet. When Barin entered, Aura sprang to her feet and ran to his crushing embrace.

"Ah, how tender," said Fria, "well, Barin if you can persuade yourself to end this scene, we can bargain."

"All right," said Barin, "what do you want?"

"Doctor Zarkov," said Fria, "what do you know of our power system?"

"Nothing," said Zarkov.

"Fool!" cried Fria, "it is like Ming's, I as told; this one outside, said you were greater than the Powermen,"

"Is something the matter with your thermonuclear power system?" asked Flash, "if so, we can fix it." Fria stared at him.

"Is this so?" she asked Zarkov. The scientist shrugged.

"Well, it does no harm to say that, yes, our power system, which also provides the heat which keeps our city alive, is failing. My people freeze, and none of my technicians can do anything,"

"Not at all surprising," said Ronal, "these systems were built a hundred years ago by the now departed scientists."

Fria clasped her hands under her chin and stared into space for some time. Aura and Barin spoke quietly, and the others watched the queen and the soldiers that surrounded them. Fria rose and walked around the room. ~~XXX~~ She stopped before one of her officers and conferred with him in whispers.

"What do we get out of this deal," said Flash, "Zarkov, perhaps Fria has the manpower and resources to fetch your spaceship. She should be properly grateful if we fix her reactor."

"We?" replied Zarkov, "but yes, you are right, Flash. And I will need your assistance. Before we get my ship we must travel to the place from which the experiment a hundred years ago was carried out. It lies southeast of Fria's city, I think. I need --"

"This is my decision," said Fria, "The Arboreans, with Aura, will come with us to Frigia. When X Zarkov and Flash Gordon have repaired the device, then I will release Aura from my control!"

"Control?" asked Barin. Aura turned from him and lifted her hair. A slender silver half cylinder bulged from the back of her neck.

"A device of the Lion Men," said Aura, "that woman controls me by her thoughts, I don't know how."

"So it was the Lion Men who started that attack," Flash whispered to Zarkov.

"Did they build those things?" the scientist replied, "No. Someone else is behind it. Who?"

"All right, it's agreed, Queen Fria," said Barin, "let us begin at once."

\*\*\*\*\*

A few hours later a line of snowbird drawn sleds sped across the snowfields northward from the Lion Men's city. Fria and the Arborean party, with Aura, rode in the largest sled, surrounded by Frigia's crack troop of snowbird-mounted lancers, resplendent in black and gold uniforms and long pikes. Fria reclined on fur cushions looking at her ~~pp~~ passengers. Dale was huddled in Flash's arms, her head on his chest. Barin sat with a fur-wrapped Aura and Ronal perched at the far end from the monarch, his eyes darting about over the passing territory and the more immediate scenery, notably queen ~~R~~ Fria.

"How long do you think it will take you to repair the system," Fria asked Zarkov, who sat beside her, his face wearing a mournful frown.

"It's hard to say," he replies, "a week perhaps."

"And then you wish to lead an expedition to the ruined city on the plain?" she asked. Zarkov nodded.

"There are things there I need to know, that I have to see before I get my --- before I continue my research."

"Have you had any trouble with those snow wolves," asked Flash, "we were attacked as we neared the Lion Men's city."

Fria shook her head. "They guard all approaches to the city for the Lion Men, I don't know why."

"But you know how," said Ronal.

"They also attacked Ming and his party in force," continued Fria, ignoring Ronal, "preventing him from arriving to reclaim his daughter. Brukka did that for me. I got the power system I gave Brukka from your ruined city. What will you fetch for me, Zarkov?"

"Once I fix your reactor, our relationship, I think, is formally concluded," snapped Zarkov.



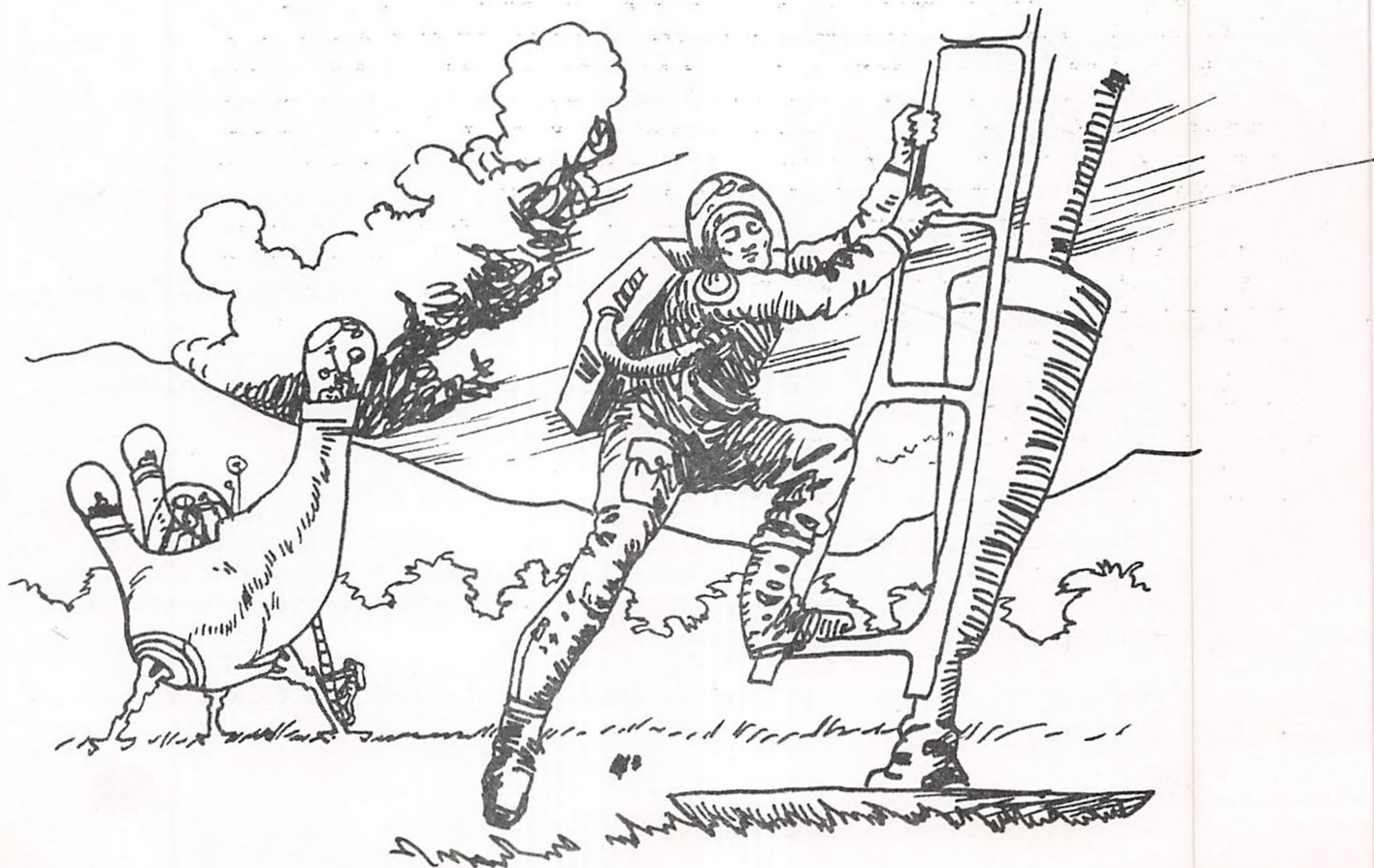
"Oh, but what if the reactor fails again?" said Fria, her eyes blazing, "Frigia needs scientists to battle Ming, who threatens us in the southeast; he raids us much more often than he does anyone else. I think he wants control of the eastern coast, for some reason. Ah, yes Arboreans you will stay in Frigia a long, long time to help me your Queen, the ruler of Mongo."

Barin growled and began to rise from his place. Fria stared at Aura a moment, and the Princess fell shrieking in pain to the floor of the sled. The snowbird lancers surrounding the sled turned their attentions to the occupants, their weapons prevented anyone ~~from~~ from making the slightest resistance. Aura, tears in her eyes, rose slowly to her knees. Barin glared at Fria as he lifted Aura from the floor.

"You may consider your selfs my prisoners," continued Queen Fria ominously, "but as Most honored prisoners, of course."

The caravan flew across the silent snow fields, winding its way northward into the Frigian territories.

TO BE CONTINUED  
(BY A DIFFERENT TYPIST - EDITOR)



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 BIZAARE FANTASY TALES: 1970-fall; 1971-March  
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 DOC SAVAGE: 1933-March-Sept, Nov, Dec; 1934-Jan, March-Aug, Oct;  
 1935-March-Nov; 1936-Jan, March-Sept, Nov, Dec; 1937-Jan,  
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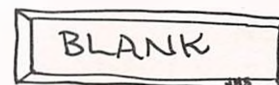
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