

UMERA

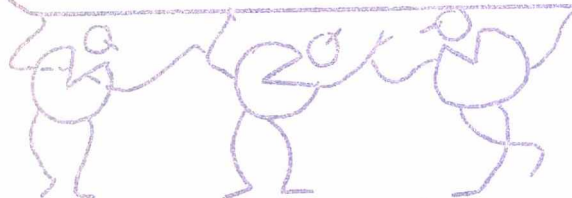
vola
Eney



#16

Jan

Εν τῇ ἀρχῇ



Harness

THIS IS UMBRA, is published by John Hitchcock, 300 E. University Pkwy., Baltimore 18, Md. It comes out 7 times a year (what a hollow boastful promise that sounds now!) and costs 10¢ for one and 25¢ for 3 and so on up. This is the third anniversary of Umbra. Whoopee.

Right here begins the editorial.

Firstly and most important come some mighty humble thanks to certain fans for going way out of their way for me in vain. That's Jan Jansen, Ron Bennett, and Dick Eney, and Mal Ashworth Ellis Mills, and J. Michael Rosenblum. You'll remember perhaps that lastish I said I

would probably be running in Taff; I mentioned this to Jan&Ron privately, too. Reason, primarily, why I decided to run was I felt I could win if I were all that Trufandom had to pick, as against more professional or stfreader-inclined candidates. Until coming home after the NYcon I still thought that, and Eney was all set to do the dirty work of nominations. Then he mentioned that he'd been nominated; and, after $\frac{1}{2}$ hr. of thought, I "declined" nomination in Eney's favor, contributed \$2 to the Nominate Eney fund, sponsored him, and suchlike. Eney's a much (slight understatement) more suitable candidate than I would have been, much more deserving of the Taff award; and if I ran vs. him, I would probably detract a few votes from his ticket, in what promised to be a fairly close race.

However, I didn't enlighten other fen of this move, and Jan wrote a desperation-type airletter saying, if I could pay the \$5, he'd do the rest; I called him off. But, being in postcon gafia, I pretty well forgot the others I'd mentioned my candidacy to.

From: DON FORD, Box 19-T, RR#2, Wards Corner Rd., Loveland, Ohio.

To: Ron Bennett, 7 Southway, Arthurs Av., Harrogate, Yorks, Eng.

Copy: J. Hitchcock.

Dear Ron:-- Received your letter dated September 22, 1956, today. You wish to nominate John Hitchcock for the 1957 TAFF election & state that Ellis Mills, Jan Jansen, Mal Ashworth and J. Michael Rosenblum are all backing John. You further state that if I do not hear from John Hitchcock I am to take it that he is standing for election.

This I cannot do.

The deadline is September 30th. In order to accept John's nomination, I must have a signed statement from him that he is willing to accept and will make the trip if elected. If John will do this by return mail and accompany it with the \$5.00 fee, I'll hold off the deadline a couple of days or so in order to allow the mails their normal delivery time.

In addition, I'd like you, Ron, to send along the signatures of John's sponsors for TAFF files.

All of the above may sound fussy and perhaps too rigid to you; but, I think you should comply with TAFF rules as everyone else has who has been nominated. I'll be glad to enter John's name in the nominations if he will not delay in answering this letter.

However, TAFF nominations are a positive thing...not a negative one. I simply cannot accept for nomination anyone of the basis of "if you don't hear from him, soon, take it that he is standing."

Personally, I'd be glad to see John run in the election; I hope he will reply one way or the other soon.

Sincerely yours
Don Ford.

So Ron traipsed over the north of England collecting signatures for me, after I'd decided not to run after all. To him and to Jan, who was going to, and to Ellis, Jan-the-2nd-time, Malash, and Mike, who signed with Ron, go my deeply felt, sincere thanks. ...This same bunch of fen--Jan, Ron&Eney especially--has since been talking about a separate fund to bring John too, seeing as I can save up almost but not quite enough for passage to London, and I'd need outside help to make the trip. If anyone wants to contribute, I have no objection out of Pride or Modesty, etc.; and my undying gratitude to any who should help the finances. Also a lifetime sub to everything I publish in fandom... And, of course, I consider myself duty bound, if I'm still unable to Go to London, to turn any outside funds over to Taff.

GIVE GENEROUSLY--SEND ENEY!

About the only tribute I can think of to pay R.Eney is that his coming, permanent-like, to this part of the world kept up--reawakened rather--my interest in fandom at its lowest ebb. The Revolt of Umbra 15 and the rest of the incredible things happening to Um's Editorial Policy (like it ceasing to exist, and all) can be traced back to Eney as a source. More objectively, Eney is a very active faasn-type creature, official editor (i.e., the one who does all the work) of FAPA, one-time dictator of SAPS, and now a member of OMPA; most of his activity has been in the apas, and, strangely enough, most of fandom's activity has been there too... Eney is the perfect ambassador of Fandom for the other half of Fandom (pardon ill-logio); quiet, cultured, gets along with everybody, Comprehends Situations--and despite this is a Fine Fan. I can't think of anybody who bears illwill against him--and this is a remarkable accomplishment after 6 years inactive fanning. I urge all faasns, and even ordinary Fen, to vote Eney in TAFF.

3½ YEARS BEFORE THE MASTHEAD DEPT.

No, make that 3½; 1 Oct. was Anniversary Time for me. In Um...9, was it?...last year (1955), I promised a review of the coming year in the Oct. 56 ish. No space thish for such, so I'll have a brief look over 1956 and Umbra and all: main interest I had was in European fandom, and with Umbra I managed to succeed in clarifying the state of fandom in Scandinavia, Germany, Netherlands, Belgium, France. The thing I'm most proud of was bringing Jean Linard, Fabulous French Fan, into contact with American fandom. Since then, he's become the most active fan outside the apas. Just got Meuh#1, the fourth fax from Vesoul,

containing 100 pages. I plug it MOST heartily: Meuh, Jean et Anne Linard, 24 rue Petit, Vesoul, Haute Saone, FRANCE . It's the only fmz in real, honest-to-ghod Creole.

But I fear that Jean is losing his priceless creolity. Yes, it's hard to say, I know; but it's true. Meuh#"1" had some frighteningly long stretches of very natural, native-like sounding English in it... no, not the outside contributions...evenmore natural-sounding than nine (viz. this sentence). That sparkling and charmant creole is, slowly but surely, becoming ordinary, blase english. Any suggestions for keeping the Linard creole pure will be thoroughly considered.

THE CONTACT GROUP. or "IT'S NOT GOING TO SUCCEED" DEPT.

I imagine most of you are now familiar with Contact, the fan-news-magazine that's put out by Jan Jansen in Belgium (to save on postage--Belgian rates are wonderfully low) and financed, so far, by the "Contact Group" of 4-5 fans, me incl. With fandom so spread-out now --America, England, Sverifandom, Gerfandom, 'Pataphandom as practiced in Eastern of France, Australia, New Zealand, Japan?, etc.--there ought to be a wide-circulation newssheet devoted ENTIRELY to fans and fan doings. There have been many fan-news-sheets in the past, but none now, when fandom is more, yes, co smopolitan, than ever. Hence:Contact. Born out of Dhivine Inspiration under Great Physical Duress, while Jan was hospitalized with that Fractured Collarbone, alias Femur, Contact had an enthusiastic first reception. Right now (Xmas day) the fifth issue is emerging from mysterious and innermost Belgium.

Yet there's a hitch...ech, no puns...: we can't keep on financing it forever. Therefore, we have proposed the novel idea of "subscriptions"; that is, the fan who wishes to receive Contact shall pay a certain amount of money for a given number of issues in the future. By this means, Contact Group is spared much unnecessary expense. The "subscription" amounts are as follows: for one year, for the sterling area, 7/-; for the dollar area, \$1.00; for the Belgian franc area, 50fr.; in the franc area, 350fr.; in the Swedish krona area, k5.00; in the Norwegian krone area, k7.00; in the Deutschmark area, DM 4.20; in the Australian sterling area, 9/-; elsewhere, YOU figure it out. Double the above amount gets you an airmail "subscription" for one year; this means that Contact is mailed by air instead of water, and, consequently, is not so damp when it reaches you. The address for remission of subs, sins, and sardines is (dollar area) Dick Ellington, 98 Suffolk St. Apt. 3A New York 2, N.Y. (or, if you prefer, Dick Eney, 417 Ft. Hunt Rd., Alexandria, Va.)--(sterling area) Ron Bennett, 7 Southway, Arthurs Ave., Harrogate, Yorks.--(all other areas and similar peculiarities) Jan Jansen Himself ((yes, Cliff, I actually Know Him Personally)), 229 Berchemlei, Bergerhout, BELGIE/BELGIQUE. Contact is the Only Original Duplicated TIJDSCHRIFT; with each subscription the lucky fan gets 24 issues PLUS a Genuine Sonja HANDWRITTEN HANDCOLORED Greetings Card. "Promags have lost the Sense of Wonder, but CONTACT readers will always keep wondering what will run out first: our supply of news, our energy, or our money." --old Flemish saying.

ACT NOW!

"It takes a good imagination to get imaginary results from an imaginary machine."--L.S.deCamp

"I don't know what psionics is, but I think---" Campbell, Jr.

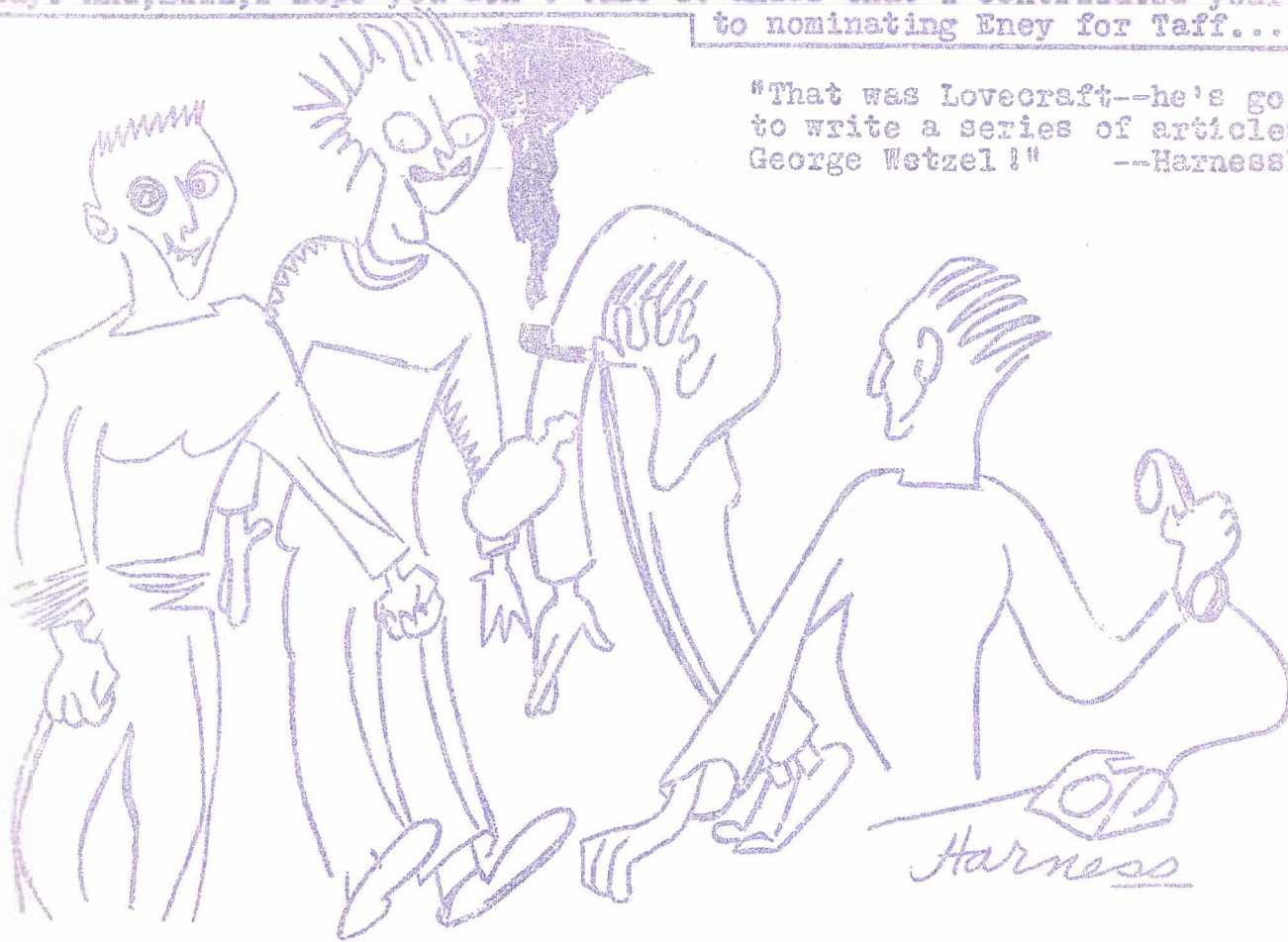
LESSER A FAN THAN THOU DEPT.

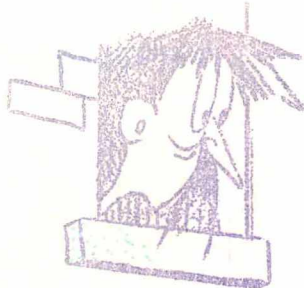
And so everybody took me Seriously when I typed "Lesser Fans:" after Tucker&Dag's letters & before the rest of Whaaat lastish...awright, so I wasn't Communicating and loused things up very tidily. Considered Chpinnion: it can be damn cumbersome, extremely annoying, and generally not worth the egoboo involved to have a fannish Reputation or a Legend (rep.--here I mean the good ones, not the deglwetzl types) grow up like a purple-veined vine of creeping carnivore around you. I made a habit of running into & around with fans at New York who were irreparably affixed to fannish legends of some sort, and meditated upon these poor unfortunates afterwards. Decided I never want to be a "BNF" or such like. Please, will someone tell me, How do I keep from becoming a BNF?

OH HELL. HERE YOU GO AGAIN BEING SO DAMN NICE DEPT.

In later Sept. I got a letter from Bill "Wm." Grant of LowerCanada saying "I wouldn't like to see such a fmz as Um fold for lack of funds so here's a dollar to help out" and there, indeed was a crisp US dollar. Again, my sincere appreciation...this srt of thing doesn't happen every day. And, Bill, I hope you don't take it amiss that I contributed your \$1 to nominating Eney for Taff.....?

"That was Lovecraft--he's going to write a series of articles on George Wetzel!" --Harnesskat





THE HIGH

AND THE MIGHTY



BY JOHN BERRY

My address, until a short time ago, was number 1, Knockeden Crescent. A nice house. But small. Conversely, the garden was big. Very big. This happened to be just the opposite to what I wanted. Insofar as the garden was concerned, I gave my fannish instincts a free rein, and completely ignored it. Right enough, I admit I did cut some of the grass but that was only because it kept me awake at nights when the wind blew it against the bedroom window. And the house itself. Small, I said? Yessir. There were three rooms. Two small bedrooms and a large room downstairs. This large room was the cause of much conflict between my wife and myself. The TV set was in one corner, and I curled up in the opposite corner to do my fanning. The first difficulty was that I couldn't concentrate on my writings because of the noise of the TV. The frequent appearance of semi-clad dancing girls also curtailed my output somewhat. As far as my wife was concerned, the dreaded Shaw-Berry typer was her chief cause of frustration. It wasn't the vibration, she confessed. Oh no. Her brother had remendied that by bolting the TV set to the table. It was the noise, she screamed. It even drowned the cacophony of sound produced by my two children and my flock of talking budgerigars.

As you can no doubt imagine, creative fanatic in such circumstances could quite easily have had far reaching mental effects on anyone with a brain less durable than my own. But when everything I looked at began to remind me of Marilyn Monroe I reluctantly took my psychiatrist's advice

and got a new house. A bigger house. Lots of rooms, an itty bitty garden, and, most important of all, a little fanac room of my own.

31, Campbell Park Avenue suited me very well, I could see, even after a cursory reconnaissance. The garden was so small it could be cultivated with a knife and fork. My own room was upstairs, a long way away from the nursery and the aviary. And, best of all, the house was only about five minutes cycle ride from 170 Upper Newtownards Road, where a chap called Willis lives.

So far, so good.

And rooms?

Two really large rooms downstairs, three bedrooms and a fanning room. Heck. I was just starting to live.

So enthusiastic was I that even whilst the furniture was being unloaded outside by the removers, I sneaked to my own room to plan everything out. I decided just where I would put the typer, the table, the bookshelves, etc. Satisfied with my tentative arrangements, I tip-toed downstairs, and whilst my wife was telling the furniture removers where to put things, I swiped a chair, a table, two bookcases, and one or two other necessary items.

I surveyed my domain.

I felt GOOD.

I leaned back nonchalantly in a plush armchair, and crossed my feet on the table. Just what I had always wanted. The chair was just a leetle too comfortable, I decided. Being so soothing, it might lull me to sleep when I wanted to think out a title or something. I reached out, patted the nearest bundle of fanzines.

Mmmmm-rammmmm.

The door burst open like a cork out of a bottle, and mywife stood at the threshold, grim of visage, her arms folded aggressively. Two furniture removers hunched over her shoulder.

"That chair should be in the living room," she rasped. There was a blur of action.

I dropped nimbly off the top of the bookcases. The armchair did look a wee bit out of place, anyways. However, a good strong table was the main item, because the Shaw-Berry typer, being an early 19th century model, needed a good solid foundation. I....

"Just what are you doing with the sideboard, may I ask?" grated my wife.

"Er, heck, sweetest," I cringed, "I just wanted somewhere to keep my prozines, and fanzines.."

A sideboard was somehow ostentatious, I consoled myself. It had been rather a tight fit. I mean, there was hardly room for me to get behind the table. As it was, I would have to move the bookcase round a mite, I couldn't always keep the shade of the standard lamp pointing out of the window. The china cabinet had seemed a good idea at the time being able to see my fanzines, and keep the dust off them at the same time. All the same.....

The furniture removers worked with such enthusiasm I



suspected my wife had promised them a big tip if they handled her furniture with care and deliberation. I had to admire the way they eased the settees through the door on its way downstairs again. But, after all, comfort isn't everything. I suppose it would have been nice to sort of lie on my back to meditate, but, sure, the thick pile carpet would be as comfortable. I always seemed....

"I cannot understand how all this good furniture managed to get in to this attic," frowned my wife as she supervised the removal of the china cabinet, standard lamp and bookcase. She shook her head slowly as she herself bore away the Dresden china dancing girl. I crawled from under the table after they departed. Luxury isn't everything. Big name vile pros like James White can afford extravagant crockery in their den, and divans, and Quinn Originals, and so on, but us poor lowly fen must make do with whatever our ingenuity can command. A table, after all, is a table. A lot can be done on a table. This was a big table. Beside the typer, there was also room for a few paper clips. Yessir. I was lucky to have the table. Too lucky.

"These two empty tea chests will be allright here," said my wife to her two stalwarts, "mind...watch that table, watch you don't scrape the veneer on your way downstairs....and, oh, John, give these men five shillings each, will you? They've been very helpful."

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In the dead of night I managed to find a long length of rotting wood in the back yard next door. Later, when I suspended it across the top of the two inverted tea chests, I discovered it would just about hold the typer. I tried to ignore the pulleys hanging from the ceiling.

The typer is heavy, yes; but with the support of the ropes and the mouldy wood it seemed to stand the strain all right. Natch, tea chests ain't very high; so it was necessary to curl up like an ingrowing toenail when I typed. I found that, as I typed, I could rest my chin on my knees if I needed to concentrate. It fair gave me the chronic backache, though.

I was rather proud of the two holes I knocked in each side of the tea chest so that I could move my elbows as I type. Even so, I felt a little hunchback in the cramped position, and every so often I would stagger to my feet and streeetch out my arms and chest, and rise to my full five feet six inches.

The room was inclined to be cold, too, and I found that after typing four or five lines it was necessary to run up and down the stairs a few times to bring back the circulation.

Last night, however, came the climax.

I got cramp so bad that I couldn't move. I sort of managed to sway to and fro until I was able to move a tea chest sufficiently far away to allow the mouldy plank to slip off. I relied on the pulleys to support the typer.

The resultant crash as the typer disappeared through the floorboards brought up my wife to investigate, as I had intended should have happened when the wood fell. She had perforce to retrace her steps to the room below, and help lift the typer off my lap.

Yessir, I sure had the cramp.

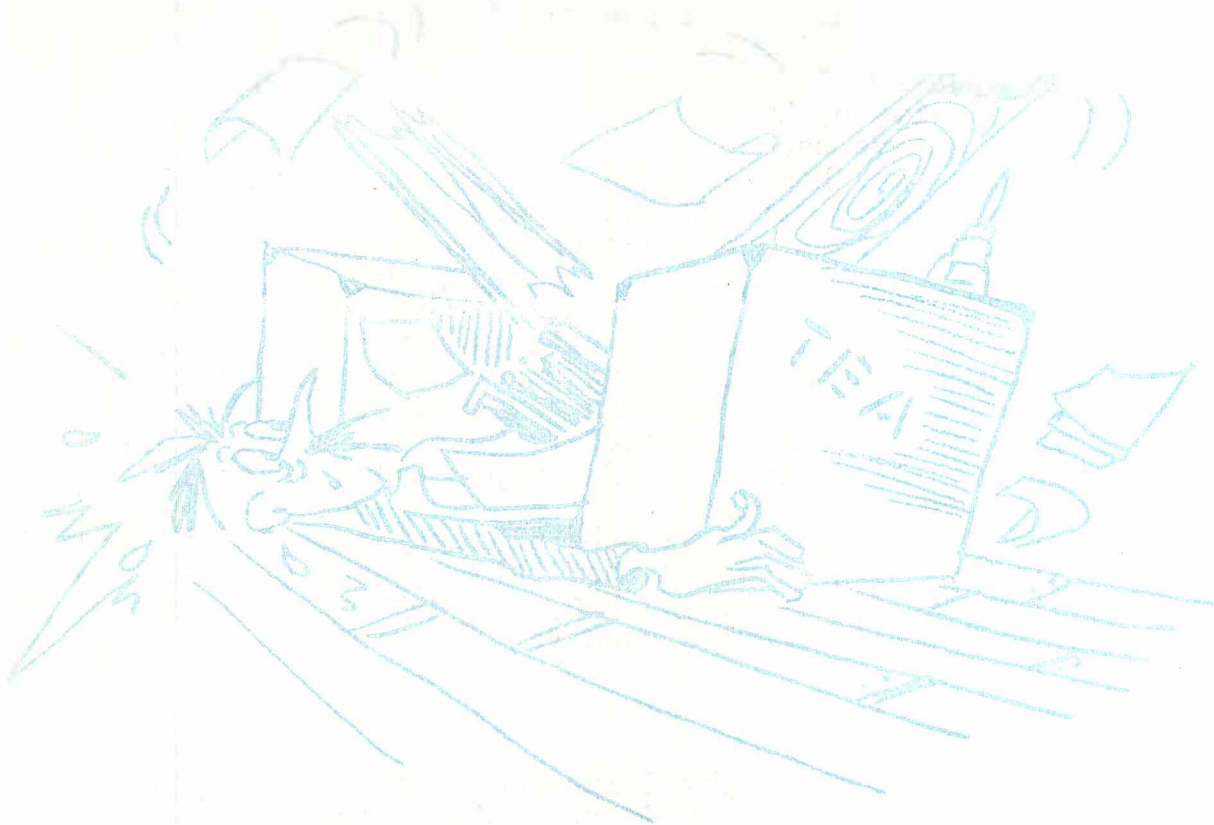
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If this article seems a little disjointed, John, please forgive me. There is a chorus of semi-nude high kickers on the television screen, and two budgerigars are making love in my hair. I have a child under each arm, and am trying to conform my lips into a friendly grin as my wife leers over her shoulder.

On the other hand, I suppose there is nothing quite so nice as good old homely fanac.

John Berry.

"I was the only one who got the news in time, so there I was reading my own mind."

--Eney

DOES THIS POEM BELONG TO RICH KIRS ?

Little Willie, running wild,
Turned his sister to a BEM;
Mother said, "You brilliant child--
"How did you learn Biochem?"

RELIGION BELONGS -- ENJOY IT !

--G.Schochet

SENSE FROM

THOUGHT DIVIDE

by Dick Eney

The Great Scientist silped his Nuclear Fizz in the Insurgent Manner.

"And so," he explained, "the attempt of the Enchanters', Necromancers', and Sorcerers' Union to take over the Earth was finally foiled."

"Just like that?" asked the Brilliant Psychologist in some surprise. "You just entrapped all the fiends of the pit and made the ENSU helpless?"

"What could be simpler?"

BP raised an eyebrow in protest. "I could think of a number of things. I understand entirely that only supernatural entities can exercise supernatural powers..."

GS nodded in benevolent agreement.

"And that if the ENSU couldn't invoke demons to do its dirty work it would be helpless..."

"And that the aforesaid demons had to agree to certain restrictions to reach the Earth Plane of Existence..."

"But think! The main restriction they had to agree to was their subjection to the ENSU--their handfasting to come to Earth Plane when called, and stay till dismissed, by a card-carrying magician. So--?!" The Brilliant Psychologist's gesture comprehended the vast prison-pit that had been an atom-bomb crater as well as the ring of guards surrounding it. "Don't you realize that no wall can hold them, that any time they get the notion to any of them can tear six or eight guards to pieces and gallop off?"

GS looked pained. "But think, old boy! They haven't gotten out yet, have they? And we've been chasing ENSU members down ever since Dazzy and I snared the hosts of hell in that crater a few days ago..."

* * * * *

The Great Scientist brought the helicopter over the center of the atom bomb crater that marked the site of the first, unsuccessful, move against the ENSU. Beside him the Dazzlingly Pulchritudinous Femme swung her binoculars around the perimeter of the pit, seeing nothing and saying as much.

"Thank Roscoe," she observed, "those nightmares are unable to fly on the Earth Plane! We'd never make it if we had to look out for air interception." She shifted the express rifle to reach for the kit-bag of magical paraphenalia as GS set the 'copter down, and they climbed out.

Wasting no time, GS drew a pentagram around the helicopter, distributed various incenses at the apices, and began a chant which Dazzy filled in antiphonally. (GS interrupted his verbal flashback to explain to the Brilliant Psychologist: "Good old Library of Congress! There is some use in an institution which requires two copies of every printed book including Grimoires!")

Clouds rolled in from the edges of the sky and lightning began to flash at regular intervals.

"Roscoe!" invoked GS in one of the pauses of his chant. "If we get a storm started we'll never get out of here in that helicopter!" "There!" cried the Dazzlingly Pulchritudinous Femme in another pause. "There's the first one!"

One of the ENSU's tame demons had popped up in answer to their summons; a bright green, dwarfish one with batwings and stag horns. It faced toward the pentacle and bounced from the film of air at its edge.

The chant continued, GS replenishing the little piles of incense from time to time. Eighty-two assorted fiends were inside the crater by the time they had finished, and others were pouring in. GS' detector instruments were jumping up to higher and higher levels as the two retreated to the helicopter.

("What, the detector? Well, you remember that device you invented to measure the degree of empathy--yes, yes, I know that was for use on psychological patients, but adaptation is the lifeblood of science." The Great Scientist gave BP a hurt look. "Well, I realized that an infernal machine would naturally have a great deal of empathy for our, uh, opponents, so I went to the Metropolitan police's bomb squad and--well, if you're going to act like that about it--")

GS hovered for fifteen minutes after his infernal machine ceased to register the arrival of more devils; by the time he shifted rotor settings and swooped away a squadron of jets was orbiting around the crater while columns of infantry and armor fanned out around its rim.

* * * * *

"And that was it", concluded GS. "You see, the ENSU couldn't get to their fiends to send them back to their own Plane, and while they were here they couldn't invoke them somewhere else on Earth Plane." He puffed contentedly on his pipe. "Very tidy! And as they can't get out of the crater, we have it made--indefinitely!"

The Brilliant Psychologist did not, quite, tear his hair. "But in heaven its own name why can't they get out of that crater? Why, I could walk out of it myself...!"

GS looked amazed for a moment. "But BP, you just a while ago cited the reason!" He gestured at the crater. "They could walk out of it, too, but for that they'd need to climb up the walls of the crater. And don't you remember that they figured we'd never be able to imprison them because no wall would hold them?"

BP buried his face in his hands and began to sob.

"There are two corners on this table--one on each end."



Little Willie loudly cries
When Baby pulls the wings off flies
For Willie has a notion nursed
That all their legs should come off first!

- - - Art Rapp

NOAH MCLEOD

the old maid and the robots

I, ROBOT, by Isaac Asimov; The New American Library of World Literature, Inc., 501 Madison Ave., New York 22, N.Y., paper bound, 35¢.

Isaac Asimov is one of the better known writers of real science fiction; that is, science fiction with an element of real science in it. He is a teacher and research writer in biochemistry at the Boston University School of Medicine; therefore knows real science to use in his stories. He has a keen sense of humor and a little of the prophet about him.

I, ROBOT is a collection of short stories in chronological order as a "future history" in the Heinlein style. They trace the development of robots from the beginnings of the positronic brain to the time when robots control the Earth's economy. The stories are told by Miss Susan Calvin, a retired expert on robot psychology.

The best stories in my opinion are ROBBIE, a story of a little girl and her robot nurse; REASON, a stiff satire on certain kinds of philosophic and religious thought; and LIAR! a tale of what happens when a telepathic robot starts telling lies to please the people with whom it comes in contact. But all the nine stories are good.

The human characters are shadowy and conventional except for Susan Calvin. Apparently in choosing a name for her Asimov was influenced by the fact that John Calvin founded Puritanism; and considered it an ideal name for a straight-laced, almost savagely stern woman, who acted on the principle that all men are wolves. As for her personality, he didn't have to go very far; there's one in every office.

By contrast with most of the human characters the robots stand out with definite personalities. There is Cutie, the logical robot who reasoned that creatures so imperfect as human beings could not have created him; there is Herbie, the telepathic robot who lied to human beings to make them feel good (Susan Calvin drove him insane for tampering with her feelings); there is Robbie, the robot nurse who rescued little Gloria. It is my opinion that Asimov deliberately failed to develop his human characters, to focus attention on the robots. He can develop character when he wants to, as is shown by his latest novel,

THE NAKED SUN. The net result of this underplaying the character angle, is that one develops an intense interest in what happens but doesn't care very much who it happens to. The big question is: "What crazy thing will that robot do next?" Except for little Gloria, I didn't give a damn about the human characters. Susan Calvin is one of the most completely unsympathetic characters in fiction; and most of the other humans are shadows.

The descriptions of the scenes on other planets are scientifically accurate but are not allowed to obtrude too much. This is as it should be; Asimov was writing about robots, not trying to sell space travel.

The positronic brains of Asimov's robots are about on par with the sodium propelled engines of Jules Verne's submarine. That is, the scientific principle of the gadget is doubtful; but the conditions under which it must operate are carefully thought out and are valid. With vacuum tubes, an electronic brain would have to be the size of the Woolworth Building to have the intelligence of a mouse, not exactly the smartest mammal known. With transistors, the device could be smaller; but obviously to put a brain of near human intelligence into a robot the size of a man, some new and radical principle is needed. Hence the positronic brain.

The idea of the three laws of robotics seems to have developed as follows. Man-like machines of human intelligence appear in fiction, both Western and Oriental, from the middle ages on. Frequently the story ended with the robot killing his master and/or destroying himself. The term "robot" was first used, I believe, by the Czech playwright Karel Capek, in the play R.U.R. In this play, the robots finally rebel and take over. Obviously a robot with suicidal, homicidal, or revolutionary tendencies would be impractical as an economic unit. Hence the three laws of robotics which keep a robot from killing people, disobeying orders, or destroying itself.

Making robots human shaped is more doubtful. An extra pair of arms would be helpful in many occasions; for deep-sea operation an octopus shape would be more efficient than a human shape. For mining coal and ore in thin beds, a turtle shape a few inches high with a pair of arms and moving on caterpillar treads would be better than a humanoid robot.

Time of the stories is in the 21st century. This brings up a point of some importance in my estimation. Very little science-fiction is laid in the immediate future, and deals with logical extrapolation of known inventions and present social trends. The revolution caused by the tank in land warfare, and that caused by submarine and aircraft carrier in naval warfare seem to have gone unpropheced by science fiction writers. The shift of power Eastwards in Europe was missed almost completely by the ordinary run of science fiction writers. Why? Why this tendency to ignore the foreseeable and to some extent predictable future, in favor of the completely unforeseeable distant future? Is it because most science fiction writers are afraid they will be accused of being subversive?


I, ROBOT is well worth the thrity-five cents asked. It will keep the reader wondering, "What darn thing will that robot do next?" Good as Dr. Asimov's robot stories are, this reviewer would like him to write some science fiction around biochemistry, a subject he really knows. It is peculiar that Asimov, a biochemist, writes about robots, while Eric Temple Bell, a mathematician wrote stories about biochemistry under his penname of John Taine.

tiender från svithjod

(column)

Lars Islander

(author)



This column, or whatever you may choose to call it, is, more or less, the result of strict injunctions expressed by two vital persons in my life - my father and John Hitchcock. Ever considered your responsibility, John, huh? - This statement, which very possibly might seem a bit puzzling, is easily explained by the fact that John wants me to do a column for Umbra and my father wants me to prepare our English test in school tomorrow.

In most cases, being a fan, or, rather, an actifan, also means being pressed for time, and as this holds unpleasantly true as regards my fanac, what is more natural than my trying to kill two birds with onestone by regarding the writing of this column as a kind of exercise and preparation for tomorrow's test? Not that I usually do prepare any English school tests - on the contrary, I never have and I neverwill - but I am quite sure my father wouldn't approve of my doing fanac instead of my school work. If the causer of my existence knew to what an extent I have been neglecting my school work lately, due to things such as fanac (incl. planning a fanzine), rehearsaling that damn Molière comedy and other reasons, which, because of their more personal and intimate nature, I am not going any closer into here, he would very probably burn all my fan mags, my letterfile and all my other fannish attributes. A horrible fate, indeed. If my father should ever come across this issue of Umbra and read my revealing words, I hope he won't understand enough English to realize what I am saying. Trouble is, I think he does. Live dangerously - become a fan! (Hi, Dad!)

As regards the above-mentioned "other reasons," I strongly feel that it would be highly desirable to warn Eric Bentcliffe and Alan Dodd, who have been reading Dirty Articles on Swedish morals, not to this perhaps ambiguous expression inspire any Unclean Suspicions in their quite probably very imaginative minds.

As I now have stared speaking of Swedish morals, I must disappoint you by explaining that I am not going to discuss this subject in this column, although one might be tempted to by the very nature of this topic. However, I feel at present quite fed up with the whole thing, which fact you might be able to understand if I tell you that during my travels this summer I had to discuss this subject with a lot of inquisitive people, including three American university students from Ohio ((Oberlin, I bet)), a business manager from Tel Aviv, an Australian Jew on his way to Israel to marry a girl he'd never seen, two Italian Catholics and an English Salvation Army Officer from Bournemouth. All these

people seemed to have read Dirty Articles on "Sex in Sweden," "Sin in Sweden," "Sweden - Land of the Midnight Sin" or whatever they call them, and they all seemed to be experts in the field. And now fans start to ask me questions about all this, too. Very eagerly. Anybody feeling conscience-stricken? Bless you, Ron Ellick, for not knowing anything whatsoever about Swedish morals.

So let us skip this subject and concentrate upon something else. That is, I am the one to concentrate.... I refuse to believe that merely reading this column should require any greater amount of concentration, either due to John's ditto or my prose...although the latter has developed an extraordinarily annoying habit of turning extremely cryptic and esoteric when I dress it in English. Perhaps it wouldn't be too bad an idea to devote more time to my school English, after all - but then, my school English is fairly nonexistent. I keep worrying my poor teacher by using English English all the time instead of the version I learn (ignore the flaw in my logic, please!) at school. Another thing I love to do to tease the poor creature is to use American English, something which infallibly results in a lecture on "horrible American brawl." Sique.

Now, I feel a quick change of subject is rather necessary right here and now; I cannot very well go on speaking about American brawl all the time to an audience (legience, hm?) made up mostly of Americans - not because I am considerate, far from that, I assure you, but because you are bound to know a great deal more about this phenomenon (although perhaps not theoretically, all of you. Did you say anything, John?) than I. And I promise that I won't start raving about other languages, either; not because I wouldn't be able to, in fact, I am at present studying six foreign languages including Russian, but because I am no Hopkins ace and have no Hopkins A's, therefore John would, I trust, be able to do it much better than I.

It appears to me that I had better finish that "quick change of..." etc. pretty fast now, before I get an inferiority complex. Trouble is, being no bodysnatching World Dictator I don't have any lots of subjects to change into. Something that I would be able to write about, though, is the deplorable state of Swedish fandom at present, and as John has asked for a bitingly impartial review of this northerly phenomenon, I am going to reveal some of the recent happenings in this thing known as Sverifandom.

The various sf clubs seem to be gafiating, or, at least, hibernating; in any case, they are far from active. The Lund convention has been reported on elsewhere and is no longer news. Consequently, the only Sverifandom subject remaining to be brought up for discussion (or rather dissection, perhaps?) is the fanzine question. This is, according to my belief, a part that there should be something to be made out of, as it would hardly be unjust to describe the state of Swedish fandom of today as being characterized by and reflected in the fan mags. (A truism?)

At the moment, the number of Swedish fanzines amounts to a hardly imposing total of ten. The oldest fmz still existing is FUTURA, a deadly sercon club bulletin which has recently been rapidly degenerating into an uninteresting, badly printed crudzine. The club itself, also bearing the name of FUTURA, seems to be made up of worshippers of Sture Lönnerstrand, a fairly insignificant writer whom they hail as the Swedish Science Fiction Pioneer and the only good writer of sf at present in Sweden. The fact that this country has had at least twenty sf writers before Lönner-

3 - larshelander

strand makes a percipient observer wonder what exactly Lönnerstrand has done to justify his "pioneer" attribute. Furthermore, Lönnerstrand's one and only as yet published science-fiction book, RYMDHUNDEN, seems to be considered by many fans just as a piece of plagiarism. In any case, it is quite evident that Lönnerstrand's importance for Swedish sf and fandom is, in reality, far from being as great as in the opinion of certain fans.

Another fanzine that is carrying on an intense Lönnerstrand appreciation campaign is the fairly new STAR STUFF SF FANZINE. The latest ish of this fmz contains one page with news in such a lousy English that, in my opinion, it is more or less an insult to the glorious language of Shakespeare and Milton etc. In this English-language (haahh) column the editors state that their fanzine is the most widely read fan mag in Sweden and that it represents Sweden's "by far largest fan organization," the Star Stuff Science Fiction Union. Already this outstanding example of puerile conceitedness, hitherto unequaled in the history of Swedish fandom, makes you realize the total absence of any trace of fannish spirit in this fanzine. ((total absence or total overabundance, Lars?))

Recently, Sture Lönnerstrand became a member of the editorial staff of this fan mag, whereupon its other editors started letting everybody know what an excellent author he was, "Sweden's foremost sf writer and sf pioneer." Considering the fact that the real sf pioneer in this country lived around the turn of the century and that Sweden's foremost sf writer of today is to be found among the eighteen "immortal" members of the Swedish Academy of Literature, one is inclined to start wondering if being a member of the editorial staff of a certain fan mag makes you entitled to the position of "Sweden's foremost sf writer and pioneer." The whole thing is ridiculous and distasteful. There is something rotten in the state of Swedish fandom.

However, a reaction against this regrettable condition of things has arisen, represented by the three fannish fmz existing at present in Swedish fandom. It is a striking fact that only the fannish fanzines have openly displayed their aversion against this Lönnerstrand hullabaloo, and this can probably be considered as a proof that some amount of fannish spirit does exist in Sverifandom. The most notable of these three fanzines is SMART GRUFF SF FANZINE, a bloody parody of STAR STUFF SF FANZINE ("gruff" = "quarrel") featuring inter alia contributions by the editorial staff-member "Luras Lögnerstrand" (this is, of course, a distortion of Lönnerstrand's name; ("Luras" means "to cheat" and the "Lögn-" constituent of "Lögnerstrand" translates into "lie.") This lampoon is characterized by a very caustic joking with Lönnerstrand's writing; it is humorous and unconventional, although partly a bit childish - one must confess that its editors do sometimes carry things a bit far. SMART GRUFF is anonymous, a very vital drawback from all points of view, and this fact is expained in the policy statemnt on the cover: "This fanzine is and will be anonymous, which exclusively depends upon the fact that some of the persons referred to herein cannot bear to hear the truth."

All this has, of course, caused a severe split in Swedish fandom, and this feut is not the only one. Sverifandom is young and very turbulent. Will it ever grow mature enough to stabilize? Time will tell, I guess; I honestly don't know.

-larshelander

John:

Sigh.

Lars

Cliff Gould, 3741 Liggett Dr., San Diego 6, Calif.

To tell the truth I wasn't overly excited to receive Umbra---I'd come to expect, from previous issues...something which was drab, dull, disappointing, etc. My expectations were far from inaccurate.

However, in your editorial, you knidled, in me a spark of interest in possible future issues. I shall wait and see...and what I see, after the wait, is entirely up to you. I hope for both our sakes (but mostly for mine..selfish that way) that the result is favorable.

Andy Young's article was well written, interesting, and yet kind of pointless. Its all been said--but at any rate Young is articulate --more than can be said of most discussers of SoW.

I know that this sounds prejudiced (toward you-Umbra) but although I usually enjoy Jansen...I have only been mildly interested in any of his stuff I've seen in Umbra.

Stark's bit was nothing--with a capital NOTH.

I suppose that you are to be congratulated on receiving a letter from Tucker. Congratulated, or something. At any rate it was an interesting, absorbing, etc. etc., letter. Your, um, striving for "fannishness" in the form of the not funny, often stupid type things was particularly humorous to me...but, I suppose, not for the reasons you hoped they'd be.

Such gems as the following really slayed me--
"DEAN GRENNELL (A GOOD MAN)" so original! "LESSER FANS" so profoundly subtle! "(flip man)" a real gasser! "ANDY HIMSELF" you mean that you actually are that familiar with Him? "RICHARD H. ENEY, LOCAL FAAN" gee, and what locaaal does he belong to--a masterstroke in Deep Thinking, this!there were, as I'm sure you are aware others -- too disgusting to hunt for.

This my young friend, is not fannishness...it is what an astute psychologist speaking in the colloquial jargon would call, high school humor... over and understatement...cuteisms, which aren't cute.

Now (slup!) for your review of Oblique.

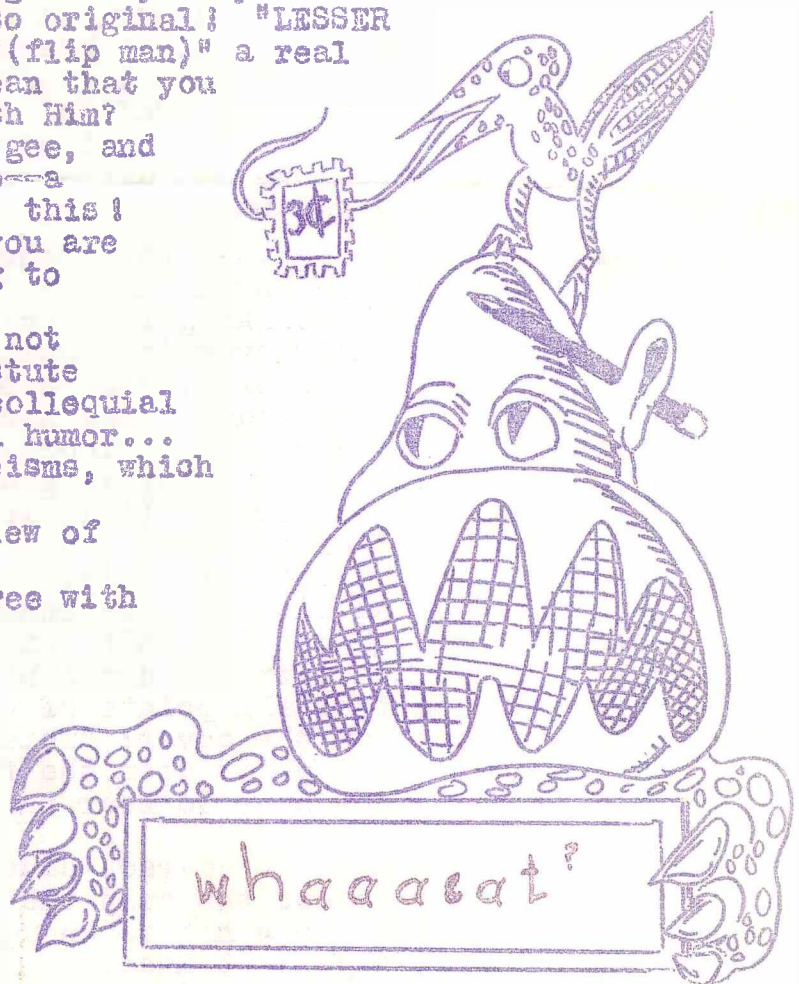
I, needless to say disagree with you, on quite a few points...

#7 had 52 not 50 pages.
(this is a disagreement?)

I thought Terry Carr's item superior to much of his stuff in PEON, and personally thought that it was excellent.

I am not a nice guy!
((over))

Harness



I led no "anti-Wetzel anti Hall crusade"---I didn't, and don't consider my suggestions re Wetzel to be of a crusading nature....I considered them to be quite ardent opinion...and hoped that the opinion was ardent enough to slop over onto the thoughts of some others.

I did not print(long letters from)"Hall and Wetzel..." -- I printed a longish letter from Wetzel and just a few lines from Hall.

As for your last sentence...I don't want to sound cruel, but although I might look as though I'm "(getting lost in) that array of literateness," you appear to be lost...and woe, woe, I find no array of literateness which surrounds you.

I was a bit angry about some of the hypocritical comments which you made though.

You "condemn" me for printing a long letter from Hall...which I didn't do, and if I did there would have been nothing wrong with it from an editors, or a readers viewpoint as long as it afforded amusement, and/or food for thought...but all that has nothing to do with this, for I didn't print a long letter from Hall.

However, the fact remains that you have not only printed long letters from Clod but have spent a page or two in Umbra "doing logio" "discussing" "arguing" with, reviewing his fanzines, and generally making a fool out of yourself.

On top of that, you yell wolf because I printed a letter of Wetzel's while you not only printed letters from him, but printed reams and reams of that types material in the form of articles, stories, etc.

On top of THAT you come forth with the sprightly comment that "fandom would rather forget those two" whilst talking about my three-fourths of a page Crusade against Wetzel, without commenting, or for all I know even knowing that that 3/4s page spent discussing George was by way of being a plea that fandom did "forget about him."

Grrrrrrr! Are you sure that you READ OBlique?

Oh, well.

I found no improvement this issue, but note that you are heartilly enthusiastic, and sincere, and have hopes (I do that is), albiet not overly high ones, for Umbra's future.

Sorrowfully-wounded,
(Cliff)

ps-gee, dad, is this here a POISON PEN letter too....geeeeeeeeeeeeeee.

((Well, Cliff, I guess that's one up for you.))

GARY LABOWITZ, 7234 Baltimore, Kansas City 14, Mo.

Got Um 15 right here. Boy! You has slipped. The cover on this one is one of the worst you've had in seven issues. And to top it all off I can't read the artist's name so I don't even know whom I am saying is poor. ((Ted White))

The interior is below par too, at least from my viewpoint. I seem to get more sercon every day, and you weren't too interesting this issue.

Sense of Wonder was so trivial. It consisted mainly of repeating the standard definitions with examples of stories.. It also seemed to try to be funny. Maybe the author wasn't trying but if he was he didn't succeed.

Jan Jansen was all right, a bit of.

Son of Univac looks like something a beginning neo would print in his first issue. Shame.

The letter, of course, reflect the personality of the writer, and chickenscratches show you know what you're talking about in the way of fanzines.

((A couple serious-type thoughts engendered by Gould's letter now: I'll give a lifetime sub to Um to anyone who can give me a working definition of "fennishness" And, if anyone doesn't want to run the risk of my scatter brain in Chickensc., simply mark "Don't review" on your fanzine. I agree with most of what Gould said relating to me & my share of Um.))

DES EMERY, 93 Hemlock St., St. Thomas, Ont., Canada.

Although Andy writes a good essay, I don't think it's actually necessary. If you have a Sense of Wonder, you already know what it is, though maybe not in sommany words. If you haven't, you'll never be able to comprehend what's in a lurid cover, pulpy stories, and impossible happenstance to make a person gaga over it. I think that Andy realizes this too, since he limits his exposition to his own personal S. of W.

But this isn't a thing to Fans apart from the race of Man you know. G.K.Chesterton wrote an essay called "Wonder and the Wooden Post" lamenting the lack of the power of Wonder among the moderns of his day, circa 1912. "It is not a power that indicates any artistic strength, still less any spiritual exaltation....It is a small and special gift, but an innocent one." I don't know how well that "innocent" fits today's fan, but after all it is inconsequential. No doubt the stodgy banker lives a happier life than the rest of us blessed or cursed, perhaps, with the Sense of Wonder.

I didn't know Larry Stark had such a sense of humour.

JACK HARNESS, The Elmwood, 1627 19th St.NW, Washington, D.C.

Dear John, Dear, dear, dear John,

I'm enclosing in separate envelope the bill for surgery on my feet-bones. I am referring to the lead balloon that fell on 'em when I opened the UMBRA envelope:///The utter crust of Jan saying he's at Wetzlar--does George have a European branch?///Both the Real McCoy and I liked Son of Univac. I forced his mouth under the faucet for saying so (he needs water, you see--for irrigation) and told him how his father tried to get insured against his spendthriftendencies, wastral protection.///Starkov is an excellent name, similar to Larry's barking, anyway.///More of this bitchy card in a moment///All those fmz that good? Not even a zhit! of a finger drawn across the throat?///Mighod! How can I dream up and answer to MEUH? You got me into this///Judging paper costs, would be cheaper to mimeo in color. Easier in circulation fingers/figures (massaging them after cranking).///Isn't the Sense of Wonder just the creativity the author infuses? New ideas or another angle or delight--what the writer is capable of, in sf or otherwise. Extrapolation--partly; see?

In the meantime, the following should divert and annoy:

As I was going to see some elves (name of Presley)

I met a man with seven selves.

Every self had seven mentals,

Every mental seven stencils,

Every stencil sever astrals;

Mentals, stencils, astrals, selves,

How many were going to see some elves?

See you later, my translater

Jack

((....much later....))

ANDY YOUNG, 10 Sumner Rd., Cambridge 38, Mass.

Jan's experience with a letter sent to Venezuela by mistake reminds me of an incident the summer I took chemistry, in Springfield, Ohio. The prof got a letter marked "missent to Springfield, Missouri" and he commented that he got letters missent to all sorts of Springfield and that there are Springfields in 47 of the 48 states and also in Alaska, or something like that. He couldn't remember which state lacked a Springfield, and I have often contemplated sending out 48 postcards addressed to the postmasters of the various possible Springfields asking the one which didn't exist to send it back or something so I could find out which Springfield isn't...but since postcards have gone up to 2¢ I would just as soon wait until I think of it with a good atlas of the US handy...

Gads but we liked Jan's con report. And waves of nostalgia swept over us at the Magnus line "I don't mean real interlineations, just interlineation-type things."

I liked Son of Univac, too. Real croggling stuff. Send Stark a bit of egoboo from me, will you?

By jing, let me again urge you to go mimeo. It's just the thing you need to get out of the old rut. Automatically changes the format. If you do it yourself or get a conscientious mimeoer the stuff is fool-proof as far as clarity is concerned.

Speaking of clarity, I was greatly impressed by working Dag's borrowed Gestetner. You can be led astray on a Gest. if you forget to keep it well inked but otherwise it is a beautiful machine and utterly foolproof. On any kind of machine there is always the temptation to keep turning the crank without checking on the results--I suspect that is the cause of the bad reproduction White often gets...he'll turn on that electric thing and let it run.

VINÇ & JOY CLARKE, 7 Inchmery Rd., Catford, London SE6, England.

We have appreciated UMBRA very much indeed and I'm amazed at the fine quality of your hectoing.

Vinç and I have every hope of emigrating to America round about 1958 or so, and we shall hope to see lots more of the fans when we arrive. We are saving very slowly - it's difficult to do over here - and we hope to have enough to take us to the States, and possibly across to California. I can't make up my mind. Cal. is the best because of my helath (I'm terribly subject to colds and bronchitis) but New York or other East Coast or Eastern side Towns appeal terribly from the writing point of view. Such is life. Something will definitely make up our minds between then and now (shouldn't that be the other way around?) and we'll let you know. Hearing from so many of you, and about so many of you, and with the hope of meeting many of you next year ((1957)) will ease the difficulties. We shan't feel we are going to a country where we know nobody. To have friends already there is a wonderful feeling.

I'd like to get hold of some copies of this Playboy everyone's on about. Wish they'd do a BRE...I've seen an odd photo or two in Ted Carnell's office and whew! Colour is interesting but of the ones that Ted has, only one model has a decent figure - the rest have flabby breasts and if there's one item of femininity that makes me want to throw up, it's that. The motto of the Windmill theater (in London) is my criterion of a good-shaped model...Not a brassiere on the stage...in other words, they must not be flabby but have good and good-looking pectoral muscles. Ah, the days of Vargas... even I could appreciate those, though I must admit that envy did enter slightly into my appreciation.

Back to Ken again via Archee. Does he really think you can judge an author by only three stories? Shame on him. Vinç by the way to put the facts straight only wrote two novelettes with Ken. Ken has written several others which were published by Panther and they have been some of the better ones that they published (in comparison to other authors that is). This is not just bias--honestly--Ken CAN write well. The trouble is first, Authentid will only take a certain type of story, a type which is not suitable for Ken's best work. New Worlds has a bias against certain taboos, such as religion and sex, both of which treated in the proper manner can make a classic of a story. Thus again some of Ken's better work is rejected. Which, alas, leaves only Nebula (which doesn't come out very often) and the American market, which entails a wait of almost 12 months for an acceptance. For someone who is trying to live on his writing, 12 months is too long to wait, so Ken writes what the magazines will accept. I have seen some of his other stuff, and believe me, it IS good. But British s.f. will not accept it. See the difficulty we're in.

Your cover by the way was a delight - isn't it wonderful what can be done with hecto?

...George Whiting now believed to be in Cyprus address unknown.

Your hectoing is grand - your cover shows very good control and I thoroughly approve. But that one on 14 was the one I most liked.

Jan's piece was much enjoyed and we're thinking of taking him up on the con for us. It's a wonderful idea--here are Vinç and I sitting in the most comfortable chairs in the bar: Willis comes up--what would you like to drink? We tell him the most expensive and exotic drink we can think of--he gets it. We drink it. Jan comes up: Cushion, Joy? I accept - or refuse as I feel at the moment. Chuck Harris offers to see the bedroom is suitably equipped - in his capacity as sexfiend he naturally has to check that there are at least three bottles of whisky there to keep up his spirits at any party we may throw. The Liverpool Gropu put their special party room at OUR disposal. Eee Hoffman and James White make notes of OUR quotes while Atom draws cartoons of US. And Taurasi and Ron Smith publish the things. (This of course is at the Worldcon.) The idea is inspiring. Are you going to make it come true? ((If you're going to for our Taff ambassador.))

Son of Univac was wonderful -- startling Squarescreen Black And White curled us up!

VINÇ:--What is (Joy) doing if she isn't reading UMBRA? Believe it or not, watching an insect which has flown too near a bottle of Cointreau and is now staggering about the table, she reports, on six legs. Personally, I think fandom is going too far when it starts to debauch the insect world.

DICK ELLINGTON, 98 Suffolk St. Apt. 3A, New York 2, N.Y.

My, finally got to watch this Presley animal on teevee oncet. Fascinating but I'm afraid he's just not my type. Somebody passed on his press agent's reply to the question about Elvis and sex: "Only a very stupid person wouldn't take advantage of some of these girls and Elvis isn't stupid." or words to that effect.

Seeing Mercer's letter reminds me of England which reminds me.... Anyway, dunno if you heard but some simple cheeild had the bad taste to send a telegram to the Bulmers (the Clarkes got it--Bulmers on holiday) saying something like, "Suggest you withdraw bid to prevent split. Publishers guarantee London in '58. Reply immediately. -Signed- Arthur Clarke. Needless to say the telegram arrived too late for any reply

or anything but it did worry the Clarke's no end. They wired me but I never got the wire. I, hearing of the telegram via rumor, sent them a telegram anyway, clearing up any doubts. Meanwhile Mike Wilson was being blamed for the whole thing. Actually he had planned to send some sort of silly telegram but would not have signed Clarke's name and anyway it was never sent. Clarke got the whole story and is mad as hell. He says I may inform all and sundry that the FBI has been notified and somebody is liable to get it in the neck for forgery. Tracing back the rumor I got I find that I heard it from Bob Hoskins who says he got it from Bob Chazins who knew who sent it but wouldn't tell. Anyway, it was a pretty silly stunt and I hope somebody gets it in the neck for it.

I still don't get why you people think Kyle is a crook or suthin'. Honest to Pogo, he may be a little nutty at times and make mistakes but he's honest as they come and I speak from three years of close contact with him. He, more than anyone else loses money on the con. The rest of us will at least get part of our expense money back but he will get very little and he put out a mint--not to mention the money he lost without hope of return in that he devoted full time to the con for three months preceding and hence was unable to earn a living. Kyle, in spite of being president of radio stations and other oddities is not rich man a-tall.

Ghu!! Eney and me is competition. Yeah, I'm a TAFF nominee too, Oh well, will say this -- I don't give a damn about any of the rest of the people nominated but I wouldn't 'arf mind seeing Eney win -- second to seeing me win of course. Nice to see trufen being nominated. Hi-ho and this will make much jack in for whoever does win.

Incidentally, for I forget, we are not, N-O-T, not paying the air force anything -- that is a total of nothing, none, no money and like that. Pass it along.

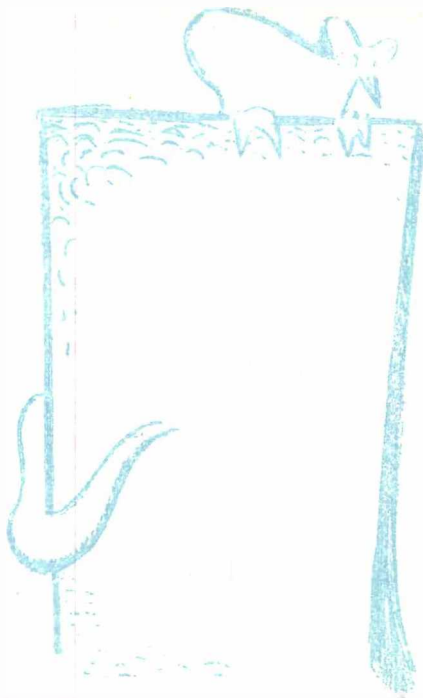
((Nice fellow, fine, good man or not, Kyle still made a mistake. It's just the more tragic a mistake for everything he's put into it. Yet it's still a mistake))

RICH ENEY, the Mild fan, 417 Ft. Hunt Rd., Alexandria, Va.

...Even got three belated signatures ((taff nominations)) from Boyd Raeburn, Ron Kidder, and Howard Lyons; I think I'll try to get Ford to add them to the list of people nominating me.

Speaking of TAFF, that Bring-John-Too fund sounds like a fine idea. I think bringing out the fact that you gave up a good chance of your own will make fazans more willing to contribute to you than a complicated vote-transmitting system. Will write Jansen to this effect.

Tried a mental contact, telepathy-type, with Nancy Share last Sunday, apparently with fine results. Gad, what will GM Carr say if I turn out to be a slan? We're going to try again this Sunday; I'm always ready to try



to get into contact with attractive young femmes of course. Telepathically, dammit! Don't pretend to misunderstand me.

((Due egoboo hereby accorded to Boyd, Ron, & P.Howie for wanting to sponsor Eney too. As I said before, my London in '57 account is open for outside financing if anyone feels like it. ##No, Dick, I understand you perfectly. "Telepathy"--Greek for feeling at a long distance, from far away, etc. Everyone lives too far away from Danville, Pa.))

((More doubly parenthetical talk: I think I said something in ETA about feeling humbly-proud at having brought Jean Linard into contact--not telepathic, mind you, at least not yet--with American ~~civilization~~ fandom...To celebrate the Advent of Linard and the True Gospel of 'Pataphysiq., here is Linard Himself (yes, Cliff...) and the only other fan who's ever seen him, Lee Riddle.:

JEAN LINARD, 24 Rue Petit, VESOUL, Hte.Sne., France.

Please record, Shourn: I don't make ANYTHING in enthusiasm, I think I've mentioned it somewhere. Moreover I dislike enthusiasm, it TIRES me. Mine especially. Furthermore I think "enthusiasm" is far to be a thing "solid" enough to last. I only do thing in sane disgust, in plain upsetting(?). So you can bet publications from Vesoul will last for a while, until Russians come over here, at least. Except, though, if we ever succeed to get out from France, but surely our mags from anywhere then wouldn't be better for that sole fact.

I'm going to start a campaign against pocket-book Eng.Fr/Fr.Engl. dictionaries of 30,000 entries, too. You join? The US one, of course, the French stuff not even deserving that. Thanksgiving is "Jour d'Action de grâces" but Am. only, anyway. I can't give you the translation in French, as Action de Grâces in French is only damn religious things. At least Catholic religion, I don't know for the others. But it'd not come on the national scale in France, at least not under this form. Oh well I don't know. Artspecialties...me, you know...

Annie (she was raised /aroused?/ by the Sisters') tells that November Month is le mois du Sacre-Coeur. Timbres-Postes est masculin. Un timbre. Though I would prefer to read HER at the feminine. Only you asked for it, sort of.

by the way (of what?) Ted White's cover for U-.15 is the first drawing par Ted I like. But I like it. Oh. Oh yes.

As to return material on its (it's?) sender, seems I'm too gentle for that. Too afraid to hurt the person. Ah..also, many people (even a lot I never known so far..I take that Ellik must have encountered a PILE of ladies on his way back to home) have written to me linard to claim for that report by Ron.

Did you ever know that Willis' French is most C H A R M I N G ? ? ?
POURQUOI PAS VOUS?

...No, I shant' publish 100 pp. every shot, pop. Was an anniversary issue, it's told. And then I've now too much debts for the whole 1957 still TO COME. I've read one thing that was good somewhere, by Ted White. Don't recall well. It was a special-typographical-layout, and the text also was good.

Oh John, it is not (NEVER) in the typer that the master creases. But only in the taper--what am I saying? I mean in the ditto, when I've already printed 10 or 20 as well as 80 copies, and suddenly crasshh...

I've to put that scotch tape by dozens and dozens and dozens of little bit en quinquonce. I know that it comes for the "entering" (?) of the master (up) into the slot in the drum. What an English. Hope you see what I mean, though. The master is not tight (?) enough, and slip a wee bit during the printing, and causes creasing any moment. Quite upsetting I swear you, when it remains 15 copies to print that you've got to spend more than an hour onto gluing the master, too!

Straighten out the crease is impossible without scotch, then. Even, some ramification subsistent. C'est exactement comme les nervures d'une large feuille d'arbre, John, mais en plus fourni, et il y en a des tas.

...However, I forgot previously, I didn't have any chance to catch any grennellianisms so far, as I don't know the English enough to only guess the 10th of all the suptilities IN PAPERS.

Thus I'm fearing it will take me a darn long time to play with rhetorics and grammar (My grammar died when I was 12 old) and rich finesses of the languages alas, John. And where people like "certain" play with language, I pray you to know that I feel very very frustrated the outest, as I've always had a so dear tendency on languages games or so. I certainly miss more than I can even imagine, and I am sorry at it. Sad, even.

LEE RIDDLE, PNC-USN, USS CASCADE, FPO, NY, NY.

Before I forget it, I'm no longer a PNCA. The "A" has been dropped and now I'm just a PNC. Before this past week, I was a Chief Personnel Man (Acting Appointment). My acting appointment and probationary period has been finished now, and now I am just a Chief Personnel Man, which means my rating of CPO is permanent until I retire from the Navy. Used to mean a \$20 a month pay increase when you advanced from Acting to Permanent, but no longer—just the prestige. Now, I'm as high as I can go as an enlisten man and since I'm getting too old to be considered for a commission (they only want youngsters who then can train—I've been in the Navy too long to take any of the propaganda they'd hand out) I guess I'll remain a PNC for the rest of my career.

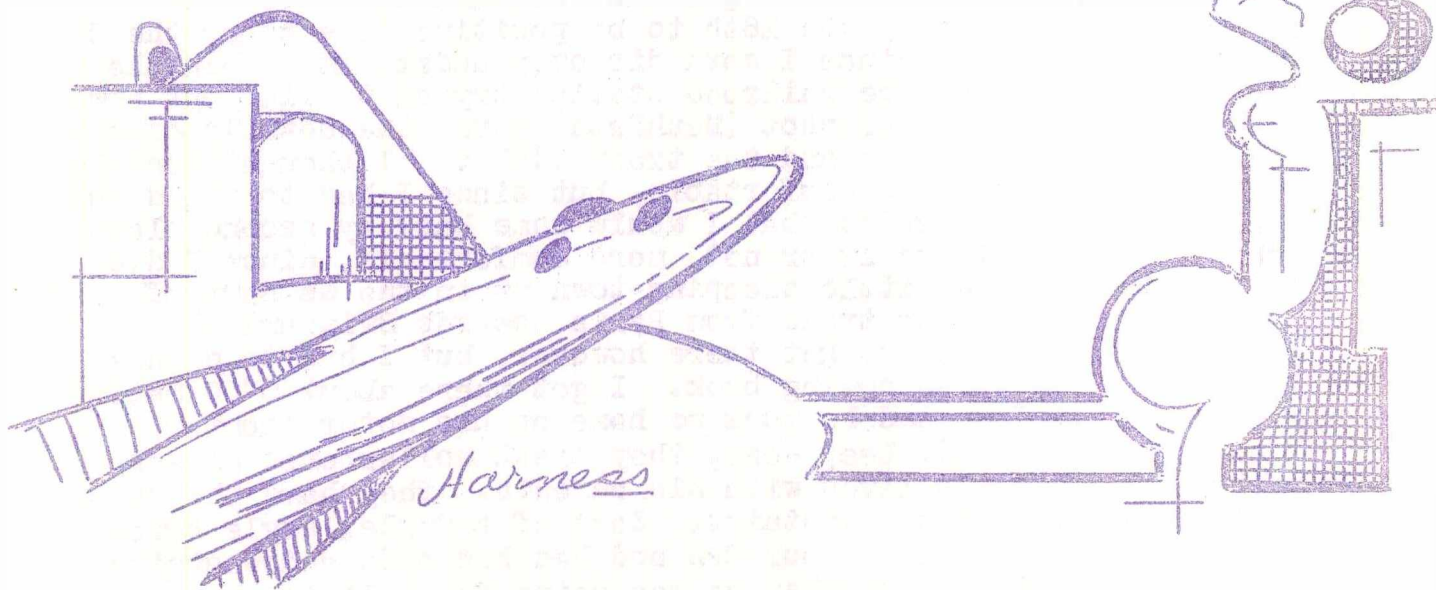
You probably know by now that I did visit the Linards after all. I hadn't planned to do so until we get back to Cannes in October... however, one night, Thursday the 16th to be positive, I woke up the CO and asked for permission, since I work directly under him. Noon the next day found me down at the railroad station trying to find out how to get up to Vesoul. The one-shot (MeuhPeon) gives the details of how I finally got the information and the train ticket. I thought traveling by first-class would be comfortable, but since I had to stand up almost half the way, I decided that I would come back by second class—much cheaper, and believe it or not, more comfortable, since I did get a seat. Vesoul is a little sleeping town up in the NE part of France, about four hours by train from Paris towards Switzerland. We didn't go through Paris to get there however, but I had to change twice going and four times coming back. I got there about 0700 Sat. morning, was met by Jean and he took me home on his motor scooter. ((Watch out for that kind, Lee, Jean, they break collarbones as easy as snapping a femur)) He lives with his parents. They have the bottom apartment and he has the upstairs. Sort of a duplex style house. His father is the equivalent of our CPA and has his office downstairs also. Jean never did tell me what he was doing for a living, except

that he works in an office. Annie works as a nurse in two of the local clinics.

I stayed there Saturday and Sunday nights and left early Monday morning, about the same time I arrived Saturday. I slept most of Saturday to get rested and they took me to a movie (The Gladiators) with the voices dubbed in in French. I never knew until now that Victor Mature and Susan Hayworth spoke brilliant and fluent French! I was in uniform and got lots of stares. Several people stopped us and tried out their English on me. Speaking of English, you would have had a good time trying to understand Jean and me trying to put our ideas across to each other. I know only a smattering of French, and all the english he knew was from books and reading--not spoken. (I believe I was the first one he had talked to in English--and that was on the telephone the night before from Cannes--another good story some of these days). We finally had to resort to writing down the words that threw us. Annie couldn't speak English at all, but we managed to get along. They are two very nice people, as I said before, remind me of the Youngs quite a bit, both in action and feelings and thoughts. I got back about midnight Monday, tired and happy and above all, broke! I'd like very much to go back up there and see them again, if nothing else to get away from the tourist traps.

You can meet an awfully nice bunch of people if you get away from the ports here in Europe. Cannes especially is nothing but money, money, money. I never cared for it, but I loved Vesoul. Same way up in Livorno, once I got away from it and up in Florence, I loved Italy. That 's northern Italy of course--this area is completely different and I hate it. What appals me most is the way the kids are running loose through the streets, smoking, drinking, and begging from the American sailors.

((Congratulations on PNCing, Lee,
and I hope you produce all sorts of
peons in the future.
This, I should imagine, is the
end of the letter
column.))

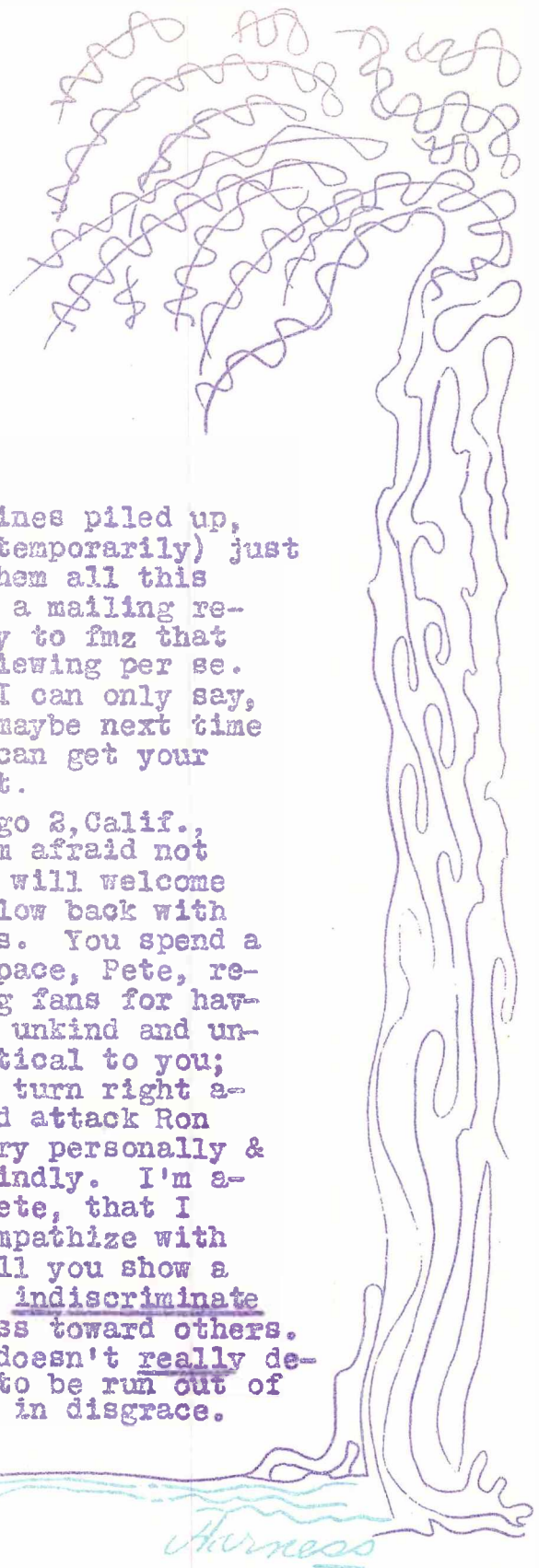


chickens grotches

"it looks like a review column to me"

What with four months' worth of fanzines piled up, and what with my having to Go Into Debt (temporarily) just to put out 30pp., I simply can't review them all this time. Suppose, then, I make it more like a mailing review (or my version of one), where I reply to fmz that evoke a reply, and do precious little reviewing per se. To the scads of people who get left out, I can only say, Look, poor scads, I'm awfully sorry, and maybe next time I'll have more space or less fmz and you can get your due egoboo---or, in a few cases, lack of it.

ABSTRACT, PJVorzimmer, 777 48th St., Sandiego 2, Calif., dittoed, sched.uncertain, 12pp., #10.--I'm afraid not many fen will welcome this fellow back with open arms. You spend a lot of space, Pete, reproaching fans for having been unkind and unduly critical to you; then you turn right around and attack Ron Ellik very personally & very unkindly. I'm afraid, Pete, that I can't sympathize with you till you show a little indiscriminate kindness toward others. Ellik doesn't really deserve to be run out of fandom in disgrace.



Hurness

"my ghod, what an eggplant"

PEON, Charles Lee Riddle, PNG/USN, USS CASCADE (AD-16), F.P.O., New York, NY, bimo., 15¢, 8/1, mimeo, 24 pp., #37. -- Lee Riddle has much the same trouble with Peon as I with Um; for YEARS Peon has been fandom's finest--or almost finest occasionally--and certainly most Dependable sercon fanzine. Peon has been going on for...how long is it? 8 years?... with the first long interruption just ended by this. The goal of 100 issues of Peon, and the goal of passing Peon on to the second generation of Riddles, have disappeared. The goal now, if it can still be called such, is 50 issues, and try to bring some life back into the thing. This issue contains: a good 5 pages of editor, 3 pp. Ron Smith with something basically similar to Eney's this issue Um, but serconnish style; 3 pp. Jim Harmon, hardly light reading, but personalized; 3pp. Joe Gibson, light style, serconnish subject; 2½ pp. James Gunn, uses nominative of address in comparing Readers' Digest to stfmags for circ; 1pp. poem: Man and Mars, Don Wilson, er, uncomic...; 2pp. Bob Tucker, not in one of his light moments; 2½ pp. Lin Carter, Amazing True Fact Article, actually has some laughs in it; 1pp (pardon, 1 p.) R. Kruis, report on the banning of stf in South Africa: "Scraping the Barrel." That's it. Lee was pretty well disappointed with the way the issue turned out; I don't see why on his grounds. Appearance was top level. I think his disappointment was rather that he failed to put something through the issue (imagine 1 copy Peon used as a veil) to the reader... or didn't think he did. Peon has a very sober atmosphere, BUT a fmz can be of sober atmosphere and still have humor--there is such a thing as sober humor--and much personal interest, centralization, etc. PEON is a slow-moving crittur, like a British conservative in the 19th cent., but it can be moved. Good luck...

STELLAR, Larry Stark III, EDITOR GODDAMMIT!, 13 Serviss Ave., EBT, R#9, New Brunswick, N.J.; Richard Eney, EDITOR ELECT OR OUGHT TO BE, 417 Ft. Hunt Rd., Alexandria, Va.; Theodore White, publisher, 1014 Tuckahoe St., Falls Church, Va.; 15¢, 2/25¢, etc.; 5/yr., mimeo, 58 pp., #2. -- Ech. Stellar is the continuation of "Zip", a rather good fmz pubd by T.White; Ted's idea was to keep on publishing, since publishing to him is the main function of fanediting, and let someone else edit it. He picked Larry Stark, who promptly made S#1-2 into a Starkzine, over violent protests from Ted, and succeeded in imparting his (L's) own personality into every corner of S. except Ted's "Publisher's Puddle." He introduced "sercon fan fiction," his own specialty and encouraged others to take part in it. In short, he performed all the faned's functions in very good style. However, Ted still continued to consider S. HIS, by virtue of his having (a) founded it and (b) publishing it. Larry quit after the second issue. Ted wanted someone to replace Larry, and asked Eney. The whole thing was unclear. Eney was led to believe he would become Stellar's editor and take over where Larry had left off. He even began scouting for material; struck up a trade-columns agreement with me (viz. Sense from Tho't Divide this). Then, at the Dive in NY before the con, Boyd R'burn asked the trio which address to send A Bas to, in trade with Stellar, and precipitated a very ugly scene. He'd thought Larry was the "owner" of the fanzine; Ted told him no, before Larry, in very not-uncertain terms. I (I think) piped up that it was Eney, was ed. Ted repeated performance for Eney's benefit. From there it devolved. Now the matter is clear: Eney is TYPIST for Stellar, Ted editor; in return, Eney gets to keep one of Ted's excellent typers. Stellar 3 is on the way; Stark is definitely out, and, justifiably, doesn't feel too happy about it. That's why I said, ech.

RETRIBUTION, John Berry, 31, Campbell Pk. Av., Belfast, N.Ire., 10¢, 3/25¢, mimeo, often, 34 pp., #4. -- Ret, however, is dedicated to fan humor, and is one of the most fabulous-type zines ever to hit fandom-in-general (hit, as opposed to creep up on, spring up in, develop). I liked Bob Shaw's GOON ABROAD THIS YEAR? best; its head (THE STORY YOU ARE ABOUT TO READ IS TRUE. ONLY THE FACTS HAVE BEEN CHANGED TO PROTECT THE INNOCENT) could well characterize the whole mag. If you have a sense of humor kicking around in you somewhere, don't fail to make yr-self known to John or co-editor Art Thomson & fandom's best cartoonist at present, 17 Brockham House, Brockham Dr., London SW2, Eng.

CONFAB, Bob Peatrowsky, Box 634, Norfolk Nebr., is dead. Ray Thompson has moved to Omaha and the big city life. Fandom, indeed, in Norfolk, Nebr., once a famed center of seventh (hah) fandom, is dead. And, as a result, I dare say Norfolk, Nebr., itself is dead. Taps, please. Confab was a terribly nice zine.

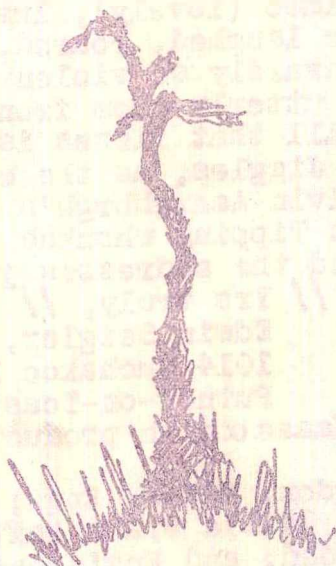
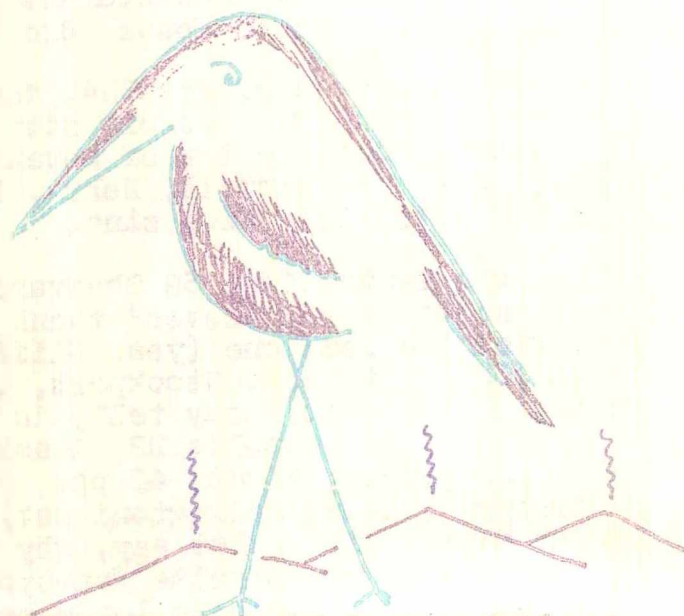
TRIODE, Erio Bentcliffe, 58 Sharrard Grove, Intake, Sheffield 12--sorry, change name to "Terry Jeeves" thank you--for art only; generally Erio Bentcliffe, the real one (yes, Cliffe, even "Himself"), still at 47 Alldis St., Great Moor, Stockport, Ches., Eng. -- I'm intrigued by that "Intake." Just what, pray tell, is took in? -- 7/\$1 to Dale Smith, 2001 Kyle Av., Minneapolis 22, & ask Mr. Boggs what state it's in, I forgot; irreggtrly; mimeo, 42 pp., #8. ----- I, what with one thing & another (familiar, washingtonians?), haven't gotten around to more than skimming this issue. What say, why not dig into it with me? It's always been one of my favorite Fan-type fanzines, and this time looks certainly no worse, prob'ly loads better. Let me urge you, simply on past performance, and the looks of thish, to fang hold on a copy.

SCIENCE FICTION FIVE YEARLY, Lee Shaw (neigh Hoffman), 545 Manor Rd., Castleton Corners, Staten Is. 14, N.Y. --- mimeo (lovely), lustrumly 58 pp., #2. -- Takes the prize! I have never laughed, roared, guffawed, rolledonfloorkickingscreaming, or spludged inwardly so violently so often for so much before. Utterly, utterly, utterly from front cover and Alka-seltzer pill ("Front cover symbol: All that fizzes is not nuclear") to the final editorial, "The Ether Jiggles, as the editor speaks." Can't decide what I liked best; Calvin Aaarghbrgh's Stars of the Slave Giants or Andy Young's Magnetic Cat Tipping whonked out the most reaction. The letters were wonderful and the addresses just ri't. Allow me: "Dear Ed: // Your magazine stinks! // Yrs truly, //

the south verily has riz again,
even if it only got 'sfar's Staten Is.
Congrats, L.ShawLtd., on a perfectly superb faaaaconish production!

Edwin Seigler, III
1014 Tuchakoe Rd.
Putney-on-Toast, Ind.

ORION, Paul Enever, 97 Pole Hill Rd., Hillingdon, M'sex, Eng.; quarterly, 14th of NovFebMayAug; 28 pp., #17. -- Too little space left for reviewing. This is GOOD man, Highly Recommended, and Eng's best fanzine too. See's you get it. No room left for paraagrafing, even: A BAS, Boyd Raeburn, 4 Glumvalley Dr., Toronto 9, Ont., and ONE/FOURTEEN; Dick Eney, 417 Ft. Hunt Rd., Alex'a, Va.,--these two fellows, you know, are competing at taff; A Bas is the best ish I've seen yet (less of R's incessant grotching at everything he picks; granted he picks some wonderfully grotchable items, but too much of Anything, etc); 1/14 is the best report of a con (nycon) I've yet seen. If this's what competition does, me for competition. (You can still get copies of 1/14; Highly Rec.)



The ghost of the green tree

-- front cover by jean young --

Changes of address:

C. Lee Riddle, PNC-USN/Bldg.927,Apt.1/
Bainbridge Village/Bainbridge,Md.

Walt Liebscher/1626 Redesdale/Los
Angeles 26/Calif.

Gregg Calkins/547 S. 4th E./#5/Salt
Lake City/Utah.

L.Shaw,Ltd./545 Manor Rd./Castleton
Corners/Staten Island 14/N.Y.

Don Allen/26,Sidney Grove/Gateshead 8/
Durham/England.

Don Ford/Box 19-T/RR #2,Wards Corner
Rd./Loveland/Ohio.

Bob Silverberg/915 West End Av.,/NYC25

Paul Enever/97 PoleHillRd./Hillingdon/
Middlesex/Eng.

Dick Ellington/98 SuffolkSt./3A/NYC2.

Art Sahe/534 W.45thSt./NYC36.

23193135 SigmundWood,DavidH./28sqdm/UK

ComCanSigsRgt/WarOffBldgs/Worcester Rd/
Droitwich/Worcs.Eng.

-- back cover by jean young --